

News Release

For immediate release
March 2, 2026



Changing Watershed Conditions in the Cataraqi Region

Kingston – Cataraqi Conservation is advising residents of the potential for higher-than-normal springtime water levels due to seasonal temperature changes as we head into the spring thaw.

Weather Situation:

A multi-day period of warmth is approaching, with weather forecasts suggesting that air temperatures will rise to consistently above zero starting Thursday, March 5 or Friday, March 6. Successive days with daytime highs approaching or exceeding 10 degrees C from Saturday, March 7 to Wednesday, March 11 is a possibility. A multi-day period of significant rainfall is also forecast to begin on March 5 or March 6.

Conditions:

Many streamflows and inland lake levels are currently below normal due to a lack of mid-winter melts and rainfall events. The snowpack, however, is over two times the normal depth and water equivalent in some areas.

The coming rise in temperatures and rainfall are expected to cause a pronounced start to the spring freshet (snowmelt) period. Rainfall combined with melting snow will contribute to increase water levels and flows on inland lakes and streams in the coming days and weeks. Runoff will be enhanced where frozen ground conditions exist.

In response to the high amount of water in the snowpack, Water Managers are increasing discharge from managed lakes and targeting lower water levels to prepare for greater inflows from snowmelt and possible rainfall events. Water management cannot prevent flooding. It seeks to balance negative impacts, as much as possible, when excess water moves through the system. Target water levels generally trend upward through March to prepare for the summer recreation season.

Risks:

The above average snowpack is one factor contributing to an increased risk of flooding this year. Weather forecasts suggesting combined warmth and significant rainfall over the coming days and weeks are further indication of the likelihood of higher-than-normal water levels during the approaching freshet.

Widespread flooding is **NOT** expected at this time. However, higher than normal springtime inundation of low-lying areas is looking more likely. If you witness flooding and/or require assistance your first point of contact is the local municipality.

Cataraqi Conservation

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Cataraqui Conservation is urging caution around all dams (inflow and outflow channels) and fast-flowing watercourses. Respect the hazards in these areas by obeying all warning signs, and keep 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.

Ice conditions will rapidly deteriorate during warmer temperatures. 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. No ice is without some risk. Visit lifesaving.org for ice safety information.

Staff will continue to monitor conditions and forecasts. **Updated statements are likely in the coming days.** This advisory will expire on March 25, 2026.

For up-to-date flooding information, please visit our flood forecasting and information page at <https://cataraquiconservation.ca/pages/flood>

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