

Water Supply Availability Committee/Drought Readiness Council Meeting – October 19, 2022

Phone Conference – Meeting Notes

Attendees

Ryan Andrews – OWRD (Chair)

Spencer Higginson – OEM

Troy Lindquist – NWS (Boise)

Marc Stewart – USGS

Jason Miner – GO

Amy Burke – NWRFC

Andy Martin – USACE

Scott Oviatt – NRCS

Matt Warbritton – NRCS

Peter Cooper – USBR

Kain Shaffer – USBR

Tom Elliott – DOE

Kari Salis – OHA

Presentations – update on water supply conditions

Scott Oviatt

- Fifteenmile site getting up and running
- WY 2022 SWE Recap
 - Jan 1 snow conditions fairly good in most of state due to cool wet systems Nov and Dec
 - Numbers decreased with respect to median because not receiving upper elevation snow
 - April 1 SWE well below median, on way to melting out most of state
 - Started receiving lower elevation snow and snowpack rebounded in most of state, excluding SE OR
 - Klamath SWE peaked three months early
 - Hood-Sandy-Lower Deschutes peaked weeks later than typical
 - SE OR basins peaked normal timing but well below median values due to lack of high elevation snow
- 2022 WY precipitation mostly median to well below median
- 2023 WY precipitation as of 10/18 essentially 0%, little to no precipitation over first couple weeks
- Many SNOTEL stations across state reading lowest and second-lowest values of precipitation over past five-month period
- Soil water content was well above median in early summer due to late spring rain
- Clackamas Lake soil water measuring historic low
- High Ridge soil water measuring below median
- Silver Creek soil water measuring below median
- Silvies soil water measuring historic low

Spencer Higginson

- 60-day precipitation well below average statewide (deficit amounts may be high in some locations along the coast)
- WY 2023 precipitation essentially 0%
- August and September temperatures well above average

- Somewhat more humid than normal which prevents temperatures from dropping lower than they would, may skew temperatures towards warmer
- Much of Oregon measured hottest August-September on record
- Mid-late October outlook forecasts above average rain statewide with varying amounts
 - Above average west of Cascades, near average eastern OR
- 8-14-day outlook favors above average precipitation and below average temperatures statewide
- 3-month outlook October through December above average precipitation northern half of state, average southern half; temperatures average statewide with exception of SE OR above average

Marc Stewart

- Some normal streamflows, but trending downwards over 7 and 28-day periods
- Some sites approaching record lows
- Crooked R measuring near record low
- Minam R measuring well below average
- Nehalem R nr Foss measuring well below average
- Thomas Cr nr Scio approaching record low
- Illinois R average to just below average
- Sprague R approaching record low
- Donner Und Blitzen well below average
- Statewide hydrograph on border of average and below average
- USGS implementing new tools for accessing data

Amy Burke

- Near normal runoff forecast for much of Oregon
- Willamette had late spring improvement
- SE OR likely to miss significant precipitation over next 10 days

Ryan Andrews

- 17 counties with drought declarations, expire at end of calendar year
- September streamflows below to well below average statewide
- WY 2022 streamflow below to well below average outside of northwest and northeast OR
- WY 2023 streamflow thru 10/18 well below average statewide
- 7-day streamflow percentiles below to well below average throughout most of western and eastern OR
 - Some record low flows in western and southern OR
- Nehalem R nr Foss approaching well below average
- Luckiamute R nr Suver below average
- S Umpqua well below average
- Crooked R ab Prineville Res near historic low
- Powder R at Hudspeth Lane trending upwards but well below average
- McKay Cr nr Pilot Rock average

Peter Cooper

- Irrigation season has or is nearing an end
- Reservoirs transitioning to winter minimum outflows to begin filling
- Much below normal carryover at end of season in southern, central, and southeastern basins (Rogue, Deschutes, Crooked, Malheur, Powder, Owyhee)
- Above normal and higher carryover than WY 2022 in northern basins (Unity, McKay, Scoggins)
- Owyhee similar contents to last year at this time - reservoir starting to fill
- Warm Springs essentially empty since early August
- Historical low reservoir contents in Crooked River basin - contents dedicated to maintaining instream flows

Andy Martin

- Supporting mainstem of Willamette with about 9900 cfs outflow
- Deep drawdown of Fall Creek project to support passage of juvenile fish, approach 2800 cfs for a bit and exhaust supplies
- Cougar drawing down for conservation and then pass inflows, and then drop down below minimum conservation pool
- Rogue operational strategy is to maintain Rogue mainstem flows at current level (1600 cfs at Agnes), support with water from Applegate for spawning and rearing of ESA-listed species

Discussion

Next meeting November 16