



NEWS RELEASE

U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS

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Experts to discuss low water levels in Lake Michigan-Huron and Lake Superior

Who: Officials representing the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers will be available via teleconference to update media regarding low water levels for Lake Michigan-Huron and Lake Superior. Experts will also be able to discuss water levels on the other Great Lakes. Experts from Environment Canada will also be available to support this discussion.

What: Lake Michigan-Huron is within inches of reaching the lowest water level in nearly 50 years. Due to their union at the Straits of Mackinac, the lakes are treated as one for forecasting purposes. Corps and Environment Canada experts forecast that if current trends continue, Lake Michigan-Huron could hit historic lows in late Fall 2012 and early 2013. Water levels on the other Great Lakes are also lower than average, but not expected to reach historic lows through early 2013.

When: 1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m. EDT, Wednesday, October 31, 2012

Where: Via teleconference: please call (888) 622-5357 and enter passcode: 257602 to participate. One-hundred lines will be available on a first come-first serve basis. If you are unable to attend or gain access, please contact the Detroit District Public Affairs Office at 888-694-8313 so that we may assess the need to schedule an additional event.

Why: Low lake levels impact commerce, recreation, local and international economies, environmental health, habitat and species preservation, and several other significant areas of interest. It is important that the Great Lakes and international community understand the factors that are affecting lake levels so they may determine how to respond to this announcement.

Background:

The Corps of Engineers in partnership with the Environment Canada monitors and forecasts water levels on the Great Lakes. The two agencies forecast that water levels on Lake Michigan-Huron will reach an historic low in the late fall. The Corps attributes the low lake levels to

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natural causes that include below average precipitation, above average evaporation rates and a below average amount of water available from the recent winter snowpack. Along with the low water levels, questions have been raised regarding past dredging projects in the St. Clair River. These past dredging projects, along with their impacts on water levels, will be reviewed during this call.

Resources:

USACE Websites of interest

<http://www.lre.usace.army.mil>

For general information and the two-page summary, please visit The Detroit District, Corps of Engineers homepage; click “What’s New” for the summary.

<http://www.lre.usace.army.mil/greatlakes/hh/greatlakeswaterlevels/currentconditions/>

Here you can view the current water level conditions on the Great Lakes and Lake St. Clair as well as some relevant Great Lakes data.

<http://www.lre.usace.army.mil/greatlakes/hh/greatlakeswaterlevels/waterlevelforecasts/>

The suite of Great Lakes forecasts can be found here. The Monthly Bulletin is done once a month and has a 6-month horizon. The Weekly Forecast is performed on Thursdays and updates current Great Lakes conditions. The forecast is for the next 30 days. The Connecting Channels forecast, also produced on Thursdays provides forecasted water depths relative to chart datum in the St. Marys, St. Clair, Detroit, and St. Lawrence Rivers.

<http://www.lre.usace.army.mil/greatlakes/hh/greatlakeswaterlevels/historicdata/>

The period of record of Great Lakes water levels can be viewed by clicking on the [Historical Great Lakes Water Level Data \(1918-2011\)](#) link. Simply follow the instructions. The long-term averages as well as the record highs and lows can also be found here.

<http://www.lre.usace.army.mil/greatlakes/hh/weatherinformation/>

Great Lakes precipitation, evaporation and snow and ice information (when applicable) can be found here.

<http://www.lre.usace.army.mil/greatlakes/hh/links/>

Links to the International Board of Controls can be found here as well as other assorted Great Lakes information.

<http://www.lre.usace.army.mil/greatlakes/hh/contacts/>

Up to date contact numbers for questions about Great Lakes water levels are here.