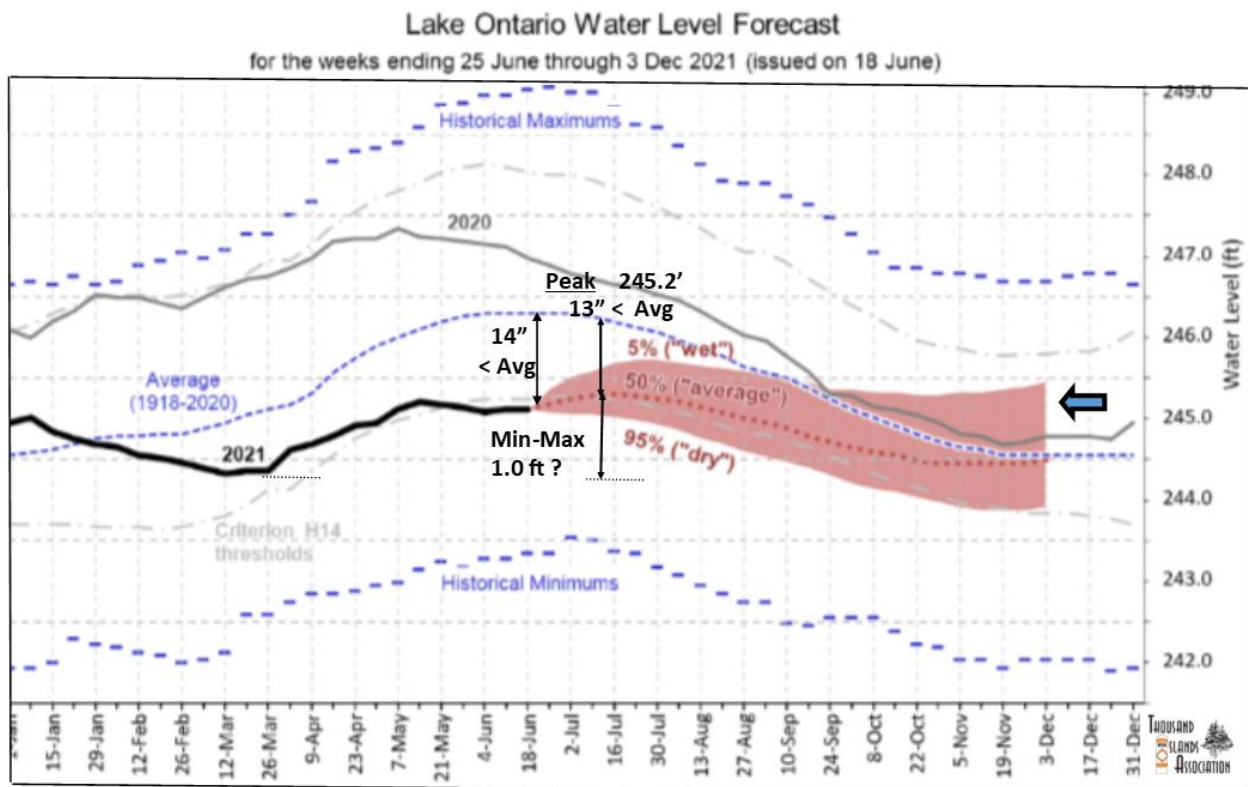


Low Water – Holding Steady

TIA Water Levels Committee – Vince Barton & Ken White (6/28/21)


Outlook

- Very little has changed over the past month – Lake Ontario’s level remained in a very narrow range between 1 to 2 inches above 245’ (approximately 14” below average for this time of year)
- Lake Ontario and the upper St. Lawrence River haven’t been this low in late June since 1965
- May was another extremely dry month for the Lake Ontario Basin, receiving just 1.38” of precipitation (44% of average)
- June has been the wettest month so far in 2021 – and even June has seen below average precipitation, with the Lake Ontario Basin receiving 87% of average June rain through June 27th
- The most recent forecast shows that it’s unlikely levels will rise more than a few inches – and may very well have already peaked
- BE SAFE out there – Use charts, GPS & River smarts to avoid the shoals!



Source: <https://ijc.org/en/loslr/watershed/forecasts> w/data graphics added by the Thousand Islands Association (TIA)

Current 6-month Water Levels Forecast Chart Observations

- There has been no real movement in the 50% line since the early June Forecast
- Mid-summer's 5% to 90% range has narrowed as forecast confidence went up
- It appears that the shrinking Min-to-Max total level swing of only 1.0 feet (late March to the early July peak) will likely break the 1.3 foot record set back in 1987
- If we get significant precipitation, the upper 5% wet line crosses above average the last part of September and remains above average through 3 December
- The area pointed to by the blue arrow  marks the first time 2021 levels could rise above average since around January 20th. Such a rise is totally precipitation dependent, requiring sustained “wet” conditions, yet is a *very low probability*
- The 50% probability line does not reach average until the beginning of December
- Since our June 1 report, the time for the 5% “wet” line to reach average has been delayed a month, from the start of August until its end

Water Level Control Efforts – IJC and ILOSLR Board

- The International Lake Ontario – St. Lawrence River Board continues to release less outflow than Plan 2014 calculates, since we are still below the H14 trigger
- However, the outflow reduction (deviation) is so small that it will not have the significant impact we'd all like to see
- This meager outflow reduction of 200 cubic meters per second for a full week will only keep an extra ¼” of water on Lake Ontario, about 1” per month - a pittance
- Remember that further outflow reductions will put ships at risk as levels decrease to near record lows in Montreal Harbor and other locations downriver

IJC's ILOSLR Board hosts Public Information Webinars – Recordings

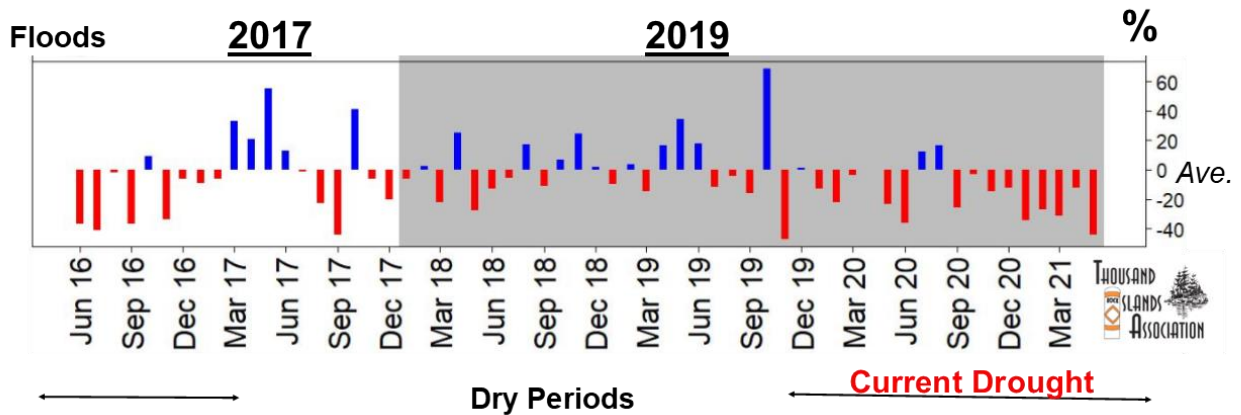
The International Lake Ontario-St. Lawrence River Board hosted virtual public information meetings on June 15th and 17th to present information on the current and forecast conditions within our Lake/River watershed. Video recordings of both virtual meetings are available at <https://ijc.org/en/loslrb/videos>.

Drought Conditions

As can be seen in the following graphic from the US Army Corps of Engineers, the Lake Ontario Basin has seen below average precipitation for the vast majority of the last year and a half. For the 12-month period from June 2020 through May 2021, the Lake Ontario Basin received just 78% of average precipitation – that's a shortfall of 8 inches of precipitation. That's a **LOT of water** we're missing in the system!

(Note the intense burst of spring precipitation in flood years 2017 & 2019)

Lake Ontario—Monthly Difference from Long-Term Average Precipitation (mm)

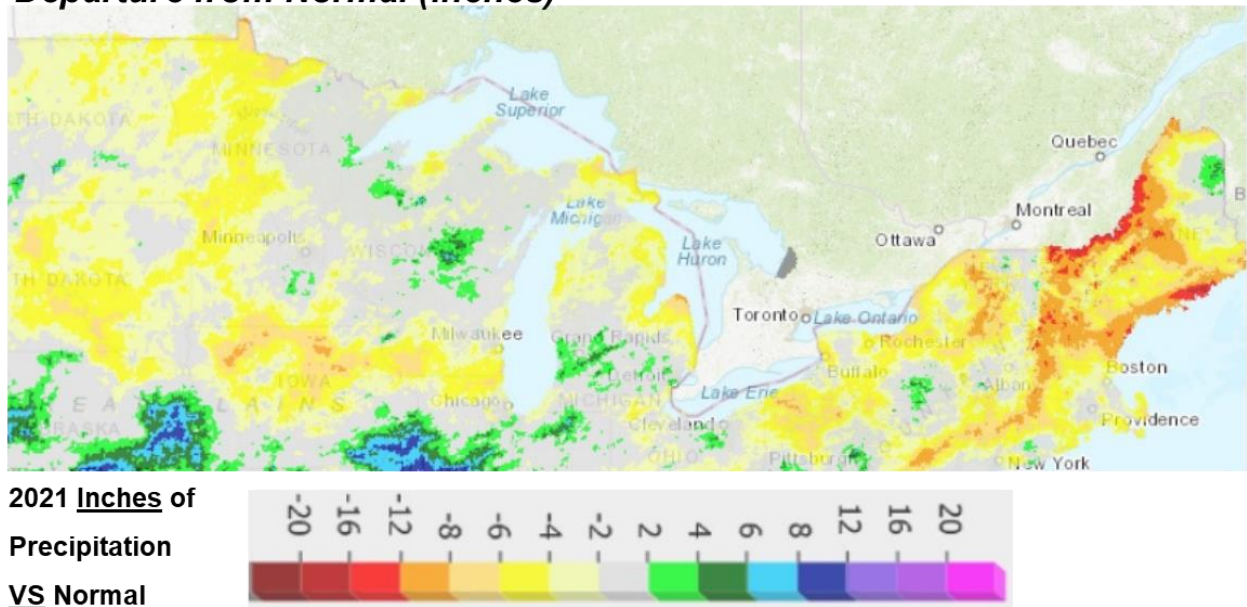


Data from: <https://lre-wm.usace.army.mil/ForecastData/GLBasinConditions/monthlyprecipPast5Years.jpg>

The following graphic from the US National Weather Service focuses in a bit more on 2021. All that yellow, tan, and orange shows just how dry 2021 has been so far.

Great Lakes Basin - 2021 Precipitation thru 6-28-21

Departure from Normal (inches)



<https://water.weather.gov/precip/> Time Range: Year to Date; Product: Departure from Normal

Summer 2021 Special Low Water Projects

While we'd all like to have more water right now, this year's low water does present some opportunities, too! Here are TIA's Suggestions:

- Clean and maintain your dock staves

- shoreline maintenance, strengthening & cleanup
- remove jagged rocks below where you dock
- recover old cans, bottles, plastic & trash from the bottom and shoreline

Plus join TIA's 2nd Annual Trash Free River Cleanup on August 7th!!! Click for [more info](#) or to [add your name](#) to our interest list.

What a difference 2 years can make!

The end of the dock in this photo was 4" underwater at this time in 2019:



4-foot dock staves in need of some TLC at Hambly Island – June 1, 2021