

**INTERNATIONAL RAINY LAKE BOARD OF CONTROL  
INTERNATIONAL RAINY RIVER WATER POLLUTION BOARD****NEWSLETTER****1<sup>st</sup> Quarter 2005**

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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 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter (January – March) of 2005.

***Basin Conditions and Regulation***

Water levels, inflows and outflows up to the end of March are shown on the attached graphs for Namakan and Rainy lakes. Namakan started the 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter 4 cm (< 1.5 in) above its IJC operating band and rose to a high of 5 cm (2 in) above its upper rule curve on January 6<sup>th</sup>. This was due to a water level gauge error that was discovered in early January; the malfunctioning gauge had shown the lake to still be within the IJC operating band. Rainy Lake was at 74% of its band at the start of the year and remained within its IJC operating band throughout the 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter of 2005. Inflow to both lakes stayed mostly in the normal to high normal range with declining lake levels throughout the reporting period after the first week in January. Precipitation during January was 96 percentile or 3 times the normal, was normal in February and was only 18 percentile in March. On March 31<sup>st</sup>, Namakan and Rainy were at 51% and 48% of their respective operating bands. A slightly above normal snowpack water content over the basin and unseasonably mild temperatures right at the end of March hinted at a possible early snowmelt runoff and ice out on Namakan and Rainy in 2005.

***IRRWPB Membership Change***

Jeff Stoner of the United States Geological Survey (USGS) was appointed by the International Joint Commission (IJC) to the IRRWPB, effective March 18, 2005. Mr. Stoner succeeds Jo-Lynn Traub as the IRRWPB Federal representative for the United States. Mr. Stoner is the Director of the USGS Minnesota Water Science Center in Mounds View, MN.

***Rainy River Hydropower Peaking***

In early February 2005, the US Co-chair of the IRLBC received a letter (dated February 7<sup>th</sup>) from Boise Cascade announcing plans to conduct a “limited trial in peaking” at their International Falls generating station. Boise stated that the trial was necessary due to the continued rise in energy costs for their mill, that it wasn’t a full return to peaking but a trial to test equipment and operating guidelines for a possible return to peaking, and that the Boards would be notified before a full return to peaking. As of early March, 2005, Boise had completed the trial, was evaluating the results, and had no immediate plans to resume peaking pending their analysis of the trial.

### ***Lake of the Woods Water Quality Forum***

One IRLBC member, one IRRWPB member and two IRLBC support staff attended the 2nd Annual Lake of the Woods International Water Quality Forum at the Rainy River Community College in International Falls on March 30, 2005. This was a professional symposium intended for researchers and resource managers working and/or interested in research and management activities related to Lake of the Woods and the watersheds flowing into it. The forum, which brought together about 90 people (more than double the number from the first forum in February 2004), provided an opportunity for researchers to update attendees on the work completed or initiated over the past year.

### ***ManOMin Watershed Sustainability Conference***

Two IRLBC members and two IRLBC support staff attended the 2005 ManOMin Watershed Conference in Fort Frances on March 31 and April 1, 2005. The conference was well attended by a varied cross-section of people including First Nations, scientists, resource managers, tourist outfitters, land owners and the general public. This year's conference, the fourth to be held, focussed on sustainability of resources and the vision for the future. Several speakers expressed concern for the future of the basin's fish and natural resources. They encouraged local people to become proactive and not wait for governments to act. Chief Al Hunter of the Rainy River First Nation announced that he is proposing to convene a "Summit on Rural Culture" sometime in the next year with the goal of forming a partnership to protect the Rainy River.

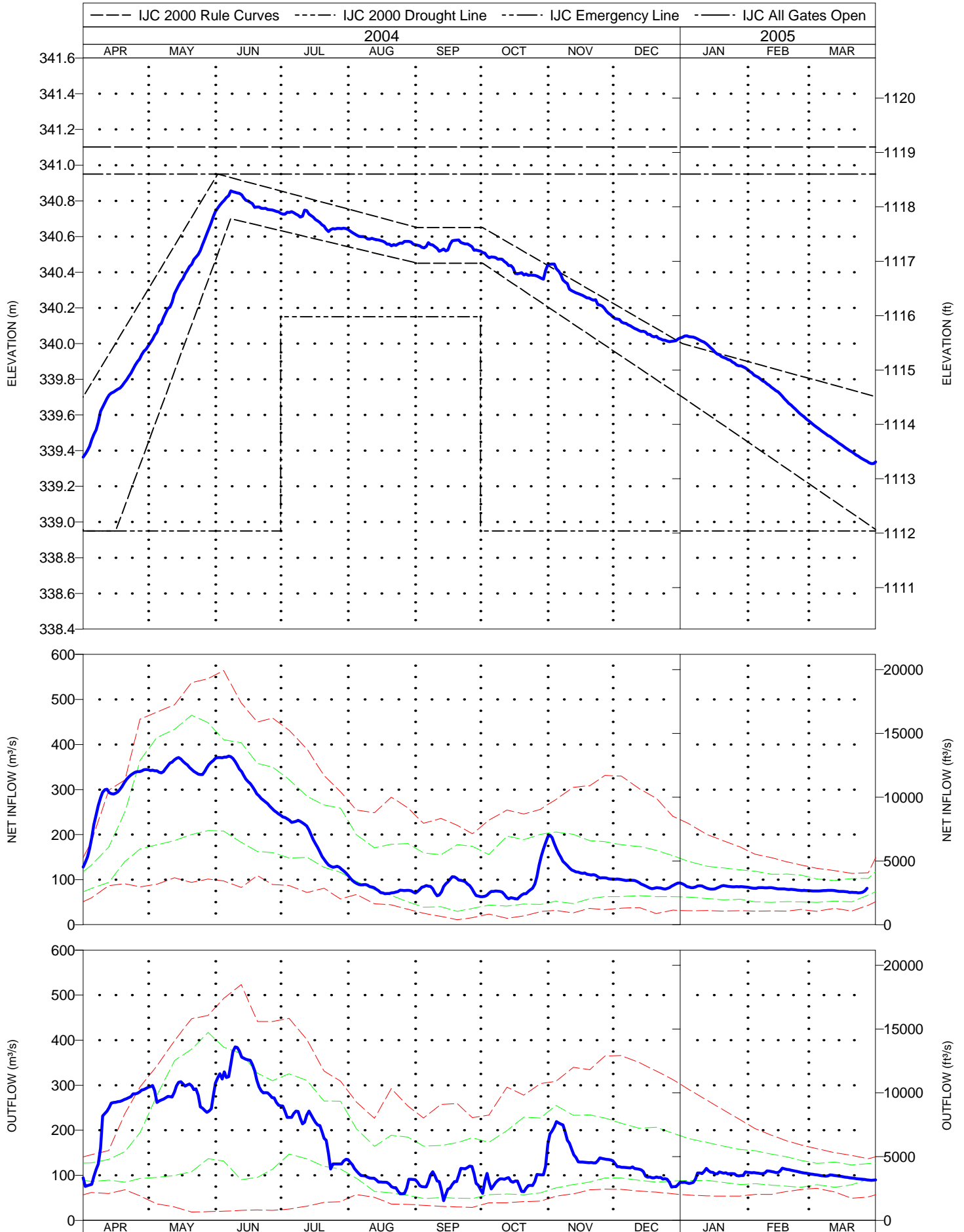
### ***Board Meetings Summary***

The Boards held three joint conference calls during this reporting period. The conference calls were conducted on February 11, 2005, March 7, 2005, and March 29, 2005. Key topics of discussion included work on the Boards' Spring 2005 Report to the IJC, preparations for the Spring semi-annual meetings of the IJC, Rainy River hydropower peaking, improvements to the Boards' web sites, preparation of the 3rd and 4th Quarter 2004 Newsletters, Lake of the Woods Water Quality Forum, Man-O-Min Conference, and membership of the IRLBC and IRRWPB.

*Questions or comments? Contact the Boards' Secretary:*

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# NAMAKAN LAKE



# RAINY LAKE

