

## Kennebec Lake Water levels

Guenter Nitsche's gauge readings show that in Sept of 2016, the water level was 23 to 27 cm lower than it was in September of 2015.

The second lowest water levels for September were in 2012 when for the same dates, the levels were 9 to 11 cm higher than this year.

This year's September levels are over one metre lower than spring high water levels (113cm lower than 2015, 215 cm lower than 2014).

The highest summer levels were in 2013 when early July levels were 91 cm higher than the current level.

Thanks to Guenter we have exact measures of the variation in water levels from 2006 to the present. These measures give us some indication of water levels variation we can expect as climate change increases future variability. Note the Water Condition Report from Quinte Conservation Authority.



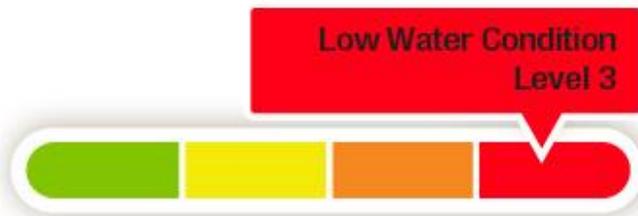
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## Level 3 Low Water Condition Continues



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While some areas in the Quinte Conservation watershed received a good amount of rain over the weekend it hasn't

been enough to lift the area out of a Level 3 Low Water Condition. Water Resources Manager Christine McClure says, "Over the weekend the Picton area received 35 millimetres of rain - the most in the watershed. Most areas received less than 25 millimetres of rain. We need significant sustained rainfall over several days all across the watershed in order to replenish our rivers and streams."

Quinte Conservation confirms low water conditions using two criteria - precipitation and stream flow. In order to move out of the Level 3 Low Water Condition the Quinte Conservation watersheds need to receive a great deal more slow, steady rain to make up for the deficit experienced earlier in the year. Significant rainfall is required to see the flows increase in rivers and streams.

McClure explains, "We are getting a lot of questions recently about how much rain we need to bring the area out of this severe low water condition. The situation is not as clear cut as being able to say a particular amount of rain will help. Our water levels and flows are so low now that it is important for the area to receive a steady amount of rain over a number days. The recent rainfall caused a small increase in stream and river flows, but those are already declining. Individual rainfall events are not having a significant impact on the situation."

McClure adds, "We are getting new reports of people with wells going dry. Under normal conditions our groundwater levels would decline through to October. This year it will be worse. People on private wells will need to be careful with their water use and monitor their wells in case they should go dry."

Quinte Conservation is continuing to ask residents and businesses to reduce their water use by 50% until the water supply has been replenished. The local environmental agency will monitor precipitation and stream flows and provide updates. Quinte Conservation encourages everyone to use water wisely and apply water conservation measures.

A Level 3 Low Water Condition was declared by Quinte Conservation and the Low Water Response Team due to lack of rainfall and low flows in local rivers and streams on August 4. The Quinte Conservation watersheds have been experiencing low water conditions since the beginning of June.

A Level 3 Low Water Condition indicates a failure of the water supply to meet demand. Restrictions on water use may

be imposed by municipalities or under the provincial Water Resources Act. Low water conditions are ranked as Level 1, 2 or 3 based on a prolonged period of low flows or precipitation. A Level 1 is the least severe and Level 3 is the most severe.

The environmental organization is encouraging any individuals or businesses in the Quinte watersheds who experience problems or hardships, such as wells going dry, to contact Quinte Conservation by calling 613-968-3434 or 613-354-3312 and dialing extension 129. Reports can also be emailed to [info@quinteconservation.ca](mailto:info@quinteconservation.ca). These reports will help the organization track the impacts of the Low Water Condition.

Well owners should take steps to protect their well pump. A licensed contractor can be hired to check water levels, make sure the pump is working and ensure the pump is protected in case the well should run dry.

Quinte Conservation is the lead for the local Water Response Team (WRT) for all of Prince Edward County and the watersheds of the Moira, Napanee and Salmon Rivers. The team includes representation from municipalities, Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change, Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry, Ministry of Agriculture Food and Rural Affairs, First Nations, and local industry. The WRT is formed when the watershed is in a Level 1 condition. Water Response Teams monitor local conditions carefully and work with local water users to reduce demand and mitigate the effects of water shortages.

Quinte Conservation is a community-based environmental protection agency. It serves 18 municipalities in the watersheds of the Moira, Napanee and Salmon Rivers and Prince Edward County. It provides cost-effective environmental expertise and leadership. Quinte Conservation's main goal is to create a sustainable ecosystem where people and nature live in harmony.

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