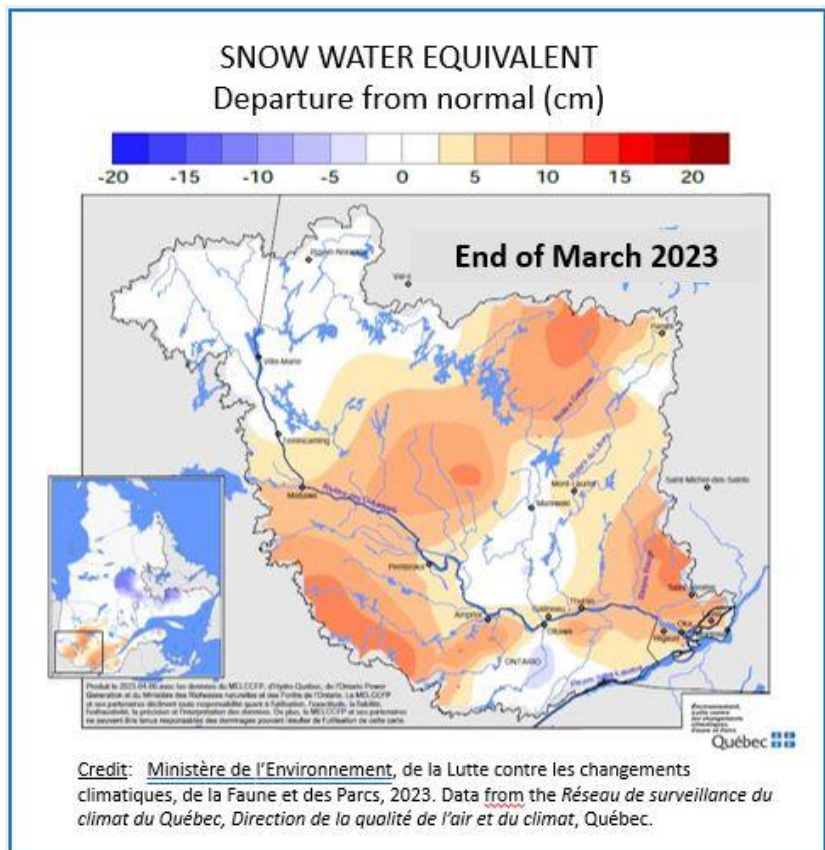




## EXPECTING MINOR FLOODING ON THE OTTAWA RIVER (Lake Coulonge to the Montreal Region)

**OTTAWA/GATINEAU, Friday April 14, 2023** — The Ottawa River Regulating Committee cautions that levels and flows along the Ottawa River continue to rise due to on-going snowmelt in the central and southern portions of the basin. Minor flood levels may be exceeded in flood prone areas along the river between Lake Coulonge and the Montreal region starting Monday, April 17. The minor flood level is defined as the level at which parts of some streets, lawns and parks are beginning to flood, with no or few houses/buildings being affected. Water levels are currently expected to remain below major flood thresholds in all locations. **Further bulletins will be published if levels are expected to exceed major flood levels.**

**River Conditions Forecast / Flooding Risk\*:** As of the end of March, large portions of the unregulated area in the south and southwest of the watershed had accumulated above normal water content in the snowpack (refer to the figure to the right). The record-setting temperatures over the last few days have triggered a rapid melt of this snow, leading to rising water levels and increased flow in tributaries and on the main stem of the Ottawa River downstream of Fort Coulonge. A rainfall event forecasted for Sunday and Monday April 16 and 17 will add to the flow in these watercourses. There are no reservoirs in this lower portion of the watershed, therefore there is no capacity to hold back these flows. The water in the lower portion of the watershed makes its way downstream and out of the basin. The available storage in the northern reservoirs will be used to restrict flows and prevent a part of the water from these upstream areas from flowing into the lower reaches of the Ottawa River, thus avoiding water levels that exceed the major flood thresholds.



**Rising levels along the main stem of the Ottawa River over the coming week are expected to result in minor flooding between Fort Coulonge and the Montreal region.** If you have a flood emergency, please contact your municipality.

**Reservoir Regulation Strategy:** Increases in water levels along the main stem of the Ottawa River in the spring are caused by an increase of inflows. The principal storage reservoirs in the northern part of the watershed will store a large portion of runoff from this portion of the basin, thereby reducing flows in downstream areas. However, dams located in the central and southern portions of the basin are essentially “run of the river” facilities with no significant

storage capacity. These facilities are not able to reduce flows and the levels associated with increased spring runoff. During this critical freshet period, the Regulating Committee takes actions to mitigate the amount of flooding and will continuously monitor conditions at all points along the river.

The Regulating Committee works closely at all times, with provincial agencies responsible for issuing flood-related messages. In Ontario, Conservation Authorities and District Offices of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry issue local flood-related messages and information to municipalities, Indigenous communities and other key agencies involved in flood preparedness and response. Current flood-related messages can be viewed on-line on the individual conservation authority websites and on the provincial flood webpage: <https://www.ontario.ca/flooding>. In Quebec, the Ministère de la Sécurité publique through the Centre des opérations gouvernementales and the Regional Directorates of Sécurité civile collaborates with municipalities to protect residents. Monitoring of flood conditions can be viewed at <https://geoeql.msp.gouv.qc.ca/adnv2/>.

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### FOR MORE INFORMATION

**Website:** Current and forecast conditions on the Ottawa River along with conditions at the principal reservoirs in the system may be obtained by consulting our website. A general [four-day forecast](#) is also provided at key locations within the basin during the spring freshet period.

[www.ottawariver.ca](http://www.ottawariver.ca) (English)

[www.rivieredesoutaouais.ca/](http://www.rivieredesoutaouais.ca/)(French)

**Telephone:** You can call 1-888-621-0059 to hear a recorded message describing the river conditions forecast.

**Twitter:** Follow us to be notified when press releases are issued, when we begin daily updates of the River Conditions Forecast message or the four-day forecasts at reference locations on our website, or when news bulletins are posted on our website.

[twitter.com/ORRPB](https://twitter.com/ORRPB)(English)

[twitter.com/CPRRO](https://twitter.com/CPRRO)(French)

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**About the Ottawa River Regulating Committee:** The group consists of the following agencies that are responsible for the collaborative flow management of the principal reservoirs within the Ottawa River watershed: Hydro-Québec, Ministère de l'Environnement, de la Lutte contre les changements climatiques, de la Faune et des Parcs du Québec, Ontario Power Generation, and Public Services and Procurement Canada. In Ontario, the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry, as an associate member of the Regulating Committee, contributes important hydrometeorological information and plays a key role in disseminating information in Ontario.

**Frequency of Press Releases:** The Regulating Committee issues a press release when the spring freshet season is starting on the Ottawa River. It issues other press releases, as needed, when it anticipates that river conditions on the main stem of the Ottawa River may exceed significant flood levels.

**\*Subject Area:** The focus of the “River Conditions / Flood Risk” report is on the main stem of the Ottawa River (from the Lake Timiskaming outlet down to the Montreal region). River conditions in tributaries of the Ottawa River, including the Abitibi-Timiskaming area, may differ.

*For additional information, please communicate with the Ottawa River Regulation Secretariat using the ‘Contact us’ form on the website or leave a message at 819-303-5886 or 1-888-621-0059.*

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**Ottawa River Regulating Committee**