

Watershed Conditions Statement:

Still Not Enough Rain in the Rideau Valley

(WCS - 4/2015)

June 3, 2015 – Despite rain over the last week, drought conditions persist.

The three month precipitation totals recorded at climate monitoring stations in and around the Rideau River to the end of May were higher than at the end of April. However, the totals are all still below 80% of normal three month precipitation and, therefore, the watershed is still in drought conditions.

There have been significant differences in the amount of rain with a distinct north-south variation. Rainfall measured at the Brockville Airport, near the headwaters of Kemptville Creek, was less than 40% of normal for the month of May. This has caused flow in the Creek to be similar to that typically seen at the end of August.

Flows in the Rideau River, as measured at Ottawa, and in the Jock River are close to what is usually seen at the beginning of July. The reservoir lakes for the Rideau Canal are all close to targets for the time of year having benefitted from heavier rainfall in the upper parts of the watershed with close to 40 millimetres measured at Bobs Lake and over 30 millimetres at Rideau Ferry on Big Rideau Lake over the weekend. Outflows from Bobs Lake have increased which will bring the water level in Christie Lake higher and increase flows in the Tay River but how long that will last depends on sustained rainfall.

Levels in lakes that do not have the dams of the reservoir lakes to maintain water levels will have increased to varying degrees due to the rain. Boaters should still be cautious to avoid obstacles that are not normally exposed.

Farmers benefitted from the dry conditions in April and what rain that has fallen has caused crops to turn the fields green. Needed now, along with some rain, are warmer temperatures.

The good news is that long range weather forecasts for the summer indicate that there will be near-normal precipitation and temperatures. Also, as much as 40 millimetres is forecast for Sunday and Monday.

The RVCA encourages everybody to always use water wisely and apply water conservation measures, particularly during this period of low precipitation.

Authority staff will continue to monitor conditions and report new information as it becomes available.

To learn more about Ontario's Low Water Response program visit:

http://www.mnr.gov.on.ca/en/Business/Water/2ColumnSubPage/STEL02_164583.html. Also, visit the RVCA website for local conditions.

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More Information:

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natural resource conservation."