

Media Release

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Canada confirms funding of study to review regulation of Lake Ontario and St. Lawrence River levels and flows

The Canadian Section of the International Joint Commission (IJC) has received funds today from the Government of Canada to review the regulation of water levels and flows in the St. Lawrence River and Lake Ontario. The Canadian Section received \$600,000 (Canadian dollars) for this fiscal year, which ends on March 31, 2001 and \$3.1 million (Canadian dollars) for next fiscal year.

The U.S. Section of the IJC received \$2.15 million (U.S. dollars) from the U.S. Government as initial funding for the review in a supplemental appropriation bill that passed in June 2000.

In October 1999, the IJC transmitted a detailed Plan of Study to the governments of the United States and Canada and requested the governments' assistance in securing the approximately \$20 million (U.S. dollars) needed to carry out the full five-year study.

It has been nearly 50 years since a comprehensive assessment was performed of water levels and flows regulation in the Lake Ontario-St. Lawrence River system. In April 1999, the IJC informed the two governments that it was becoming increasingly urgent to review the regulation of Lake Ontario outflows in view of dissatisfaction, on the part of some interests, with the working of that system and in light of environmental concerns and climate change issues. However, the IJC recognizes that the study may not resolve all the issues or result in significant additional benefits for any interest group.

The International Joint Commission was created under the Boundary Waters Treaty of 1909 to help prevent and resolve disputes over the use of waters along the Canada-United States boundary. Its responsibilities include approving certain projects that would change the natural levels and flows of boundary waters, such as the international Hydroelectric Power project at Massena, New York and Cornwall, Ontario. If it approves a project, the IJC's Order of Approval may require that the flows and water levels resulting from the project meet certain conditions to protect the interests in both countries. For more information, visit the [IJC's web site at www.ijc.org](http://www.ijc.org).

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