

Overview of Southeastern NH Flood Potential – Spring 2009

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Overview

Overall, southern New Hampshire is in better shape than previous years going into the spring season with respect to local flooding. River levels in southeastern NH are slightly above, but near, normal and most of the snow has melted, reducing the potential for snowmelt induced spring flooding. With the exception of December 2008, precipitation has been near normal this winter. NOAA's Climate Prediction Center indicates that there is an equal chance of either above or below normal precipitation through June of 2009 however, we are in an active precipitation pattern, which may give us at or above normal levels through the next month.

April has gotten off to a rainy start throughout the entire state, a pattern that will most likely continue over the next few weeks, however only minor flooding has been reported within a few watersheds. Flooding is still a possibility, especially if we receive high amounts (>2 in) over short time periods, but so far so good in the southeastern portion of the state. Northern areas are at greater risk given the significant snowpack that remains but only minor flooding has been reported so far this spring.

General Explanation of the Tables

*Note: All current data are preliminary and have not been quality controlled. Precipitation and river discharge values reported are not intended for research purposes.

Precipitation: Precipitation data gathered from the NOAA Climate Reference Network stations located at Kingman Farm and Thompson Farm indicate that precipitation in the Durham area was near average for the months of January through March of 2009. The monthly total liquid and liquid water equivalent (for frozen precipitation) precipitation for January through March of 2009 was slightly above that for the corresponding months in 2007 and below that received in 2008. Precipitation amounts for the first week of April, 2009, are near the monthly total for April, 2008, but well below April, 2007. The majority of the snow pack in the Durham area, and southern New Hampshire in general, has melted.

Climate Reference Network Stations: <http://www.ncdc.noaa.gov/oa/climate/uscrn/>

Monthly Average Precipitation for Durham:

http://www.unh.edu/stateclimatologist/nh_data_summary.htm

River Discharge: Information on stream discharge for the Oyster River near Durham and the Lamprey River near New Market were gathered from the USGS, real-time, stream gage network for New Hampshire. In March 2009, both rivers were slightly above normal levels (average for the years 1934 to 2006) but below that of March 2008. As of the morning of April 8th, 2009, river levels were decreasing from high discharge levels recorded overnight during the precipitation event of April 7-8. Although high, discharge levels were below the historic maximum average daily discharges recorded during the month of April for the period of record 1934-2006. These high levels were due mostly to rainfall, which amounted to just over an inch of liquid precipitation.

USGS National Water Information System:

http://nh.water.usgs.gov/WaterData/station_map.htm

Please direct any questions or comments to: mary.stampone@unh.edu.