Watershed Conditions Statement – Flood Outlook
For Lake Ontario & St. Lawrence River, Storm Surge

Kingston ON – Cataraqui Conservation has issued a Watershed Conditions Statement – Flood Outlook for Lake Ontario and the St. Lawrence River today due to forecasted strong winds, storm surge and high waves.

The Provincial Flood Watch for the Lower Great Lakes Shoreline sent out today by the Surface Water Monitoring Centre (SWMC) of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry states:

“Strong winds are forecast across the lower Great Lakes beginning today (Wednesday) and lasting through to Friday. Sustained winds out of the northeast at 25 to 30 km/hr with gusts up to 50 km/hr are forecast for Wednesday. Windspeed increase to 35 to 45 km/hr with gusts from 80 to 100 km/hr and transitioning into a northwest – west and southwest direction through Thursday, peaking in the morning to evening hours. Winds are likely to reduce by Friday but still moderately high in the 30 to 40 km.hr range from the southwest.

Waves and storm surge are expected to cause flooding concern in Lakes Ontario, St. Clair and Lake Huron shoreline due to this storm event.”

The current water level in Kingston (as of noon February 26) is 75.00 metres above sea level (masl) IGLD85, about typical summer peak. The SWMC storm surge model is forecasting an additional rise of 0.23 m, peaking the afternoon of February 27. The high winds are expected to increase water levels further in localized areas due to wave uprush.

The Environment Canada Marine Forecast has issued a GALE WARNING for Eastern Lake Ontario: https://weather.gc.ca/marine/forecast_e.html?mapID=11&siteID=08203.

Widespread flooding is NOT expected as a result of this storm. The Flood Outlook Statement is to alert municipalities and residents in flood prone and low-lying areas to the potential for localized flooding and erosion impacts.
Residents in flood prone and low-lying areas should continue to pay attention to wind and wave forecasts for approaching storms with high winds from the southeast, south and southwest, as these are the conditions when the probability of localized impacts (e.g. flooding & erosion) is increased.

If you witness flooding and require assistance, your first point of contact is the local municipality. CRCA does not provide sandbags. However, information about where to purchase sandbags is provided at [www.crca.ca/flood](http://www.crca.ca/flood). Residents are reminded that it is the property owner’s responsibility to properly dispose of sandbags and sand, which is considered hazardous waste, and any other debris that may have been deposited along the shoreline.

Any work along shorelines (e.g. placement of fill, armour stone, etc.) will require a permit from the CRCA. Call our office or visit our website [www.crca.ca](http://www.crca.ca) for further information.

CRCA appreciates feedback from the public and municipal staff detailing flooding and erosion impacts. Please report observations on the online form at [www.crca.ca/flood](http://www.crca.ca/flood).

For further information on water levels, wind and wave forecasts, and Provincial flood messages visit [www.crca.ca/flood](http://www.crca.ca/flood).

Staff will continue to monitor International Lake Ontario St. Lawrence River Board water level forecasts, Surface Water Monitoring Centre Provincial Statements, and local water levels, and update CRCA messaging as needed. This Watershed Conditions Statement will remain in effect until (or updated before) 11:59 PM February 28, 2020.


See below for watershed conditions terminology:

**Normal:** No flood conditions exist

**Watershed Conditions Statement – Water Safety:** High flows, unsafe banks, melting ice or other factors that could be dangerous for recreational users such as anglers, canoeists, hikers, children, pets, etc. Flooding is not expected.

**Watershed Conditions Statement – Flood Outlook:** Early notice of the potential for flooding based on weather forecasts calling for heavy rain, snow melt, high wind or other conditions that could lead to high runoff, cause ice jams, lakeshore flooding or erosion.
**Flood Watch:** Flooding is possible in specific watercourse or municipalities. Municipalities, emergency services and individual landowners in flood-prone areas should prepare.

**Flood Warning:** Flooding is imminent or already occurring in specific watercourses or municipalities. Municipalities and individuals should take action to deal with flood conditions. This may include road closures and evacuations.

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**Media contact for more information:**
Krista Fazackerley, Communications & Education Supervisor  
(613) 546-4228 ext. 243, kfazackerley@crca.ca

**Municipalities contact for more information:**
Shawn Fairbank, Water Resources Technologist  
(613) 546-4228 ext. 284, sfairbank@crca.ca

Janice Teare, Water Resources Engineer  
(613) 546-4228 ext. 252, jteare@crca.ca

Steve Knapton, Operations Planning Coordinator  
(613) 546-4228 ext. 223, sknapton@crca.ca

Toll-free (613 area code) 1-877-956-CRCA (2722)