



**US Army Corps  
of Engineers**  
North Central Division

# **GREAT LAKES LEVELS UPDATE NO. 23 3 JUNE 1987**

Again, another month of below average precipitation on the Great Lakes basin. The preliminary reports for the month of May indicate that the precipitation ranged from near average on Lake Superior to about one-half the average amount on Lake Ontario. As a result, the Lakes Superior and Michigan-Huron levels stayed relatively constant, again during May, instead of rising as is normal for this time of the year. The other Great Lakes appear to have peaked and are in their seasonal decline, however, Lakes St. Clair and Erie levels are declining at a slower rate than Lake Ontario. Currently, Lake Superior's mean monthly level is only about 1/10 foot above its long-term mean and the Lake Ontario mean monthly level is about 1/2 foot above its long-term mean. The middle lakes are now less than 2 feet above their long-term monthly mean levels. Even so, these are still considered to be extremely high levels. The attached bulletin shows the actual levels through May and the six-month forecasts. Our forecasts show an improved trend toward lower levels on Lakes Michigan-Huron, St. Clair and Erie to about 1-1/2 feet above the long-term mean in November.

The International Joint Commission (IJC) is continuing to direct the outflows for Lakes Superior and Ontario. The Lake Superior outflow according to Plan 1977 is continuing during June and will decrease from 89,000 cubic feet per second (cfs) to a discharge of about 76,000 cfs. The Lake Ontario outflow continues to be regulated under an emergency action known as Criterion (k) and provided for in the IJC's Orders of Approval. However, throughout May, the discharge was decreased as Lake Ontario began its seasonal decline. As of May 29th, the St. Lawrence River flow was at 316,000 cfs. The emergency action through May has reduced the Lake Ontario level by about 2-1/2 feet below the level that would have occurred without regulation. Also, we continue to be fortunate as May produced no major shore damaging storms.

Under the authority of Public Law 84-99, the Corps of Engineers has continued with the Advance Measures program, which consists of constructing preventive works prior to a flood threat to life and property. There has been little change in the status of the program since my May 1st summary.

The Corps is also authorized to assist local communities in responding to actual flooding situations, to supplement maximum state and local efforts. Requests for assistance should be directed through local and state disaster assistance agencies. For Great Lakes basin technical assistance or information, please contact one of the following Corps of Engineers District Offices:

For New York, Penn. & Ohio  
Colonel Daniel R. Clark  
Cdr, Buffalo District  
1776 Niagara Street  
Buffalo, NY 14207-3199  
(716) 876-5454-Ext. 2201

For Mich., Minn. & Wisc.  
Colonel Robert F. Harris  
Cdr, Detroit District  
P.O. Box 1027  
Detroit, MI 48231-1027  
(313) 226-6440 or  
226-6441

For Ill. & Indiana  
LTC Frank R. Finch  
Cdr, Chicago District  
219 S. Dearborn St.  
6th Floor  
Chicago, IL 60604-1797  
(312) 353-6400

You can still get the "Help Yourself" brochure from the District Offices listed above or from this office: North Central Division, 536 South Clark Street, Chicago, Illinois 60605-1592, telephone: (312) 353-6364.

Near-shore wave warnings are provided by various National Weather Service Offices for certain portions of the Great Lakes. Information can normally be heard on the National Weather Service's local weather radio broadcasts.

The Corps of Engineers' "Self-Help" program of distributing sandbags, sand and plastic sheeting to threatened communities is continuing. As mentioned, you should call your local or state disaster assistance agencies to obtain materials and assistance under this program. The quantity of materials distributed to date has changed little since my May 1st summary.

On the Great Lakes water level study, the International Joint Commission's (IJC) recently appointed Reference Project Steering Committee, comprised of two lead IJC Commissioners as well as Ms. Elizabeth Dowdeswell, Regional Director General, Conservation and Protection, Environment Canada and myself, held several organizational meetings during the past month. Copies of the IJC's Lake Levels Study Directive are available from both the U.S. and Canadian Section Offices of the IJC.

You have my assurance that these updates will continue to accompany the monthly bulletin until all the lakes return to safe levels.

  
JOSEPH PRATT  
Brigadier General, USA  
Commanding