

Watershed Conditions Statement - Flood Outlook

Bracebridge Minden Parry Sound District

Thursday, July 20, 2023

3:00 pm

The Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry – Bracebridge Minden Parry Sound District is advising area residents that a Watershed Conditions Statement – Flood Outlook Bulletin is in effect in the district until Thursday, July 27, 2023. This message will affect residents within the MNRF Bracebridge Minden Parry Sound District for portions of the District of Parry Sound, District of Muskoka, and County of Haliburton within the **Magnetawan River, Muskoka River and Pickereel River Watersheds** – other small watersheds within the region may also be experiencing higher than normal water levels and river flows for this time of year.

Water levels and river flows are significantly higher than normal for this time of year.

Lower-lying portions of known flood-prone areas and shoreline infrastructure such as docks, boathouses, and beaches may be impacted to various degrees as lake and river levels are anticipated to increase and remain high for the next several days.

Boaters are advised to be cautious if traveling on local waterways. Boat traffic during high water conditions can cause damage to shorelines and to shoreline property with vessel wakes.

High water levels and fast river flows can be hazardous to boaters, swimmers or people on or close to the water. The banks and shorelines adjacent to water bodies can be extremely slippery and unstable. Residents and visitors should exercise caution while around waterbodies and maintain close supervision of children and pets.

MNRF also advises extreme caution when using forest access roads for outdoor activities as they may become inundated with water, are prone to washouts, and may become impassible due to localized flooding.

Residents that have been affected by high water and flow conditions in the past should take necessary action to protect/secure any vulnerable property in proximity to rivers and lakes and closely monitor developing conditions and regularly check for updated messages.

The ministry is closely monitoring the weather and developing watershed conditions.

Further updates will be issued as appropriate.

TECHNICAL INFORMATION

Description of Weather System

Rainfall warnings have been issued by Environment Canada for areas within the Magnetawan, Muskoka, and Pickerel River Watersheds. Rainfall totals for portions of these areas could reach 50-70 mm on July 20, 2023.

Weather forecasts call for additional rainfall over the next seven days with a chance of thunderstorms.

Description of Current Conditions

Lake water levels and river flows are generally above their normal ranges for this time of year and significant rainfall as forecasted will cause them to rise further.

The watersheds are cascading systems - each waterbody feeds into the next downstream. Runoff from rain cascades and compounds through the entire system affecting water levels in each waterbody. It will take a number of days for the high flows to work through the entire system. Downstream water bodies may experience a delay in the full impact of the upstream inputs.

MNRF is closely monitoring the weather and developing watershed conditions. Further updates will be issued as appropriate.

DEFINITIONS

- **WATERSHED CONDITIONS STATEMENT – WATER SAFETY:** indicates that high flows, melting ice or other factors could be dangerous for such users as boaters, anglers and swimmers but flooding is not expected.
- **WATERSHED CONDITIONS STATEMENT – FLOOD OUTLOOK:** gives early notice of the potential for flooding based on weather forecasts calling for heavy rain, snow melt, high winds or other conditions
- **SHORELINE CONDITIONS STATEMENT – WATER SAFETY:** indicates that **along the Great Lakes shorelines high water**, melting ice or other factors could be dangerous but flooding is not expected.
- **SHORELINE CONDITIONS STATEMENT – FLOOD OUTLOOK:** gives early notice of the potential for flooding **along the Great Lakes shorelines** based on weather and lake conditions, and water safety information.

- **FLOOD WATCH:** potential for flooding exists within specific watercourses and municipalities
- **FLOOD WARNING:** flooding is imminent or occurring within specific watercourses and municipalities.

LEARN MORE

- Surface Water Monitoring Centre public webpage www.ontario.ca/page/surface-water-monitoring-centre
- Environment Canada bulletins: www.weather.gc.ca
- A close watch on local conditions and weather forecasts from Environment Canada is recommended.
- Parks Canada maintains the Ontario Waterways Water Management InfoNet on the Trent-Severn Waterway website at <https://parks.canada.ca/lhnhhs/on/trentsevern/info/infonet/point-gestion-eau-water-management-updates>

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