
INTERNATIONAL RAINY LAKE BOARD OF CONTROL (IRLBC) INTERNATIONAL RAINY RIVER WATER POLLUTION BOARD (IRRWPB)

NEWSLETTER

3rd Quarter 2010

This newsletter provides a summary of the activities of the International Rainy Lake Board of Control (IRLBC) and the International Rainy River Water Pollution Board (IRRWPB) during the 3rd Quarter (July to September) of 2010.

Basin Conditions and Regulation

The condition of Namakan and Rainy Lakes changed dramatically in July. Rainfall for the month in the Rainy-Namakan basin was the fourth highest in 106 years of record, with much of it coming in the first week of the month. Kettle Falls received 190 mm (almost 8 inches) in the first five days of July. Water levels, inflows and outflows are shown on the attached graphs for both lakes.

Namakan Lake, which had been below its lower rule curve since May 17, was back within the rule curve band on July 3. Due to the dramatic increase in inflow, the lake rose above its upper rule curve on July 6. Outflow was increased from 49 m³/s on July 5 to 310 m³/s by July 10. The lake was back within its rule curve band on July 15. The lake remained within its rule curve band for the remainder of the quarter, although heavy precipitation at the end of the third week of July necessitated a doubling of outflow to control the lake level. Namakan Lake level ended September at 49% of band.

Rainy Lake levels rose quickly after the early July rainfall. The level, which had been below the IJC's lower rule curve since May 10, was back within the rule curve band on July 8. Rainy Lake outflow was increased from the IJC minimum of 100 m³/s at the beginning of July to almost 600 m³/s before month-end. Lake levels rose to 84% of band late in July before beginning a gradual decline. Inflows rose sharply again in late September, but outflow increases prevented the lake from exceeding the upper rule curve. Rainy Lake ended the quarter at 83 % of band and was declining.

Board Meetings and Activities

The Boards held a conference call on July 9 to discuss planning for projects needed to complete the 2015 rule curve review for Namakan and Rainy lakes. Project management for the process was also discussed.



Boards Visit to Little Turtle Lake, August 18, 2010 (Photo: R Cousins)

The Boards held their joint annual basin meetings on August 17-19. Participating from the IJC were Commissioners Joe Comuzzi, Sam Speck and Pierre Trepannier, as well as engineering advisors Mark Colosimo and Paul Pilon. In addition to their own meetings, the Boards met with the Namakan and Rainy Lake dam operators on August 17 and held a public meeting at La Place Rendez-vous in Fort Frances that evening.

On August 18, the Boards toured the Seine River area, with the Seine River First Nation hosting. The Boards

viewed a number of sites related to wild rice harvesting and sturgeon spawning and met with elders at the Seine River First Nation community.

On August 19, the Boards met with resource agencies. Representatives of several of the agencies outlined work being carried out within the basin.

Other items of note during the quarter included the following:

- The Boards welcomed Col Michael J. Price, the new commander of the St. Paul District of the US Army Corps of Engineers, as the new US Chair of the International Rainy Lake Board of Control, effective July 2, 2010. Col Price succeeded Col Jon Christensen.
- As noted in the second quarter newsletter, the governments of the United States and Canada have issued a reference to the International Joint Commission to examine and make recommendations regarding bi-national management in the Lake of the Woods and Rainy River watersheds and the IJC's potential role in this management. In July the IJC established a task force to assist it with the reference. The IJC held public meetings in the Lake of the Woods and Rainy River Basin in early September 2010 to announce the reference and introduce the new Task Force. The Task Force has established a Citizen Advisory Committee (CAG) and drafted a work plan to be reviewed by the CAG and the public in October 2010.
- A proposal was approved under the IJC's International Watersheds Initiative for the Canadian Hydraulics Centre to carry out additional work with the model of the upper Rainy River that had been developed earlier in 2010. An initial meeting was held between IRLBC staff and the principal investigators in mid-September.
- Representative Board members and staff continued discussions with the IJC and resource agencies towards engaging a project manager to oversee scoping and implementation of studies identified in a report by the IJC's 2000 Rule Curve Assessment Workgroup. This report entitled, "Plan of Study for the Evaluation of the IJC 2000 Order for Rainy and Namakan Lakes and Rainy River" was submitted by the Workgroup to the IJC in June 2009 and is posted on the IRLBC website.
- On September 28, the Boards submitted their joint semi-annual report to the IJC, in advance of the IJC's semi-annual meetings to be held in Ottawa in late October.

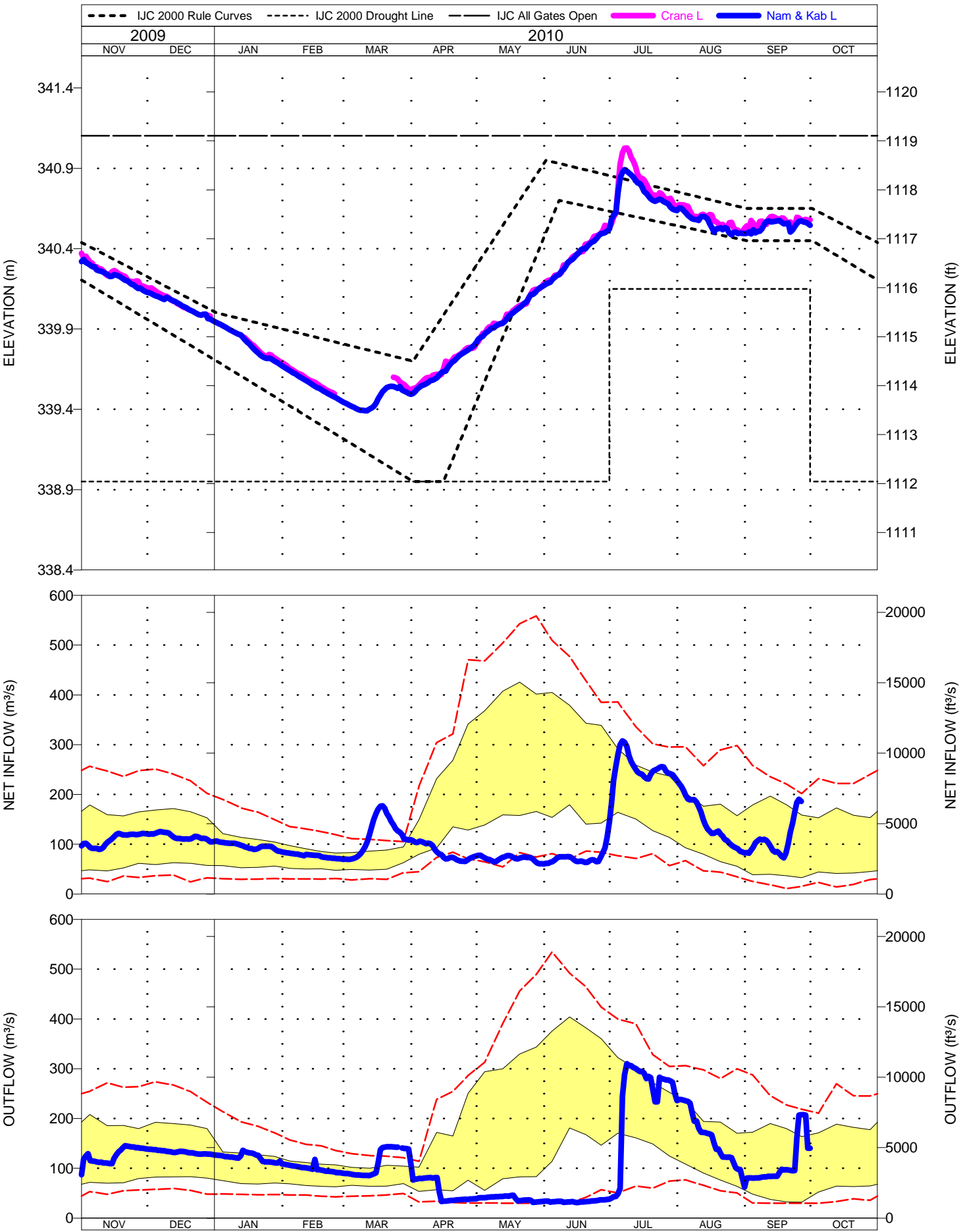


Crilly Dam (Seine River), August 18, 2010 (Photo: M DeWolfe)



Crilly Dam Tailwater, August 18, 2010 (Photo: M DeWolfe)

NAMAKAN LAKE



RAINY LAKE

Figure 2

