



US Army Corps
of Engineers
Detroit District



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OCTOBER 2020 GREAT LAKES WATER LEVEL SUMMARY

LAKE SUPERIOR

Lake Superior continued its decline from September to October, dropping about an inch to a level of 602.89 feet. Significantly above average evaporation juxtaposed with above average precipitation, likely contributed to relatively modest changes to water levels and below average net basin supply. The monthly mean level was 9 inches above its long-term average (LTA) level for October and 6 inches below the record high for the month. The current six-month forecast projects Lake Superior to continue its seasonal decline until March. Water levels are predicted to remain 8 to 9 inches above LTA throughout the forecast period. Also, water levels are forecast to be 6 to 8 inches below record high levels over the next 6 months, which includes provisional record high levels set in January and February 2020.

LAKE MICHIGAN-HURON

Lake Michigan-Huron continued its seasonal decline, dropping about 4 inches from September to October. The October mean level of 581.53 feet was 2 inches below last October's level, 31 inches above the LTA level, and 10 inches below the record high. Lake Michigan-Huron experienced above average net basin supply during the month likely due to above average precipitation. The current forecast indicates that water levels on Lake Michigan-Huron will continue to decline, reaching their lowest point in February. Water levels are projected to be 6 to 8 inches below record high levels over the next 6 months, which includes the provisional record high levels set in 2020 from January to April. Lake Michigan-Huron levels are projected to remain from 28 to 32 inches above LTA levels and 2 to 8 inches below last year's levels over the next 6 months.

LAKE ST. CLAIR

Lake St. Clair declined about 6 inches from September to October to a level of 576.57 feet. Despite reaching a provisional monthly record high in September, lake levels fell 6 inches from September to October. The October monthly mean level was also 29 inches above its monthly LTA level. The 6-month forecast projects the lake to continue to decline through February. Water levels are expected to be 7 to 9 inches below record high levels over the next 6 months, which includes provisional record high levels in January, March, and April of 2020. In addition, Lake St. Clair is forecast to be 25 to 31 inches above its LTA levels and 2 to 9 inches below last year's levels through April 2021.

LAKE ERIE

Lake Erie continued its seasonal decline in October declining about 4 inches to a monthly mean level of 573.23 feet. This level was 1 inch below last year's level, but 25 inches above the LTA for October. Despite above average precipitation and below average evaporation in October, levels dropped. The latest 6-month forecast projects Lake Erie to continue its seasonal decline into the winter, reaching its lowest levels sometime between December to February. Water levels are forecast to be 7 to 11 inches below record high levels throughout the 6-month forecast, which includes provisional record high levels from February to April 2020. Additionally, levels for November and December are forecast to be 1 and 2 inches below last year's levels. The lake's water levels are also expected to be 22 to 26 inches above monthly LTA levels over the next 6 months.

LAKE ONTARIO

After dropping 8 inches from August to September, Lake Ontario continued its seasonal decline, dropping an additional 6 inches from September to October. Below average net basin supply experienced throughout October was likely a result of below average precipitation. The monthly mean level for October was 245.08 feet, which was 13 inches below its October 2019 level and only 3 inches above the LTA level. Over the next 6 months, the lake level is predicted to be 5 to 17 inches below last year's levels and 3 to 12 inches above LTA levels.