Water Supply Availability Committee/Drought Readiness Council Meeting – September 10, 2020

Phone Conference – Meeting Notes

Attendees

Ken Stahr – OWRD (Chair)
Jordan Beamer – OWRD
Mellony Hoskinson – OWRD
Ryan Andrews – OWRD
Dierdre Dooley – OWRD
Jim Johnson – ODA
Daniel Stoelb – OEM
Traci Naile – OEM
Lee Go – FSA
Amy Burke – NWRFC
Henry Pai – NWRFC
Jeff Marti – WDOE
Roxy Nayar – DEQ
Jon Rocha – USBR
Larry O'Neill – OCS
Tom Elliott – ODOE
Carrie Boudreau – USGS
Marc Stewart – USGS

Presentations – update on water supply conditions
Ken Stahr presenting for Scott Oviatt and NRCS

- WY 2021 SNOTEL precipitation measuring at 82% of average for the State of Oregon
    - Precipitation received decreases from north to south – individual sites show clear trend along Cascade Crest
        - NE basins measuring above normal
            - Umatilla-Walla Walla-Willow at 144%
            - Grande Ronde-Burnt-Powder-Imnaha at 110%
        - Southern OR measuring well below normal precipitation
            - Owyhee, Malheur, Lake County-Goose Lake, Klamath, and Rogue-Umpqua all measuring at or below 50% of normal
- SWE data points are still misleading at this (early) point in the water year.

Amy Burke

- Temperatures measured above average for both September and October
    - Greater departure from average for September
- Some expansion of D3 coverage in central OR and reduction in D3 in northern OR
- Normal to above normal precipitation is expected over the next 10 days
    - High precipitation event is expected for 11/13
- Increased chances of below normal temperatures and above normal precipitation over the next 10 days
- Water supply forecasts have not yet been presented at this point in the water year
- Sea surface temperature anomalies indicate hope for snowpack in WY 2021

Larry O'Neill

- Monsoon failed to materialize
    - West and SW OR climate regions had driest and warmest summers on record
    - NW OR had significantly warmer and drier conditions than normal
- La Nina signatures don't favor wet conditions in southern OR

- AHPS 13-month SPI indicates benefits to area around Columbia River and Northern Cascades due to recent rains
- Soil moisture profile indicates dry soil conditions were unimproved with any precipitation so far this year
    - Groundwater supply is very low in SW and central OR as indicated by NASA's shallow groundwater indicator

Ken Stahr

- Many basins measured below normal streamflows for the first month of WY 2021
    - North Coast (118%), Sandy (115%), and Grande Ronde (102%) were only basins which measured above average streamflow for October
    - Several basins were near or below 50% of normal streamflow
        - Goose and Summer Lakes (55%), Umpqua (53%), Powder (49%), Rogue (48%), and South Coast (23%)
- County-averaged streamflows show decreasing trend from north to south
    - Northern counties measured near or above average streamflow for October
    - Many counties in central and southern OR measured below to well below average streamflow
- Averaged values and those at individual sites are likely still too misleading to provide an accurate representation of the expected conditions over the coming water year
- Some watersheds impacted by wildfires are showing streamflow responses to burned areas
    - Little North Fork Santiam experienced significant burns to the watershed leading to fluctuations in hydrograph

Carrie Boudreau

- Some deterioration in streamflows in SW OR over past 7-days and month measuring below normal
- Many sites throughout the state are in various stages of hydrological drought as defined by the 14-day average streamflow compared to normal
    - It is still too early for values to represent conditions of the water year to come
- Statewide 7-day hydrograph indicates streamflow conditions are on the lower end of normal

Jon Rocha

- Reservoirs have begun storing and re-filling
    - Some systems at a severe deficit due to lack of carryover and high demands
        - Rogue (5%), Powder (9%), Deschutes (18%), and Crooked (28%) systems finished WY 2020 with well below normal carryover
    - Umatilla (140%), Burnt (137%), Owyhee (134%), and Malheur (115%) are all measuring above normal with Tualatin (92%) just below normal as of 11/11
- Some systems are releasing minimum flows to varying degrees
    - Crooked River at Bowman Dam
    - Umatilla
    - Scoggins minimum flow releases cease 11/13
    - Owyhee minimum flows lessened due to water supply projections

Jordan Beamer

- Presentation
    - Towards Operational Remote Sensing of Evapotranspiration from Irrigated Agriculture in Oregon for Improved Water Management

Discussion

- Potential groundwater issues associated with burned wells
- DEQ kicked off TMDL Sandy Basin project
- Next meeting proposed for Thursday, 12/10 at 9 am