

Water Supply Availability Committee Meeting – February 12, 2019
Oregon Office of Emergency Management

In-House and Phone Conference – Meeting Notes

In-House Attendees

Ryan Andrews – OWRD
Daniel Stoelb – OEM
Erik Rau – OEM
Nick Yonker – ODF

Phone Attendees

Ken Stahr – OWRD (Chair)
Scott Oviatt – NRCS
Margaret Matter – ODA
Chris Runyan – USBR
Geoffrey Walters – NWRFC
Marc Stewart – USGS
Mary Karen Scullion – USACE

Presentations – update on water supply conditions

Scott Oviatt

- Statewide snowpack at 84% of normal
 - Much of eastern Oregon at or above normal, while west side lags behind below normal
 - Range = 67% (Hood, Sandy, Lower Deschutes) – 114% (Umatilla & Goose and Summer Lakes)
 - Up from 72% on 02/08/2019
 - Up from 39% in 2018
- Statewide precipitation at 84% of normal
 - Similar story to statewide snowpack with western Oregon lagging behind below normal and eastern Oregon hovering near normal
 - Range = 79% (Deschutes) – 102% (Grande Ronde)
 - Statewide average being held lower by greater number of SNOTEL sites in western portion of state
 - Up from 80% on 02/08/2019
 - Near 2018 conditions at similar date (86%)
 - For reference, statewide precipitation was at 104% in 2015
- Forecasted volume (50% exceedance – mostly April – June, with some April – September)
 - Western Oregon forecasted below normal as a whole hovering near 85%
 - Eastern Oregon forecast hovers near normal, with an exception for the Owyhee caused by reduced reservoir storage and carryover
- Streamflow forecasts (April – September)
 - Below normal predictions statewide
 - Some drought relief from recent storms

Andy Bryant

- Water year precipitation

- To date (132 days), statewide precipitation well below normal (50 – 75% for much of western Oregon, while eastern Oregon marginally better (50 – 90%) with some smaller regions in northeastern Oregon near normal
- Eastern and southwestern Oregon benefitting most from snow and rains over past 30 days
- Recent temperatures
 - Temperatures thus far in February are 5 – 10 °F below normal
 - January temperatures were notably above average for much of State of Oregon (2 – 4 °F above normal)
- Drought monitor
 - Reduction from D3 (extreme drought) in southeastern Oregon to D2 (severe drought), otherwise conditions largely remain the same
- Outlooks
 - Mid-February
 - Above average precipitation statewide over next 14 days
 - High chance of below average temperatures statewide
 - 3-month (February – April)
 - Below normal precipitation
 - Above average temperatures
 - May – June
 - Normal precipitation
 - Above average temperatures
- Observed water year runoff
 - Natural runoff well below normal statewide
 - However, improved snowpack has yet to translate to runoff
- Forecast runoff (April – September)
 - Below normal runoff projected statewide
 - Uniformly 80 – 95% of normal in western Oregon
 - Eastern Oregon with wider range where projections increase from south to north (39 – 103%)
- Water supply forecasts (50% exceedance; April – September)
 - Willamette trending towards normal at 82%
 - Rogue one of biggest benefactors of recent rains; 85%
 - Deschutes (Prineville) still projected well below normal at 66%
 - Grande Ronde at normal
 - Malheur below normal at 72%

Marc Stewart

- Many sites with 7-day averages well below normal in northwestern Oregon (< 24% of normal) with some improvement towards normal moving south
 - Some sites in northeastern Oregon are above normal
 - 7-day averages may be influenced (upward) due to ice affect due to recent cold temperatures
- Upper Klamath Lake trending upwards
- Cumulative runoff is well below average for much of the state as of 01/31

- 34% at Deep Creek (Lake County)
- 95% at Umatilla River
- 7-day average runoff hydrograph for Oregon below normal

Ken Stahr/Ryan Andrews

- Statewide percent of average streamflow at 58% of normal for the water year through January
 - January average streamflow of 63% is up from December (59%)
 - County-wide averages range from 18% (Crook) to 124% (Josephine)
 - Central-eastern Oregon are particularly well below normal
 - Southwestern and northeastern Oregon hovering near normal
- Wheeler County streams
 - Some peaks in streamflow in January and early February in John Day River and North Fork John Day River, but streamflow receding to normal
 - Streamflow in Bridge Creek (used to represent smaller basin within the county) well below normal and approaching lowest on record at this point in the year

Chris Runyan

- Scoggins at 64%; inflow at 37 cfs
 - Below normal with only three years on record being lower at this point
- Prineville at 38%; inflow at 120 cfs
 - ODFW instream flows require outflow of 50 cfs
- Wickiup at 55%
- Ochoco at 12% however water level is below the sensor
- McKay at 49%
 - Near normal storage contents for this point in year
- Owyhee at 40%
 - Most southeastern Oregon reservoirs are well below normal
 - Fill is highly dependent on snowpack
- Many reservoirs are forecasted at below normal fill
 - Range from 70% (Ochoco) to 108% (McKay)

Mary Karen Scullion

- Corps working on catching up to rule curve while closely monitoring minimum flows in order to fill
 - Reservoirs averaging 12% full, however refill season for Corps begins 02/01
 - 5% behind rule curve

Nick Yonker

- Fire conditions not concerning

Miscellaneous

- Wheeler County drought declaration on 01/16

- Rains are likely to be replenishing dry soil profile, snowpack condition may not be enough to cause significant runoff
- Long term temperature outlook above normal should be considered in drought declaration
- The Committee agrees that is too early to recommend a governor's declared drought, and would like to revisit this in March. Conditions could change throughout the season.
- Next meeting proposed for 03/12