

August 15, 2011 Drought Report

Precipitation

Precipitation amounts over the past 7 days across the state range from less than 1 inch to over 4 inches with the greatest amounts occurring in the eastern part of the state and the least in the upper middle part of the state. The 90-day precipitation deficits persist in the northwest corner of the state with deficits up to -4.3 inches in Elk County.

Surface Water

A review of the US Geological Survey (USGS) County surface water monitoring gages indicates that the 30-day average streamflow values reflect the rainfall that has fallen over the past week. Eight counties (Armstrong, Bradford, Centre, Indiana, Jefferson, Juniata, Lawrence, and Tioga) returned to Normal from Watch status and Cameron improved from Warning to Watch status. Adams, Franklin, and Warren Counties dropped from Normal to Watch status and Crawford and Venango moved from Watch to Warning status. There are now 16 counties in Watch and 5 counties in Warning for the surface water indicator.

The snapshot of instantaneous streamflows varies across the state with flows ranging from much above normal for most of the eastern portion of the state and at or above normal for the western portion of the state.

Groundwater

The trend lines for the 30-day moving average of groundwater levels vary from wells levels continuing to lower, others bottoming out, and others slightly increasing. Fayette County, last week having a groundwater indicator in "Watch" is now Normal. Two counties, Potter and Juniata, remain with Emergency indicators. Both these monitoring wells act as surrogate monitoring wells for McKean and Perry Counties.

Water Suppliers

There has been no change to the list of 12 Public Water Supply Agencies (PWSAs) on voluntary or mandatory restrictions.

Forecast

Forecasts call for lower precipitation depths over the next 2 weeks with somewhat even distribution of between trace amounts in the northwest to about 2 inches in the east. The forecast for the week between August 23 and August 31 calls again for trace amounts in the entire western half of the state to about 1 inch in the east.

Summary

Precipitation over the last week brought some relief to areas across the state, although the magnitude received was not sufficient to eliminate the 90-day precipitation deficits that still persist in the northwest/northcentral areas. Surface water and groundwater levels continue to show stress with drought indicators in watch/warning/emergency.

Conditions will be monitored closely, drought watch/warning declarations remain in effect.