



RISING OTTAWA RIVER WATER LEVELS

OTTAWA/GATINEAU, Thursday April 11, 2019 — The Ottawa River Regulating Committee would like to inform watershed residents that levels and flows along the Ottawa River have begun increasing with the onset of the spring freshet period. It cautions residents along the shores of the Ottawa River, from Mattawa down to the Montreal region that during the spring period water levels can rise rapidly and cause minor flooding in low-lying areas. Based on the current snow cover, the Regulating Committee anticipates that the flow volume in the Ottawa River will be higher than average this spring.

River Conditions Forecast / Flooding Risk: Spring runoff in the southern and central portions of the Ottawa River basin is expected to continue to increase due to forecasted warmer temperatures and precipitation over the next few days. Levels and flows in the lower reach of the Ottawa river from Lake Deschenes down to the Montreal region could increase rapidly at times. Minor flooding in low-lying areas may occur over the next few days depending on the temperatures and precipitation amounts received. Low-lying areas are those that are flooded regularly during the spring freshet period.

At this time, the snowpack is higher than average in most parts of the basin; this increases the potential for higher than average flows over a prolonged period along the river this spring. However, the magnitude of the spring flood largely depends on weather conditions that can only be predicted a few days in advance. For this reason, the Regulating Committee will be closely monitoring precipitation amounts and temperature increases throughout the spring freshet period as they may cause levels and flows to change rapidly. **It will issue further bulletins if flood risks increase.**

Reservoir Regulation Strategy: The principal storage reservoirs in the northern part of the watershed are expected to store a large portion of runoff from these areas. However, dams located in the central and southern portions of the basin are essentially “run of the river” with no significant storage capacity. As such, they do not significantly reduce the flows and levels associated with increased spring runoff. During this critical freshet period, the Regulating Committee will take all possible actions to mitigate the amount of flooding and will continuously monitor conditions at all points along the river.

The Ottawa River Regulating Committee works closely at all times with provincial agencies responsible for issuing flood related messages. In Ontario, Conservation Authorities and District Offices of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry issue flood related messages and information to municipalities and other key agencies involved in flood preparedness and response. Current flood related messages can be viewed on-line on the individual conservation authority websites and on the provincial flood webpage: <https://www.ontario.ca/flooding>. In Quebec, the Centre des opérations gouvernementales

du Québec and the Sécurité civile collaborate with municipalities to protect residents. Monitoring of flood conditions can be viewed at <https://geoegl.msp.gouv.qc.ca/adnv2> .

If you think that your property may be at risk of flooding, **please contact your municipality.**

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Website: Current and forecast conditions on the Ottawa River along with conditions at the major reservoirs in the system may be obtained by consulting our website. A general four-day forecast is also provided at key locations within the basin during the spring freshet period.

www.ottawariver.ca (English)

www.rivieredesoutaouais.ca (French)

Telephone: The river conditions forecast and information on current river levels may be obtained for the following locations: Lake Timiskaming, Mattawa, Pembroke, Lake Coulonge, Chats Lake, Ottawa (Britannia), Gatineau (Hull wharf), Grenville and Maniwaki, by calling the following numbers:

Ottawa-Gatineau

(613) 995-3443 English

(613) 995-3455 French

Outside the Ottawa-Gatineau
region

1-800-778-1246 English

1-800-778-1243 French

Twitter : Follow us to be notified when news releases are issued, when we begin daily updates or the general four-day forecasts on our website, or when special bulletins are posted on our website.

www.twitter.com/ORRPB (English)

www.twitter.com/CPRRO (French)

The Ottawa River Regulating Committee consists of the following agencies that are responsible for the integrated flow management of the principal reservoirs within the Ottawa River watershed: Hydro-Québec, Ministère de l'Environnement et de la Lutte contre les changements climatiques du Québec, Ontario Power Generation, and Public Services and Procurement Canada. In Ontario, the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry, through its associate membership with the Regulating Committee, contributes important hydrometeorological information and plays a key role in disseminating information in Ontario. The Regulating Committee issues a press release when the spring freshet season is starting on the Ottawa River and when it anticipates that river conditions on the main stem of the Ottawa River (between the Lake Timiskaming outlet down to the Montreal region) could exceed significant flood levels.

For additional information, please contact Manon Lalonde (613) 996-8639 or Michael Sarich (613) 996-8643 of the Ottawa River Regulation Secretariat, or write to secretariat@ottawariver.ca (English) or to bureau@ottawariver.ca (French).

Ottawa River Regulating Committee