

ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS WEEKLY GREAT LAKES WATER LEVEL UPDATE

May 08, 2026

WEATHER CONDITIONS

Over the past week, most of the basin received a much-needed break from precipitation. However, localized rain fell south of Buffalo, NY and neared 3 inches of precipitation. A decrease in precipitation also brought a decrease in temperatures, with most areas seeing temps 5-10 degrees Fahrenheit below average. The northern portion of the basin saw overnight lows dipping below freezing. Over the next week, rain will continue to be light with sprinkles possible over the weekend and mid-week next week. Temperatures should warm up slightly and settle around average over the next 7 days.

LAKE LEVEL CONDITIONS

Forecasted water levels for May 8th are above levels from last month on all lakes by a range of 5 to 13 inches, as the seasonal rise continues. Compared to last year, projected May 8th water levels on Lakes Superior, Michigan-Huron, and Ontario are above last year's level by 4, 6, and 16 inches, respectively. Lakes St. Clair and Erie are 2 and 3 inches below last year's May 8th levels. Lake Ontario is 12 inches above its long-term monthly average for May, Lakes St. Clair and Erie are 2 inches above their long-term monthly averages for May, and Lakes Superior and Michigan-Huron are at their long-term monthly average for May. All lakes are below record high May water levels by a range of 16 to 33 inches and above record low May water levels by a range of 24 to 48 inches, depending on the lake. By June 8th, water levels are forecast to rise between 4 and 2 inches, depending on the lake, except Lake Ontario, which is forecast to remain at its May 8th level.

FORECASTED MONTHLY OUTFLOWS/CHANNEL CONDITIONS

Lake Superior's outflow through the St. Marys River is projected to be slightly above average in May. Lake Michigan-Huron's outflow through the St. Clair River, Lake St. Clair's outflow through the Detroit River, Lake Erie's outflow through the Niagara River, and Lake Ontario's outflow through the St. Lawrence River are projected to be above average in May.

ALERTS

Water levels shown are still-water surface elevations over the entire lake surface. Water levels at specific locations may differ due to meteorological influences. Official records are based on monthly average water levels and not daily water levels. Great Lakes, connecting channels, and St. Lawrence River users should keep informed of current conditions before undertaking any activities affected by changing water levels. Mariners should use navigation charts and refer to current water level readings.

	SUPERIOR	MICH-HURON	ST. CLAIR	ERIE	ONTARIO
Forecasted Water Level for May 8, 2026 (feet)	601.61	579.13	574.87	572.15	247.18
Chart Datum (feet)	601.10	577.50	572.30	569.20	243.30
Difference from chart datum (inches)	+6	+20	+31	+35	+47
Difference from average water level for Apr 8, 2026 (inches*)	+8	+11	+5	+9	+13
Difference from average water level for May 8, 2025 (inches*)	+4	+6	-2	-3	+16
Difference from long-term monthly average of May (inches)	0	0	+2	+2	+12
Difference from highest monthly average of record for May (inches)	-16	-33	-30	-27	-18
Year of highest recorded monthly mean	2019	2020	2020	2020	2017
Difference from lowest monthly average of record for May (inches)	+24	+31	+31	+37	+48
Year of lowest recorded monthly mean	1926	1964	1934	1934	1935
Projected net change in levels by Jun 8, 2026 (Inches)	+4	+3	+3	+2	0

ALL DATA SHOWN IN THIS SUMMARY ARE REFERENCED TO IGLD 1985
 *VALUES FOR SPECIFIC DAY ARE BASED ON 3-DAY DAILY AVERAGE AROUND SPECIFIED DATE
 LONG TERM AVERAGE PERIOD OF RECORD, 1918-2024

FORECASTED INFORMATION PROVIDED BY
 Department of the Army
 Detroit District, Corps of Engineers
 1-888-694-8313 ext. 1

RECORDED GAUGE DATA
 (1918 – present) provided by
 NOAA Center for Operational Oceanic Products
 and Services

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