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## **AUGUST 2008 GREAT LAKES WATER LEVEL SUMMARY**

### **LAKE SUPERIOR**

Lake Superior's seasonal rise slowed during the month of August. Its mean water level of 601.77 feet was 1 inch higher than July and 16 inches above last year's water level. Lake Superior was 8 inches higher than its chart datum elevation, but still 5 inches below its long term average (LTA) for August. Precipitation in the Lake Superior basin during the month was 1.4 inches below average, but precipitation over the last year is almost 5 inches above average. The outflow from Lake Superior into the St. Marys River was above average. The latest 6-month forecast continues to hold Lake Superior's water level 4 to 14 above those of a year ago, but a half foot below LTA.

### **LAKE MICHIGAN-HURON**

Lake Michigan-Huron began its normal period of seasonal decline in August, as its water level dropped an inch during the month. Its mean water level of 578.15 feet was 9 inches higher than it was last August, 8 inches above chart datum, but 14 inches below its LTA. Precipitation in the Lake Michigan-Huron basin in August was 1.2 inches below average, but almost 2.5 inches higher than average over the past 12 months. The outflow from Lake Michigan-Huron into the St. Clair River was below average in August. Lake Michigan-Huron is predicted to remain 8 to 13 inches above its level of a year ago and 13 to 14 inches below its LTA over the next 6 months.

### **LAKE ST. CLAIR**

After reaching its peak water level during July, Lake St. Clair began its normal period of seasonal decline in August. Its mean monthly level was 574.31 feet; 6 inches higher than last August's level and 4 inches below its August LTA. The outflow from Lake St. Clair into the Detroit River was below average. Lake St. Clair is forecasted to be 4 to 7 inches higher than last year's levels through January 2009 and 2 to 7 inches lower than its LTA through February.

### **LAKE ERIE**

Lake Erie also began its seasonal decline in August. Its August mean water level was 571.65 feet; 5 inches lower than July's monthly mean level. Lake Erie was 4 inches higher than last August and near its LTA. Precipitation in the Lake Erie basin during August was 1.35 inches below average, but precipitation during the last 12 months is 3.3 inches above average. Lake Erie's outflow into the Niagara River was near average in August. Lake Erie is forecasted to remain near last year's levels and slightly below LTA through February 2009.

### **LAKE ONTARIO**

Lake Ontario's water level continued its seasonal decline in August. Its mean water level of 246.26 feet was 2 inches lower than July's level. Lake Ontario was 14 inches higher than its level of a year ago, and 7 inches higher than its August LTA. Lake Ontario's outflow through the St. Lawrence River was above average in August. Lake Ontario was the only Great Lake to see higher than average precipitation during the month. Lake Ontario is forecasted to continue its seasonal decline through December. Levels on Lake Ontario are expected to remain 4 to 10 inches above last year's levels through December, then fall slightly below last year's level in January. It is forecasted to drop below its LTA in November.

### **SPECIAL NOTE ON THE ACTIVE ATLANTIC HURRICANE SEASON**

The National Weather Service is forecasting a very active Atlantic Hurricane season. As we saw with Faye and Gustav, the remnants of these storms can bring significant precipitation to the Great Lakes region. If increased rainfall as a result of tropical systems is realized during the next few months, water levels may hedge toward the upper band of our forecast.