

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. 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 February 2020

In February, a fairly dry month was experienced throughout the Great Lakes basin. Well below average precipitation occurred in each of the lake basins with Lake Superior receiving just 40% of average precipitation during the month. Water supplies for Lakes Superior, Michigan-Huron, and Erie were below average, while Lake Ontario's water supply was slightly above average. High outflows remain throughout the basin as a result of the high water levels. The preliminary outflow estimates through the St. Clair River, Detroit River, Niagara River, and the St. Lawrence River were at record highs for the month of February.

Lakes Superior and Michigan-Huron surpassed their February record-high monthly mean levels, which were previously set in 1986. Lake Erie also surpassed its previous February record high monthly mean level set in 1987. Lake Superior continued its seasonal decline in February, declining 3 inches from January to February, and it is forecast to continue its decline in March before beginning its seasonal rise. Lakes Michigan-Huron and St. Clair declined less than an inch from January to February, but are forecast to resume their seasonal rise in March or April. Lake Erie rose 4 inches and Ontario rose 3 inches from January to February and both lakes are forecast to continue their seasonal rise through the spring.

PRECIPITATION (INCHES)								
BASIN	February				12-Month Comparison			
	2020	Average (1900-2017)	Diff.	% of Average	Last 12 months	Average (1900-2017)	Diff.	% of Average
Superior	0.58	1.46	-0.88	40	29.25	30.59	-1.34	96
Michigan-Huron	0.80	1.73	-0.93	46	33.40	32.52	0.88	103
Erie	1.21	2.09	-0.88	58	36.73	35.55	1.18	103
Ontario	1.50	2.36	-0.86	64	36.14	35.83	0.31	101
Great Lakes	0.90	1.77	-0.87	51	32.97	32.76	0.21	101

LAKE	February WATER SUPPLIES ¹ (cfs)		February OUTFLOW ² (cfs)	
	2020	Average (1900-2008)	2020	Average ³ (1900-2008)
Superior	-30,000	9,000	85,000	67,000
Michigan-Huron	77,000	88,000	254,000	157,000
Erie	15,000	38,000	273,000	192,000
Ontario	44,000	37,000	337,000	227,000

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

¹ 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.

² Does not include diversions.

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