

Water Supply Availability Committee Meeting – October 9, 2018
Oregon Office of Emergency Management

In-House and Phone Conference – Meeting Notes

In-House Attendees

Ken Stahr – OWRD (chair)
Daniel Stoelb – OEM
Scott Oviatt – NRCS
Ryan Andrews – OWRD
Erik Rau – OEM

Phone Attendees

Nick Yonker – ODF
Marc Stewart – USGS
Carrie Boudreau – USGS
Ryan Lucas – NWRFC
Kevin Berghoff – NWRFC
Amy Burke – NWRFC
Jonathan Rocha – USBR

Presentations – Update on water supply conditions

Nick Yonker

- Much of the state has low fire potential due to recent precipitation events
- Klondike fire is only fire currently burning
 - Some potential for expansion due to forecasted easterly winds
- 1000-hr fuel moisture
 - Much of eastern Oregon between 11-15%
 - West of Cascades $\geq 16\%$
- NODE (Northwest Oregon Dry Easterlies) Index provides notice when easterly winds and low humidity are expected for northwestern Oregon
- Low to minimal fire activity projected for 7-day significant fire potential
- Wildfire season peaked around mid-August

Scott Oviatt

- Drought had significant impact on native vegetation for browsing in eastern Oregon
- Statewide precipitation measured at SNOTEL sites was 85% of normal for WY 2018
 - Large proportion of measurable precipitation came at beginning of water year
 - Percentage does not reflect current conditions
- SNOTEL sites measuring 195% of normal precipitation statewide for beginning of new water year (Oct 1-Oct 8)
- In WY 2018, many SNOTEL sites measured the lowest recorded precipitation during period of record (stations began recording at various times between mid-1970 and mid-1990)
 - Records occurred at various times during summer 2018
- Effective saturation was recorded at new minimum record around mid-August for period of record (2008-2017) in near Silvies (Harney)
 - Rock Springs (Grant/Harney) and High Ridge (Umatilla/Union) exhibited similar conditions
 - High Ridge measured about 25% effective saturation in mid-August

- Low saturation leads to any accumulated snowmelt going to storage at meltout rather than readily available runoff

Amy Burke

- 30-day and 90-day averages of precipitation indicate above normal conditions for much of Oregon
 - 1-3 °F above normal statewide in August
- Increase in D3 (extreme drought) conditions in central and eastern Oregon from August
 - Conditions worsened from D0 (abnormally dry) to D1 (moderate drought) in northeastern Oregon
- Runoff volume deficits compared to normal were observed for John Day River, Silvies River, Siletz River, and Umpqua River
- Less than average precipitation predicted for 30-day forecast statewide
 - 8-14 day forecast predicts below normal precipitation and above normal temperatures (drier, warmer conditions)
- ENSO-neutral conditions projected to slowly evolve to weak El Nino patterns
 - Stronger El Nino conditions weakly coincide with reduced annual runoff

Marc Stewart

- Gages with recent above normal conditions are due to urban runoff due to recent precipitation events
 - Few streams in southwestern Oregon are currently in the lower 10% but have been trending low all year
- Statewide aggregate 7-day average runoff is below normal since mid-April

Ken Stahr

- Wickiup Reservoir bottomed out around 1% of capacity at end of storage season
- Crook County streamflow measured at 7% of normal for September
 - County recorded 37% of normal for WY 2018
- Crooked River went dry near the end of July
 - No current measurable inflow into Prineville Reservoir
- 10 counties have state-declared drought
 - Malheur has local declaration of drought
 - Only 5 counties are currently not in secretarial drought
- 3% of pasture and rangeland has good or very good condition
 - 82% in poor or very poor condition

Jonathan Rocha

- Wickiup Reservoir at lowest storage on record
- Tualatin
 - Scoggins measuring at 33% capacity
 - Carryover is well below average
- Deschutes

- Prineville measuring at 38% capacity
 - Well below average carryover at 56000 ac-ft
- Ochoco measuring at 12% capacity
 - Well below average carryover at 6000 ac-ft
 - Transitioning from late summer storage to augmenting for instream flow requirements
- Umatilla
 - McKay has near average carryover
- Many southeastern Oregon reservoirs are measuring near empty

Other

- 50+ notes from producers in Malheur County commenting on poor water supply conditions and the drought's effects
- 11/06/2018 proposed for next meeting