Watershed MANAGEMENT 

Drought Information Center

June 10, 1999

Thunderstorm activity resulted in about 0.1-0.2 inch of precipitation in a 40-50 mile wide area reaching from Lawrence/Beaver Counties to Potter/Tioga Counties. Another band of thunderstorms brought about 0.1-0.5 inch in the counties north and east of Northumberland County, with the highest concentrations falling in the extreme northeastern counties.

In the Delaware River basin, streams showed little or no reaction to the storm activity. The Lackawaxen River at Hawley has declined from 108 cubic feet per second (cfs) on Monday to 99 cfs this morning. The Lehigh River at Bethlehem is down from 878 to 808 cfs, and at Glendon, near its mouth, the Lehigh is flowing at a daily record low of 835 this morning. The Schuylkill River at Philadelphia decreased from 680 to 487, compared to a normal of 1400 cfs for today. The Schuylkill hit a daily record low at Reading earlier this week. In the Christina River watershed, Brandywine Creek is down from 178 to 165 cfs, compared to a normal of 298. The Delaware River at Trenton declined from 4040 to 3940 cfs. Basinwide, flows are near half of normal. Fifteen gages recorded record daily flows earlier this week.

In the Susquehanna River basin, stream flows are equally low. Twenty-five gages recorded daily record lows this week, including all gages on the main stem Susquehanna River except Towanda. This morning, the Harrisburg gage, at 6540, is within 20 cfs of the record low of 6520 for the day; the Marietta gage, at 7110 cfs, is continues below the daily record low of 8200. The Lackawanna River at Old Forge is down from 142 to 130 cfs, compared to a normal of 343. The West Branch Susquehanna at Lewisburg is down from 2050 to 1760, well below the daily record low of 1970 cfs. The Juniata River at Newport dropped from 1190 to 1010 cfs, compared to a normal of 2660. In the lower basin, Conestoga River at Conestoga declined from 189 to 171 cfs, also well below its record of 225 cfs for today.

In the Ohio River basin, the main stem Allegheny River continued a decline to 4040 cfs, from 5600 on Monday, about 40 percent of its 11,500-cfs normal. The Kiskiminetas River at Vandergrift fell from 818 to 566 cfs, close to its record of 557 cfs. The Monongahela River at Braddock declined from 2080 to 1790, below its record of 1950. The Beaver River at Beaver Falls is down to 740 cfs, below its record of 810 for the day. The Ohio River at Sewickley is flowing at 8000 cfs this morning, compared to a normal of 19,200.

Ground water continues to decline statewide, as is expected now that foliation is nearly complete. The precipitation brought some minor improvement in ground water levels in Pike, Susquehanna and Sullivan Counties.

The precipitation outlook during the next few days is scant, with the possibility of up to 0.25 inch, primarily in western Pennsylvania, in the form of thunderstorms. The 6-10 day forecast indicates the possibility of up to 1.5-2.5 inches, which will be much needed, but probably still not enough to overcome the growing June deficits.

Statewide, stream flows continue to reflect not only the deficits in precipitation, but also the low ground water levels. Base flows, provided by ground water, are approaching or have fallen below record low levels in many areas of the state. Watering lawns, and nonessential outdoor water uses in general, should be curtailed to conserve the ground and surface water reserves we have.