



US Army Corps
of Engineers
North Central Division

GREAT LAKES LEVELS

UPDATE, NO. 4

4 November 1985

The Great Lakes, except Lake Ontario, remain extremely high. Lakes Superior, Michigan-Huron and St. Clair set new record high levels in October. The approaching storm season continues to be of concern since the high lake levels could compound storm damage to shoreline property.

The attached bulletin shows our projected levels for the period November 1, 1985 through April 30, 1986. All the upper Great Lakes are predicted to remain high for the next six months. The Lake Superior October mean level of 602.13 feet was about 14 inches above the October average and was the highest level of record for any month. Lake Ontario, on the other hand, has fallen to near normal for this time of year. Its level is expected to fall below normal in November and remain below normal through the end of the year.

In April of this year, the IJC directed its International Lake Superior Board of Control to reduce Lake Superior outflows below the flows prescribed by Plan 1977, the regulation plan for Lake Superior. The objective was to alleviate harm, to the extent possible, due to high water conditions on the lower lakes while not exceeding, as nearly as may be, the level of 602' on Lake Superior. Heavy precipitation in August (35% above average), in September (90% above average), and in October (19% above average) on the Lake Superior basin required the IJC to direct the Board to increase the Lake Superior outflows during these months. The Lake Superior level seemed to have peaked at the end of the first week in September and begun its seasonal decline. However, additional very heavy rainfall near the end of September caused the level to rise again.

Since 11 October, the outflow of Lake Superior has been at a record rate of 133,000 cfs, thus resulting in an October average outflow of 125,000 cfs. However, the level remains near its annual peak as rainfall continues. Flow through the Davis and Sabin navigation locks was resumed on 9 October. The Davis lock was subsequently closed on 20 October and two additional gates were opened in the compensating works at Sault Ste. Marie bringing the total gates open to nine.

By the end of October, the effect of the IJC's emergency action was:

Lake Superior	Up 2-3/4 inches
Lakes Michigan-Huron	Down 2 inches
Lake St. Clair	Down 1-1/4 inches
Lake Erie	Down 1 inch

The Province of Ontario has continued to withhold about 4,000 cfs of the Ogoki Diversion in an effort to reduce the supplies to Lake Superior.

In addition, the Corps of Engineers' Detroit and Buffalo Districts are continuing to pursue a program for providing flood protection measures to the States of Michigan and Ohio. Potential flooding problems exist primarily along the shore of Lake Erie, the Detroit River, and Lake St. Clair. In Michigan, construction has begun at Luna Pier and Milleman in Brownstown Township while project development continues at Detroit Beach in Frenchtown Township, Estral Beach, and Labo Island in Brownstown Township. In Ohio, three projects were approved. They are: Reno Beach/Howard Farms, Whites Landing, and Bayview. Project development continues at Eastlake. All other potential locations are either ineligible or have declined participation in the program.

For Great Lakes basin technical assistance or information, please contact one of the following Corps of Engineers District offices:

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The updates will be continued for the next few months to provide additional information on the actions being taken to help alleviate high water level conditions and to provide flood protection.


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Commanding