

# **FLOOD WATCH – Mattawa River below Hurdman Dam to the confluence with Ottawa River at Mattawa**

## **Flood Outlook – elsewhere in NBMCA watershed**

Message Number: 2024-06  
Issued: April 13, 2024, at 5:15 PM EDT  
From: NBMCA Duty Officer, Angela Mills

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**FLOOD WATCH** notifies that the potential for flooding exists within specific watercourses and municipalities. Municipalities, emergency services and individual landowners in flood-prone areas should prepare.

**Watershed Conditions Statement – Flood Outlook** gives 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.

If you have a flood emergency, please contact your municipality. If you live in an unincorporated township, please contact the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNRF) – North Bay District.

A **FLOOD WATCH** has been issued for the portions of the Mattawa River downstream of Hurdman Dam to the confluence with the Ottawa River in the Town of Mattawa. A **Watershed Conditions Statement – Flood Outlook** is in effect for the remainder of the North Bay-Mattawa watershed, including the urban creeks in the City of North Bay (downgraded from Flood Watch).

This is an update to the previous Message Number 2024-05 dated April 12, 2024.

### **Current Conditions:**

Water levels and flows have responded significantly to rain over the last two days. Total rainfall recorded at the North Bay Airport for April 11-12 is 62 mm.

Chippewa Creek has peaked with a response of 108 cm and has receded by 38 cm. The La Vase River water level has increased by 92 cm and is stabilizing. The Wasi River has stabilized after a water level increase of 55 cm.

Water levels on Lake Nipissing have risen sharply in response to the rain and increasing inflows. Northwest winds are amplifying the water level on the east end of the lake. The water level on Lake Nipissing is regulated by dams operated by the federal government.

Water levels along the Mattawa River have been increasing. Water levels on Trout Lake, Turtle Lake, and Lake Talon are regulated by dams that are operated by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry.

The water level on the Ottawa River at Mattawa has increased with increased discharge from upstream reservoirs. Upstream discharge is expected to continue increasing and water levels may reach the start of minor flooding by early next week, per the Ottawa River Regulating Committee <https://ottawariver.ca/> Water levels on the Ottawa River are managed by upstream dams and reservoirs operated by provincial and federal governments.

Current water levels can be viewed by searching Station Names “Ottawa River”, “Mattawa River”, “Chippewa Creek”, “La Vase River”, “Wasi River”, and “Lake Nipissing” at [https://wateroffice.ec.gc.ca/search/real\\_time\\_e.html](https://wateroffice.ec.gc.ca/search/real_time_e.html)

### **Forecasted Conditions:**

Periods of light mixed precipitation or snow are forecast for today (April 13) and tomorrow. Winds are expected to be gusting to 64 km/h from the Northwest along the Lake Nipissing Shoreline, tapering off this afternoon. Another precipitation event is forecast for mid week (April 17-18).

Water levels and flows from inland lakes and local rivers are expected to remain high. Streams that usually respond quickly will start or continue to recede. Soils are expected to remain saturated and area rivers will respond rapidly to additional precipitation.

The water level of Lake Nipissing is expected to rise. Public Services and Procurement Canada are advising caution with rising water levels. For water level and flow information, see <https://www.tpsgc-pwgsc.gc.ca/ontario/eaux-water/reenseignement-information-eng.html>. The changes to water levels on Lake Nipissing depend on the amount of water flowing in from rivers, precipitation, and the amount of water flowing out through the control dams to the downstream French River.

The water level of the Ottawa River at Mattawa is expected to rise in response to increased flows from upstream. Water levels may reach the start of minor flooding by early next week, per the Ottawa River Regulating Committee.

### **Historic Flood Conditions:**

For comparison, in response to 34.5 mm of steady rain over 12 hours with frozen or saturated soil conditions and minimal remaining snowpack in March 2024, the water level on Chippewa Creek increased by 83 cm over 15 hours, peaking about 3 hours after rain ended.

Additionally, when river-based flooding occurred at Mattawa in May 2023, peak flow from the upstream Temiscaming Dam was 20% greater than current flow and peak flow in May 2019 was 59% higher than current flow.

### **Risk:**

A Flood Watch has been issued for the Mattawa River below the Hurdman Dam to the confluence with the Ottawa River at Mattawa. A Watershed Conditions Statement – Flood Outlook has been issued for the other areas of the North Bay-Mattawa watershed.

Water levels have responded to significant rainfall and water levels and flows are high. Water levels are expected to stabilize now that the weather system has moved through. Water level on Lake Nipissing is expected to continue to rise with increased inflows. Strong winds and wave action are a concern while lake levels are high. Flooding may occur in low-lying and poorly drained areas. Additional precipitation on saturated soil conditions will quickly trigger a response in water levels and flows.

Tributaries to the Upper Ottawa River received more rain than our local area. The Ottawa River is expected to rise as this water is released from upstream reservoirs. The water level of the Ottawa River at Mattawa is forecast to reach the start of minor flooding by early next week. The Ottawa River water levels are managed by dams and reservoirs operated by provincial and federal governments. The Ottawa River Regulation Planning Board posts current data and forecasts on their website <https://ottawariver.ca/>

All residents, especially those in low lying areas, are encouraged to monitor the conditions that are developing. Banks adjacent to rivers and creeks are very slippery at this time and when combined with fast moving and cold open water, pose a serious hazard. The public is encouraged to keep children and pets away from watercourses and waterbodies.

Municipalities are encouraged to monitor water crossings for debris that may affect the movement of water through culverts and bridges. A close watch on local conditions and updated forecasts and warnings from Environment Canada is also recommended.

Staff at the North Bay-Mattawa Conservation Authority will continue to monitor weather and watershed conditions and update this message based on the changing weather and streamflow conditions.


**This message will be in effect until (or updated before) Friday, April 19, at 4:00 PM EDT.**

The general public is advised of these messages through the [www.nbmca.ca](http://www.nbmca.ca) website with the flood status icon and a link to information about current conditions. NBMCA also circulates these messages to local media and social media, posting on Twitter (@theNBMCA), Instagram (nbmcainfo), and Facebook (NBMCA).

The public is invited to share photos of watershed conditions on social media using #NBMCAFlood.

### Terminology: Notification Levels

**WATERSHED CONDITIONS STATEMENT:** general notices of potential flooding or other conditions that pose a safety risk. There are two kinds of statements:



The diagram shows a horizontal bar divided into four colored segments: green, yellow, orange, and red. Above the yellow segment is a yellow box containing the text "Water Safety Statement".

**Water Safety:** indicates that high flows, unsafe banks, melting ice or other factors could be dangerous for users such as anglers, boaters, swimmers, children, or pets. Flooding is not expected.

Flood Outlook Statement



**Flood Outlook:** gives 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**

Flood Watch



**FLOOD WATCH:** notifies that the potential for flooding exists within specific watercourses and municipalities. Municipalities, emergency services and individual landowners in flood-prone areas should prepare.

**FLOOD WARNING**

Flood Warning



**FLOOD WARNING:** notifies that 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.

**MAP: North Bay – Mattawa Watershed**

