USGS RELEASES FIRST ANNUAL STREAMFLOW SUMMARY

From ASFPM.

This past year has produced some record-breaking high streamflow conditions in the northeastern United States, as well as some near-record lows in other areas, according to the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS). In a new USGS publication, *Streamflow of 2006—Water Year Summary*, changes in streamflow over the course of 2006 are examined in relation to conditions over the past 75 years.

Last year, parts of New England recorded their highest annual flows since 1930. At the same time, below-normal conditions were prevalent in Texas and other states in the central and southern Great Plains, parts of the Southeast, and Alaska.

"Despite these regional highs and lows, however, streamflow conditions nationwide were relatively typical," says Harry Lins, hydrologist with the USGS surface-water program. "We expect in any given year that 1% of streamgages will experience a new all-time record high flow or all-time record low. In 2006, 2% of streamgages reported record highs, most in New England, and 1% experienced new lows."

The USGS plans to provide similar summaries every year. Robert Hirsch, Associate Director for Water, said, "These types of summaries are very important as they place annual streamflow in a historic context and help to provide insights on whether conditions reflect short-term (year to year or seasonal) hydrologic fluctuations or longer term, more global influences. They also reinforce the critical need for a stable streamflow monitoring network over the long term."

> > > This first-ever USGS summary of seasonal, regional, and national streamflow for water year 2006 can be accessed at **http://water.usgs.gov/waterwatch/2006summary/**.