

FLOOD WATCH – North Bay-Mattawa Watershed inland rivers

Water Safety – Lake Nipissing Shoreline in North Bay and Callander and the Mattawa River in Mattawa

Message Number: 2025-03
Issued: March 18, 2025, at 2:30 PM EDT
From: NBMCA Duty Officer, Angela Mills

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 – 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.

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

A **FLOOD WATCH** has been issued for the inland rivers within the North Bay-Mattawa Watershed

A **Watershed Conditions Statement – Water Safety** has been issued for the Lake Nipissing Shoreline in the City of North Bay and Municipality of Callander and the lower reaches of the Mattawa River through the Town of Mattawa.

This is an update to the previous Message Number 2025-02 dated March 14, 2025.

Current Conditions:

Water levels on local creeks and rivers, including Chippewa Creek, La Vase River, and Wasi River have increased in response to the weekend's rain and snowmelt. Water levels on local lakes have also been rising. Monday's cooler temperatures slowed the melt and runoff. Trails at the Corbeil Conservation Area have been closed due to flooding.

Water levels on Lake Nipissing and the Ottawa River are Mattawa are normal and well below flood thresholds.

Moisture content in the snowpack was an average of 148.7 mm (as of March 14), which is above normal for this time of year. After recent mild temperatures, rain and snowmelt, the

remaining snowpack and frozen or saturated soils have limited capacity to store additional moisture.

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

Forecasted Conditions:

Temperatures are forecast to be mild today through Thursday (Mar 20), remaining above freezing, with 10-15 mm of rain forecast. Snowmelt runoff is expected to resume, and local water levels will increase.

Water levels on the Ottawa River are managed by upstream dams and reservoirs operated by provincial and federal governments. Forecasts are available at <https://ottawariver.ca/>

The water level on Lake Nipissing is regulated by dams operated by the federal government. Forecasts are available at <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-services-procurement/services/infrastructure-buildings/bridges-docks-dams/frenchriver-dam.html>

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.

Risk:

Forecasted warm temperatures and rain will trigger snow melt and increase hazardous conditions around lakes, rivers, and streams. With water levels already high, the runoff from additional snowmelt and rain is expected to further increase local water levels across the watershed. A Flood Watch is in effect for the local inland rivers as there is a risk of flooding in low-lying and flood-prone areas. Higher flows on area creeks and rivers will cause any remaining ice to break up. Rain on frozen and saturated conditions may result in rapid changes in water levels on urban creeks in the City of North Bay, especially during and after periods of intense precipitation. Water levels throughout the watershed will increase and localized flooding is possible in low-lying and flood-prone areas.

Changing water levels with increased runoff and warm temperatures are expected to impact ice stability along the Lake Nipissing shoreline and the Mattawa River. A Watershed Conditions Statement – Water Safety is in effect as flooding is not currently expected in these areas.

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 cold open water, pose a serious hazard. The public is encouraged to keep children and pets away from watercourses and off 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, March 21, 2025 at 12:00 PM EDT.


The general public is advised of these messages through the 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:


 **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:** 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:** 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:** 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

