

News Release

For immediate release
March 4, 2026



Cataraqi Conservation Issues Watershed Conditions Statement – Flood Outlook and Water Safety for Inland Lakes and Streams

Kingston – Cataraqi Conservation is advising residents of the potential for flooding from expected higher-than-normal springtime water levels, and the need to exercise caution near watercourses as water levels and flows begin increasing in the coming days.

Weather Situation:

A multi-day period of warmth is approaching, with air temperatures forecast to stay consistently above zero starting Friday, March 6, possibly exceeding 10 degrees C on Saturday, March 7.

There is uncertainty regarding the timing and magnitude of expected rainfall.

2 to 11 mm of rain or freezing rain is forecast for Thursday, March 5 and Friday, March 6. Another 4 to 38 mm of rain is forecast for Saturday, March 7. Long-range forecasts are currently suggesting additional significant amounts of rainfall for Tuesday, March 10 and Wednesday, March 11.

Higher than average temperatures are expected to persist with daytime highs approaching or exceeding 10 degrees C on multiple days next week before temperatures are forecast to drop below zero again Thursday, March 12.

Conditions:

Many streamflows and lake levels are currently below normal due to a lack of mid-winter melts and rainfall events. The snowpack, however, contains 81mm of water equivalent, on average (two times normal for this time of year). Some locales have over 100mm (over two and a half times normal).

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

Risks:

The spring freshet (snowmelt) period is expected to begin on Friday, March 6 and accelerate on Saturday, March 7, causing water level and flow increases on inland lakes and streams.

Cataraqi Conservation

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Smaller, more responsive watercourses could rise quickly and produce elevated levels as early as Saturday, March 7 or early Sunday, March 8. Larger watercourses and lakes respond more slowly, continuing to rise for days. Additional runoff from snowmelt during the warm temperatures next week could drive levels higher, especially if combined with additional rainfall. Runoff will be enhanced where frozen ground conditions exist.

Widespread flooding is **NOT** expected at this time. However, higher than normal springtime inundation of low-lying areas is expected. Localized roadway inundation is possible where drainage infrastructure is overwhelmed and at some creek crossings. If you witness flooding and/or require assistance, your first point of contact is the local municipality.

The consistently cold temperatures this winter have resulted in thicker ice cover on lakes and streams. Ice cover will weaken and may begin to break up and move leading to possible localized ice jam flooding, especially in areas with a history of ice jamming.

Cataraqi 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 deteriorate rapidly during warmer temperatures. Cataraqi 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 and will update statements as needed. This Watershed Conditions Statement will remain in effect until (or updated before) Wednesday, March 18, 2026, at 11:59 PM.

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

Media contact for more information:

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

Affected residents are advised of the following sand and sandbag availability and location information (separate municipalities):

Residents in the Township of Athens
44 Elgin Street North - call first to schedule pick up (613-924-2044) **sand only (no bags)**

Residents in the Township of Augusta
Call 613-925-4231 x 201 if you have questions about sandbag supplies

Residents in the City of Brockville
Contact the City if you have questions about sandbag supplies

Residents in the Township of Elizabethtown-Kitley
Contact the Township if you have questions about sandbag supplies

Residents in the Township of Front of Yonge
Contact the Township if you have questions about sandbag supplies
<https://mallorytown.ca/contact/>

Residents in the Town of Gananoque
Public Works Yard Waste Depot located at the end of James A. Brennan Road - call first (613-382-4422)



Residents in the City of Kingston

Creekford Road Public Works site. Residents should submit a request through Contact Us <https://www.cityofkingston.ca/city-hall/contact-us> , or call 613-546-0000, *and arrangements can be made to have someone meet them on site*

Residents in the Township of Leeds and the Thousand Islands (2 locations)

- Main Township yard located at 1233 Prince Street in Lansdowne
- North yard located at 312 Lyndhurst Rd in in Lyndhurst

At both locations, clean sand stored in two yellow covered containers. Bags, a shovel, and a filling cone available for public use.

Residents in Loyalist Township

Contact the Township if you have questions about sandbag supplies

Residents in the Town of Greater Napanee

Contact the Town if you have questions about sandbag supplies

Residents in the Township of Rideau Lakes

Municipal storage dome at 1410 County Road 8 in Philippsville - call first (613-349-2314)

Residents in the Township of South Frontenac

2490 Keeley Rd, Sydenham – call first to schedule pick up (613-376-3027)