

## **Water Supply Availability Committee/Drought Readiness Council Meeting – October 13, 2021**

Phone Conference – Meeting Notes

### **Attendees**

Ryan Andrews – OWRD (Chair)

Bill Martin – OEM

Spencer Sawaske – ODFW

Peter Cooper – USBR

Peter Markos – DEQ

Salina Hart – USACE

Marc Stewart – USGS

Scott Oviatt – NRCS

Paige Haxton-Evans – DEQ

Andy Bryant – NWS

Carrie Boudreau – USGS

Tom Elliott – ODOE

Henry Pai – NWRFC

Larry O’Neill - OCCRI

### **Presentations – update on water supply conditions**

#### **Scott Oviatt**

- Statewide snowpack saw significant increase following recent storms
  - SWE on Dec 5 = 13% of median
  - SWE on Dec 14 = 80%
  - Some basins entered December with lowest on record
- Snowpack
  - Min = Owyhee @ 36%
  - Max = Rogue-Umpqua @ 116%
  - West side basins normal and above
  - East side basins are below to well below normal
- SNOTEL precipitation measuring 96% of median
  - Min = Malheur @ 77%
  - Max = Harney @ 124%
- Many individual stations measuring lowest or second lowest accumulated precipitation on record for period March 1 through December 14
  - Trend continues for some stations back to October 1, 2019

#### **Andy Bryant**

- Precipitation deficits persist outside of NW Oregon over past 365 days and for WY 2022
- November precipitation
  - Above average in NW OR
  - Near average throughout much of state
  - Below normal in southern OR and parts of eastern OR
- November temperatures were well above average statewide
  - Result of southerly wind flow
  - Little to no snow
- Significant increase in spatial coverage of snowpack over past two weeks
- Climate outlook
  - Below average temperatures and above average precipitation projected for next 8 – 14 days
  - ENSO forecast shows gradual trend towards neutral in late spring, early summer

- Seasonal outlook for January through March is driven by La Nina persistence through winter
  - Above average precipitation in northern third of state, near normal elsewhere
  - Below average temperatures statewide

### **Henry Pai**

- Near to above average water year runoff in northwestern OR
  - Yet to materialize in much of SW and eastern OR
- Forecast is dependent on snowpack at this point in year
  - Yet to materialize
  - Near normal and below in western OR
  - Some increase in Willamette due to snowpack
    - 88% of normal for April through September
  - Rogue at 80%
  - Owyhee at 70%

### **Larry O'Neill**

- 156 CMOR reports for 2021
- Precipitation in Union and Umatilla Counties led to removal of D4 conditions on US Drought Monitor
- Most extensive coverage of D3 and D4 conditions in state history
- 24-month SPEI
  - Evapotranspiration important to consider as opposed to simply precipitation
  - Warrants D4 conditions in central OR

### **Carrie Boudreau**

### **Ryan Andrews**

- 26 counties with state drought declarations
- Percent change in mean annual flow between base periods 1981-2010 and 1991-2020
  - Some significant reductions in MAF between base periods in southern and eastern Oregon basins
  - Little change in western OR, with exception of Rogue basin
- November streamflow variable throughout the state
  - Well above average in NW and SW OR counties
  - Below to well below average in much of eastern OR
    - Exceptions in Harney and Baker Counties
- Basins in western Oregon measuring near normal over first two months of water year
  - Most central and eastern basins measuring below to well below normal over same time
- Recent streamflows over past 7-day and 28-day periods are well below long-term average statewide
  - Some exceptions in NW OR

### **Peter Cooper**

- Some gains in reservoirs over past month
  - Exception in Umatilla – maintained storage amount but below average for time of year
- All OR projects continue to store water
- Flood management operations potentially beginning at Scoggins over next week
- Below average reservoir contents in most reservoirs
- Need wet conditions to continue, particularly in southern OR basins
- Most river basins need above to much above normal runoff over water year to refill
- Approaching of at record low storage contents in some systems
  - Low carryover in Rogue (record low) and Prineville
  - Phillips Lake basically empty
- First runoff forecast to be issued early January

### **Salina Hart**

- Willamette draw down to minimum pool went as normal
- Refilling operations at Cougar and Fall Creek to begin soon
- No carryover storage in Willamette
- Carryover used up at end of irrigation season in Rogue
  - 23% below normal during flood season
- Willow Creek used carryover for irrigation

### **Discussion**

- January 12<sup>th</sup> proposed for next meeting