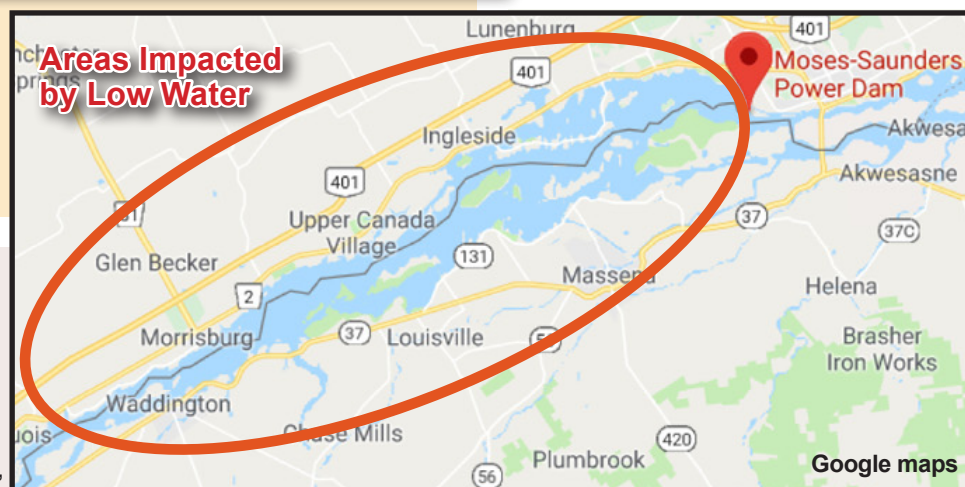


International Lake Ontario - St. Lawrence River Board



Quarterly Newsletter: Fall 2019



Boat Haulout

With Lake Ontario's water levels on the decline, combined with extraordinarily high outflows still being released through Moses-Saunders Dam, the forebay upstream of the dam has seen a significant, sustained drop in water levels, making it extremely challenging to haul out boats that would normally be removed at this time of year under more-normal flow conditions.

To assist these efforts, the Board will temporarily reduce outflows and increase water levels on Lake St. Lawrence, which will allow marinas and shoreline property owners with docks a one-time opportunity to access their boats to haul out for the season. The proposed assistance to boaters in Lake St. Lawrence will have little impact on the water levels of Lake Ontario, even over the weekend of the outflow reduction (1 cm or less than 1/2 inch).

An outflow reduction of approximately 1,000 m³/s (35,300 cubic feet per second) is scheduled for a 48-hour period from the evening of 11 October through the evening of 13 October. This is expected to increase Lake St. Lawrence levels by roughly 50 cm (20 in). Note that the reduced outflows will cause levels in the Montreal area to temporarily decline by over 30 cm (12 in) during these dates.

Because of the relative sizes of Lake Ontario and Lake St. Lawrence, the total effect of the flow reduction will be equivalent to 1 cm (0.4 in) of water that would otherwise be released from Lake Ontario during this time, and this additional amount will be removed over the fall months, as conditions allow, to ensure **the net impact on Lake Ontario water levels will be zero.**

The Board carefully considered the full range of impacts of this operation, including the significant impact that high 2019 Lake Ontario and St. Lawrence River water levels have had, and in some cases continue to have, on people who live and work along the shoreline.



There are approximately 700 marina and boat club slips around Lake St. Lawrence and hundreds of private docks that are impacted. Without raising water levels here, many boats would be left on the bed of Lake St. Lawrence and vulnerable to significant damage from winter conditions.

GLAM

Devastating impacts of high water occurred throughout the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River basin in 2019. It is critically important that the memories of these high water impacts are documented and summarized so that, as time goes by, these will not be forgotten. To support such a summary, the International Joint Commission's (IJC) Great Lakes – St. Lawrence River Adaptive Management (GLAM) Committee is seeking first-hand observations and experiences from all who would volunteer to tell their story related to high water impacts in 2019.



A questionnaire has been developed that allows impacted shoreline property owners to report directly on their experiences in 2019. The questionnaire includes opportunities to describe the types and extent of their high water impacts, as well as upload photos to illustrate those impacts. Responses will be summarized by the GLAM Committee as part of its reporting to the Board and the IJC and will also be used to improve models that are used to assess potential impacts under a range of water level conditions.

Further information, including a link to the questionnaire itself, is available on the GLAM Committee website (<https://ijc.org/en/glam/watershed/questionnaire/high-water-levels-2019>). Property owners are encouraged to complete the questionnaire as soon as the extent of their high water impacts are available.

Seasonal Decline

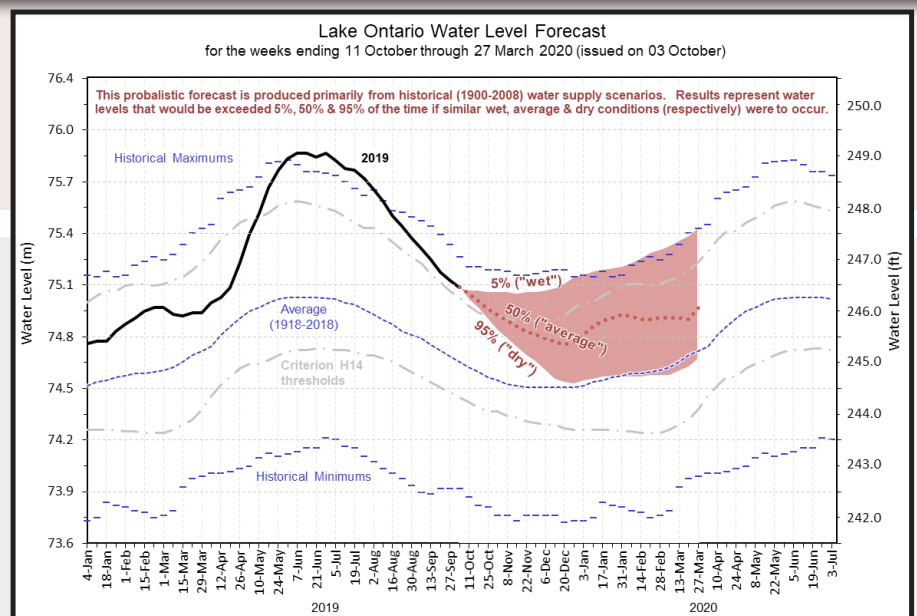
Lake Ontario is expected to continue its seasonal decline over the next several weeks. Much like all the other Great Lakes, each year, Lake Ontario's water levels follow a seasonal trend - rising in the spring, peaking in the summer, and falling through the autumn and winter seasons. The primary driver is the natural, uncontrolled water supplies into the basin, and not a regulation plan.

What regulation can do, when compared to pre-dam conditions, is reduce peak elevation and shorten the recovery time, as conditions allow, following a high-water event. This is exactly what Plan 2014 has been doing during the 2019 high water event.

Outflows for this time of year remain near record-high rates. As Lake Ontario continues its seasonal decline, the Board is maintaining outflows now and for the foreseeable future at the maximum rate possible given shoreline property owners' interests and safety considerations throughout the Lake Ontario - St. Lawrence River System.

As Lake Ontario levels decline, it is necessary to gradually decrease outflows to maintain the same balanced impacts. River velocities increase as the same volume of water passes through a lower and narrower river and levels in the upper St. Lawrence drop, including Lake St. Lawrence. These levels are expected to remain near minimum safe values for commercial navigation, and in consideration of water intake protection, throughout the remainder of the season.

Lake Ontario Water Level Forecast



For the most up to date forecast information visit:
<https://ijc.org/en/loslr/watershed/forecasts>

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The Board's website (www.ijc.org/loslr)

Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/InternationalLakeOntarioStLawrenceRiverBoard>).

