



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

**Flood Report for Manitoba  
April 28, 2009**

**Weather Conditions:**

- A storm developing over Montana and Wyoming will move slowly eastward across the Dakotas during the next few days. Precipitation amounts are expected to range from 20-30 mm over the Souris River and Pembina River watersheds and 10-20 mm over the Red River watershed. Some of this could be in the form of snow.
- Winds over the Red River Valley easterly 30-40 km/hr Wednesday and northerly 30-40 on Thursday.

**City of Winnipeg:**

- The Red River level at James Avenue in Winnipeg this morning was 19.23 feet, a decline of 0.21 feet from yesterday morning. The computed natural level for this morning (without flood control works) is 30.25 feet which is only 0.05 feet below the observed crest in 1950.
- The decline of river levels in Winnipeg will be gradual for the rest of this week 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 river level at James Avenue in downtown Winnipeg is expected to decline to 18 feet by May 4 based on favourable weather conditions. Levels after that will continue to decline slowly despite a gradual increase in Assiniboine River flows resulting from Portage Diversion operations. If rainfall should increase river flows, flood control works will be operated to maintain levels at James Avenue at 18 feet or less within operation guidelines.
- 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. The 2009 crest natural (without flood control works) of 32.5 feet in Winnipeg is the second largest since 1852. The natural crest in 1997 was 34.4 feet and that of 1852 was 34.5 feet. The crests for the 1776 and 1826 floods are estimated at 36.5 feet.

### **Emerson to St. Adolphe:**

- The river level declined less than one-quarter of a foot at most locations during the 24 hour period ending this morning.
- River levels will begin to decline more significantly near the end of this week unless tomorrow's rain is heavier than expected.
- With favourable weather, the level at Morris is expected to decline to the PTH 75 elevation of 775 feet by mid May. Opening of the highway would occur following a road condition inspection.
- Strong winds and wave action can cause river levels at Letellier, Morris and Brunkild to fluctuate by one foot or more. Wave action can erode dikes and closures. Vigilance should be increased during the next few days since fairly strong winds are predicted.
- The Red River at Grand Forks declined 0.63 feet since yesterday but the level at Drayton declined only 0.2 feet.

### **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 765.45 feet, a decline of 0.18 feet since yesterday morning. The flow into the Red River Floodway this morning was 36,900 cubic feet per second (cfs) of a total 91,600 cfs upstream of the Floodway Inlet.
- The level at the Floodway Inlet is expected to decline to 760 feet by May 10 based on favourable weather.
- The natural level at the floodway inlet crested at 766.96 feet on April 21 and the natural flow crested at 97,900 cfs on April 23.

### **Lockport to Breezy Point:**

- Levels in this portion will continue to decline slowly for the rest of this week. The level declined 0.37 feet at Lockport but only 0.17 feet at Selkirk since yesterday.

### **Assiniboine River:**

- Flow into Portage Reservoir declined from 11825 cfs yesterday morning to 11016 cfs this morning. A gradual decline is expected to continue for the rest of this week as the decline in flows at Brandon will exceed the rise in flows on the Souris River. However flows are likely to be quite steady next week. The flow in the Portage Diversion this morning was 10,450 cfs and the flow in the river downstream was 565 cfs. River flows toward Winnipeg will be gradually increased once levels at James Avenue in Winnipeg are below the flood stage of 18 feet.

- Continued high flows in the Portage Diversion have resulted in considerable flooding of farmland west of the Portage Diversion due to overtopping of the failsafe. The function of the failsafe is to localize damage on the diversion embankments to a relatively small area.
- Assiniboine River levels from Portage la Prairie to Winnipeg will change very little until Assiniboine River flows downstream of the Portage Diversion at Portage la Prairie are increased. Levels in this portion could rise by up to seven feet by the third week of May, but will remain well below flood stage.
- The river level at 1<sup>st</sup> Street in Brandon fell 0.58 feet since yesterday and has decline 3.5 feet during the past five days. The Assiniboine River is below flood stage at all points.
- The outflow from Shellmouth Reservoir remains at 50 cfs. The reservoir water level rose 0.34 feet since yesterday morning and stood at 1401.05 feet this morning, a total rise of 12 feet so far this spring. The level is expected to reach 1403.5 feet by mid May, which is an ideal level heading into the summer.

#### **Souris River:**

- The Souris River rose a quarter foot at Melita since yesterday morning and is now within 1.25 feet of the 1999 crest. A further rise of three quarters of a foot is expected but this could change depending on how much rain falls tomorrow.
- The river rose nearly half a foot at Hartney but less than one-third of a foot at Souris and Wawanesa since yesterday.
- Crests on the Souris River from Coulter to Napinka should be half a foot below those of 1999 and portions from Hartney to Wawanesa should have crests about one foot lower than in 1999. Crests may be somewhat higher if tomorrow's rainfall exceeds 15 mm.
- The crest is expected at Coulter on May 2, Melita on May 4 and Wawanesa on May 9.
- Significant overbank flooding is underway from the U.S. boundary to just south of Melita. The river is expected to remain generally within its banks at points from north of Melita to Wawanesa but there could be minor flooding in low lying portions.
- The duration of flooding in the Coulter area 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 Pembina Valley continues from Rock Lake to Near Windygates but levels are declining at all points. It is possible that minor rises could occur later this week if tomorrow's rainfall exceeds 15 mm.
- The level declined a further 0.25 feet at La Riviere during the 24 hour period ending this morning.

- Rock Lake had declined to 1336.18 feet as of this morning, a decline of 0.14 feet from yesterday morning. While the level remains high, there is no serious shoreline flooding at this time. The normal summer level is near 1330 feet.
- The level of Pelican Lake was 1352.88 feet yesterday afternoon. It is possible that the level will rise slightly if tomorrow's rain is as predicted. The outlet control works continue to be operated at the maximum outflow possible (about 400 cfs today) in order to reduce the lake to its desirable level of 1351.7 feet.
- The Pembina River at Neche declined 0.25 feet since yesterday morning and will continue to decline slowly unless rainfall is heavier than expected. There is no longer a concern about boundary overflows or flooding at Gretna or Halbstadt.

#### **Other Rivers:**

- Both the Fisher River and the Icelandic River crested a week ago and levels have decline by about four feet since that time. Flooding along these rivers has now ended.
- Overland flooding continues in portions of the Interlake region but is generally subsiding. Flooding could be prolonged if significant precipitation were to develop during the next few weeks. Little or no rain is expected for the rest of this week.

#### **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 within the next 10 days or so. Strong winds may cause ice to push up the shoreline in areas of shallow ground slopes such as at beaches. Those who have experienced difficulties due to ice before are advised to take whatever precautions may be feasible, such as moving valuables to higher ground.
- The level of Lake Winnipeg is presently at 714.63 feet. The lake is regulated within the range of 711 to 715 feet.
- The level of Lake Manitoba is presently at 812.30 feet. The lake is regulated within the range of 810.5 to 812.5 feet.
- Lakes in the Whiteshell area are well above their summer target levels at this time, which is not unusual during spring runoff. Logs are being removed to reduce lake levels.

#### **Overland Flooding:**

- Overland flooding could continue for several more weeks in low-lying areas of the Interlake. Overland flooding has essentially ended in other areas except for particularly low lands. Tomorrow's predicted rainfall may prolong overland flooding where it is still ongoing but likely won't be enough to re-start overland flooding elsewhere.

- 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>