



LEVELnews

Great Lakes – St. Lawrence River Water Levels Dry, Cold Conditions Continue In March

The dry, cold conditions seen in February across the Great Lakes continued through March, resulting in less than average rises in lakes Michigan–Huron, Erie and Ontario. The cold weather also left 37% of the Great Lakes ice covered for the week of April 9, when the average is 9%.

- The monthly mean water level of Lake Superior was 20 cm above its period-of-record (1918–2014) average in March, 19 cm higher than March 2014, and the highest March level since 1997.

- Lake Michigan–Huron’s mean level in March was 19 cm above average, 53 cm above last year’s level and the highest mean level recorded in March since 1998.
- Lake Erie’s mean monthly level was 8 cm below average and the same as last year.
- Lake Ontario was 27 cm below its March average level, 14 cm lower than a year ago, and the lowest March level recorded since 2003.
- Montreal Harbour’s level steadily declined through March

keeping it below average.

Above-average water supplies were counteracted by above-average outflow, resulting in Lake Superior’s level falling 1 cm in March, less than the lake’s average (1918–2014) decline of 2 cm. Lake Michigan–Huron levels, on average, rise 4 cm in March, but due to below-average water supplies they remained stable. Lake St. Clair rose 36 cm in March, considerably more than its average rise of 17 cm, in part due to thick ice conditions

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Great Lakes Water Level Information				
Lake	March 2015 Monthly Mean Level		Beginning-of-April 2015 Level	
	Compared to Monthly Average (1918–2014)	Compared to One Year Ago	Compared to Beginning-of-Month Average (1918–2014)	Compared to One Year Ago
Superior	20 cm above	19 cm above	20 cm above	19 cm above
Michigan–Huron	19 cm above	53 cm above	18 cm above	52 cm above
St. Clair	3 cm above	14 cm above	12 cm above	22 cm above
Erie	8 cm below	Same	9 cm below	1 cm below
Ontario	27 cm below	14 cm below	32 cm below	12 cm below

in the St. Clair and Detroit Rivers. Lake Erie rose 9 cm in a month that on average rises 13 cm. Lake Ontario's level rose 2 cm during March, significantly less than its average rise of 14 cm.

Beginning-of-April Lake Levels

The beginning-of-April levels of lakes Superior and Michigan–Huron remained above average and above last year's, while the levels of lakes Erie and Ontario were below-average and at or below last year's levels. Lake Superior's beginning-of-April level was 20 cm above the 1918–2014

average, and 19 cm above last year's level. Higher beginning-of-April levels have been recorded on Lake Superior in only 12 years since 1918, and have not been this high since 1997. Lake Michigan–Huron's beginning-of-April level was 18 cm above average, 52 cm higher than last year, and the highest beginning-of-April level since 1998. Lake Erie was 9 cm below average at the beginning of April, and 1 cm lower than this time last year. Lake Ontario's level began April at 32 cm below average, and 12 cm lower than last year at this time. Lower beginning-of-April levels have been recorded on Lake Ontario in just 10 years since 1918, and this is the lowest it has been since 1965.

Water Level Forecast

For a graphical representation of recent and forecasted water levels on each of the Great Lakes, Lake St. Clair and Montreal Harbour, compared to their respective period-of-record monthly averages and

extreme levels, please refer to the Canadian Hydrographic Service's monthly water levels bulletin found at:

tides-marees.gc.ca/C&A/bulletin-eng.html

Ice Conditions on Lakes

The thick ice formed on the Great Lakes is expected to take some time to melt away. More information on Great Lakes ice conditions can be found on the Canadian Ice Service web site at: ice-glaces.ec.gc.ca.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

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March Precipitation over the Great Lakes*

Great Lakes Basin	44%	Lake Erie	39%
Lake Superior	69%	(including Lake St. Clair)	
Lake Michigan–Huron	37%	Lake Ontario	35%

March Outflows from the Great Lakes*

Lake Superior	130%	Lake Erie	100%
Lake Michigan–Huron	107%	Lake Ontario	95%

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

NOTE: These figures are preliminary.