



Winter/Spring Flood Potential Outlook Briefing

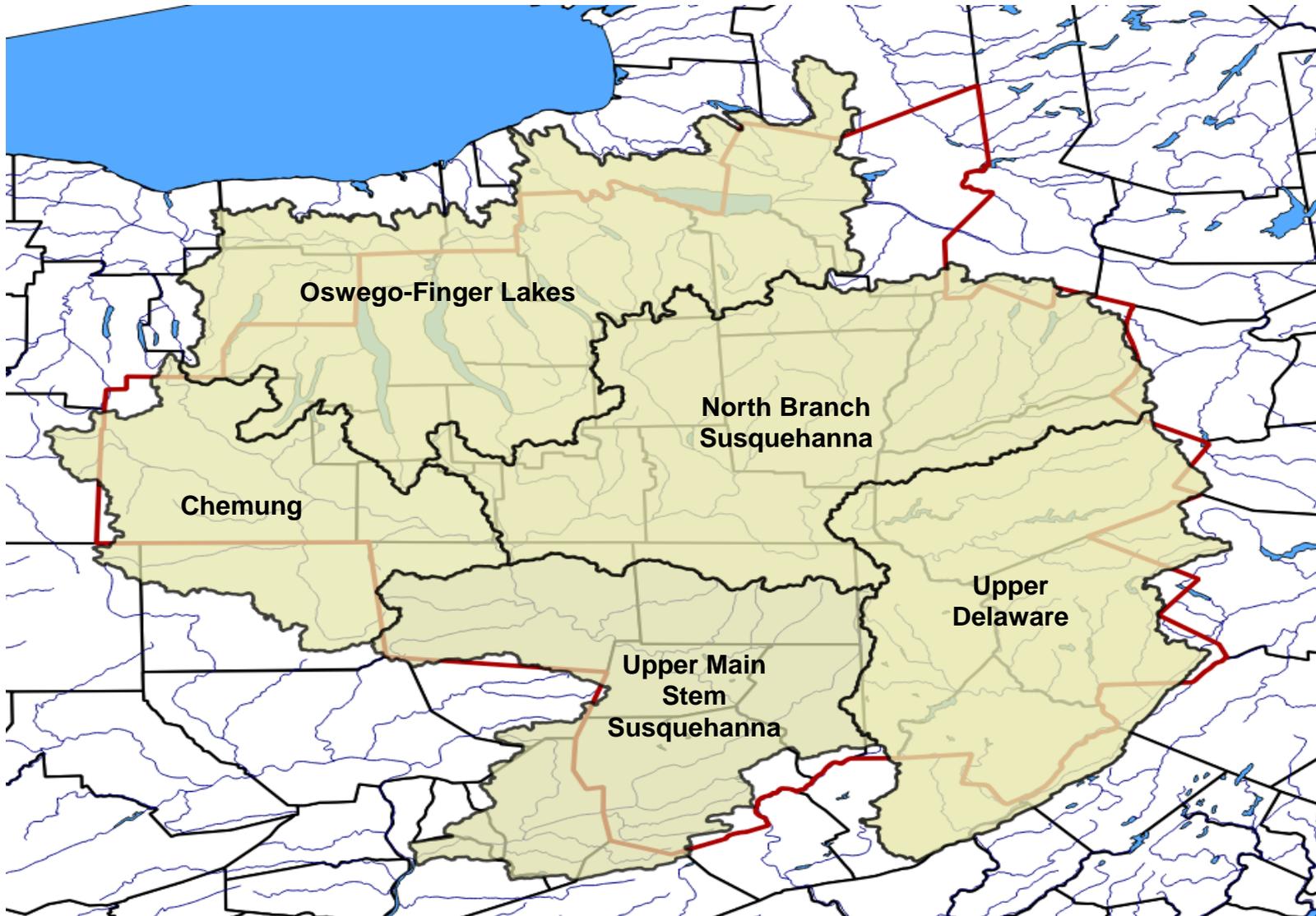
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National Weather Service
Binghamton, NY*

March 5th, 2015

This outlook is prepared only for the WFO Binghamton Hydrologic Service Area



NWS Binghamton Hydro Area



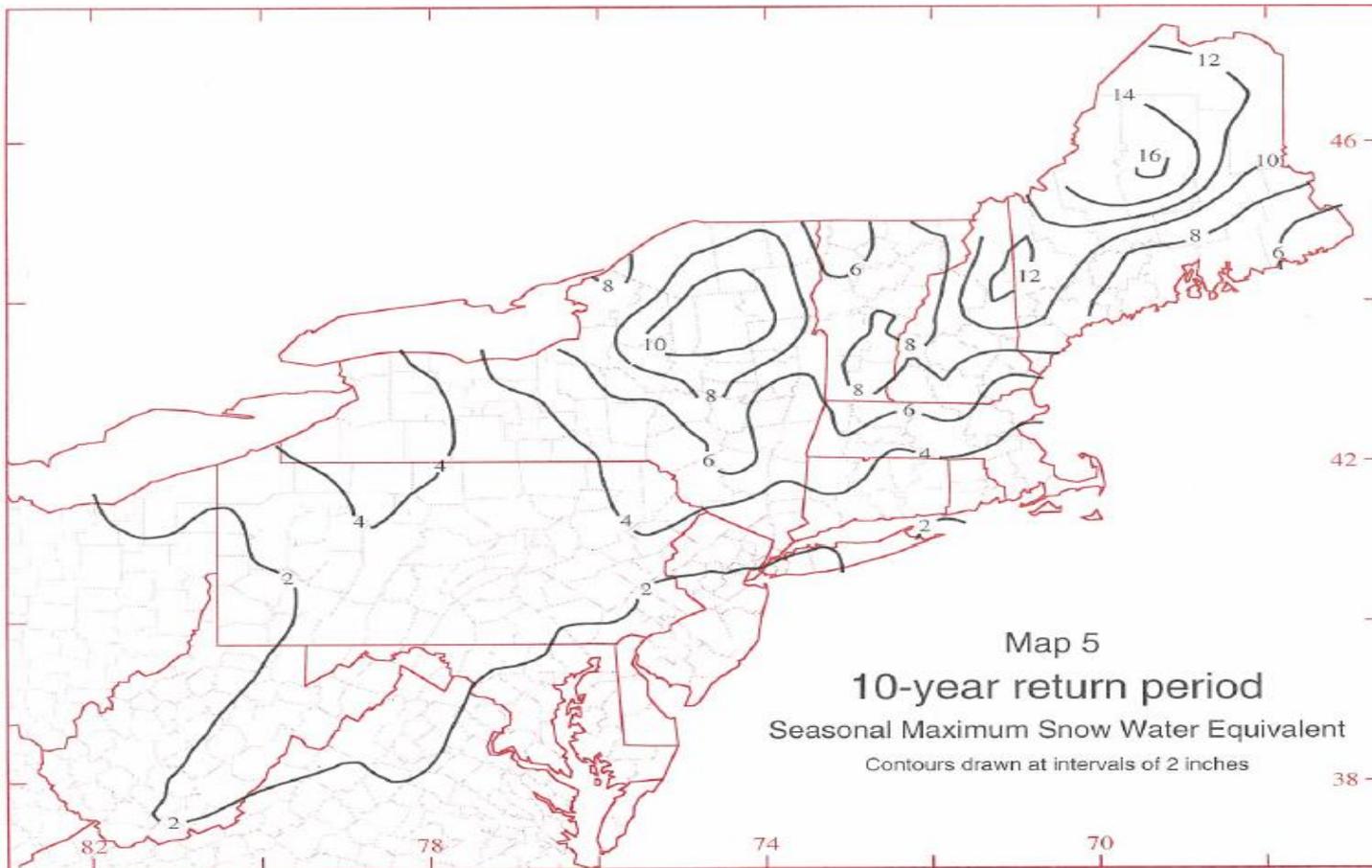


What We Know



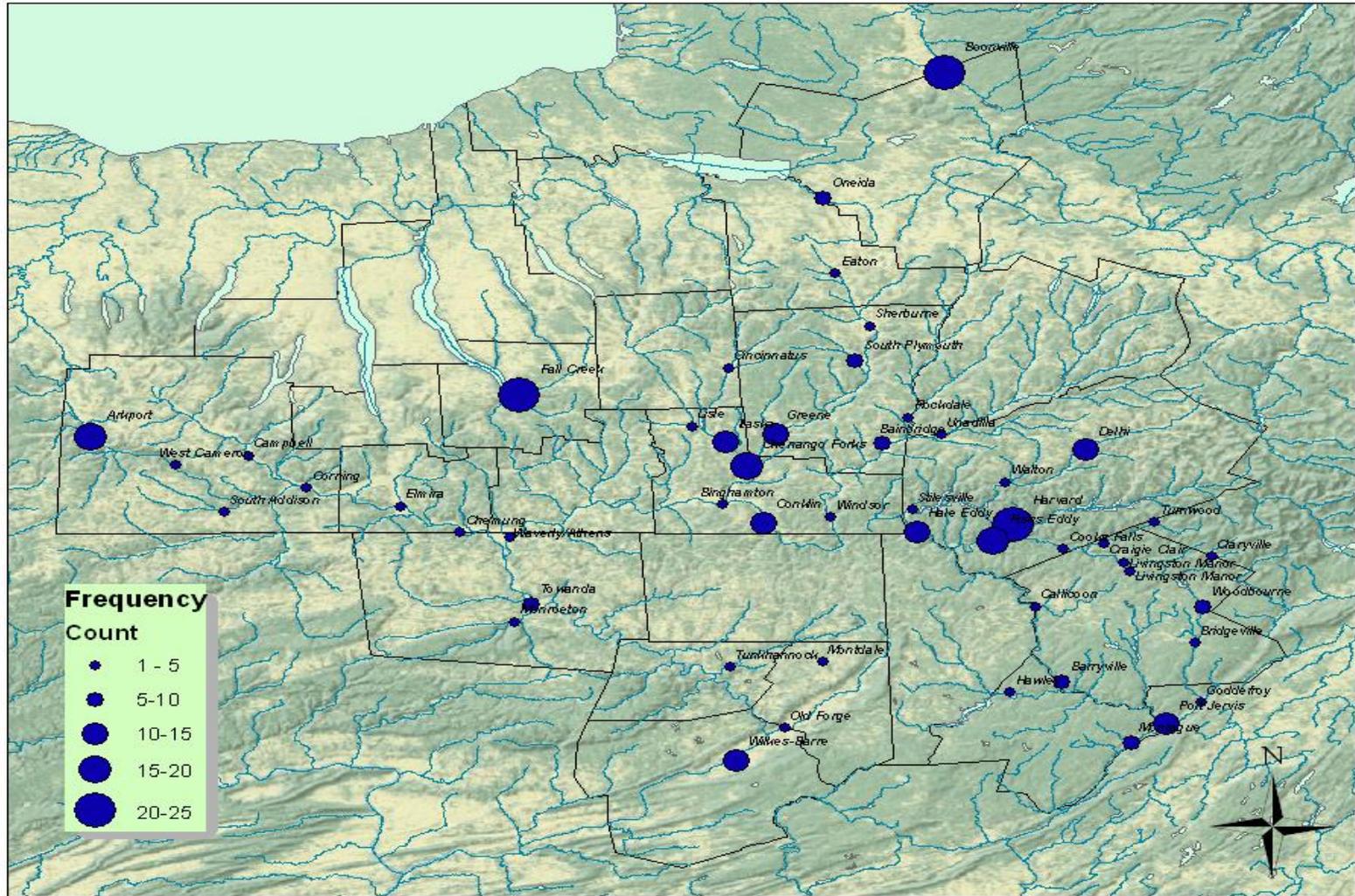
- ❖ Snow Depth: Above normal. 10-20" across Northeast Pennsylvania and the NY Southern Tier. Rest of Central NY; 20-30" with spotty higher totals.
- ❖ Snow Water Equivalent: Above normal. 2-4" South, and 4-6" North.
- ❖ Snow is currently cold and dry. Ripening of the snow before melting will take time, which is good.
- ❖ Most rivers are iced over more than in the past which is not good.
- ❖ Ice is estimated to be 12-18" thick on many streams and rivers.
- ❖ Ice thickness over 1 foot is a key to a higher chance for ice jam flooding.
- ❖ Frost depths are deep which will increase water running off into the rivers. Frost line under snow cover at NWS Binghamton is 20" which is unusual. Exposed areas, such as roads, parking lots and other bare ground may have much deeper frost lines.

SWE Return Period



This map shows the annual return frequency of having 4" to 6" of water in the snow pack over CNY and NEPA. This suggests there is a 1-in-10 chance of having these amounts every year. The amounts are definitely above normal, but generally not exceptionally unusual.

Ice Jam Frequencies



This picture indicates the common ice jam hot spots to be aware of in our region. The larger the dot, the higher occurrence of jams at a location. Database is only as good as what has been reported into it, and not ALL jams over time are accounted for.



Things to Remember

- Snow melt alone will not cause major flooding.
- A rapid warm up ***with heavy rain, wind and high humidity*** would bring the most trouble to the region.
- Daily average temperature 42° F and above causes ice to break up. Need to watch closely for this key indicator in forecast. (Daily High + Low divided by 2.)
- River ice thickness over 1 foot means higher risk for jams until the ice becomes “candled” and brittle.
- Problems may develop when river stage **increases 2-3 times** the current ice thickness.
- It would take river levels rising 2 to 4 feet higher than current levels to begin moving ice.



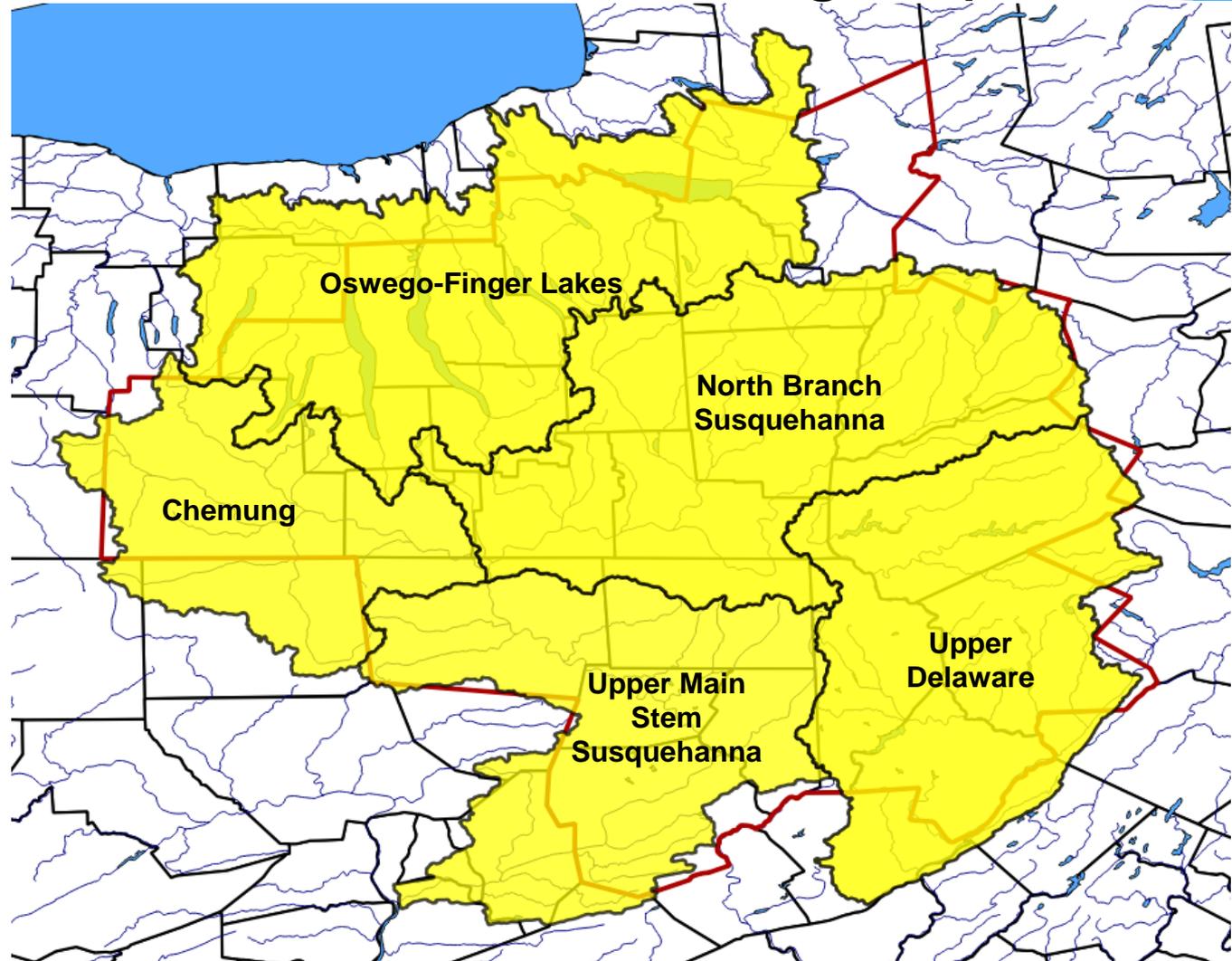
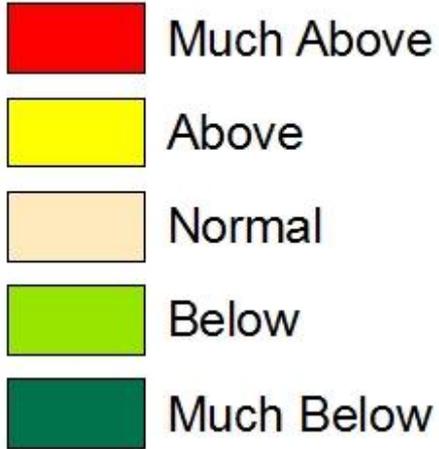
What We Think

- Weather forecast next 2 weeks is trending milder, but with a little less precipitation than average. No quick warmups are being advertised, yet. A gradual melt is expected for now.
- Given current conditions, we feel that there is a good chance for some degree of flooding in CNY and/or NEPA at some point in the next couple months.
- Best case scenario is a “maple sugar” thaw with mild days and cold nights.
- Worst case scenario is a rapid warm up with wind and heavy rain.
- **Ice jam related flooding** tops of our list of concerns right now.
- Know the ice jam hot spots in your county to stay ahead of the game.



Seasonal Flood Potential Through April

Flood Potential



Ice Jams are the primary concern.

The next two weeks flood risk is relatively low with no major storm or warm up in sight.



For More Information

- A more detailed Winter/Spring Flood Outlook briefing can be found on our You Tube channel at:
<https://www.youtube.com/user/NWSBinghamton>
- To monitor your rivers stages and forecasts, visit our AHPS page at:
<http://water.weather.gov/ahps2/index.php?wfo=bgm>
- Want to get a text alert when a river gauge goes above a certain level? Sign up at the USGS Water Alert site here:
<http://water.usgs.gov/wateralert/>
- To get the forecast for monitoring the temperatures and precipitation,
 - Enter your city at our mobile site
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