

# *Watershed* MANAGEMENT



## Drought Information Center

**April 26, 1999**

The past week brought rainfall to the entire state, with total accumulations exceeding 1.0 inch in most counties, except the southern tier counties east of Franklin, where totals were in the 0.7-0.9 inch range. Heaviest accumulations occurred in the Ohio basin area where totals were in the 1.3-2.0 inch range. In the Susquehanna basin area, totals were generally about 1.0-1.2 inches, and in the Delaware basin area, totals were generally in the 1.1-1.5 inch range. Overall for the month of April, precipitation surpluses of about 1.0-3.0 inches have occurred in the Ohio and western Susquehanna basins, while deficits ranging as high as 0.6 inch exist in the eastern Susquehanna and Delaware basins. Six-month totals show deficits statewide, ranging as high as 3.2 inches in the middle Delaware and Lake Erie areas.

In the Delaware River basin, stream flows in the main stem Delaware River are up somewhat; flows at Montague increased from 4370 cubic feet per second (cfs) last Monday to 4460 today. No data is available for the Trenton gage this morning. The Lackawaxen River at Hawley increased from 486 to 513 cfs, the Lehigh River at Bethlehem is up similarly from 2000 to 2110 cfs; while the Schuylkill River at Philadelphia declined slightly from 2250 to 2130 cfs. In the Christina River watershed, Brandywine Creek at Chadds Ford increased from 312 to 316 cfs. Nearly all gages in the basin are reading below long-term normal values this morning.

In the Susquehanna River basin, flows are also up in the main stem at all gages, with Harrisburg flows increased from 44,400 to 48,400 cfs. The Lackawanna River at Old Forge is up from 495 to 571 cfs, while the West Branch Susquehanna at Lewisburg increased from 14,700 to 15,100 cfs, with most gages in the watershed showing similar increases. The Juniata River at Newport rose from 6580 to 8780 cfs. In the lower basin, flows are mixed; Swatara Creek at Harper Tavern decreased from 448 to 439 cfs and Conestoga River at Conestoga fell from 569 to 490 cfs, while Conodoguinet Creek at Hogestown rose from 673 to 821 cfs. Basinwide, most gages remain above long-term normal levels.

In the Ohio River basin, stream flows in the main stem Allegheny River are increased noticeably, with flows at Natrona up from 34,600 to 40,300 cfs. The Kiskiminetas River at Vandergrift is up from 9720 to 12,100 cfs, and the Monongahela River at Braddock rose from 12,400 to 25,500 cfs. The Beaver River at Beaver Falls is showing a similar increase, from 4980 to 6500 cfs. The Ohio River at Sewickley rose from 48,700 to 69,500 cfs. Gages throughout the basin are above normal.

Ground water levels increased in 17 of the 27 daily monitoring wells this week, while decreases were recorded in wells predominately throughout the Susquehanna and in the lower Delaware basin areas.

Weather patterns across the Commonwealth generally cleared over the weekend and are to remain pretty much so for the next few days, with total precipitation forecast for the next three days to be below 0.1 inch, with possibly as much as 1.0 inch creeping into the extreme southwest by Wednesday. The 5-10 day outlook indicates the additional possibility of up to 0.1 inch in the Delaware basin, up to 0.25 inch in the Susquehanna basin and possibly 0.5 inch in the Ohio basin areas, with temperatures to be at or above normal, in the 50-60 degree range.

We have not seen sufficient recovery, particularly in ground water levels, to warrant removal of our statewide drought "watch" at this time. With the outlook for the remainder of April to be fairly dry, the "watch" will remain in effect until at least early May.