

SEARCH
DETNEWS.COM

GO

HOT COMPANIES are Looking for **YOU!**Brought
to you by: **Michigan
JOBHUNTER**

Sunday, February 4, 2001

The Detroit News

▶ E-mail this story

▶ Comment on this story

detnews
.comSITE
INDEX

NEWS

SPORTS

ENTERTAINMENT

Copyright 2001
The Detroit News.Use of this site
signifies your
agreement to the
[Terms of Service](#)
(updated April 17,
2000).

State's lake water levels continue drop

Huron, Michigan, Superior decline for third straight year

Dire spring forecast

Water levels on lakes Huron, Michigan and Superior are markedly lower than last February, bringing bad news for boaters, marinas and some shoreline residents.



Note: Lake Michigan and Lake Huron levels are the same.

Source: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

The Detroit News

By Jeremy Pearce / The Detroit News

With a dire spring forecast for Michigan boaters, water levels on Lakes Huron, I and Superior continue a three-year retreat and aren't expected to rise in time for bo season.

Lake Superior's waters have dropped by 6 inches since just last February, accord Army Corps of Engineers scientists.

Lakes Michigan and Huron are each down by 5 inches. All five Great Lakes rem in some cases, feet -- below their long-term average levels, exposing rocks, shoreli dock pilings not seen since the 1960s.

"After all this snow, if you can't move your boat down a canal or to your well, so very wrong," said Don Mercer, a Farmington resident who sails his boat on Lake S

Weather experts agree that only an immediate surge in rain or snowfall can halt t declines.

"We keep hoping, but the likelihood of the lakes turning around and rising isn't h Adam Fox, a Corps hydrologist in Detroit. "The weather would have to change rig today."

Scientists throughout the Great Lakes hesitate to tie lake declines to larger global But they admit the possibility of shifts in climate. Most are convinced that conditic of a 30-year cycle that caused widespread flooding as recently as the 1980s.

One theory holds that global warming may be making the cycle more pronounc

"It's going to take at least another five or 10 years of data to test that theory," said Quinn of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

Superior's levels are 13 inches below the long-term average. Lakes Michigan and Huron have fallen 23 inches. Lake Erie is down by 9 inches; and Lake Ontario is 4 inches below average.

Near Detroit, the closely watched waters of Lake St. Clair are 8 inches below long-term average, although heavy winter ice has helped to temporarily push water levels up.

"The Detroit River is a little slushy right now. That makes the water back up, so it's not sinking," said Fox. "That slush will melt. Things are going to change and probably not for the better."

You can reach Jeremy Pearce at (313) 223-4825 or jpearce@detnews.com.

[▶ Comment on this story](#)

[▶ Previous story](#) [▶ Back to index](#)