

Water Supply Availability Committee Meeting – January 8, 2019
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
Sonya Andron – OEM
Justin Marquis – FEMA
Jake Grabowsky - FEMA

Phone Attendees

Nick Yonker – ODF
Jonathan Rocha – USBR
Steve King – NWRFC
Andy Bryant – NWRFC
Amy Burke – NWRFC
Mary Karen Scullion – USACE
Margaret Matter – ODA

December meeting notes approval – All present approved

Presentations – Update on water supply conditions

Scott Oviatt

- Statewide snowpack at 73% of normal as of 01/08/2019
 - Compared to 39% of normal on 01/09/2018
- Lack of recent precipitation in eastern Oregon causing % to decrease, although SWE remains near normal (range = 91-109%)
- Western Oregon and Cascades numbers are lagging due to rain falling as snow and limited storm impacts (range = 62-75%)
- Statewide precipitation at 78% of normal as of 01/08/2019
 - Compared to 85% of normal on 01/09/2018
- Streamflow forecasts (50% exceedance) unavailable for much of state due to staffing constraints at the NRCS National water and Climate Center.
 - Willamette region projected to hover around 90% of normal
 - Klamath region projected between 69-75%
 - Rogue region projected between 64-91%

Andy Bryant

- Current water year precipitation averaging between 25-90% throughout the state
 - Northern OR averaging near 75% of normal precipitation for current water year (98 days)
 - Below average even considering some relatively significant precipitation events
 - Southern OR averaging between 50-75% of normal precipitation
 - Some areas between 25-50% of normal
- Precipitation totals for past 30 days show 5” or more for majority of western OR
 - Some areas on North Coast received 20” or more precipitation
 - Cascades averaging approximately 2-3”
 - Central and southeastern OR averaging less than 2”

- Northeastern OR averaging more than 2"
 - Much of state still below normal precipitation
- January temperatures are above average in northern OR while southern OR temperatures are below average
- US Drought Monitor showing some reduction in D3 (extreme drought) in southwestern OR
 - Some additional improvements in northeastern and northwestern OR
 - Reduction from D2 (severe drought) to D1 (moderate drought) and D0 (abnormally dry)
- Mid-January outlook
 - Beneficial precipitation predicted for south/southwestern OR over next 8-14 days
 - Above-average temperatures predicted statewide
- One month outlook
 - Below average precipitation and above average temperatures
- Three month outlook (Jan-Mar)
 - Below average precipitation and above average temperatures
 - Despite the weak El Nino, there has been a lack of atmospheric response to change in sea surface temperatures so far this winter
 - Mar-May outlook very similar
- Some improvement in water year runoff to date from December, but still well below average statewide
- Forecasted water year runoff (Apr-Sep)
 - Below normal projected runoff statewide
 - Averaging around 75-80% of normal west of Cascades
 - East of Cascades varies from well below normal (<60%) in some central and southeastern areas, while northeastern OR projected around 80% of normal
 - Projections are highly dependent on spring precipitation
- Link to NWRFC ESP Natural Forecasts
 - <https://www.nwrfc.noaa.gov/natural>

Ken Stahr

- Lower than normal streamflow statewide at 47% through 01/05/2019
 - Western OR at 42% of normal
 - Eastern OR at 54% of normal
 - Crook County at 19% of normal as of December 2018
- Below normal streamflow for southwest OR for past 28 days
- Low peaks for Willamette basin not getting streamflow to normal range
- Williamson River averaging very low streamflow between 10-24% of normal
- Chetco peaks are also low, creating below normal streamflows
 - Low frequency, short duration, and low magnitude peaks
- Near record low inflows to Prineville Reservoir in the Deschutes basin
- Umatilla and Harney basin also experiencing below normal streamflow

Jon Rocha

- Scoggins at 45% full
 - Near flood control in mid-December
 - Current storage contents = 20000 ac-ft
- Prineville at 35% full
 - Approximately 50000 ac-ft storage contents
- Ochoco at 8% full, although potential issues with pressure transducer
- McKay at 23% full
 - Recent activity bumped contents to interquartile range of normal
- Southeastern OR reservoirs near historic lows at end of water year 2018
 - Reservoirs showing some recovery, but below pace of historic refill
 - Includes Warm Springs, Beulah, Bully Creek, Phillips
 - Owyhee and Unity Reservoirs within interquartile range of normal storage contents
- Inflow forecasts currently projecting below average storage contents for nearly all major southeastern OR reservoirs for both BOR and RFC estimates
 - BOR forecast % of average 69-80%
 - McKay projected at 109%
 - RFC forecast % of average 16-86% (including McKay)

Nick Yonker

- Low fire danger
- Weak El Nino leading to forecasted milder and drier conditions
 - Low snowpack with early meltout
 - Conditions leading to severe/extreme drought, contributing to above normal fire conditions

Margaret Matter

- Overflow discharges of animal wastewater ponds due to short, intense rainfall events

Other

- Next meeting proposed for 2/12/2019