

New Water Levels Update Assists Lake Ontario Stakeholders

Fluctuations of Lake Ontario’s water levels affect coastal resource decision makers such as shoreline landowners, boaters, marina operators, environmentalists... Accurate and timely information on recent, current, and forecasted lake levels, based upon the most accurate scientific information available, can assist these stakeholders in making better-informed coastal resource use decisions.

New York Sea Grant (NYSG) has developed a Lake Ontario Water Levels Update that is now available in PDF format via the NYSG website (http://www.seagrantsunysb.edu/glcoastal/WaterLevels-LOnt/Lake_Level_Update.pdf). While much of the information in the Update is available on the Web from other sources, very few stakeholders are aware of where to find it and may not understand the data fully enough to draw accurate conclusions. The NYSG-designed Update is a user-friendly, accurate, clear report on Lake Ontario water levels.

Components of the Update include a graph showing the current and previous 24 months of lake level data (20th/21st Century long-term average levels, historical monthly highs and lows, recorded daily levels, and the high, low and average inflow water level forecasts extending about five months forward). Graphs also show daily mean deviations from long-term mean daily levels, daily inflows and weekly

average outflows, and long-term water levels for 1988 through 2009.

The report is prepared monthly during the ice-free months of the year and bi-monthly during the winter. NYSG also provides the report to NYSG stakeholders via our “Great Lakes Splash” electronic newsletter.

Additional features, possibly including a lake level question & answer section, will be added in 2010.

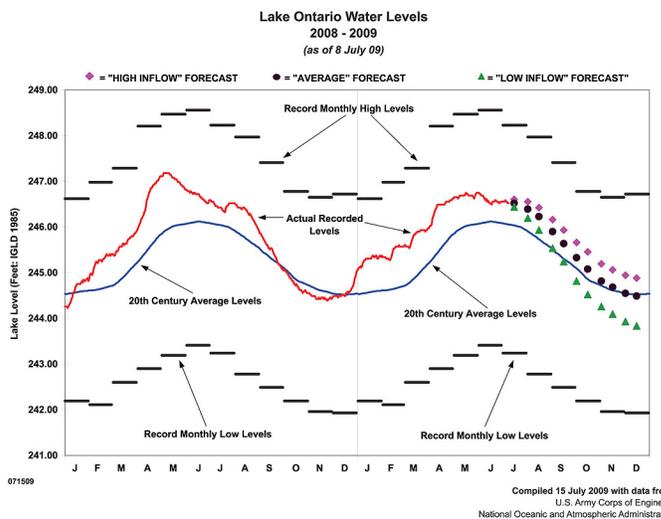
In preparing the report, NYSG draws upon its extensive network of university and agency-based information sources such as the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the US Army Corps of Engineers, and the International St. Lawrence River Board of Control.

Sea Grant audience members who have used the new online tool report that it is very useful as a coastal development decision-making tool.



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Lake Ontario Water Levels Update

This project meets the performance measures of Sea Grant’s Hazard Resilience in Coastal Communities focus area. Sea Grant Extension administration is located at 112 Rice Hall, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY 14853.

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