

LEVEL *news*



Great Lakes - St. Lawrence River Water Levels

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Below-average Supplies Found Basin-wide during June

The water supplies to each of the Great Lakes were once again below average during June. Although still below average, the water supplies to Lake Superior were closer to average than they were to lakes Michigan-Huron, Erie and Ontario.

Near-average supply conditions, combined with below-average outflows caused the level of Lake Superior to increase 9 cm during June, 1 cm more than its long-term average June increase. Conversely, low supply conditions combined with low inflows from Lake Superior meant that the level of Lakes Michigan-Huron fell 1 cm during June – instead of increasing a few centimetres,

as it has on average during the month. As a result, levels on Lakes Michigan-Huron fell further below average during June and are now, as on Lake Superior, more than 50 cm below average.

The very low water supply to Lake Erie's local basin, combined with the lower-than-average inflow it received from the upper lakes, resulted in its level falling by 9 cm last month. Normally, it rises by 1 cm on average in June. Similarly, the level for Lake Ontario fell 11 cm during June instead of declining just slightly, as it has on average during the month.

The level of Lake Superior is currently about 8 cm higher

low level for this time of year. Although the level of Lake Superior is expected to increase during July, unless wet conditions are experienced soon, new record low monthly mean levels will likely be set in a month or two.

Although Lakes Michigan-Huron are still about 30 cm higher than they were at the same time in 1964, if dry conditions continue to persist over the next six months they could be close to their 1964 lows by the end of the year.

Near record low levels are not expected on either Lake Ontario or Lake Erie in the foreseeable future; their **(continued on next page)**

Great Lakes Water Level Information

Lake	June 2007 Monthly Mean Level		Beginning-of-July 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	52 cm below	36 cm below	52 cm below	32 cm below
Michigan-Huron	49 cm below	6 cm below	52 cm below	8 cm below
St. Clair	18 cm below	same	19 cm below	1 cm below
Erie	6 cm below	1 cm above	11 cm below	7 cm below
Ontario	6 cm below	9 cm above	13 cm below	1 cm below



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levels are expected to decline steadily over the next six months as they continue their seasonal declines. Both lakes began their seasonal decline earlier than average this year and have already experienced notable declines in their levels.

For the complete range of probable water levels on each lake over the next six months, please refer to the June 2007 edition of the Monthly Water Level Bulletin found at: www.waterlevels.gc.ca/C&A/bulletin_e.html.

Timetable for Decision on Lake Ontario and the St. Lawrence River Regulation

The International Joint Commission (the Commission) has released a timetable for its process to review the regulation of water levels and flows on Lake Ontario and the St. Lawrence River.

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
<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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June Precipitation over the Great Lakes

As a percentage of the long-term June average:

Great Lakes Basin	83%	Lake Erie	66%
Lake Superior	101%	(including Lake St. Clair)	
Lakes Michigan-Huron	82%	Lake Ontario	65%

NOTE: These figures are preliminary

The Commission will release its proposed decision on Lake Ontario-St. Lawrence River water level and flow regulation on September 17, 2007. At that time, the Decision Package will include a new draft Order of Approval, a new plan for regulating Lake Ontario outflows and informational papers on the proposed decision.

As announced in January of this year, the Commission intends to conclude its careful consideration of the final report of its International Lake Ontario-St. Lawrence River Study Board in 2007. The Commission's deliberations on Lake Ontario-St. Lawrence River water level and flow regulation and its work to develop a proposed decision are still underway.

While the Commission is working to ensure that its proposed decision will be viable, the Commission intends to consult with the public through several means, including a series of public hearings. The Commission will carefully consider the public

comments before finalizing its Orders of Approval and adopting a new regulation plan. The Commission will make further announcements, including its public hearing schedule, in the coming weeks.

June Outflows from the Great Lakes

As a percentage of the long-term June average:

Lake Superior	70%	Lake Erie	95%
Lake Huron	86%	Lake Ontario	98%

NOTE: These figures are preliminary