



DETROIT DISTRICT
U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS
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477 MICHIGAN AVENUE
DETROIT, MICHIGAN 48226

JANUARY 2012 GREAT LAKES WATER LEVEL SUMMARY

LAKE SUPERIOR

The average water level of Lake Superior during January was 600.43 feet, which was a drop of 3 inches from December's average level, continuing its seasonal decline. The January level was 8 inches below chart datum, 13 inches below its long-term average (LTA), and the same level as last year. Lake Superior's outflow through the St. Mary's River was below average in January. Precipitation within the lake's basin was 47% of average in January and 87% of average over the past 12 months. Lake Superior is forecasted to continue its seasonal decline through March and then begin to rise in April, ranging from 1 to 12 inches below chart datum over the next six months. During this time, Lake Superior is expected to be between 2 inches below to 1 inch above last year's levels. The water levels are forecasted to remain 12 to 13 inches below their LTA through July.

LAKE MICHIGAN-HURON

Lake Michigan-Huron continued its seasonal decline in January. Its monthly mean level of 577.40 feet was 2 inches lower than December's level, 1 inch below chart datum, 7 inches above its level of last year and 13 inches below its LTA. Precipitation on the Lake Michigan-Huron basin was 145% of average in January and 114% of average over the past 12 months. Lake Michigan-Huron's outflow through the St. Clair River was below average in January. Lake Michigan-Huron is forecasted to continue its seasonal decline into March and then begin to rise in April. The lake is forecasted to be 13 to 15 inches below its LTA over the next six months and between 2 inches below and 8 inches above chart datum. The water levels are expected to range 2 inches below to 7 inches above last year's levels from February through July.

LAKE ST. CLAIR

Lake St. Clair's monthly mean water level of 574.21 feet was 2 inches lower than December's level. Lake St. Clair was 21 inches above last year's level, due to an ice jam that significantly impacted water levels in 2011, and 7 inches above its LTA. Lake St. Clair's outflow through the Detroit River was near average during January. Lake St. Clair is forecasted to follow its seasonal decline into the month of March and then begin to rise in April. Lake St. Clair is projected to be 7 to 20 inches above last year's levels through April, then 2 to 4 inches below last year's levels from May through July. Lake St. Clair can fluctuate greatly in the winter months due to ice jams. The lake level is forecasted to range between 4 inches below and 8 inches above its LTA over the next six months.

LAKE ERIE

Lake Erie's average water level was 572.11 feet in January, which was 1 inch below its level in December. January's water level was 22 inches above last year's level, due to the ice jam on Lake St. Clair in 2011, and 15 inches above its LTA. Very wet conditions continued across the Lake Erie basin as it received 130% of average precipitation for January and has received 149% of average precipitation over the last 12 months. The outflow from Lake Erie into the Niagara River was above average during January. The latest 6-month forecast projects Lake Erie to be 0 to 24 inches above its levels of a year ago through May and then 4 to 6 inches below last year's levels during June and July. The lake is projected to be 2 to 15 inches above its LTA over the next six months.

LAKE ONTARIO

The level of Lake Ontario rose 7 inches from December's level to a mean level of 245.41 feet. Lake Ontario's water level was 12 inches above last year's level and 9 inches above its LTA. Lake Ontario received above average precipitation in January, with the total being 131% of average. During the last 12 months, precipitation over the basin has been 119% of average. Lake Ontario's outflow through the St. Lawrence River was above average in January. The lake is forecasted to be 2 to 23 inches above its levels of a year ago through May and then range from 3 inches below to 1 inch above last year's levels during June and July. Lake Ontario is expected to be 7 to 16 inches above its LTA over the next six months.