Watershed MANAGEMENT 

Drought Information Center

January 24, 2000

From January 20 to 23 there was light precipitation in Pennsylvania. Total precipitation amounts ranged from zero to four-tenths of an inch, with the statewide average for the period possibly close to two-tenths of an inch. During the past 24-hours, the only measurable precipitation in the Commonwealth seems to be under a tenth of an inch total in an extremely small area in the Indiana County area.

In the Delaware River Basin, most streams are showing little or no change since last Friday. Flow enhancements are seen in Bush Kill Basin while the mainstem Delaware River and Brodhead Creek Basin show receding trends. Lackawaxen River and Lehigh River basins have mixed gauge changes. The mainstem Delaware River is down from 10,900 to 8,870 cfs. at Trenton. The Lackawaxen River is up from 413 to 576 cfs. at Hawley. The Lehigh River is down from 1,680 to 1,570 cfs. at Bethlehem. The Schuylkill River is up slightly from 1,800 to 1,830 cfs. at Philadelphia and the Brandywine Creek is even at 244 cfs. at Chadds Ford. About 75% of the stream gauges in the Delaware River Basin are at below normal flow for January 24.

Since January 21, the most common flow trend for the Susquehanna River Basin is flow recession. Towanda Creek, Penns Creek, Sherman Creek, Conodoguinet Creek and West Conewego Creek basins show flow enhancements while Juniata River, Yellow Breeches Creek, Codorus Creek and Conestoga River basins are holding about steady. The mainstem Susquehanna River is down from 8,700 to 6,240 cfs. at Towanda, down from 33,200 to 29,200 cfs. at Wilkes-Barre, and down from 17,300 to 16,800 cfs. at Marietta. The West Branch Susquehanna River is down from 3,420 to 2,080 cfs. at Lock Haven, down from 6,240 to 4,230 cfs. at Williamsport, and down from 6,260 to 4,400 cfs. at Lewisburg. The Juniata River is up from 5,210 to 6,340 cfs. at Newport and the Conestoga River is holding almost steady from 362 to 358 cfs. at Conestoga. About 60% of the stream gauges in the Susquehanna River Basin are at below normal flow for this date.

The Ohio River Basin shows more streams with little gauge changes, over the past three days, than any other category. Brokenstraw Creek, Kiskiminetas River and Raccoon Creek basins show flow enhancements while French Creek Basin, the mainstem Allegheny River and the mainstem Ohio River have mainly decreasing gauge readings. Mixed gauge changes are seen in the Clarion River and Monongahela River basins. The Allegheny River is down from 11,700 to 7,060 cfs. at Natrona. The mainstem Ohio River is down from 17,000 to 10,800 cfs. at Sewickley. The Kiskiminetas River is up from 1,950 to 2,200 cfs. at Vandergrift. The Monongahela River is down from 7,510 to 3,260 cfs. at Braddock and the Beaver River is up marginally from 1,620 to 1,710 cfs. at Beaver Falls. About 80% of the stream gauges in the Ohio River Basin are at below normal flow for today’s date.

Since January 21, 26 counties with monitoring wells show a water level rise for one county and drops for 25. The Cameron County reading was made yesterday, January 23 at 04:36, and the Warren County reading for today is missing. The increase is 4.14 ft. in Franklin County. Decreases range from 0.02 to 1.54 ft. (Carbon County) with an average fall of 0.37 ft.

Less than a quarter inch total precipitation is forecast for extreme western Pennsylvania counties over the next five days. For the period January 29 to February 3, between a half and two inches total precipitation can be expected with amounts increasing from west to east. Temperatures for the next ten days are expected to be close to normal with moderating temperatures toward the end of the period.