



NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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LEVEL 2 Low Water Condition Continues

Below normal rainfall during the spring and early summer are continuing to bring very dry conditions to the Trent River valley. As a result, a Level 2 Low Water Condition continues for the watershed region, an area stretching from Grafton to Quinte West and from Lake Ontario to Rice Lake.

Based on data from Environment Canada (Trenton), the 3-month average monthly precipitation for May through July was 35 millimetres which is only 47% of normal. A 3-month average precipitation below 60% of normal is a trigger for Level 2 Low Water Condition.

“The 18 millimetres of rain recorded at the Trenton weather station last week (July 25) was enough to keep us from moving to Level 3,” says Janet Noyes, Manager – Watershed Science & Services. “But with August being one of the drier months of the year, everyone should make a conscious effort to reduce their water use. We are starting to receive a number of reports of dry wells and agricultural hardships from across the watershed.”

Under a Level 2 Low Water Condition, residents, businesses, industries, and municipalities are asked to voluntarily reduce their water use by 20%. Lower Trent Conservation encourages everyone to use water wisely and apply water conservation measures. Non-essential water uses such as lawn watering, car washing, etc. should be suspended until natural water supplies recover. Those who hold a *Permit to Take Water* from the Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change are asked to reduce their water taking by 20% as well.

Many municipalities have invoked water use bylaws. Residents should know what bylaws are in effect in their municipality regarding water use, as well as outdoor fire bans.

Water flows in local streams have declined significantly over the past month due to the lack of precipitation (ranging from 52 to 71% of the lowest summer monthly average flow). In order to trigger a Level 3 Low Water Condition based on stream flows, the monthly average must reach 30% or lower. A significant amount of rain is needed to reverse the current downward.

“Fortunately, most streams west of the Trent River within Northumberland County have a source connection to the Oak Ridges Moraine. The Moraine’s deep groundwater aquifers are helping to augment the base flows for watercourses such as Shelter Valley, Salt, Cold and Mill Creeks,” adds Noyes.

Water is a shared resource. While one homeowner may have an abundant water supply, excessive water use could be drawing down groundwater aquifers that could impact nearby wells.

To assist with tracking the impacts of the Low Water Condition, Lower Trent Conservation is encouraging individuals or businesses who are experiencing problems or hardships as a result of the dry conditions to contact them at 613-394-4829 or information@ltc.on.ca.

A Level 1 Low Water Condition was declared on June 3rd, and was upgraded to Level 2 on July 4th.

The Ontario Low Water Response Program was developed by the Province to help coordinate and support local response in the event of a prolonged period of low stream flows or precipitation. There are three levels of Low Water Conditions with Level 1 being the least severe and Level 3 being the most severe.

The local Water Response Team, comprised of local municipalities with support from provincial government agencies and other stakeholders, will continue to monitor conditions and report new information as it becomes available. Updates on the Low Water status will be provided as conditions warrant. To learn more about Ontario's Low Water Response program visit our website at www.ltc.on.ca.

For more information, contact:

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