

August 15, 2011

## Control Board Acts on Falling Lake St Lawrence Levels

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 release outflows moderately lower than those specified by the regulation plan for the next three weeks. Although levels on Lake Ontario are slightly above those specified by the Plan, they have fallen rapidly during the past month. The levels of Lake St. Lawrence (that portion of the St. Lawrence River from Iroquois to the power dam at Cornwall-Massena) are at the lowest levels since 1998 for this time of year, causing problems for recreational boaters to access their docks. The Board may vary outflows to meet other critical needs.

The Board intends to release outflows 100 m<sup>3</sup>/s (3500 cfs) below those prescribed by Plan 1958-D for about three weeks to increase the water level at Lake St Lawrence by approximately 5 cm (2 in) compared to what they would have been otherwise. This action started on August 10 and is expected to continue to about the end of the month. Actual levels may differ depending on the winds since northeast or east winds lower the levels of Lake St. Lawrence considerably. The best opportunity for boaters to access lifts and docks may come during periods with sustained southwest or west winds. Lake Ontario will be maintained above the levels it would otherwise be than if the Plan outflows were followed, and at the end of the three weeks would be storing an additional 1 cm (0.4 in). Due to this action, the levels of Lake St. Louis are expected to be about 4 cm (1.6 in) lower than they otherwise would be. Lake St. Louis levels are near average for this time of year.

The Board, in conjunction with its staff, continues to monitor the situation carefully and is prepared to take further action as required.

Water levels on both Lake Ontario and the St. Lawrence River can vary considerably from year to year. The Board urges everyone to be prepared to live within the range of levels specified in the Orders of Approval. For Lake Ontario, the upper limit for monthly mean levels is 75.37 m (247.3 ft) and the lower limit (from April to December) is 74.15 m (243.3 ft), a range of 1.22 m (4 ft). Levels on the river tend to vary more widely.

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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 [http://ijc.org/conseil\\_board/islrbc/en/main\\_accueil.htm](http://ijc.org/conseil_board/islrbc/en/main_accueil.htm). 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](mailto:stlaw-L-subscribe@cciw.ca), with the word 'subscribe' in the title and body of your message.*