

News Release

For immediate release
September 4, 2025



Level 3 Low Water Condition Confirmed for Cataraqui Region

Kingston ON – Cataraqui Conservation and the Low Water Response Team have elevated the low water condition today from Level 1 to Level 3 for the Cataraqui Watershed due to very dry conditions and lack of rain fall.

“August saw some signs of improvement related to precipitation, with small rainfall events. However, on average the region only received 46 per cent of the precipitation it would normally get,” explained Cataraqui Conservation’s Water Resources Technologist Mallory Wright. “As well, all inland streams which are monitored by Cataraqui Conservation and our partners saw steady declines that are well below the average flow rate for this time of year and have reached low water thresholds. Water managers are very limited in what they can do to alleviate effects without consistent or significant rainfall.”

“If current dry conditions persist without significant rainfall, it is likely that the Level 3 declaration will remain in place for at least the rest of September,” noted David Ellingwood, Cataraqui Conservation’s General Manager. As summer changes to fall, it is hoped that typical fall rains will improve conditions, but the long-range forecast is for warm and dry weather.

Low water conditions are based upon precipitation and stream flow indicators. A Level 3 Low Water Condition is determined by Cataraqui Conservation and the Cataraqui Region Low Water Response Team as part of the Ontario Low Water Response Program.

A Level 3 low water condition is the highest of three levels and reflects a water supply that fails to meet the demand if current precipitation and stream flow trends persist. Level 1 ‘Minor’ suggests a potential water supply problem and Level 2 ‘Moderate’ a potentially serious problem.

Residents on groundwater systems or who draw from inland lakes or streams are asked to voluntarily conserve water by following water conservation practices:

- Reduce non-essential water uses.
- Limit outside watering of plants and lawns. If you must water your lawn, early morning or later evening watering reduces evaporation.
- **Note that lawns naturally become dormant during times of low water and will recover quickly.** Lawns that have turned brown from the drought are not ‘dead’. The grass has just gone dormant from lack of water. When rainfall returns, the grass will come out of dormancy and perk back up.
- Limit washing vehicles, driveways and sidewalks. Use a pail of soapy water to wash your car and rinse off quickly with a hose.
- Repair leaky plumbing or fixtures to help curtail water wastage.

Cataraqui Conservation is urging boaters to exercise caution when out on lakes as low water conditions may expose shoals or other obstructions not visible during normal conditions.

Cataraqui Conservation

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If a water well supply becomes low or dry, well owners are encouraged to review the Ontario Government's "Managing your well in times of drought" publication (<https://www.ontario.ca/page/managing-your-water-well-times-water-shortage>). Contact a local licensed water well contractor (<https://www.ontario.ca/page/find-licensed-well-contractors>) to assess the well and provide recommended solutions.

Municipalities may invoke water use bylaws and residents should find out what bylaws are in effect in their municipalities regarding water use as well as outdoor fires.

To help Cataraqi Conservation staff track the spread and seriousness of low water impacts on the region, we are asking for help from the public in collecting this information. If residents have a low water concern, please let us know by filling in this quick online form: <https://survey123.arcgis.com/share/7955b90fe7814d0bbef6f9b870ec6da9>

Cataraqi Conservation will continue to monitor water levels and will provide updates as conditions change.

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