

# News Release

April 8, 2009

## REGULATION UPDATE FOR RAINY AND NAMAKAN LAKES

The Boards are issuing the following information in response to reports of public concern over the potential for high water levels this spring. This concern commenced with the well-above normal snowpack accumulated over the winter and grew with the occurrence of rainfall and above normal temperatures in March, which resulted in a period of sharply increased runoff. High water events in the basin in recent years and the current high water situation just to the west in the Red River basin were also influencing factors.

The Boards wish to advise the public that water level and flow data, and meteorological conditions, are being monitored across the Rainy-Namakan basin on a daily basis. The Boards are also maintaining contact with ACH LP and Boise Inc, the two companies that own the dams and operate them in accordance with the lake level rule curves put in place by the International Joint Commission (IJC).

While the potential for significant snowmelt runoff is above normal this year, the actual runoff will, as always, be very much influenced by weather conditions this spring. A high snowpack does not guarantee a large runoff. The initial rapid runoff has been slowed by a return to more seasonable weather. While runoff will pick up again, both lakes are well below their normal summer levels and have space to store excess water beyond that which can be discharged downstream. The snowmelt runoff would have to be augmented by significant spring and early summer rainfall in order to reach flood levels on the lakes.

Of course, as basin residents are well aware, significant spring and summer rainfall can in fact happen, resulting in overly high water levels. Weather drives the system; the Companies and the Boards have only limited ability to moderate the outcome. Further, operations must consider not only the lakes but downstream areas as well. Consequently the Boards stress the need for property owners to be aware of the water levels that have occurred in the past. Shoreline development should be planned and protected accordingly. Nevertheless, the Boards again note that the snowpack alone will not result in flood conditions on Rainy and Namakan lakes.

The Boards suggest that waterfront property owners and users of the system keep themselves updated on basin conditions. Up-to-date information can be found by selecting the International Rainy Lake Board of Control under "Boards" at

[www.ijc.org](http://www.ijc.org). Persons can also call the Board's contacts, Rick Walden (819-997-2529) or Ed Eaton (651-290-5617).