

LEVELER

E-Newsletter from the Lake Ontario Riparian Alliance

Issue 72 May 8, 2017

Grassroots Public Advocacy for the Protection, Restoration and Conservation of Lake Ontario Beaches and Riparian Property

In this issue:

- **Do Everything You Hear or Read Not Believe!**
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Do Not Believe Everything You Hear or Read!

The spin-doctors at the International Joint Commission (IJC) have been saying in print and other media that Plan 2014 is not the cause of the high Lake Ontario water levels that we are experiencing. They are attempting to deflect criticism of Plan 2014 by saying those levels are all due to nature.

LORA would beg to differ. While it has been a very wet spring thus far, to say that those levels and the resulting flooding are not the effects of Plan 2014 is disingenuous at best and a lie at worst.

Plan 2014 does a number of things that make this the source of the pain currently inflicted along the south shore of the lake.

Here is a list of things changed by Plan 2014 that have led to our current situation:

- Plan 2014 has eliminated of Criterion K, which protected that south shore from extreme high and low water conditions.
- Plan 2014 disproportionately damages the south shore of Lake Ontario while other areas and interests are kept whole or even get a benefit.
- Plan 2014 involves less human control of regulation. The former Lake Ontario-St. Lawrence River Board of Control was allowed to make flow deviations for all parts of the lake and river system. The current board is prohibited from making any deviations to aid private and public property owners and recreational boaters on Lake Ontario.
- Under Plan 2014, deviations for protection of the lake are only allowed if a trigger level is reached and then it is subject to modification by a Plan 2014 stipulation, the F-limit, which was not part of Plan 58DD. This F-limit restricts the level of Lake St. Louis down river by Montreal, Canada. The F-limit was previously explained in LEVELER 71.

As of May 6, 2017, the lake has reached the level of 248.2 feet. This is above the highest annual Trigger Level in Plan 2014. This Trigger in the Plan is set for June 1st, not May 6th.

What will happen now? Absolutely nothing! Why?

The following was excerpted from the International Lake Ontario – St. Lawrence River Board's Facebook page:

Flow change: Decrease from 7,100 m³/s (250,700 cfs) to 6,800 m³/s (240,100 cfs) at 0901 hrs on 6 May 2017. Lake St. Louis has been as high as 22.55 m overnight and is currently at 22.51 m, a bit above the highest Plan 2014 F-limit value of 22.48 m. Ottawa River outflows are expected to rise, then decline relatively rapidly within the next few days following heavy rainfall. Lake Ontario outflows will continue to be adjusted as necessary, according to the F-Limit rules of Plan 2014, and Lake St. Louis will continue to be maintained at or near 22.48 m. Provisional data

shows that Lake Ontario likely reached 75.65 m (248.2 ft.) yesterday. More outflow decreases may be necessary over the weekend - but then outflows should be able to be increased over several days next week.

As a means of explaining the Board's Facebook message, the following dialogue occurred last night with two individuals with knowledge of the IJC actions and Plan 2014.

Question:

Why were outflows down in 2017 versa 2016, especially earlier in the year? Seems in a wetter year outflows would be higher.

Answer:

The general answer is because of the high levels downstream in 2017. Plan 2014 automatically reduces the lake's outflow if needed to meet certain downstream water levels in the St. Lawrence River near Montreal. These downstream river levels are heavily influenced by the Ottawa River, which has and is now setting flow records. It can be argued whether this is fair or not, but that is how the IJC decided to have Plan 2014 operate in order to limit damages downstream.

Question:

Does it not all come back to the closed-door meetings in which the Province of Quebec said they would not accept any more damages on their part of the river than 58DD created and NYS DEC said they would take damages in the lake?

Answer:

That's what it appears.

Current Lake Level

The Lake is now at 248.2 feet.

The average for this time of year is 245.96.

**The lake is 25.68 inches above average
and 6 inches higher than last week.**

(As reported International Lake Ontario - St. Lawrence River Board Week ending 5/3/17)

As always, the LORA website has all past newsletters posted at:

<http://www.loranet.org/> and <http://www.loranet.org/levelerarchive/pastissues.htm>

<https://www.facebook.com/LORANET.ORG/>