

October 27, 2011

Control Board continues to follow Plan flows

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 as specified by the regulation plan. The Board may vary outflows to meet critical hydropower, navigational or other needs. As the levels on Lake Ontario are currently following their seasonal decline, the Board intends to retain the 2.7 cm (1 in) of water currently stored on the lake and release this water in the winter.

The level on Lake Ontario as of October 26, 2011 was 74.68 m (245.01 ft), 9 cm (3½ in) above the long-term average for that time of year. Water levels on Lake St. Lawrence have generally remained below average since August, but are currently near average for this time of year. Levels of the St. Lawrence River near Montreal have gradually fallen since June and have been below seasonal long-term average levels for the past month, but still above the Seaway Alert Level. The level at the Port of Montreal on October 26, 2011 was 6.09 m (19.98 ft), 25 cm (10 in) below average.

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 full range of levels that have occurred. The Board strives to maintain the range of monthly mean levels of Lake Ontario below the upper limit of 75.37 m (247.3 ft) and above the lower limit (from April to December) of 74.15 m (243.3 ft) specified in the Orders of Approval. However, the Board points out that the actual monthly levels have been respectively higher and lower than those limits during regulation, on the rare occasions when climate conditions were outside the design range. Furthermore, wind set up and wave runup may increase local levels on the lake and river.

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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. 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.