

LEVEL *news*



Great Lakes - St. Lawrence River Water Levels

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Below-Average Water Supplies Received by All Lakes except Erie

Water supplies to the local basins of lakes Superior, Michigan-Huron, and Ontario were below average during February. For Lakes Michigan-Huron, February was the fifth consecutive month with significantly below-average supplies. Lake Erie was the only Great Lake to have a monthly supply greater than its February average.

Lake Superior's level fell by 7 cm this February, 2 cm more than its average February decline of 5 cm. The level of Lakes Michigan-Huron declined by 2 cm in February, which is twice their average February decline of 1 cm. Lake Ontario's level declined by 5 cm this February, instead of

rising as it typically does during the month. On average, Lake Ontario's level has increased by 3 cm in February over the 1918-2010 period of record. Lake Erie's level rose by 7 cm during the month, compared to its average rise of 3 cm in February.

Ice restrictions reduced the flow in the St. Clair River causing a substantial drop in the level of Lake St. Clair in late February. This drop carried over into March. The level of Lake St. Clair is expected to recover once the ice restriction in the St. Clair River eases.

As indicated in the water level information table provided below, the levels of each of

the Great Lakes and Lake St. Clair remain below their respective 1918-2010 period-of-record average levels. All lakes are lower than they were one year ago. Water levels are particularly low on lakes Superior and Michigan-Huron. At the beginning of March, the levels of lakes Superior and Michigan-Huron were just 18 and 21 cm above their lowest levels for the beginning of March for the 1918-2010 period of record. Those lowest readings were recorded in 1926 and 1964, respectively.

Period of Record

Note that the period of record used for water level
(continued on next page)

Great Lakes Water Level Information

Lake	February 2011 Monthly Mean Level		Beginning-of-March 2011 Level	
	Compared to Monthly Average (1918-2010)	Compared to One Year Ago	Compared to Beginning-of-Month Average (1918-2010)	Compared to One Year Ago
Superior	34 cm below	21 cm below	35 cm below	20 cm below
Michigan-Huron	51 cm below	33 cm below	50 cm below	32 cm below
St. Clair	29 cm below	6 cm above	56 cm below	32 cm below
Erie	24 cm below	17 cm below	18 cm below	5 cm below
Ontario	19 cm below	13 cm below	21 cm below	11 cm below



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comparison purposes has been updated to 1918-2010, as compared to the previous use of 1918-2009. The addition of the 2010 water level data caused some of the long-term average monthly mean and beginning-of-month water level values to change slightly (by plus or minus one centimetre).

March Forecast

With average water supply conditions, the level of Lake Superior is expected to continue to fall slightly in March, as is typical at this time of year. The level of Lake St. Clair is expected to rise in March, as the ice conditions in the St. Clair River ease. The levels of lakes Michigan-Huron, Erie, and Ontario are all expected to rise in March from their current levels.

Six-Month Forecast

The February 2011 edition of the Canadian Hydrographic Service's monthly water level

bulletin posted at the beginning of March, at www.waterlevels.gc.ca/C&A/tidal_e.html, contains the forecasted range of water levels on each of the lakes for March through August 2011. Based on the latest six-month forecast water levels on each of the Great Lakes and Lake St. Clair will most likely remain below average throughout the spring and summer and, by extrapolation, potentially longer. However, since weather and attendant water-supply conditions can change significantly from one month to the next month, it is important to check the bulletin at the beginning of each month for the latest water level conditions and forecast.

Teleconference Reminder

The International St. Lawrence River Board of Control will hold a public teleconference on **Tuesday, March 15, 2011, from 7:00-8:30 p.m. EDT**, to discuss the regulation of outflows and water levels in the Lake Ontario-St. Lawrence River system. Participation in the meeting can be in person or by phone.

For detailed information about the teleconference and to download the meeting materials, please go to "Activities" on the Board's Web site at:

www.ijc.org/conseil_board/islrbc/en/activities.htm.

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Editor, Chuck Southam

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February Precipitation over the Great Lakes *

Great Lakes Basin	102%	Lake Erie	192%
Lake Superior	60%	(Including Lake St. Clair)	
Lakes Michigan-Huron	90%	Lake Ontario	107%

February Outflows from the Great Lakes *

Lake Superior	81%	Lake Erie	92%
Lake Huron	86%	Lake Ontario	100%

* As a percentage of the long-term February average.

NOTE: These figures are preliminary