

## Information

Recorded monthly mean water levels in this bulletin are derived from a representative network of water level gages on each lake (see cover map). Providers of these data are the U.S. Department of Commerce, NOAA, National Ocean Service, and Integrated Science Data Management, Department of Fisheries and Oceans, Canada. The Detroit District, Corps of Engineers and Environment and Climate Change Canada derive historic and projected lake levels under the auspices of the Coordinating Committee on Great Lakes Basic Hydraulic and Hydrologic Data.

This bulletin is produced monthly as a public service. The Corps also, on a weekly basis publishes online the *Great Lakes, Connecting Channels and St. Lawrence River Water Levels and Depths*, which provides a forecast of depths in the connecting rivers between the Great Lakes and the International Section of the St. Lawrence River. This *Monthly Bulletin of the Lake Levels for the Great Lakes* may be obtained free of charge by writing to the address shown on the front cover, by calling (313) 226-6441 or emailing [hhpm@usace.army.mil](mailto:hhpm@usace.army.mil). Notices of change of address should include the name of the publication. This information is available on the internet at <http://www.lre.usace.army.mil/Missions/GreatLakesInformation.aspx>.

### Great Lakes Basin Hydrology September 2020

Preliminary estimates indicate the precipitation for the Great Lakes basin and each individual lake basin was below average in September. As a result of below average precipitation, water supplies to all the lakes, except Lake Superior were below average. This was especially true for Lakes Erie and Ontario, which experienced exceptionally dry conditions. Despite below average water supplies this month for most of the lakes, water levels remain high and so outflows remained above average. Preliminary estimates indicate that outflows through the St. Clair River and Detroit River were above their September record-high outflows.

Water levels for all the Great Lakes declined from August to September. Lake Superior declined about 1 inch, while Lakes Michigan-Huron, St. Clair, and Erie declined by 3 to 4 inches from August to September. Lake Ontario also dropped 8 inches in the last month. The monthly mean level for Lake St. Clair in September was a new record high, which surpassed its previous record high from last year by 1 inch. The current 6-month forecast predicts all lakes to continue their seasonal water level declines throughout the fall.

PRECIPITATION (INCHES)								
BASIN	September				12-Month Comparison			
	2020	Average (1900-2017)	Diff.	% of Average	Last 12 months	Average (1900-2017)	Diff.	% of Average
Superior	2.29	3.50	-1.21	65	26.02	30.59	-4.57	85
Michigan-Huron	2.81	3.43	-0.62	82	33.99	32.52	1.47	105
Erie	2.45	3.23	-0.78	76	32.50	35.55	-3.05	91
Ontario	2.26	3.27	-1.01	69	32.88	35.83	-2.95	92
Great Lakes	2.53	3.39	-0.86	75	31.39	32.76	-1.37	96

LAKE	September WATER SUPPLIES <sup>1</sup> (cfs)		September OUTFLOW <sup>2</sup> (cfs)	
	2020	Average (1900-2008)	2020	Average <sup>3</sup> (1900-2008)
Superior	83,000	70,000	88,000	83,000
Michigan-Huron	15,000	27,000	258,000	193,000
Erie	-53,000	-17,000	253,000	204,000
Ontario	-18,000	5,000	300,000	249,000

Notes: Values (excluding averages) are based on preliminary computations; cfs denotes cubic feet per second.

<sup>1</sup> Net basin supply is the net result of precipitation falling on the lake, runoff from precipitation falling on the land which flows to the lake, and evaporation from the lake. Negative net basin supply denotes evaporation exceeded runoff and precipitation. The net total supply can be found by adding the net basin supply and the outflow from the upstream lake.

<sup>2</sup> Does not include diversions.

<sup>3</sup> Lake Ontario average water supplies and average outflows are based on period of record 1900-2005