



**Forecasting and Flood Response Coordination
Regulatory and Operational Services,
Manitoba Water Stewardship**

**Flood Conditions and Forecast Update for Manitoba
April 23, 2009**

Weather Conditions:

- Rain and snow with 10-15 mm precipitation is still expected over the U.S. portion of the Red River watershed from tonight to Saturday morning. Precipitation over southern Manitoba is expected to be less than 5 mm with a possible 10 mm near the U.S. boundary.
- Moderate northerly winds are expected today and Friday.

City of Winnipeg:

- The Red River level at James Avenue in Winnipeg this morning was 20.27 feet, a decline of 0.18 feet from yesterday morning. The decline was still mainly due to further decreases in flows on the Assiniboine River and on local streams. The computed natural level for this morning (without flood control works) is 32 feet.
- The decline of river levels in Winnipeg will be gradual for the next few weeks even with favourable weather due to the need to gradually lower the gates on the floodway control structure at St. Norbert. The gates must be lowered gradually since natural river levels at the floodway inlet will be declining slowly and controlled levels must remain just below the natural levels.
- The Red River watershed is saturated at this time and thus river levels would quickly respond if significant rainfall were to develop in coming weeks. Another crest is possible if heavy rain develops during the next few weeks but the likelihood is diminishing day by day.
- The crest of 22.5 feet at James Avenue in Winnipeg was the second highest since major flood control works began operation in 1969. The crest was 24.5 feet in 1997.

Emerson to St. Adolphe:

- Levels have declined about 0.2 feet at Letellier and St. Jean and about 0.1 feet at other locations.

- River levels will decline very slowly for the rest this week but will decline more significantly next week.
- With favourable weather, re-opening of PTH 75 at Morris should be possible by May 10.
- Levels could fluctuate significantly during the next few days due to wind which could cause temporary rises of up to one foot in some locations with wave action included.
- Strong winds and wave action erode dikes and closures. Special vigilance with respect to wind is recommended for the next few days.
- Levels in the United States portion are beginning to decline a little more rapidly with a half foot drop at Grand Forks since yesterday morning.

Floodway Inlet:

- The floodway gates will continue to be operated to maintain levels somewhat below natural levels upstream at the floodway inlet. There will be a very gradual lowering of the control gates for most of this week.
- The water level upstream of the Floodway Inlet this morning was 766.47 feet, a decline of 0.06 feet since yesterday morning. The flow into the Red River Floodway this morning was 42,100 cubic feet per second (cfs) of a total 97,900 cfs upstream of the Floodway Inlet.
- The natural level at the floodway inlet crested at 766.96 feet on April 21 but the natural flow is cresting today. The difference is due to the decline of the Assiniboine River and local flows in the Winnipeg area which affects levels but not flows at the Floodway Inlet.

Lockport to Breezy Point:

- Levels in this portion continue to decline very slowly for the next week or so. Levels from Lockport to Breezy Point have declined about 0.2 feet since yesterday morning.

Assiniboine River:

- Flow into Portage Reservoir declined from 13660 cfs yesterday morning to 13470 cfs this morning. A gradual decline is expected to continue for the next five days. The flow in the Portage Diversion this morning was 12970 cfs and the flow in the river downstream was 500 cfs. River flows toward Winnipeg will be increased once levels in the City of Winnipeg are below the flood stage of 18 feet at James Avenue.

- Assiniboine River levels from Baie St. Paul to Winnipeg will continue to decline slowly for the rest of this week.
- Flooding continues along the Assiniboine River from Griswold to Brandon. However levels continue to decline and flooding should end by early next week.
- The outflow from Shellmouth Reservoir remains at 50 cfs. The reservoir water level has risen 0.5 feet since yesterday and stood at 1399.1 feet this morning. The level is expected to rise close to the normal summer level of 1402.5 feet by early May.

Souris River:

- The Souris River continues to rise with a level of 1407.33 feet at Melita this morning.
- Crest forecasts have been reduced one more foot based on updated flow projections for Westhope, North Dakota issued by the U.S. National Weather Service.
- Crests at Coulter, Melita and Hartney will be about one foot lower than that of 1999, whereas crests from Souris to Wawanesa will be at least two feet lower than in 1999.
- Significant overbank flooding is underway from the U.S. boundary to just south of Melita. Minor overbank flows will develop in areas from Melita to Hartney by the middle of next week. Overbank flows are no longer expected from Souris to Wawanesa.
- The duration of flooding on the Souris River should be much shorter than in 1999 unless unusually heavy rain develops as in 1999. Flooding that year extended into June.

Pembina River:

- Flooding of the entire Pembina Valley continues but levels are declining at all points.
- The level declined 0.4 feet at La Riviere during the 24 hour period ending this morning.
- Crests from Rock Lake to La Riviere have been similar to those of 1974, which was among the largest flood in recent decades.

- Rock Lake had declined to 1336.9 feet as of this morning.
- The level of Pelican Lake was measured at 1353.15 feet near noon yesterday. Outlet control works continue to be operated at the maximum outflow possible in order to reduce the lake level.
- The Pembina River at Neche has declined by nearly one-tenth of a foot since yesterday and will continue to decline slowly.
- There were no overflows at the International Boundary last night since south winds were not as strong as predicted. With winds shifting to the north for the next few days overflows are highly unlikely this spring.
- There is no longer a significant flood threat for Gretna and Halbstadt.

Other Rivers:

- Both the Fisher River and the Icelandic River have crested but levels remain high and some flooding continues at the Peguis First Nation. The level of the Fisher River has declined in excess of one metre during the last three days.
- Extensive overland flooding continues in the Interlake region with many roads overtopped or washed out. However conditions have stabilized and are beginning to slowly improve in many areas. Flooding could easily be prolonged or increase if significant precipitation were to develop during the next few weeks.

Lakes:

- Many lakes such as Lake Winnipeg, Lake Manitoba and Dauphin Lake are still ice covered. Some smaller lakes such as Pelican Lake are partially ice covered. Ice is expected to break up during the next 10 days or so. Strong winds may cause ice to push to considerable depths up the shoreline in areas of shallow ground slopes such as at beaches.
- Ice pushed up shorelines by strong winds can cause significant damage and pose a risk to low lying cottages. Those who have experienced such difficulties before are advised to take whatever precautions may be feasible, such as moving valuables to higher ground.

Overland Flooding:

- Overland flooding continues in many portions of southern Manitoba, especially in the Red River Valley and the Interlake but is subsiding in most areas and should end next week if dry weather continues. Flooding could

quickly increase if significant rainfall were to develop. Resident in low lying areas are advised to take precautions against possible sudden rises.

- Further details are provided below and specific forecasted crest stages are shown on the daily flood sheets issued by Manitoba Water Stewardship. This information may be viewed at <http://www.gov.mb.ca/waterstewardship/floodinfo/floodsheet.html>