

# LEVEL *news*



Great Lakes - St. Lawrence River Water Levels

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## ***Water Level Changes Reflect Below-average Supplies***

Water supplies to each of the Great Lakes were less than average during May. The below-average supply conditions were reflected in the water level changes experienced on each lake during the month

The water supplies to lakes Superior and Michigan-Huron were once again well below average during May. Daily water levels on lakes Superior and Michigan-Huron basins increased just 3 cm during May, much less than their long-term average increases of 10 and 8 cm, respectively, for the month. Their smaller-than-average increases further exacerbate the low water level situations on these lakes.

Although monthly mean water levels on lakes Erie and Ontario increased a few centimetres from April to May, May's below-average supply conditions caused daily levels on both these lakes to decline steadily during the month instead of increasing as they have on average. As a result, the levels on lakes Erie and Ontario fell below average at the end of May.

For the complete range of probable water levels on each lake over the next six months, please refer to the May 2007 edition of the Monthly Water Level Bulletin found at: [www.waterlevels.gc.ca/C&A/bulletin\\_e.html](http://www.waterlevels.gc.ca/C&A/bulletin_e.html).

### **Swimming Hazard**

LEVELnews would like to highlight a hazard often forgotten when discussing the current low water level conditions on lakes Superior and Michigan-Huron. With levels on these lakes lower than they were last year, it is imperative that anyone responsible for children — parents, grandparents and camp counsellors — check water depths for swimming and diving and remember to actively supervise young swimmers at all times. Help ensure that everyone enjoys fun-filled, accident-free visits to the Lakes this summer.

### **Great Lakes Water Level Information**

Lake	May 2007 Monthly Mean Level		Beginning of June 2007 Level	
	Compared to Monthly Average (1918-2006)	Compared to One Year Ago	Compared to Beginning-of-Month Average (1918-2006)	Compared to One Year Ago
Superior	50 cm below	37 cm below	53 cm below	40 cm below
Michigan-Huron	44 cm below	3 cm below	46 cm below	7 cm below
St. Clair	10 cm below	9 cm above	15 cm below	1 cm above
Erie	6 cm above	15 cm above	1 cm below	5 cm above
Ontario	4 cm above	21 cm above	3 cm below	14 cm above



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## IJC announces the membership of its International Upper Great Lakes Study Board and the Beginning of the Study

The International Joint Commission (IJC) of Canada and the U.S. has announced the membership of its International Upper Great Lakes Study Board. The five-year Upper Great Lakes Study will seek to determine whether the regulation of Lake Superior outflows pursuant to the order and plan can be improved to address the evolving needs of users on lakes Superior, Michigan-Huron and Erie. Physical changes in the St. Clair River, which forms part of the connecting channel between Lake Huron and Lake Erie, will be investigated early in the study. This is one factor that might be affecting water levels and flows. Depending upon the nature and extent of the

### FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Ralph Moulton, Manager  
Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Water Level  
Information Office  
P.O. Box 5050  
Burlington, ON L7R 4A6  
Tel. (905) 336-4580  
FAX: (905) 336-8901  
E-mail: [water.levels@ec.gc.ca](mailto:water.levels@ec.gc.ca)  
<http://www.on.ec.gc.ca/greatlakes/>

David Fay  
Great Lakes-St. Lawrence  
Regulation Office  
111 Water Street East  
Cornwall, ON K6H 6S2  
Tel. (613) 938-5725

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Editor, Chuck Southam

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## May Precipitation over the Great Lakes

As a percentage of the long-term May average:

Great Lakes Basin	71%	Lake Erie	56%
Lake Superior	97%	(including Lake St. Clair)	
Lakes Michigan-Huron	66%	Lake Ontario	49%

**NOTE:** These figures are preliminary

physical changes, and their potential impact on water levels and flows, the study may also explore potential remediation options.

The five-year Upper Great Lakes Study will:

- determine the factors that affect water levels and flows in the upper lakes;
- develop new regulation plans for the St. Mary's River and test their performance;
- assess the impacts of these plans on the ecosystem and human interests; and
- incorporate climate change scenarios into the analysis.

The IJC will also appoint a Public Interest Advisory Group (PIAG) to assist the Study Board with communication and outreach activities. The Study Board reflects a wide range of technical expertise from academia and government, as well as a broad geographic perspective from throughout the Upper Lakes. Also serving on the board are the co-chairs of the PIAG, making sure that the views of the public are given due consideration.

For more information about the IJC and its Study Board, including biographical information for Study Board members, please visit the IJC's Web site at: [www.ijc.org](http://www.ijc.org) or contact Mr. Greg McGillis at 613-947-1420.

## May Outflows from the Great Lakes

As a percentage of the long-term May average:

Lake Superior	71%	Lake Erie	101%
Lake Huron	86%	Lake Ontario	108%

**NOTE:** These figures are preliminary