



March 15, 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 flooding or other extreme water level conditions downstream, or to meet critical hydropower and navigation needs. Flow reductions earlier this winter to assist in ice formation resulted in about 3.7 cm (1.5 in) of water retained on Lake Ontario. This water has been released through outflows above the regulation plan-specified amounts the past several weeks. Lake Ontario is now at its plan-specified level.

The supply of water received by Lake Ontario was below average in February. Lake Ontario's level rose slightly in January in response to melting snow and has since declined to about where it was at the beginning of the year. The level is presently at 74.49 m (244.39 ft) which is about 18 cm (7.1 in) below average and 42 cm (16.5 in) below last year at this time. There is very little risk of Lake Ontario reaching its upper level limit in 2010; there is a small but growing risk of low levels in the fall. Water levels in the international section of the St. Lawrence River have generally been near average the past several months. Levels near Montreal have been below average for the past several months, but well above chart datum.

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.islrbc.org/ or 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.