



# NEWS RELEASE

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## Great Lakes to continue high water level trend into the fall

**DETROIT-** The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Detroit District, announces that based on preliminary August data, Lake Superior tied its record high for the month while Lake St. Clair and Lake Erie established new record high monthly mean water levels in August. Water levels on Lake Michigan-Huron and Lake Ontario were slightly below record highs, but still very high compared to average.

The Detroit District monitors the Great Lakes' water levels and provides the data and analysis of these findings as a public service. Recent data is revealing interesting trends and the possibility of high levels again during the fall and early winter.

“The fall and early winter often bring significant storm systems to the Great Lakes,” said Keith Kompoltowicz, chief of Watershed Hydrology, Detroit District. “These systems have the potential to bring tremendous impacts to the coastlines including more erosion and coastal flooding, even with the declining lake levels. Those with interests along the shoreline should be prepared for these events.”

The August levels continue a trend of new records set on the Great Lakes this spring and summer. Lakes Superior, St. Clair, Erie and Ontario all reached new record highs. In June, the records for Lakes Erie and Ontario are the highest for any month dating back to 1918, while the July level for Lake St. Clair was the highest in the period of record. Lake Michigan-Huron was less than one inch from its June record. Additional record high water levels are possible on all the Great Lakes and Lake St. Clair this fall.

*Waterfront owners are urged to beat the rush and apply for shore protection permits now.*

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On the Great Lakes and other navigable waterways, many shore protection projects, including riprap, revetments, seawalls and backfill, and bioengineered shore protection, commonly require permits from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Coastal shoreline property owners may want to consider applying for proposed shore protection permits now. Many tend to put turning in such applications until an emergency situation arises; however, regulatory staff advise property owners to plan their projects and apply for permits in advance.

“Submitting a complete permit application and tailoring the project to meet our Nationwide Permit or Regional General Permit criteria are the best ways to streamline the permit process,” said Katie Otanez, regulatory project manager, Detroit District. “We are happy to talk to anyone who has questions about the application or permit evaluation process.”

In Michigan, applications for permits should be submitted online through the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes and Energy MiWaters website. Links to MiWaters, information on Nationwide and Regional General Permits, and other resources are available on the Detroit District Regulatory website at: [www.lre.usace.army.mil/Missions/Regulatory-Program-and-Permits](http://www.lre.usace.army.mil/Missions/Regulatory-Program-and-Permits).

Although August experienced lower than average precipitation across the Great Lakes basin as a whole, the lakes remain high. The Great Lakes region will continue to see the threat of coastal flooding and shoreline erosion especially during storm events, even with forecasted water level declines. Localized water levels are often impacted by winds and can be significantly higher during storms. Water levels and flow rates in the connecting channels of the Great Lakes are also high and may, depending on winds and other atmospheric conditions, lead to localized flooding.

*Help is available to local communities.*

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has authority to support communities in flood fighting by providing technical expertise, and in certain instances, provide flood fight supplies, such as sand bags and plastic sheeting. This assistance must be requested by state authorities. Communities should contact their county emergency management offices, who can begin coordination with the state and the Corps. At this time, The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Detroit District, is providing technical assistance to Bay, Macomb, Monroe, Ottawa, St. Clair, and Wayne Counties in Michigan.

“The Detroit District has a broad range of engineering and flood fight expertise it can bring to communities to help them respond to flooding they are experiencing,” said Pat Kuhne, chief of Emergency Management, Detroit District. “We have been supplementing State and local efforts, by providing advice to neighborhoods and homeowners on how to protect their properties. If you

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need this type of assistance, reach out to your County emergency management office who can make the official request.”

*Long term solutions are available also.*

“The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has several programs that may be able to assist government entities such as local communities, counties or States,” said Jim Luke, outreach coordinator, Detroit District. “The range of services that the Corps can provide varies from providing technical assistance to conducting a study to construction. Examples include, determining why you are having flooding issues, flood warning/preparedness, a flood damage reduction study, or construction projects such as levees or erosion protection.”

For additional information, contact Emily Schaefer, public affairs specialist, at 313-226-4681 at the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Detroit District.

To find updates on the Great Lakes high water information visit the Detroit District Website at: [www.lre.usace.army.mil](http://www.lre.usace.army.mil)

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