

Weekly Drought Report October 26, 2010

Precipitation

Over the last 7 days, Pennsylvania received between 0.01 to 0.5 inches of precipitation except in a west to east band along the lower third of the state and along the Erie coastline that received between 0.5 and 1.0 inches. Given the next 7 day forecasted amounts, the cumulative precipitation from last week into the next week will be less than the 14-day forecast amounts reported last week.

While the 90-day precipitation indicators are at “Normal” for counties in the eastern half of the state, a significant number of indicators in western counties are dropping from “Normal” to “Watch” and “Warning” with Armstrong County going from “Warning” to “Emergency” indicator.

Surface Water

Instantaneous streamflow reflects the rainfall that occurred last night. At locations where rain fell, the flow values are rising and at locations where rainfall did not occur, mostly across the western portion of the state, instantaneous streamflows continue to decline. For the most part, a review of the instantaneous streamflow gages indicates that flows are at or below normal in the western part of the state and at or above normal in the eastern part of the state.

The 30-day moving average streamflow values all have an indicator of “Normal” except for Beaver County, which is in “Watch”. Overall, the 30-day values continue to rise in response to the heavy rain which occurred approximately one month ago in the eastern part of the state. The values have peaked or have begun to again decline in areas in the western part of the state where rainfall was not as great.

Groundwater

For almost all of the groundwater monitoring wells, the 30-day moving averages for groundwater levels are in “Normal” status and show rising water depth, even for those western monitoring wells for which precipitation departures have remained below average. A previously reported “Emergency” groundwater indicator in Lawrence County has now been corrected and is showing “Normal”.

Precipitation forecast

The precipitation forecast over the next 7 days indicates a range from about 0.25 to 1.0 inches uniformly across the state. Forecasts for November 3rd through November 11th show precipitation accumulations up to 4 inches in the eastern part of the state with the western part of the state once again lagging behind with accumulations between 0.5 inches and 2 inches.

The Drought Watch/Warning declarations remain in effect at this time. Consideration will be given in the next several weeks for lifting the drought declarations in areas where a sustained recovery has been documented.