

Watershed Conditions Statement - Flood Outlook

Bracebridge Minden Parry Sound District

Wednesday, July 10, 2024
12:00pm

The Ministry of Natural Resources – Bracebridge-Minden-Parry Sound District is advising area residents that a Watershed Conditions Statement – Flood Outlook Bulletin is in effect for the district until Friday, July 19, 2024.

This message is intended for residents and visitors within the MNR Bracebridge-Minden-Parry Sound District for portions of the District of Parry Sound, District of Muskoka, County of Haliburton, and City of Kawartha Lakes within the Black, Burnt, Gull, Magnetawan, Muskoka, Pickerel, Seguin, and Severn River Watersheds.

Hurricane Beryl made landfall along the Texas coast of the USA on July 8 and has significantly weakened after landfall. While moving northeast and towards the Lower Great Lakes, remnants of Beryl are forecast to merge with an upper trough that is currently over central North America, creating a highly efficient conveyor belt of moisture into southern Ontario.

The remnants of Hurricane Beryl reached Ontario on the evening of July 9. It is forecasted that this may result in significant precipitation into the southern portion of the province over the next few days. Confidence on the exact path of the system is low.

The MNR Surface Water Monitoring Centre (SWMC) updated the [Provincial Flood Watch](#) on July 10 and indicate that the areas at greatest risk of the heaviest rainfall are situated immediately south of Georgian Bay and along the St. Lawrence River. These areas could receive 50-100mm of total rainfall from this event.

Lower-lying portions of known flood-prone areas may be impacted to varying degrees as lake/river levels rise in response to received precipitation. Residents and visitors should **exercise caution while around waterbodies** and maintain close supervision of children and pets.

MNR also advises **extreme caution when using forest access roads** for outdoor activities as they may become seasonally 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 continue 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

Environment Canada Issued a Rainfall Warning for the Muskoka-Parry Sound area on July 9 at 2:00pm. Rainfall with embedded torrential downpours expected.

Rainfall totals of 40 to 60 mm, with locally higher amounts are possible. There is a potential for torrential downpours with rainfall rates of 20 to 40 mm per hour at times.

Rainfall in the area started on the evening of July 9 and is forecasted to continue through to the morning of July 11. The heaviest rain is anticipated to occur on July 10 into the evening.

Rainfall amounts are expected to be highly variable across the region, and some areas may receive in excess of 60 mm. Rain is forecasted to taper to scattered showers from west to east tonight through the early morning of July 11.

Description of Current Conditions

MNR has conducted proactive dam operations across all watersheds in Bracebridge-Minden-Parry Sound District to increase flows.

Prior to the Beryl weather system, water levels on most major lakes were trending down and were within the Normal Operating Zone (NOZ) for this time of year. Water levels may rise outside of the NOZ should significant precipitation be received.

River flows are currently higher than average for this time of year due to previous significant rainfall. River flows are anticipated to increase further as additional precipitation is received and dams are operated to mitigate to the extent possible against high water.

The watersheds are complex cascading systems: water inputs received upstream must travel down through the watershed before exiting the system and permitting water levels to return to the NOZ. This means that water levels and river flows for locations near the bottom of the watersheds can remain elevated for longer periods of time while the additional water works its way through system.

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.
- **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
- Parks Canada Trent-Severn Waterway Updates - <https://parks.canada.ca/lhn-nhs/on/trentsevern/info/infonet/point-gestion-eau-water-management-updates>
- A close watch on local conditions and weather forecasts from Environment Canada is recommended.

