



NEWS RELEASE

U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS

BUILDING STRONG®

For Immediate Release:
February 05, 2013
Release No. 020513-01

Contact:
Lynn Rose, 313-226-4680;
cell 313-300-0662
Lynn.M.Rose@us.army.mil

Lake Michigan-Huron sets all-time record for lowest monthly water level

DETROIT -- The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Detroit District through its Great Lakes Hydraulics and Hydrology Office reports a preliminary new record low water level for Lake Michigan-Huron for the second month in a row. The new record low of 175.57 meters or 576.02 feet is not only the lowest January monthly average water level ever recorded, but also the lowest monthly average ever recorded for any month over the official period of record for Great Lakes water levels, which extends back to 1918. The Corps issues water level forecasts for the Great Lakes in coordination with Environment Canada, and with the use of water level data and forecasting models developed by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Great Lakes Environmental Research Laboratory and National Ocean Service. The Corps latest forecasts indicate a strong likelihood for continued record lows on Lake Michigan-Huron over the next several months. Water levels on the remaining Great Lakes are expected to remain below their respective long-term average water levels, but above record lows.

“Not only have water levels on Michigan-Huron broken records the past two months, but they have been very near record lows for the last several months before then. Lake Michigan-Huron’s water levels have also been below average for the past 14 years, which is the longest period of sustained below average levels since 1918 for that lake” said John Allis, Chief of the Great Lakes Hydraulics and Hydrology Office at the Corps, the office that monitors Great Lakes water levels.

The current record low water levels on Lake Michigan-Huron are the result of lower than average snowfall during the winter of 2011-2012, coupled with the very hot and dry summer. Together these conditions led to only a 4 inch seasonal rise of Lake Michigan-Huron in 2012, compared to an average rise of 12 inches. Also, evaporation was significantly above average during the summer and fall months and contributed to a very rapid seasonal decline.

Above average precipitation and snow cover coupled with below average evaporation this winter are needed to raise Lake Michigan-Huron water levels above record lows. However, it would take similar conditions over many seasons for levels to rise to near average levels. The Corps will continue to monitor basin conditions and provide updated information on our website at <http://www.lre.usace.army.mil> or call our Public Affairs Office at 313-226-4680.

-30-

U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS – DETROIT DISTRICT

477 Michigan Avenue
Detroit, MI 48226
www.lre.usace.army.mil