

LAKE OF THE WOODS CONTROL BOARD

MISSION, GUIDELINES AND GOALS

MISSION

To regulate the water levels of Lake of the Woods and Lac Seul, and the flows in the Winnipeg and English Rivers downstream of these lakes to their junction, for the benefit of all users and interests.

GUIDELINES

- All decisions are made in accordance with international treaty, Canadian federal and provincial legislation, and sound water management principles.
- All decisions are based on the most recent and extensive hydrometeorological data and information available to the Board at the time.
- All decisions consider, and attempt to balance, all interests in the basin.
- People with many diverse interests use the basin. While some hold differing or even conflicting views of what constitutes an ideal water level or flow regime, others may share concerns and viewpoints. Some distinct interests are:
 - cottaging and permanent residency
 - recreational uses (including boating and fishing)
 - nature (fish and wildlife protection)
 - tourist outfitting
 - wild rice
 - electric power production/consumption (both within and outside the basin)
 - local industry (power and water quality concerns)
 - domestic water supply
 - lakefront and riverfront properties
 - commercial fishing

The Board relies on spokespersons for these interests to provide information on the benefits and disbenefits, to each interest, of a range of water levels and flows. To facilitate this process, the Board seeks input from First Nations, from a number of specific interest groups that the Board has formally recognized, and from government resource agencies.

- When two or more interests have differing requirements, the Board may select a compromise strategy that, while it does not completely satisfy any interest, causes the minimum loss or damage to the interests overall.
- When critical conditions exist for an interest, the Board may select the regulation strategy that best satisfies that interest.

GOALS

- 1. To regulate and control the water levels of Lake of the Woods and Lac Seul, and the flows in the Winnipeg and English Rivers downstream of these lakes to their junction.** Hydrometeorological data will be collected and assessed on a continuing basis, and regulation strategy will be set by the Board as necessary (both at and between regularly scheduled meetings). Approved regulation strategy will be implemented by the Board's Secretariat (by varying outflows as required). Approval of the International Lake of the Woods Control Board will be sought for regulation actions whenever the water level of Lake of the Woods is above elevation 323.39 m (1061.0 ft) or below elevation 321.87 m (1056.0 ft).
- 2. To ensure that all interests and users are taken into account in the decision making process.** The Board and/or its Secretariat will consult with First Nations advisors, specific interest group representatives and resource agency advisors at regulation meetings (to be held within the basin at least three times per year) and also at other times whenever regulation strategy is being set. Information from First Nations, interest groups, resource advisors and the general public regarding desirable levels and flows in the various seasons, and relative impacts of undesirable conditions, will be collected, documented and periodically updated.
- 3. To maintain and strengthen public relations and communications so as to ensure that relevant information about regulation is available to the public and to improve the public's understanding of the competing demands on the resource and the regulation process.** At least one public open house or public meeting will be held each year, with more added when basin conditions warrant. In addition, the Board and/or its Secretariat will endeavour to participate in events or meetings sponsored by others. Suitable means of providing information to the public on a regular basis will be maintained and revised as appropriate. Continuing effort will be made to inform the public about the range of water levels to be expected, shoreline risks, variability of conditions and limitations to achieving desirable water level conditions.
- 4. To maintain and, as possible, strengthen the technological tools of the Board, in order to facilitate the assessment of watershed conditions, the evaluation of alternative regulation strategies and the rationale for decisions.** Errors, omissions and inconsistencies in the hydrometeorological database for the basin will be identified and corrected, wherever possible and practicable. New and alternate means of collecting hydrometeorological data will be adopted, and the range and extent of this data expanded, where feasible. Existing computer models and tools will be maintained and enhanced where possible, and new or alternate tools and models will be periodically reviewed and adopted as appropriate, subject to resource limitations, to address the Board's operational needs, especially in the areas of lake and river simulation modelling and modelling related to inflow forecasting.
- 5. To anticipate and respond to issues or activities that impact on the mandate or responsibilities of the LWCB.** To the best of its ability, the Board will monitor, and react to as appropriate, activities and initiatives of others in the basin related or potentially related to water levels and flows. The Board will liaise with, and exchange information with, agencies and governments active in the basin. In particular, shoreline development plans will be evaluated, as well as activities or studies in the upper basin (Rainy and Namakan lakes) which could potentially affect the downstream area, and comments or recommendations provided as appropriate.