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

Flood Report for Manitoba

May 07, 2009

Weather Conditions:

- Occasional showers today and Friday with total amounts of 5-10 mm except 10-20 mm in southern Interlake.

- Winds north 30-40 today and north 20 on Friday.

City of Winnipeg:

- The Red River level at James Avenue in Winnipeg this morning was 17.54 feet, a decline of 0.26 feet from yesterday morning. Fluctuations of up to 0.1 feet from the general trend in City river levels may occur during the next few weeks due to operation of flood control works.

- The river level in Winnipeg will continue to decline very gradually for the next few weeks even with favourable weather. This is due to the need to lower the gates on the floodway control structure at St. Norbert as unregulated levels decline and due to gradually increasing flows on the Assiniboine River resulting from Portage Diversion operation.

- The river level in downtown Winnipeg will be in the range of 17.0 to 17.5 feet for the next five days. The computed unregulated level for this morning (without flood control works) is 26.8 feet.

Emerson to St. Adolphe:

- The river level declined between 0.2 and 0.3 feet at most locations during the 24 hour period ending this morning. It declined 0.44 feet at Morris, due to a change in winds.

- The total decline in river levels since the crest ranged from 3.8 feet at Emerson to 3.6 feet at Morris and 3.1 feet at St. Adolphe as of this morning.

- The level at Morris is still expected to decline to the PTH 75 elevation of 775 feet by about mid May unless significant precipitation develops. Opening of the highway would occur following a road condition inspection.

- The recession has been very slow so far since the large amount of water in the floodplain from Drayton to Aubigny continues to feed the Red River. The rate of decline will gradually increase as the flooded area shrinks.

Floodway Inlet:

- The floodway gates will continue to be operated as required to maintain levels somewhat below unregulated levels upstream at the floodway inlet. A gradual lowering of the control gates will continue.

- The water level upstream of the Floodway Inlet this morning was 762.85 feet, a decline of 0.22 feet since yesterday morning. The flow into the Red River Floodway this morning was 28,500 cubic feet per second (cfs) of a total 78,650 cfs upstream of the Floodway Inlet.

- The level at the Floodway Inlet is expected to decline to 760 feet by about May 15 based on favourable weather.

Lockport to Breezy Point:

- Levels at Lockport will decline about 0.35 feet per day and those at Selkirk and Breezy Point about 0.25 feet per day on average for the rest of this week. Levels will fluctuate due to changes in wind speed and direction due to backwater from Lake Winnipeg.

Assiniboine River:

- Flow into Portage Reservoir likely increased slightly to 10,500 cfs from the 10,160 cfs yesterday morning. The flow could not be accurately estimated this morning due to changes in gate settings which cause temporary instability in the computations. The inflow should begin to decline today and this should continue in the weeks ahead unless heavy rain develops. The flow in the Portage Diversion this morning is estimated at 9000 cfs while the flow in the river downstream is1500 cfs. River flows toward Winnipeg will be continue to be gradually increased as required to maintain levels at James Avenue in Winnipeg between 17.0 and 17.5 feet for the next 10 days or so.

- Assiniboine River levels from Portage la Prairie to Winnipeg will rise very gradually this week and will rise more significantly for the following two weeks due to Portage Diversion operation. Levels will remain well below flood stage.

- The outflow from Shellmouth Reservoir remains at 100 cfs. The reservoir water level rose 0.3 feet since yesterday morning, in part due to a strong north wind, and stood at 1403.44 feet this morning. The level is expected to reach 1403.9 feet by mid May and will be held near that level by somewhat increasing the outflow next week.

Souris River:

- Levels of the Souris River declined between 0.2 and 0.3 feet from Coulter to Napinka Dam since yesterday but declined less than 0.05 feet from Hartney to Wawanesa. The River has reached its crest at all locations.

- Crests from Coulter to Melita this spring were about one foot lower than 1999 crests, whereas from Hartney to Wawanesa they were 1.5 to 2.0 feet lower than 1999 crests.

- Levels on the Souris River will be slow to decline during the next 10 days due to the large amount of water in the floodplain from the J. Clarke Salyer Refuges in North Dakota to just south of Melita. However the declines will increase steadily unless heavy precipitation develops.

- Significant overbank flooding continues from the U.S. boundary to just south of Melita. By late May flooding should be limited to a small area of haylands based on favourable weather from now on.

- There are some overbank flows from just north of Melita to near the town of Souris. Flooding in this portion should end within 10 days unless heavy precipitation develops.

- While agricultural lands along the Souris River are flooded, no buildings are affected.

- The duration of flooding should be significantly shorter than in 1999 unless unusually heavy rain develops as in 1999. Flooding that year extended well into June.

Pembina River:

- Flooding of the Pembina Valley continues from Rock Lake to near Windygates although levels are declining about 0.1 feet per day. A very gradual decline in levels will continue unless significant rainfall develops. Flooding between Rock Lake and Swan Lake is expected to continue for another three weeks while flooding of most valley lands in the La Riviere area should end within a week or so.

- Rock Lake is presently at 1335.55 feet and will continue to decline slowly based on favourable weather. 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 at 1352.34 feet yesterday afternoon. The outlet control works continue to be operated at the maximum outflow possible (about 370 cfs today) in order to reduce the lake to its desirable level of 1351.7 feet.

- The Pembina River level at Neche declined 0.6 feet since yesterday.

Lakes:

- Large lakes such as Lake Winnipeg, Lake Manitoba and Dauphin Lake are still ice covered. Ice may push up the shoreline in areas of shallow slopes such as at beaches if strong on-shore winds develop. It is possible that this may occur today. 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. Smaller lakes in southern Manitoba are now ice free.

- The level of Lake Winnipeg is presently near 714.8 feet. The lake is regulated within the range of 711 to 715 feet. Manitoba Hydro is releasing maximum outflows from the Lake to reduced additional rises, but the lake is still expected to rise to near 715 feet later in May.

- The level of Lake Manitoba is presently near 812.5 feet and is expected to crest near 812.65 feet later in May. The lake is regulated within the range of 810.5 to 812.5 feet. The outflow from the Lake is presently near 8000 cfs and cannot be significantly increased without causing flooding on Lake St. Martin, which is presently at 801.1 feet or about half a foot below flood stage. Lake St. Martin is expected to crest at 801.7 feet in early June. Fairford Dam has not been operated since February 6, 2009 in accordance with the present rules of operation.

- The level of Dauphin Lake is near 856.2 feet which is a good level for this time of year.

- Some lakes in the Whiteshell are still well above their summer target levels. Logs have been removed from Brereton, White and Jessica lakes and levels on these lakes have begun to decline. Some logs will be removed from the dam at West Hawk Lake as soon as possible.

- 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