



FLOOD WATCH for North Bay-Mattawa watershed

Watershed Conditions Statement – Water Safety for Lake Nipissing Shoreline and Mattawa River downstream of Hurdman Dam

Message Number: 2026-07

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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 and Forestry (MNRF) – North Bay District.

A **Flood Watch** has been issued for the most of the NBMCA watershed and a **Watershed Conditions Statement – Water Safety** continues for the Lake Nipissing Shoreline and Mattawa River downstream of Hurdman Dam.

This is an update to the previous Message Number 2026-06 dated April 9, 2026.

Current Conditions:

Preliminary data indicate more than 25 mm of rain has fallen across the watershed since yesterday. Month-to-date, more than 90% of normal April

precipitation has been recorded at the North Bay Airport. Water levels and flows have increased in response to several days of mild temperatures, rainfall, and snowmelt in the couple of weeks. Wasi River has responded significantly to last night's rain, having risen more than 25 cm and continues to rise. Chippewa Creek has increased by more than 75 cm and is bank full.

Significant water content remains stored in the snowpack, with an above normal average of 118.7 mm (as of Apr 8). The remaining snow is very wet and unstable, and many wetlands and low-lying areas across the watershed are inundated. Trails at the Corbeil Conservation Area are closed due to flooding.

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:

Forecasts indicate temperatures will remain above freezing for the coming week with daytime highs for most days above 10 °C. Significant and continued rainfall is anticipated for the coming week with 50-100 mm cumulative rain forecast.

Water level and flows on local creeks and rivers will continue to increase in response to the forecasted rain and resulting snowmelt.

The water level of Lake Nipissing is expected to continue to increase in response to higher inflows, refilling the lake from winter draw down. 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. <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-services-procurement/services/infrastructure-buildings/bridges-docks-dams/frenchriver-dam.html>

The water level of the Ottawa River at Mattawa is seasonal and expected to increase over the coming days per the Ottawa River Regulating Committee. 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/>

Historic Flood Conditions:

For comparison, current conditions and forecasts are similar to those of April 18, 2019, when flooding occurred in the watershed. The snowpack water content was 123 mm (measured April 15, 2019). Daytime temperatures were between 3 and 12 °C, with overnight temperatures above freezing. Actual precipitation measured on April 18, 2019, was 31.8 mm. When combined with snowmelt, the daily average water level on Chippewa Creek, in North Bay, increased by 57.6 cm in that one day.

For that same rain event, Wasi River responded over several days with daily average water level at the gauge increasing by 70 cm over two days causing flooding in Chisholm and East Ferris. Current readings are 47 cm less than 2019's peak level on the gauge.

Risk:

A Flood Watch has been issued for the North Bay-Mattawa watershed. With soils frozen or saturated, the landscape has little storage capacity for rainfall and snowmelt. Urban creeks respond quickly to rain events. Water levels are high and additional rain and snowmelt will increase water levels and flows.

A Watershed Conditions Statement – Water Safety message continues for the Lake Nipissing shoreline and Mattawa River downstream of Hurdman Dam. These areas are not currently at risk of flooding.

Many low-lying areas and wetlands are inundated and have limited capacity to store additional water. Water levels and flows in local streams and rivers, especially those in urban areas could change rapidly especially during and after rainfall. Flooding and ponding are likely in flood-prone low-lying areas. Lake ice surrounding inflowing streams will deteriorate rapidly with increasing flows.

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 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) Monday, April 20, 2026 at 4:00 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

