



FLOOD WARNING for North Bay-Mattawa watershed

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

Message Number: 2026-08

Issued: April 14, 2026, at 12:15 PM EDT

From: NBMCA Duty Officer, Angela Mills

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.

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 (MNR) – North Bay District.

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

This Message is an update to the previous Message Number 2026-07 dated April 13, 2026.

Current Conditions:

Preliminary data indicate more than 50 mm of rain has fallen across the watershed today. Month-to-date, more than 110% of normal April precipitation has been recorded at the North Bay Airport. Water levels and flows have increased significantly in response to several days of significant rainfall, and snowmelt in the couple of weeks.

Water level on Chippewa Creek has risen by more than 130 cm, Wasi River has risen more than 35 cm, La Vase River has risen by more than 55 cm, Turtle/Trout Lake has risen by 13 cm, Lake Nosbonsing has risen by 5 cm, Lake Talon has risen by more than 30 cm, and Mattawa River below Boullion Lake has increased by more than 28 cm since Sunday (Apr 12).

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 30-60 mm cumulative rain forecast.

Water level and flows on local creeks and rivers will continue to rise in response to the forecasted rain and resulting snowmelt as the water drains through the landscape.

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 Warning has been issued for the North Bay-Mattawa watershed. With soils frozen or saturated, the landscape has little storage capacity for rainfall and snowmelt. Water levels are high and additional rain and snowmelt will increase water levels and flows. Urban creeks respond quickly to rain events. Very few local rivers are controlled by dam structures; none are operated by NBMCA. River response is driven by rainfall and snowmelt.

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.


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

