



US Army Corps
of Engineers
Detroit District



DETROIT DISTRICT
U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS
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DECEMBER 2020 GREAT LAKES WATER LEVEL SUMMARY

LAKE SUPERIOR

Lake Superior continued its seasonal decline from November to December, dropping 3 inches to a level of 602.46 feet. The December mean level was 9 inches above its long-term average (LTA) level, 7 inches below the record high for the month, and 4 inches below last year's level. Water supplies to Lake Superior were below average in December, likely a result of the above average evaporation that occurred and below average precipitation. The current six-month forecast projects Lake Superior to continue its seasonal decline until March. Water levels are predicted to remain 7 to 8 inches above LTA levels throughout the forecast period. January and February levels are forecasted to be below the record high levels from 2020 by 6 to 7 inches. The remaining months in the forecast are all projected to be below record high levels by 6 to 8 inches.

LAKE MICHIGAN-HURON

Lake Michigan-Huron declined 2 inches from November to December to a level of 581.17 feet. The December mean level was 31 inches above the LTA level, 5 inches below the record high, and 4 inches below last December's level. Lake Michigan-Huron experienced above average net basin supply during the month likely due to below average evaporation, despite below average precipitation. Runoff was generally normal across the basin, with the northern region showing some above normal runoff and the southern region showing below normal and most of the middle showing normal runoff. The current forecast indicates that water levels on Lake Michigan-Huron will continue to decline, reaching their seasonal low in March. From January to May, water levels are forecast to be 6 to 8 inches below the record high levels from 2020. Lake Michigan-Huron levels are also projected to remain from 27 to 31 inches above LTA levels over the next 6 months.

LAKE ST. CLAIR

Lake St. Clair declined just under an inch from November to December to a level of 576.21 feet. The December mean level was 28 inches above its monthly LTA level, 7 inches below the December record high, and 2 inches below last year's level. The 6-month forecast projects the lake to stay relatively steady over the next month and reach its seasonal low in February and begin its seasonal rise. Water levels are expected to be below the record high levels set in January and March through June 2020 by 7 to 9 inches. In addition, Lake St. Clair is forecasted to be 24 to 32 inches above its LTA levels over the next 6 months.

LAKE ERIE

Lake Erie sustained its November level into December, at 573.00 feet. This level was 25 inches above the LTA December level, 9 inches below the December record high, and 1 inch below last year's level. Below average precipitation, and above normal runoff contributed to net basin supplies being near average for December. The 6-month forecast projects Lake Erie to sustain its current water level into January, and then begin its seasonal rise. Water levels are forecasted to be below record high levels set in 2020 for the next 6 months. Additionally, levels for January through June are forecast to be 6 and 9 inches below last year's levels. Lake Erie's water level is also forecast to be 21 to 26 inches above monthly LTA levels over the next 6 months.

LAKE ONTARIO

Lake Ontario rose less than 1 inch from November to December, beginning its seasonal rise. The December mean level was 244.82 feet, which was 4 inches above the December LTA level. Additionally, the December level was 15 inches below last year's level and 23 inches below the December record high. Water supplies were slightly above average during December. Over the next 6 months, the lake level is predicted to be 2 to 13 inches below last year's levels, in June the lake level is predicted to be 1 inch above last year's level. Water levels are also projected to be 6 to 11 inches above LTA levels.