Hydrologic Conditions – April 2018

The Hydrologic Conditions Mapper for New York State has been updated for the month of April 2018 and can be accessed at:

http://ny.water.usgs.gov/projects/eom/

During April, monthly precipitation totals averaged 3.6 inches, and 0.1 inches above normal quantities across the State. The highest precipitation amount and the largest positive departure from normal quantities (5.5 inches and 2.0 inches above normal quantities) were recorded in Essex County. The lowest precipitation amount and the largest monthly deficits were recorded in Chemung County (1.88 inches and 1.33 inches below normal quantities).

Of the 32 index streamflow sites, 30 recorded normal levels. Two of the index streamflow sites recorded wet levels. On April 16, heavy rains resulted in one station in Bronx County and the Hudson River below Poughkeepsie to exceed flood stage for less than a day. Two stations in the Adirondack Region exceeded minor flood stage for two days during the period from April 25 – 27. Normal flows occurred at the index streamflow site on Long Island for the second month in a row. This is only the third month since July 2015 that monthly streamflows have not been below normal levels. A Drought Watch designation, as issued by NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC), has continued in effect for Nassau and Suffolk Counties since July 2016.

Average lake levels of Lake Ontario during April were about 0.4 foot above long-term monthly average water levels. (https://www.glerl.noaa.gov//data/dashboard/GLWLD.html).

New York City reservoirs were collectively at about 99.7 percent of capacity at the end of the month; about 1 percent more than the normal storage capacity of about 98.5 percent (http://www.nyc.gov/html/dep/html/drinking_water/maplevels_wide.shtml).

Sixty-one percent of the index groundwater wells reported normal water levels for the month. Twenty-five percent reported above-normal water levels and 14 percent reported low-to-very-low water levels. There was no discernible geographical distribution of wells that fell into a particular classification; rather, wells in all conditions were scattered across the State. Bedrock wells recorded a slightly lesser percentage (22 percent) of wells with water levels in their respective above-normal ranges compared to water-table wells (25 percent). However, about 3 percent of bedrock wells and water-table wells had water levels in their respective below-normal ranges.

Of the 89 reporting wells, 3 wells reported new record high monthly median levels and 1 reported new record low monthly median levels for April; all 4 of these wells have periods of record less than 13 years. Although the Hydrologic Conditions Mapper showed only 3 reporting wells with sufficient data on Long Island—two of which reported below-normal water levels—the USGS Groundwater Watch (at https://groundwaterwatch.usgs.gov/) showed that many wells in Nassau and Suffolk Counties continue to indicate below-normal water levels at the end of April. However, most wells did show a continued recovery from the low levels reached last fall.

Exceedance percentages shown on the Hydrologic Conditions Mapper are calculated for individual USGS sites. This information along with additional information from other Federal, State, and local agencies assist the NYSDEC and the State Drought Management Task Force to evaluate regional conditions for determination of drought classifications.

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