



**LOWER TRENT**  
CONSERVATION

# PRESS RELEASE

*Working with Local Communities to Protect our Natural Environment*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 7, 2020

## Low Water Condition - Level II

Rainfall continues to be in short supply across the Trent River Watershed. As a result, Lower Trent Conservation confirms Level II Low Water Conditions (moderate drought) are now being experienced across the watershed region, an area stretching from Grafton to Quinte West and from Lake Ontario to Rice Lake. This replaces the previous declaration of a Level 1 Low Water Condition made on June 30, 2020.

Under a Level II Low Water Condition, residents, businesses, industries, and municipalities are asked to voluntarily reduce their water use by 20%. Lower Trent Conservation encourages everyone to use water wisely and apply water conservation measures. Non-essential water uses should be suspended until natural water supplies recover. Those who hold a *Permit to Take Water* from the Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change are asked to reduce their water taking by 20% as well.

Residents can help conserve water by using rain barrels to capture rain for watering lawns and gardens, limiting vehicle washing, etc. Lower Trent Conservation staff urge rural residents to be wary of their water use. Water is a precious resource – continued wise use of water is encouraged now and always. Municipalities that source water from Lake Ontario or the Bay of Quinte have access to a more sustainable water supply. The delivery of water to residents on these systems is not impacted by current conditions.

If water supply on private systems becomes low or dry, well owners are encouraged to review the Ontario Government's drought publication for managing wells (<https://www.ontario.ca/page/managing-your-water-well-times-water-shortage>). Those in need of bulk potable water supply should check with their local municipality for availability and information on private water haulers.

The May to July 3-month rainfall totals recorded by Environment Canada at Trenton was 110 millimetres, which is 48 percent of normal precipitation for this time of year (227 mm). The total precipitation for the month of July was 37 mm, which is 53% of the normal 69 mm. A 1-month or 3-month precipitation below 60 percent is the trigger for Level II Low Water. Monthly streamflows in most of our local creeks are still above the 50% of the Lowest Average Summer Month (LASM) flows for these creeks, which is a trigger for Level II Low Water. With the recent rain, flows in these local creeks have improved but many are nearing this low flow trigger as well.

Droughts can cause many severe impacts on the environment and communities including:

- Water shortages for human consumption, industrial, business and agriculture use
- Decline of water quality
- Increase in wildfires
- Increases in insect infestations and plant disease

Following lower than average precipitation and low water levels in 1998, the Ontario government developed the Ontario Low Water Response program to ensure the province was prepared for future low water conditions. The response plan was developed to help coordinate and support local response in the event of a drought. There are three levels of Low Water Conditions with Level I being the least severe and Level III being the most severe.

Conservation Authority staff will continue to monitor conditions and report new information as it becomes available. To learn more about Ontario's Low Water Response program visit our website at [www.LTC.on.ca](http://www.LTC.on.ca). Residents can report any low water observations using the Low Water Reporting Form on our website.

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