

Watershed Conditions Statement - Water Safety

Bancroft District

Wednesday, March 24, 2021
3:00 pm

The Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry – Bancroft District is advising area residents that a **Watershed Conditions Statement - Water Safety** is in effect in the District until Monday, March 29, 2021

Residents of Bancroft District should keep a close watch on conditions, regularly check for updated messages and exercise caution near fast-moving rivers and streams. Please alert any children or other dependents under your care to these dangers and supervise their activities. Residents who have a historic susceptibility to flooding should take appropriate precautions to protect their property, such as ensuring sump pumps are functioning and securing items that may float away as water levels rise.

Residents can expect increasingly high flows through water control structures as they are being managed to mitigate, as much as possible, the impacts from the expected melt and rainfall. Due to the increasing flows and recent warm temperatures, ice conditions on lakes can be very unsafe.

The Ministry is closely monitoring the weather and developing watershed conditions. Further updates will be issued as appropriate.

TECHNICAL INFORMATION

Description of Weather System

This message is being sent on the basis of information received from MNRFS-Surface Water Monitoring Centre, MNRFS-Aviation Forest Fire and Emergency Management Services, Trent Severn Waterway (TSW) and Environment Canada.

Warm temperatures and significant spring precipitation are forecast across the Province this week.

A system is forecasted to move into southwestern Ontario on Thursday bringing 10 to 25 mm of rain to the region. It is forecast to push across southern Ontario and drop another 15

to 25 mm of mixed precipitation across south and central Ontario Friday, with southern sections of the forecast region primarily receiving rain. The phase and amount of precipitation, as well as the track of the system, is currently uncertain. Updates to this message may be provided as necessary.

Southeast and central Ontario daytime highs are forecast in the mid to high teens with overnight lows above 0 degrees C through to Thursday with a cooling trend beginning on Friday.

Description of Current Conditions

Recent warm temperatures have reduced the snowpack across Bancroft District. Continued warm temperatures and precipitation are likely to further degrade the snowpack and increase runoff, increasing levels and flows in local waterbodies. Mid-March snow surveys indicate significant snowpack remains in our watersheds and approximately 60 to 160 mm of water equivalent remain.

Snowpack has ripened in some areas making it less capable to absorb rainfall. The Frozen Ground model indicates that the ground in much of Bancroft District is still considered frozen. This condition of the soil leads to quicker and enhanced runoff should rainfall occur. Stream flows are expected to rise throughout Bancroft District, resulting in increased water levels and flows with the possibility of minor flooding in low lying areas.

Ice cover in the rivers and streams may breakup as a result of warm temperatures and higher flows, increasing the risk of ice jams and associated overbank flooding.

A close watch on local forecasts and conditions is recommended.

The MNRF and TSW continue to closely monitor local lakes and rivers as this event progresses. The MNRF is in regular communication with partner agencies and water control structure operators, including Conservation Authorities, Ontario Power Generation (OPG), Bracebridge Generation and TSW.

DEFINITIONS

- **WATERSHED CONDITIONS STATEMENT – WATER SAFETY:** Indicates that high flows, melting ice or other factors could be dangerous for such users as boaters, anglers and swimmers, but flooding is not expected.
- **WATERSHED CONDITIONS STATEMENT – FLOOD OUTLOOK:** Gives early notice of the potential for flooding based on weather forecasts calling for heavy rain, snow melt, high winds or other conditions.
- **FLOOD WATCH:** Potential for flooding exists within specific watercourses and municipalities.
- **FLOOD WARNING:** Flooding is imminent or occurring within specific watercourses and municipalities.

LEARN MORE

- Surface Water Monitoring Centre public webpage www.ontario.ca/flooding
- Environment Canada bulletins: www.weather.gc.ca
- A close watch on local conditions and weather forecasts from Environment Canada is recommended.

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