Watershed MANAGEMENT 

Drought Information Center

April 17, 2000

From April 9 to 16 there was an average of possibly 0.25 inches total precipitation, for the state as a whole; this was by no means evenly distributed. Some counties had no precipitation for the period, while others had total amounts of five or six tenths of an inch. Areas with heavier amounts of precipitation in western Pennsylvania included Westmoreland, Fayette, Cambria and Somerset County. In the eastern part of the state, Philadelphia County received about a half-inch of precipitation during this period. Although only preliminary data is available for the past 24 hours, it appears that between a quarter and a half-inch of precipitation occurred in at least 30% of the area of the state. This preliminary data shows the extreme southern and western counties of the Commonwealth were affected by this precipitation.

Since last Monday, almost all streams in the Delaware River Basin show flow recessions. Flow enhancements occurred in Pennypack Creek and Crum Creek basins, while Frankford Creek Basin remained fairly steady. The mainstem Delaware River is down from 19,600 to 14,000 cfs. at Riegelsville. The Lackawaxen River is down from 1,350 to 542 cfs. at Hawley. The Lehigh River is down from 3,840 to 2,900 cfs. at Bethlehem. The Schuylkill River is down from 6,090 to 4,680 cfs. at Philadelphia and the Brandywine Creek is down from 1,070 to 664 cfs. at Chadds Ford. About 55% of the stream gauges in the Delaware River Basin are at above normal flow for April 17.

Since April 10, the Susquehanna River Basin also shows flow recessions. All streams in this basin have decreased flows compared to the past week. The mainstem Susquehanna River is down from 54,100 to 19,600 cfs. at Towanda, down from 72,700 to 28,400 cfs. at Wilkes-Barre, and down from 105,000 to 51,200 cfs. at Harrisburg. The West Branch Susquehanna River is down from 14,600 to 6,340 cfs. at Lock Haven, down from 23,400 to 10,400 cfs. at Williamsport, and down from 30,400 to 12,200 cfs. at Lewisburg. The Juniata River is down from 6,760 to 4,050 cfs. at Newport and the Conestoga River is down from 1,460 to 892 cfs. at Conestoga. About 75% of the stream gauges in the Susquehanna River Basin are at below normal flow for this date.

Compared with last week, the Ohio River Basin also shows flow recessions for all major watercourses except for flow enhancement in Pine Creek Basin. The Allegheny River is down from 69,400 to 28,900 cfs. at Natrona. The mainstem Ohio River is down from 102,000 to 46,900 cfs. at Sewickley. The Kiskiminetas River is down from 5,920 to 3,350 cfs. at Vandergrift. The Monongahela River is down from 24,100 to 13,900 cfs. at Braddock and the Beaver River is down from 22,000 to 4,870 cfs. at Beaver Falls. About 65% of the stream gauges in the Ohio River Basin are at below normal flow for today’s date.

Since April 10, 26 counties with monitoring wells show water level rises for eight counties and drops for 18; the Sullivan County well does not appear to be working properly. Increases range from 0.01 to 1.43 ft. (Carbon County) with an average rise of 0.44 ft. Decreases range from 0.04 to 7.84 ft. (Potter County) with an average drop of 1.25 ft.

For the next five days, between one inch to over 2.5 inches of precipitation is forecast for Pennsylvania, with amounts generally increasing from the Ohio and New Jersey borders toward north central counties. For the period April 22 to 27, from one-tenth to over one inch of precipitation is expected, with expected total amounts generally increasing from west to east. Temperatures for the next ten days are expected to be close to normal.