From: Herbold, Stacey
Subject: Drought Update 27 - Happy New Year! The drought is almost a thing of the past. Eyes on groundwater levels.
Date: Thursday, December 31, 2020 12:00:45 PM
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Dear Community Water Systems and Municipalities,

Happy New Year's Eve! Let 2021 bring us just enough precipitation to keep our wells and reservoirs full, the mountains white through the winter, and our crops plentiful in the growing season.

The state is so very close to being relieved of drought conditions. According to the U.S. Drought Monitor, over the past week the area experiencing drought in NH has been reduced from 40% to 12%. "Moderate drought" (D1) is hanging on in the majority of Sullivan County, the southwestern part of Grafton County, and northwestern Merrimack County. Thirty-six percent of the state continues to be categorized as abnormally dry, while the remainder of the state has returned to non-drought or dry conditions.

Winter weather is on its way. The forecast calls for dry conditions this evening, but a storm will move into the state after midnight. A wintery mix is expected south and east of Concord. Up to 2"-4" of snow is expected to the west and north. The storm will wind down Saturday afternoon and another storm will arrive Sunday night through Monday morning. The 6-10 day outlook favors below normal precipitation, the 8-14 day outlook favors above normal precipitation in the southern half of the state and near normal precipitation in the north, and the 30-day outlook favors above normal precipitation.

IMPORTANT! Although drought has ameliorated in most of the state, this does not mean groundwater levels have returned to normal. There is often a lag in recovery, especially for bedrock wells. Last month's New Hampshire Groundwater Level Monitoring Report indicated that the majority of the wells in the network were experiencing below normal to low groundwater levels, although water levels in about half of the wells in the network had risen since the previous month. December's report should be released early this month and provide a clearer picture of groundwater supplies.

Are residential well owners experiencing well shortage issues in your community? If so, they may qualify for the Low-Income Residential Drought Assistance Program.

Drought Guidance for community water systems, the public, municipalities, and private well owners, as well as other drought information such as guidance on setting up an emergency water access location may be found on the Drought Management webpage.

Drought Update:

According to the U.S. Drought Monitor, currently 12.20% of the state is categorized as "moderate drought"(D1), 36.16% is categorized as abnormally dry, and 51.64% is not in drought.

Over the past 7-days, the majority of the state received between 1.00" to 3.00" of precipitation. The

greatest amounts were received in Hillsborough County, Cheshire County, parts of Merrimack County, parts of Rockingham County, and across the White Mountains. Also, some areas in the White Mountains received up to 5" of precipitation. The least amount of precipitation, ranging from 0.50" to 1.0", was received along the western border of the state from Claremont north to Lancaster, in northern Coos County, and in a few other pockets throughout the state. (National Weather Service Precipitation Observed & National Weather Service NERFC).

Month to date, 30-day, 60-day, and 90-day precipitation departures are above normal for all counties except for Coos County and Grafton County. Month to date, 60-day, and 90-day departures are below normal for Coos County. The sixty-day departure is below normal for Grafton County. One hundred and eight day departures are below normal for all counties and range from -0.68" in Cheshire County to -4.64" in Grafton County (National Weather Service).

New Hampshire Groundwater Level Monitoring Report for November 2020: The majority of the wells in the network are experiencing below normal to low groundwater levels, although water levels in about half of the wells in the network have risen since last month. Overburden well CVW-04 in Concord, and overburden wells in Campton, Deerfield, Franklin, and New Durham have been below normal to low for a 6-month period. The overburden wells in Newport have been below normal to low for almost a year. The bedrock wells in East Kingston and Hooksett have been below normal to low for a 6-month period. The dug well in New London and the overburden well in Barnstead have recovered to normal since last month.

Forecast and Outlooks:
Tonight will be dry, but a storm will move into the state after midnight. A wintery mix is expected south and east of Concord. Up to 2"-4" of snow is expected to the west and north. The storm will wind down Saturday afternoon and another storm will arrive Sunday night through Monday morning.
(WMUR & NOAA National Weather Service Forecast & NOAA Precip Forecast).

The 6-10 day outlook favors below normal precipitation and above normal temperatures across the state. The 8-14 day outlook favors above normal precipitation in the southern half of the state and near normal precipitation in the north. Above normal temperatures are favored across the state. The 30-day outlook favors above normal precipitation and temperatures. National Weather Service Climate Prediction Center).

The US Monthly Drought Outlook for December had predicted that drought removal was likely by the end of the month except for the southeastern portion of the state where drought was predicted to persist but improve. As of today, this prediction was correct, except drought was removed in the southeastern section of the state and remains in the majority of Sullivan County, the southwestern part of Grafton County, and northwestern Merrimack County. (The next monthly outlook should be released today, but may be delayed due to the holiday.)

Stacey Herbold
Water Conservation Program
Water Use Registration and Reporting Program
NHDES Drinking Water and Groundwater Bureau

29 Hazen Drive, P.O. Box 95
Concord, NH 03302-0095
PH: (603) 271-6685
FAX: (603) 271-0656

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