

November 3, 2010

Control Board continues following regulation plan

The International St. Lawrence River Board of Control (Board) recently reviewed conditions in the Lake Ontario-St. Lawrence River system. The Board has decided to continue to release outflows in accordance with the regulation plan as much as possible. Outflows may be adjusted to avoid extreme water level conditions downstream, or to meet critical hydropower and navigation needs.

The supply of water received by Lake Ontario was below average during September. Lower than average Lake Erie outflows were somewhat offset by above-average precipitation on the Lake Ontario basin. Lake Ontario's water level remains at average for this time of year, and has followed its seasonal average since mid July. Since August 14, outflows have been as specified by Plan 1958-D, and the lake level remains the same as that computed by the Plan.

Lake Ontario is presently at 74.59 m (244.72 ft), which is average for this time of year. There is almost no risk of Lake Ontario reaching its upper level limit in 2010; there is a small risk of low Lake Ontario levels later this fall. The Board urges everyone to be prepared to live within the range of levels specified in the Orders of Approval. Water levels on Lake St. Lawrence have generally been at or above average since late May, and are currently 11 cm (4 in.) above average for this time of year.

Levels of the St. Lawrence River near Montreal rose sharply at the end of September following heavy rainfalls, and reached near-record high values before recently falling back below average. The level at the Port of Montreal is presently about 50 cm (20 in.) above chart datum, but 32 cm (12.6 in) below average. With average weather conditions, the level in the Harbour would remain below average, but above chart datum for the next six months.

The Board, in conjunction with its staff, is monitoring the situation carefully and is prepared to take action if required. The Board will assess the situation again in about 4 weeks, or earlier if there is a significant change in conditions.

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The International St. Lawrence River Board of Control was established by the International Joint Commission in its 1952 order of approval. The Board's main duty is to ensure that outflows from Lake Ontario meet the requirements of the IJC order; it also develops regulation plans and conducts special studies requested by the IJC. For more information, visit www.ijc.org (> Boards > International St. Lawrence River Board of Control). To receive a weekly e-mail about water levels and flows in the Lake Ontario–St. Lawrence River system, please send a blank e-mail message to stlaw-L-subscribe@cciw.ca, with the word 'subscribe' in the title and body of your message.