

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

In-House and Phone Conference – Meeting Notes

In-House Attendees

Ken Stahr – OWRD (Chair)
Lafe Paulson – OWRD
Andy Bryant – NWRFC
Scott Oviatt – NRCS
Daniel Stoelb – OEM
Nick Yonker – ODF

Phone Attendees

Margaret Matter – ODA
Steve King – NWRFC
Peter Cooper – USBR

Presentations – update on water supply conditions

Scott Oviatt

- Statewide snowpack at 121% of normal
 - The pattern of warmer than average temperatures and lower than average precipitation seen through January 2019 shifted on February 9th, when the trend reversed. February saw snowpack around the state recover dramatically.
 - Range = 94% (Hood, Sandy, Lower Deschutes) – 153% (Umatilla & Goose and Summer Lakes)
 - Up from 73% on 02/08/2019
 - Up from 39% in 2018
- Statewide precipitation at 93% of normal
 - Western Oregon at 80-85% and eastern Oregon between 90 and 114%.
 - Range = 81% (Hood, Sandy, Lower Deschutes) – 114% (John Day)
 - Statewide average being held lower by greater number of SNOTEL sites in western portion of state
 - Up from 80% on 02/08/2019
- Forecasted volume (50% exceedance – mostly April – June, with some April – September)
 - Western Oregon forecasted largely normal
 - Eastern Oregon forecast is consistently above normal

Andy Bryant/Steve King

- Water year precipitation
 - To date (161 days), statewide precipitation has recovered somewhat, but remains below normal (75 – 90%) for much of western Oregon, while eastern Oregon has regions as high as 125%
 - Percentages in the past 30 days have been consistently above 150% throughout most of the state with areas in the center of the state exceeding 400%.

- The northwestern corner of the state, and a small area along the central California border are exception, with approximately 90-100% of average in the past 30 days.
- Recent temperatures
 - Temperatures thus far in March are below normal by as little as 2°F in southeastern Oregon, and as much as 20°F in northeastern Oregon
 - February temperatures were 2 – 10 °F below average throughout Oregon
- Drought monitor
 - Continues to show gradual improvement
- Outlooks
 - Mid-March
 - Below average precipitation statewide over next 10 days
 - High chance of above average temperatures statewide
 - 3-month (March – May)
 - Average precipitation
 - Above average temperatures
 - June – August
 - Below 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
 - 50 – 95% of normal in much of northwestern Oregon
 - 50-110% of normal in southwestern Oregon
 - Eastern Oregon projections range from 58% in the south and central regions, to 142% in the northeast
- Water supply forecasts (50% exceedance; April – September)
 - Willamette remains below normal at 80%
 - Rogue Slightly below normal (92%) and trending downward
 - Crooked River (Prineville) made a marked improvement to 98% of normal
 - Grande Ronde at normal
 - John Day River at 110%
 - Malheur above normal (104%) but trending downward

Marc Stewart (absent, presented by Ken Stahr)

- Many sites with 7-day averages below normal to much below normal in many parts of northwestern Oregon (< 24% of normal) with some improvement towards normal moving south and east
 - Certain sites in northeastern and southwestern Oregon are also below normal.
 - The south coast region showed marked improvement over the last month.

- Accumulated runoff for October to February are 64.9% of normal, the second lowest in the past decade.

Ken Stahr

- Statewide percent of average streamflow is at 58% of normal for the water year through February. Most of the precipitation in February remains frozen, and has not influenced streamflow.
 - February average streamflow of 61% is down from January (62%)
 - County-wide averages range from 19% (Wasco) to 135% (Coos)
 - Southwest Oregon and the central coast have experienced the highest streamflows as a percentage of the average.
 - Some peaks in streamflow in January and early February in John Day River and North Fork John Day River, but streamflow receding to normal
 - Mean daily flows around the state continue to hover near or below values observed in recent drought years.

USBR Pacific Northwest Regional Office, River and Reservoir Operations (Absent, presented by Ken Stahr)

- Scoggins at 85%; inflow at 43 cfs
 - Nicely recovered since last meeting
- Prineville at 42%; inflow at 278 cfs
 - ODFW instream flows require outflow of 50 cfs
- Wickiup at 64%; inflow at 104 cfs
- Ochoco at 16%
- McKay at 59%
- Owyhee at 48%
 - Most southeastern Oregon reservoirs remain near or below 50% capacity
 - Notable exception is Thief Valley Reservoir at 100%
 - Fill is highly dependent on snowpack
 - Inflow forecasts indicate many eastside reservoirs may be well over 100% 1981-2010 average volume.

Nick Yonker

- Fire conditions not concerning

Miscellaneous

- Wheeler County drought declaration on 01/16
 - The Committee agrees that it remains too early in the season to make a recommendation, and that the issue be deferred to the next meeting.
- Next meeting proposed for 04/09