Cataraqui Conservation Extends Water Safety Statement for Inland Lakes and Streams

Kingston ON – Cataraqui Conservation has extended the current Water Safety Statement for the region to alert the public of high flows and safety around dams and watercourses.

A storm system is forecasted to drop 10 – 25 mm of rain March 19 and 20. Expected rainfall amounts are uncertain and may be highly variable, due to the possibility of thunderstorm activity.

The snowpack has mostly melted, except for areas in the bush, and on north facing slopes. Even though the ground has begun to thaw, it remains saturated from snow melt and recent rainfall events, therefore high runoff rates are still possible. Creek flows are at March monthly averages and some lakes are experiencing high spring levels.

Water Managers, who operate dams on area lakes, are passing high flows through water control structures to keep water levels within targets for this time of year. These flows are being managed to mitigate, as much as possible, the impacts from the expected melt and rainfall.

Further increases may occur, especially with the higher rainfall amounts. Levels on inland lakes and some streams may rise for several days.

Cataraqui Conservation continues to urge caution around all dams (inflow and outflow channels) and fast flowing watercourses. Respect the hazards in these areas by obeying all warning signs, keeping away from booms, buoys, and barriers. Stay well back from the water’s edge above and below dams and hydroelectric stations. Creek banks and lake shorelines may be slippery, increasing the chance of falling in.

Also, due to the high flows and recent warm temperatures, ice formation on lakes can be very unsafe. Cataraqui Conservation does not measure ice thickness for advising the public about ice conditions for recreational activities. Ice conditions can vary considerably from one waterbody to the next and within a single waterbody.

Widespread flooding is NOT expected at this time. However, localized inundation of low-lying areas is possible. If you witness flooding and/or require assistance your first point of contact is the local municipality.

Staff will continue to monitor conditions and forecasts and will update statements as needed. This Watershed Conditions Statement will remain in effect until (or updated before) Thursday, April 2, 2020 at 11:59 PM.
For up to date flooding information, please visit our flood forecasting and information page at www.crca.ca/flood.

As part of our flood forecasting and warning program staff are collecting information to help track flood events. If you experiencing flooding impacts on your property or business please fill in a brief questionnaire at the following link: https://crca.ca/watershed-management/watershed-information/flood/.

**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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