LEVEL news

Great Lakes - St. Lawrence River Water Levels

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What a Difference a Month can Make

One month ago, ice only covered Lake St. Clair, the western end of Lake Erie, and shallow bays and inlets around the Great Lakes. Ice conditions have changed significantly due to the cold weather experienced during January. At the beginning of February, large areas of ice in varying concentrations and stages of development could be found on each of the lakes. Lake St. Clair, Lake Erie, and Georgian Bay were completely ice covered.

Please visit the Canadian Ice Service website at: **http://ice-glaces.ec.gc.ca/** for the latest ice conditions on each of the Great Lakes.

Water Levels

January also brought some notable changes in water levels. Lakes Erie and Ontario saw the biggest changes with the heavy rainfall early in January and the runoff that followed causing levels to increase by 20 and 22 cm, respectively, during the month. The increases in water levels experienced on these two lakes can be seen in the attached plots (please see over) showing the hourly water heights (in metres above Chart Datum) recorded last month at Port Stanley on Lake Erie and Cobourg on Lake Ontario.

Daily water levels on Lakes Michigan-Huron increased slightly instead of continuing to decline as they usually do during January. Daily water levels on Lakes Michigan-Huron increased just 3 cm during January; however, this increase helped levels on these lakes moved 5 cm closer to average by month's end. Lake Superior continued its annual seasonal decline during January. Levels fell by a near-average amount of 8 cm.

Great Lakes Water Level Information

Lake	January 2005 Monthly Mean Level		Beginning of February 2005 Level	
	Compared to Monthly Average (1918-2003)	Compared to One Year Ago	Compared to Beginning-of-Month Average (1918-2003)	Compared to One Year Ago
Superior	2 cm below	18 cm above	3 cm below	18 cm above
Michigan-Huron	26 cm below	21 cm above	23 cm below	23 cm above
St. Clair	15 cm above	31 cm above	20 cm above	33 cm above
Erie	25 cm above	29 cm above	26 cm above	36 cm above
Ontario	19 cm above	9 cm below	24 cm above	same

Environment Canada Environnement Canada

Canada

FOCUS, Winter 2004

The International Joint Commission's **FOCUS** newsletter is now available on-line at: **http://www.ijc.org/rel/focus/v29i4/index.html** .

The Winter 2004 edition includes articles about:

- The Lake Ontario - St. Lawrence River Study Board workshops.
- The 2005 IJC Great Lakes Conference and Biennial Meeting -- June 9-11, 2005 in historic Kingston, ON.
- Progress and future needs regarding Aquatic Alien Species and the Great Lakes - St. Lawrence Ecosystem.

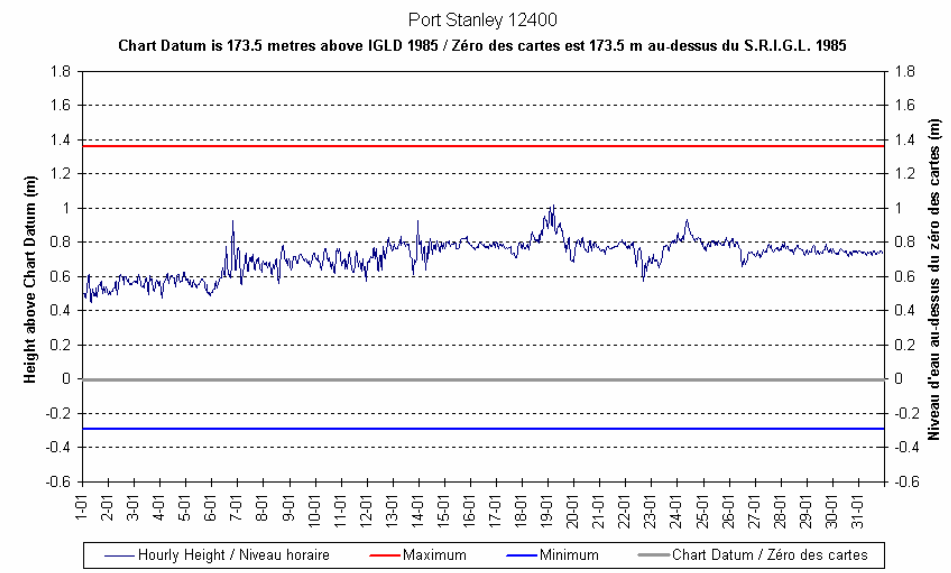
If you would like to be added to the newsletter's mailing list, please contact the IJC at: **commission@windsor.ijc.org** .

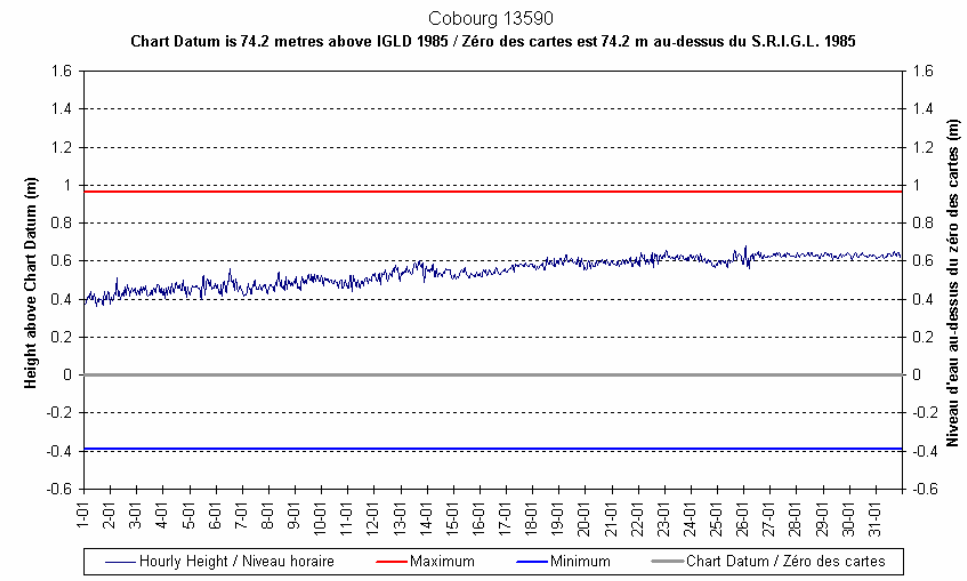
January Precipitation over the Great Lakes

As a percentage of the long-term January average:

Great Lakes Basin	**121%**	**Lake Erie**	**174%**
Lake Superior	**86%**	**(including Lake St. Clair)**	
Lakes Michigan-Huron	**129%**	**Lake Ontario**	**99%**

NOTE: These figures are preliminary





These water level plots and others can be found by visiting:
http://chswww.bur.dfo.ca/danp/recent-forecast_e.html

January Outflows from the Great Lakes

As a percentage of the long-term January average:

Lake Superior	**108%**	**Lake Erie**	**110%**
Lake Huron	**100%**	**Lake Ontario**	**100%**

NOTE: These figures are preliminary

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