

Watershed MANAGEMENT



Drought Information Center

August 23, 1999

Since August 19, there was a substantial amount of rain in Pennsylvania. Some gauges measured over three inches during the period, but if an average were calculated for the entire state, the rainfall would probably be less than an inch. The southwest corner of the state, with an area of about 20% of Pennsylvania, had an average rainfall of possibly 0.2 inches, while an area within about a 50-mile radius of Snyder County averaged perhaps 1.75 to two inches. This area of concentrated precipitation includes about 20% of the area of Pennsylvania. Other notable areas with heavy precipitation include Franklin and Adams Counties along the Maryland border, and Warren and McKean Counties in the northern tier. Gauges in these four counties measured between 1.0 and 1.5 inches of rain.

In the Delaware River Basin, other than the Lackawaxen River Basin, there were no major changes between the gauges today and those on Thursday. The Lackawaxen River Basin shows marginal increases in flows. The mainstem Delaware River at Trenton is down from 3,040 to 2,740 cfs. The Lackawaxen River at Hawley is up from 23 to 38 cfs. The Lehigh River at Bethlehem is unchanged at 437 cfs. The Schuylkill River at Philadelphia is up from 402 to 443 cfs., and the Brandywine Creek at Chadds Ford is up from 56 to 70 cfs. Many streams are still well below normal flows for this date.

Somewhat more effects of the rain are evident in the Susquehanna Basin. This morning's readings, compared with those on Thursday, show a definite flow improvement for the lower reaches of the mainstem Susquehanna River. Similar improvements are noted in the Towanda Creek Basin and on the Loyalsock and Muncy Creeks. The Susquehanna mainstem at Towanda is essentially even from 732 to 746 cfs. It is up slightly at Wilkes-Barre from 1,280 to 1,480 cfs. It is up decisively from 3,780 to 7,510 cfs. at Harrisburg, and also up from 4,760 to 10,700 cfs. at Marietta. The West Branch Susquehanna River at Lock Haven is down from 425 to 230 cfs. It is down from 1,090 to 896 cfs. at Williamsport, and up slightly from 1,450 to 1,660 at Lewisburg. The Juniata River at Newport is up from 925 to 1,350 cfs., and the Conestoga River at Conestoga is down slightly from 88 to 81 cfs. Many streams remain below normal flow for August 23.

The Ohio River Basin shows increased flows along the Allegheny and mainstem Ohio Rivers. The Redbank Creek at St. Charles is also in the improved flow category, rising from 56 to 229 cfs. since Thursday. Elsewhere in the basin, no major changes are evident between gauge readings on August 19 and those taken this morning. The Allegheny River at Natrona is up from 2,110 to 3,980 cfs. The Kiskiminetas River at Vandergrift is down slightly from 499 to 488 cfs. The Monongahela River at Braddock is down marginally from 1,600 to 1,530 cfs., and the Beaver River at Beaver Falls is unchanged at 898 cfs.

With the exception of the Allegheny and mainstem Ohio Rivers, many streams remain below normal flow for this date.

Since August 19, the 27 counties with monitoring wells show a water level rise for eight counties and a drop for 17. Lycoming and Warren Counties are unchanged. Water level rises range from 0.02 to 4.70 ft. with an average increase of 0.85 ft. Decreases range from 0.02 to 0.60 ft. with an average drop of 0.18 ft.

During the period of August 23 to 28, rain is predicted for all but the extreme northeast corner of the state. Amounts should be about 0.75 inches from the Ohio line to about halfway across the state. For that period, the eastern half of the state should receive an average of under 0.3 inches of rain. For the period of August 28 to September 2, close to another inch of rain is predicted except for the southeast third of the state, for which less than 0.5 inches is expected. Temperatures for the period are expected to be close to normal.