

Water Supply Availability Committee/Drought Readiness Council Meeting – June 10, 2020
Oregon Office of Emergency Management

In-House and Phone Conference – Meeting Notes

Attendees

Ken Stahr – OWRD (Chair)	Andy Bryant – NWS
Ryan Andrews – OWRD	Amy Burke – NWRFC
Mary Karen Scullion – USACE	Aaron Borisenko – DEQ
Jim Johnson – ODA	Larry O’Neill – OCS
Nick Yonker – ODF	Danette Faucera – ODFW
Carrie Boudreau – USGS	Jon Rocha – USBR
Erik Rau – OEM	Tom Elliott – ODOE
Margaret Matter – ODA	Jeff Marti – WADOE
Roxy Nayar – DEQ	Kelly Smith – UNL
Sarah Rubrecht – Josephine County	

Presentations – update on water supply conditions

Scott Oviatt

- Nearly all sites have melted out as of June 10
 - Three sites with measureable snowpack
 - North Cascades (13.5 in)
 - Wallowas (12.5 in)
 - Central Cascades (12.5 in)
 - Rapid snowmelt runoff occurred 1 to 3 weeks early
 - Southern basins failed to reach normal peaks
 - Rogue, Umpqua, Klamath
 - Northern basins peaked near normal
 - John Day, Grande Ronde/Powder/Burnt, Owyhee/Malheur
- Statewide precipitation measuring 81% of normal statewide to date
 - Nearly all basins below average (max = 102% in Grande Ronde/Powder/Burnt; min = 68% in Klamath and Lake County/Goose Lake)
 - Low pressure system stalled in NE OR causing significant precipitation event)
 - SNOTEL measurement sites measuring below to well-below normal statewide, with exception in NE OR
 - SNOTEL precipitation over past 30-days measuring normal to well-above normal statewide with exception of central-southcentral OR
 - Some SNOTEL sites received 3 – 5 inches in NE OR and northern Cascades over 4-day period from 5/18-5/21
- Probability of volumetric streamflow for 50% exceedance probability forecasted well below normal for May through September for much of Oregon
 - Exceptions with some sites in Hood basin and NE OR
 - June through September streamflow forecasts show low probability of measuring near 50% exceedance probability for much of state

- Exceptions with Umatilla, Grande Ronde and Rogue
- Some areas focused on likelihood of reaching 70% exceedance probability due to early snowmelt and below-normal precipitation
 - Central and south-central Oregon

Andy Bryant

- Water Year to date measuring from below normal to much below normal statewide with the exception of NE OR
 - NE OR measuring above normal (100 – 150%)
 - Measuring 2-12 inches above normal
 - Rest of state between 25-90% of normal
 - Some areas west of Cascades showing up to 20 inches below normal
- Precipitation over past 30 days measured above to well-above normal statewide with exception of central OR
- May temperatures measured 0-2 degrees F above normal statewide
 - Early June (6/1-6/8) temperatures measured approximately 1-6 degrees F below normal statewide
- US Drought Monitor showing little change between May and June updated
 - Some reduction in D3 (extreme drought) designation in SW OR
 - Minor increase in D3 coverage in north central OR
- Mid to late June outlook probabilities favor below average temperatures and above average precipitation
- July to September outlook probabilities favor above average temperatures and below average precipitation
 - Summer precipitation not significant in terms of water supply

Amy Burke

- Observed water year runoff measuring well below normal statewide with exception of some sites in NE OR
- Natural streamflow forecasts for April through September variable statewide
 - SW OR forecasted well below normal with exception of Chetco River
 - West of Cascades vary between 60-85% of normal
 - Central OR forecasted 5-29% of normal
 - SE OR forecasted well below normal 35-73% of normal
 - NE OR forecasted above to well above normal (95-154%)
- Some sites in SW OR natural streamflow forecasted in lower 25th percentile for period of record; similar for central OR
 - Other sites west of Cascades measuring between 25th and 50th percentiles
- With exception of Chetco and Umatilla, most other sites forecasted to fall short of normal natural streamflow

Larry O'Neill

- Slight improvements in Drought Monitor
 - Harney County is area of concern due to low data collection in area

- Drought depictions may be lagging

Carrie Boudreau

- May streamflows measured normal to below normal west of Cascades
 - SW OR and north central OR measured below to well below normal
 - Exception for Chetco River
 - NE OR sites measured above to much above normal
- 7-day average streamflows (6/1-6/8) measuring near normal west of Cascades
 - Sites in north central OR measuring below to well below normal
- WY 2020 streamflows measuring below 5-year average (2016-2020)
- Upper Klamath Lake elevation measuring well below previous 5 water years
- 14-day streamflow measuring below normal for many sites, with several qualifying as moderate or severe hydrologic drought
- 7-day statewide runoff measuring near normal

Ken Stahr

- WY streamflow measured 69% of normal through May
 - West = 70%; east = 67%
- May monthly streamflow measured 82% of normal
 - West = 90%; east = 77%
- May streamflow percent of average ranged well below to well above normal by county
 - Max = 187% in Curry; min = 21% in Crook
 - Several NE OR counties measured well above normal
- Streamflows at some individual sites measuring near or below 2015 levels

Jon Rocha

- Reservoirs in eastern OR measuring near or above average
 - Includes Owyhee, Malheur, Burnt and Umatilla basins
 - Recent precipitation reduced irrigation demands from reservoirs
 - Tualatin – Scoggins Reservoir measuring near average
 - Umatilla, Burnt, and Tualatin reservoirs near capacity
- Some reservoirs measuring well below average (approximately 75% and less)
 - Includes Powder, Deschutes, Crooked, and Rogue systems
 - Rogue reservoirs measuring below normal, with some in lower 10th percentile for storage contents
- Wickiup Reservoir contents measuring well below normal
 - Potential for being emptied
- Soil moisture deficits may become problematic for carryover towards next water year

Nick Yonker

- Moderate fire potential in central OR
- Low fire potential west of Cascades and NE OR
- Elevated 7-day significant fire potential exists in NW10 due to forecasted lightning storms

- Above normal significant fire potential in SW OR for June
- Significant increase in coverage of above normal fire potential in July
 - Covers much of state with exception of NW and NE OR
- Much of state projected for above normal fire potential in August and September with exception of NW OR
 - Some debate over NE OR due to recent precipitation events

Kelly Smith – National Drought Mitigation Center at University of Nebraska

- Condition Monitoring Observer Reports for Drought
- Observer reports can be found at go.unl.edu/CMOR_drought

Roundtable Discussion

- County drought declaration
 - Douglas and Gillam counties officially submitted drought declaration requests
 - Requests supported by members of both WSAC and DRC
 - Some hesitation from groups regarding pre-approving declaration requests prior to counties submitting requests
 - Impromptu conference calls with DRC members when requests do eventually come in
- Explore options for outreach to counties in order to facilitate action
 - Increase awareness of drought conditions and impacts in order to get ahead of drought
- Reach out to OHA regarding presentation on harmful algal blooms and drinking water advisories for next meeting
- Next meeting proposed for Wednesday, July 8th from 9 – 12