



# NEWS RELEASE

U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS

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## Lakes Michigan-Huron set record low levels

**DETROIT** -- The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Detroit District through its Great Lakes Hydraulics and Hydrology Office reported a preliminary new record low water level for Lake Michigan-Huron in December 2012. The new record low of 175.61 meters or 576.15 ft is the lowest December monthly average water level ever recorded over the official period of record for Great Lakes water levels, which extends back to 1918. The Corps' latest *Monthly Bulletin of Water Levels for the Great Lakes* indicates a strong likelihood for continued record lows on Lake Michigan-Huron over the next 6 months. Water levels on the remaining Great Lakes are expected to remain below their respective long-term average water levels, but above record lows.

“Although this is the first record low set on Michigan-Huron in almost 50 years, water levels on Michigan-Huron have been very near record lows for the last several months. Lake Michigan-Huron’s water levels have also been below average for the past 13 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, 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.

Forecasted water levels are highly dependent on expected water supplies over the coming months. Above average precipitation and snow cover coupled with below average evaporation this winter could result in Lake Michigan-Huron rising above record low levels. However, it would take many months of these wet conditions for levels to rise to near average levels. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers 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.

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