

October 4, 2020

Delivered by E-mail to the International Joint Commission

Regarding potential flooding of the Upper St. Lawrence River and Lake Ontario

We are writing with concern about possible future floods on Lake Ontario. While we have avoided a flood in 2020, the upper lakes remain at record levels. As long as the upper lakes are in flood, the risk of future Lake Ontario flooding remains high. An additional 1 foot or more over 2019 levels is very likely, which would result in catastrophic damages. We have appended an updated flood projection for the fall of 2020 and spring 2021 which enforces the need to build a buffer in order to avert a spring 2021 flood.

Extreme weather conditions are becoming increasingly frequent and are difficult to predict. For these reasons we strongly urge that proactive measures are taken to establish a precautionary buffer, as any extreme weather will produce significant rainfall and undermine the efforts to reduce lake levels.

We applaud the efforts of the International Joint Committee (IJC) for deviating from Plan 2014 along with the International Lake Ontario-St. Lawrence River Board (ILOSRLB) who had full discretion to manage outflows from January 1, 2020 until June. While we recognize that regulation decisions cannot prevent flooding, they can mitigate it, and the resulting higher outflows and the raising of the limits for Lake St. Louis greatly contributed to the prevention of a flood in Lake Ontario during a pandemic. One can only imagine the extreme hardship of sandbagging to protect our shoreline while wearing face masks and socially distancing.

The US State Department and the Privy Council of Canada must continue to act proactively, and provide legal authority for a full time “Emergency Deviation” to Plan 2014 until the upper lakes are below flood level, or the necessary permanent improvements to Plan 2014 have been implemented.

We recommend that the ILOSRLB use extraordinary measures to target an end of year Lake Ontario level of 244.4 feet (75.4 meters) above sea level while remaining vigilant of the potential environmental damages of the increased water flow. This will provide a buffer for unforeseen extreme weather events.

We applaud the IJC in their efforts to expedite a review of Plan 2014 in a transparent manner and the creation of a Public Advisory Group of concerned citizens to provide input to this process. The Plan must include specific control actions to prevent and mitigate future Lake Ontario and St. Lawrence River levels from reaching unacceptable extreme levels, and it must include a critical buffer for unforeseen extreme weather events. We cannot stress enough the need for speed.

Failure to deal with the extremely high water levels of the Upper St. Lawrence River and Lake Ontario will result in potentially irreversible damages and hardships to a great many citizens, putting extreme demands on governments to repair and replace very valuable infrastructure. As medical experts are currently forecasting a continuation of the COVID-19 pandemic into 2021, we urge that all efforts be focused to prevent valuable government resources and attention from being diverted from their efforts to deal with the pandemic and restoring our economy in order to deal with extreme flooding situations.

We implore you to take action immediately as this is an extremely urgent matter.
We look forward to your reply.

Sincerely,



Carolyn Johnson
Co-chair of YQNA



Angelo Bertolas
Co-chair of YQNA



Tony Farebrother
Chair, TICA

2020-2021 LAKE ONTARIO FORECAST

		LAKE ONTARIO - Toronto					DATA SUMMARY FROM 2015 - 2021
		Level		Hydrology			
MM/YR		ACTUAL	FORECAST	RNBS	I	O	
		AVG (2015-present) RNBS					<p>AVG RNBS w/LL OUTFLOW</p> <p>Forecast 1 RNBS based on (2015-present) monthly averages Unregulated outflow is increased to best fit line vs lake level <u>Lake ON is LL year-round</u></p> <p>APR/MAY =avg outflow for Ottawa flooding</p> <p>MINOR LAKE ONTARIO FLOODING</p>
		I = Lake Erie best-fit outflows					
		O = LL					
Oct-20		74.68	-166	7336	8294		
Nov-20		74.67	876	7331	8271		
Dec-20		74.65	784	7321	8227		
Jan-21		74.70	1126	7566	8350		
Feb-21		74.83	1802	7663	8484		
Mar-21		74.96	1764	7753	8608		
Apr-21		75.27	1983	8109	7841		
May-21		75.64	2635	8358	8226		
Jun-21		75.70	1828	8496	9910		
Jul-21		75.67	1173	8489	9910		
Aug-21		75.49	381	8223	9910		
Sep-21		75.29	15	7957	9381		
Oct-21		75.13	-166	7696	8775		
Nov-21		75.09	876	7571	8736		
Dec-21		75.03	784	7466	8677		
		AVG (2015-present) RNBS					<p>AVG RNBS w/LL+200 & LL+400 OUTFLOW</p> <p>Forecast 2 RNBS based on (2015-present) monthly averages Unregulated outflow is increased to best fit line vs lake level <u>Lake ON is LL+200 during the navigation season</u> <u>Lake ON is LL+400 during the non-navigation season</u></p> <p>APR/MAY =avg outflow for Ottawa flooding</p> <p>MINOR LAKE ONTARIO FLOODING</p>
		I = Lake Erie best-fit outflows					
		O = LL+200 navigation, LL+400 non-nav					
Oct-20		74.66	-166	7336	8441		
Nov-20		74.64	876	7331	8380		
Dec-20		74.61	784	7321	8307		
Jan-21		74.63	1126	7566	8556		
Feb-21		74.72	1802	7663	8771		
Mar-21		74.81	1764	7753	8860		
Apr-21		75.12	1983	8109	7841		
May-21		75.50	2635	8358	8226		
Jun-21		75.52	1828	8496	10110		
Jul-21		75.46	1173	8489	10110		
Aug-21		75.32	381	8223	9667		
Sep-21		75.16	15	7957	9104		
Oct-21		74.99	-166	7696	8836		
Nov-21		74.94	876	7571	8789		
Dec-21		74.87	784	7466	8724		
		AVG (2015-present) RNBS					<p>AVG RNBS w/LL+400 & LL+500 OUTFLOW</p> <p>Forecast 3 RNBS based on (2015-present) monthly averages Unregulated outflow is increased to best fit line vs lake level <u>Lake ON is LL+400 during the navigation season</u> <u>Lake ON is LL+500 during the non-navigation season</u></p> <p>APR/MAY =avg outflow for Ottawa flooding</p> <p>NO LAKE ONTARIO FLOODING</p>
		I = Lake Erie best-fit outflows					
		O = LL+400 navigation, LL+500 non-nav					
Oct-20		74.64	-166	7336	8589		
Nov-20		74.60	876	7331	8488		
Dec-20		74.56	784	7321	8387		
Jan-21		74.58	1126	7566	8541		
Feb-21		74.68	1802	7663	8785		
Mar-21		74.76	1764	7753	8908		
Apr-21		75.07	1983	8109	7841		
May-21		75.44	2635	8358	8226		
Jun-21		75.44	1828	8496	10310		
Jul-21		75.38	1173	8489	10107		
Aug-21		75.25	381	8223	9608		
Sep-21		75.09	15	7957	9138		
Oct-21		74.89	-166	7696	8949		
Nov-21		74.83	876	7571	8889		
Dec-21		74.76	784	7466	8812		

