

Water Supply Availability Committee Meeting – January 9, 2018

Oregon Office of Emergency Management

In-House and Phone Conference - Meeting Notes

In-House Attendees

Ken Stahr – OWRD (chair)
Daniel Stoelb – OEM
Marc Stewart - USGS
Nick Yonker – ODF
Ryan Andrews - OWRD

Phone Attendees

Andy Bryant – NWS
Brian Sauer - USBR
Scott Oviatt – NRCS
Peter Cooper – USBR
Margaret Matter – ODA
Jeff Marti – WA State Drought Coordinator
Mary Karen Scullion - USACE

Presentations – Update on Water Year Summary

Scott Oviatt

- Snow
 - Reiterated drastic difference in statewide snow water equivalent (SWE) on November 20th of 238% of normal and December 5th of 59% of normal. SWE measured at Camas Snow Course #3 in Lake County was 1.8” (46% of normal). SWE is well below normal in the northwest with the exception of northern Washington. Oregon snowpack is 39% of normal statewide. Precipitation east of Cascades is mostly rain with small amounts of SWE composed mainly of remnants of late October/early November. Current snowpack is well below average historical values.
- Mountain Precipitation
 - 85% of normal statewide, down from 135% on November 20th. Hood, Sandy, and Umatilla are only basins above normal.
- Streamflow Forecast
 - Majority of spring and summer 50% exceedance probability statewide is below normal. Lack of snow is depressing forecast values.
 - Lack of snow increases uncertainty

Andy Bryant

- Precipitation
 - Water Year (WY) precipitation to date is below average statewide with central Oregon region seeing well below average numbers. December precipitation averages were below normal, although some areas of northeast Oregon were above normal. Temperatures in the Cascades increased to above normal; valley temperatures were below normal.

- La Nina conditions are persisting, and slowly trending to ENSO-neutral for spring 2018.
- Mid-January outlook
 - Significant system affecting northern half of state
 - Pattern shift indicates possible wet conditions
 - Zonal flow bringing storms to region
- Jan/Feb/Mar – 3-month outlook
 - Increased average precipitation predicted in northern-third of Oregon
 - Below average temperatures predicted in northern-third of the state
 - Increased concern for southern Oregon

Jeff Marti

- Washington maintained normal winter conditions
 - Ridging on western coast contributed to westerly flow
 - Washington benefits due to lack of blockage due to narrow portion of ridge
 - Oregon blocked by wide base of ridge

Marc Stewart

- 28-day average on January 8th indicates below average conditions in southeast Oregon
- 7-day averages of USGS gages indicate slightly below normal conditions statewide
- Stream temperatures
 - High water temperatures compared to normal on Sprague River
 - Similar for Elk Creek nr Trail, Applegate River nr Wilderville, and N Umpqua River ab Copeland Creek nr Toketee Falls
 - Although there are fewer years of data available, relate stream temperatures to discharge moving forward

Ken Stahr

- Streamflow
 - December streamflows were well below normal, and much lower compared to November
 - 65% of average for December
 - 94% of average for WY
 - Streamflow trends early in the 2018 WY followed similar patterns to those of 2017 however 2018 streamflows are way below normal
 - 2017 mean daily streamflows hovered near 1981-2010 mean daily flows
- Storage
 - Many basins at, or above normal reservoir storage at end of December
 - Klamath looks to be on track for storage refill
 - Upper Klamath Lake inflow is very low
 - Not releasing much downstream

Nick Yonker

- Warm, dry, windy conditions can create conditions for winter fires
- Some moisture from fall is keeping fires down so far this winter

Mary Karen Scullion

- Many basins begin refill on February 1st
- Rogue basin refill begun January 1st
- Repair work is underway
 - Continuing 50-year cycle repairs
 - Spillway gates and regulating outlets
 - Hills Creek, Cougar, Foster, Fall Creek, Blue River
 - Detroit beginning 2019
- On-track flood control status

Peter Cooper

- Dry soil moisture conditions throughout the state
 - Prineville has moisture in about top three inches of soil
- Storage carryover is good in eastern Oregon
 - May help get some reservoirs to full capacity
- January – June forecast runoff volumes below normal
 - If low precip/snow conditions persist, some projects may not fill
- Prineville at 46% and Ochoco at 45%
- Dry conditions in Owyhee may lead to early irrigation

Comments/Updates

- Next meeting February 13th at 10:00 a.m. at the Office of Emergency Management
 - Possibly hold webinar so everyone can follow presentations?
- Email slides to committee and post to website
- General concern regarding lack of soil moisture and snowpack
- No snow to provide baseflows
 - For the most part, streamflow hydrographs indicate runoff responses due to rainfall events