



EXPECTING MAJOR FLOODING ON THE OTTAWA RIVER
Lac Coulonge down to Montreal Region

OTTAWA/GATINEAU, Thursday April 18, 2019 — The Ottawa River Regulating Committee warns that levels and flows on the Ottawa River from Lac Coulonge down to the Montreal region are expected to rise extremely rapidly starting this Friday due to forecast rainfall and snowmelt runoff. Major flood levels are expected to be exceeded over the weekend. **Later on, flows and levels similar to those observed at the height of the May 2017 flood may be reached depending on the amount of precipitation received.** All flood-prone areas along the Ottawa River from Lac Coulonge down to the Montreal Archipelago are at risk.

River Conditions Forecast / Flooding Risk: Two low pressure systems are expected to bring 30 to 80 mm of precipitation over much of the basin from Thursday through to Saturday. At the same time, warmer temperatures will melt a large portion of the remaining snowpack in the central areas of the basin. Rainfall and snowmelt will combine to produce very high runoff, causing levels to rise sharply on the Ottawa River starting this Friday. Levels are expected to exceed major flood levels, which are the levels at which several houses are impacted, over the weekend in flood-prone areas along the Ottawa River. **Levels as high as those seen in May 2017, at the height of the flood, could be reached depending on the amount of precipitation received.** Due to the forecast uncertainty it is difficult to accurately predict how quickly water levels will rise and when river conditions may peak. Residents of flood-prone areas are encouraged to closely follow evolving conditions and to take necessary measures. **The Regulating Committee will be reassessing forecast conditions and providing hydrological condition updates on its website daily at <http://www.ottawariver.ca/forecast.php>.**

Reservoir Regulation Strategy: The principal storage reservoirs in the northern part of the watershed are expected to contain the majority of the increased runoff in those 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 cannot 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 limit the amount of flooding and will continuously monitor conditions at all points along the river.

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

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>.

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