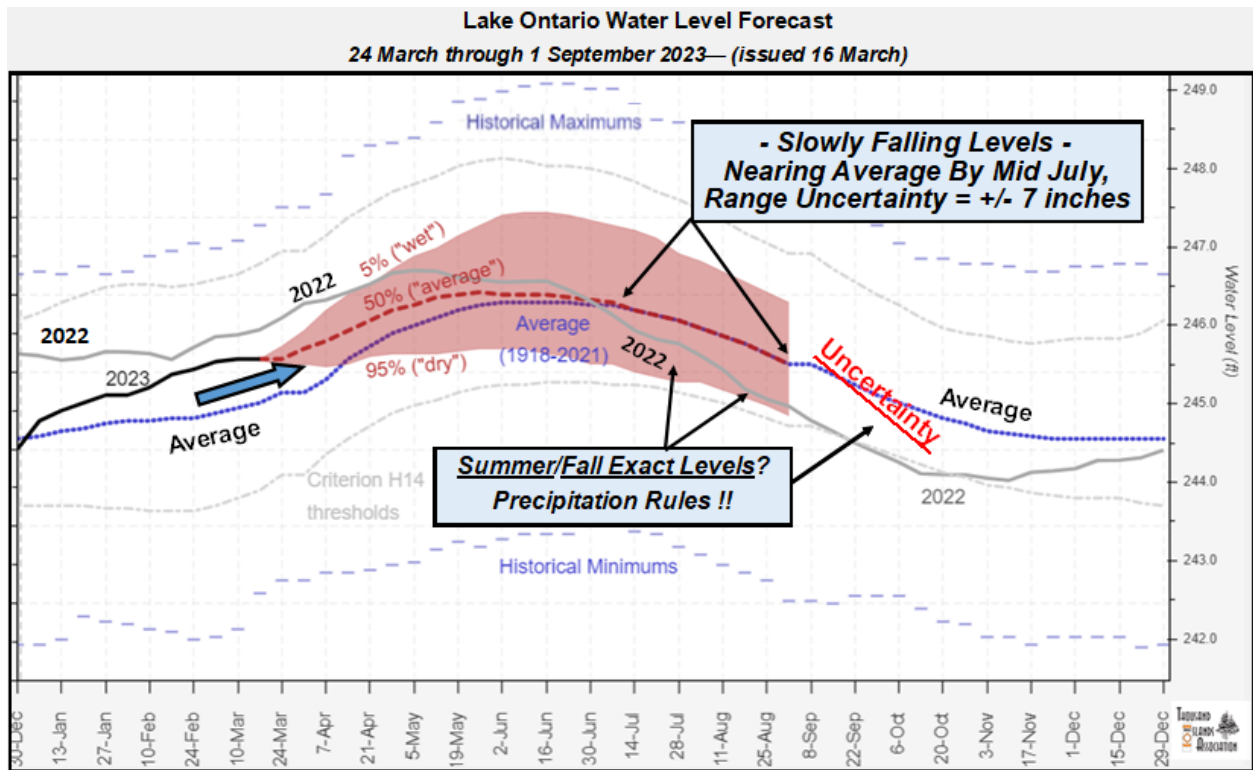


Water Levels – Going UP Slowly & Falling to Around Average Mid-Summer

TIA Water Levels Committee (3/20/23, Updated 4/1/23) – by Barton, Stewart & White



<https://ijc.org/en/loslr/b/watershed/forecasts> Edits by TIA

SUMMARY – We’re now Watching Spring Melt. Will this be an Average Year?

- This 'mild' winter has produced minimal ice cover. Extreme wind, snow, water level seiche & ice events are history. The River is 2.0 ft above datum.
- Water levels are now almost **6” above** the late March average.
- The ILOSLR Board target outflow is still at a significant rate of 7,940 m³/s
- The Beauharnois Canal was ice covered. **Ice jam & flood prevention is job #1**.
- In the Upper St. Lawrence, both the American and Canadian Channels are open, as are the waters off Gananoque across toward Grindstone.
- Bays and protected areas are still frozen this year **with soft white ice**, rather than the more solid blue ice. With the arrival of March insulating snows, the top surface became slushy. There was and is very little dry ice to be found.
- Locals call this an '**Open Winter**' and the River ice is different this year throughout. For typical 8 inch ice thickness, only the bottom inch is solid blue with the top 7” less dense **airy 'snow ice'**. The next strong NW blow has easily broken remaining ice found in bays and more protected areas into large sheets.
- Lots of the inland lakes are open with evaporation stealing water from the spring. More early spring snow melt will be absorbed rather than runoff into the Ontario basin since the soil frost line was shallow, less than 2” from the surface.
- Lake Ontario Basin **1st Quarter precipitation** has been pretty close to average through ~ March 20th, yet levels have been on the high side of forecasts.

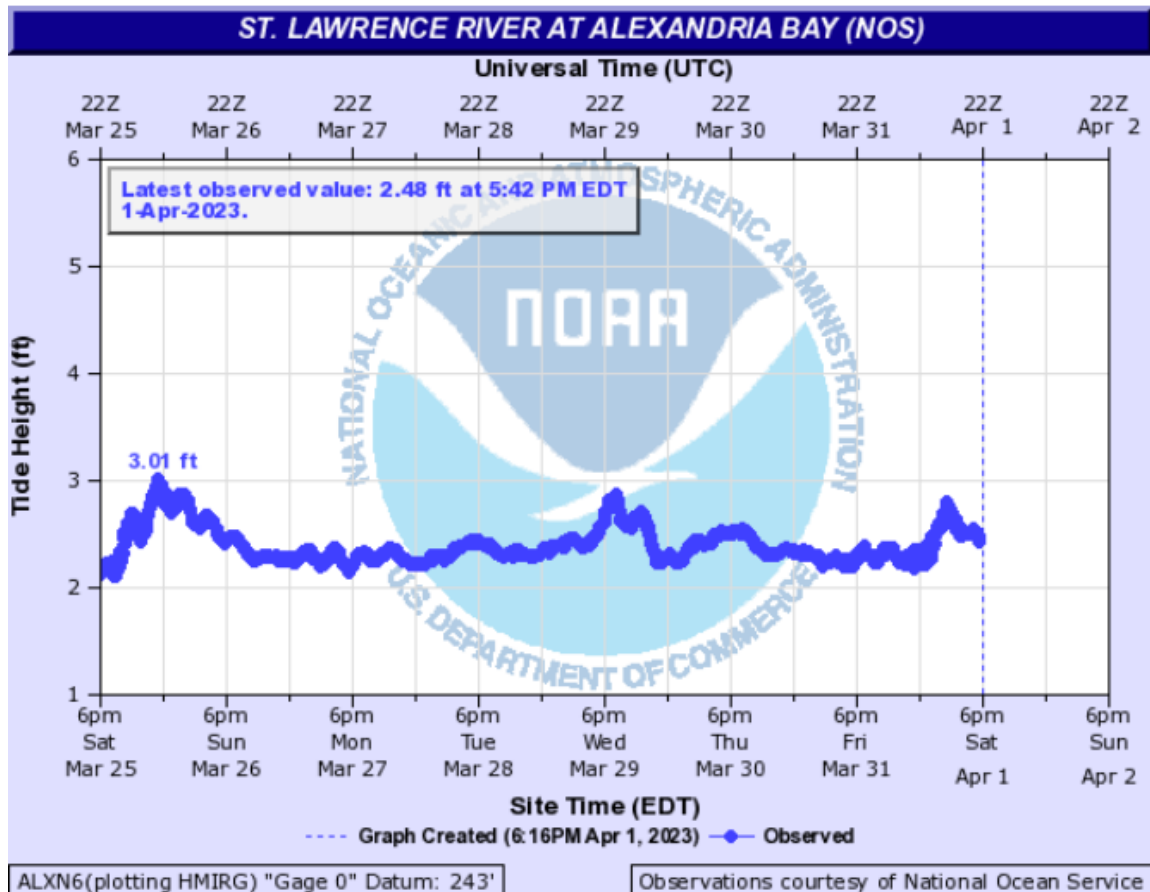
April Fools UPDATE:

In the last 11 days since the above article was written, the ice conditions and have changed dramatically and water levels are inching upwards to around 2.3 feet above chart datum.

The River is completely open, although in a few, very protected bays some dangerously soft ice remains. It's that time of the year when the ice fishermen hang up their tackle for the season, as several folks have gotten wet yesterday and today with the remaining soft ice shards offering little strength.

Ice fishing season is over!

Out in the main Canadian Channel an occasional dock, log or small boat can be spotted floating downstream amongst broken ice, heading towards the Moses-Saunders hydro dam. Strong winds today are clearing the channel waters quickly, with a temporary rise in levels as is seen on this levels graph from the Alexandria Bay level gauge station.



Its yo-yo time for weather on the River. After an inch of show yesterday, today was sunny, balmy and breezy in the mid-60's yet will be falling to the upper teens by tonight! **The River is almost ready for us. See you soon!**