

Watershed MANAGEMENT



Drought Information Center

March 1, 1999

The weekend brought precipitation statewide, totaling about an inch in the southeast, about 3/4 inch in the northwest, and about 1/2-3/4 inch elsewhere. Final monthly totals show deficits exceeding 1 inch throughout most of the Susquehanna River basin. In the Delaware and Ohio basins, totals range from normal in a few counties to about 1/2-inch deficit.

In the Delaware River basin, main stem Delaware River flows are increased somewhat in the upper and lower basin, but decreased in the middle basin, compared to Friday. Trenton is up from 8550 cubic feet per second (cfs) to 8980 cfs. Tributary flows throughout the basin are significantly increased this morning. The Lackawaxen River at Hawley is up from 229 to 446 cfs; the Lehigh River at Bethlehem is up from 2050 to 2490 cfs; and the Schuylkill River at Philadelphia is up from 2020 to 2910 cfs. Flows in the upper reaches of those tributaries are increase even more noticeably. Brandywine Creek at Chadds Ford is up from 225 to 856 cfs, reflective of the increases in the Christina River watershed. With scattered exceptions, flows throughout the basin are marginally above normal. Headwater streams have already peaked and are receding; whereas lower main stems are near or at peak this morning, as a result of the weekend precipitation.

In the Susquehanna River basin, main stem flows are all decreased from Friday, with flows at Harrisburg down from 25,800 to 24,000 cfs. Tributary flows throughout the basin are generally up considerably, particularly in the headwater areas. The Lackawanna River at Old Forge is up from 279 to 470 cfs. The West Branch main stem is increased above Renovo but holding about even in the lower reaches, with Lewisburg flows even at 7050 cfs. Juniata River watershed flows are all increased, with the Newport gage reading 1920 cfs, up from 1810 on Friday. Lower basin tributaries are flowing higher as well as reflected by the Conestoga River at Conestoga, up from 370 to 1100 cfs. Throughout the basin, most flows remain below normal.

In the Ohio River basin, Allegheny River main stem flows have all increased, with the river at Natrona up from 12,700 to 16,500 cfs. Allegheny tributary flows are all up, except the lower reach of the Kiskiminetas River, which is down from 1320 to 1180 cfs at Vandergrift. Monongahela River watershed flows are all significantly increased, as reflected by the river at Braddock, up from 5220 to 11,400 cfs. The Beaver River shows similar trends, up at Beaver Falls from 2250 to 7720 cfs. Despite the significant increases in flow this morning, most gages throughout the basin are reading below normal.

Ground water is improved somewhat, except for declines in Chester, Carbon, Sullivan and Franklin Counties.

The three-day forecast indicates the possibility of 0.5-1.0 inch of precipitation, with the higher amounts in the western half of the state. The five-day forecast indicates a total of up to 1 inch in the southeastern third and up to 1.5 inch in the northwestern two-thirds of the state. The 5-10 day forecast adds another 2.5-3.0 inches, with temperatures above normal in the 30-40 degree range.