

News Release

LOW WATER IN THE RIDEAU VALLEY

RIDEAU VALLEY, June 2, 2010 — Rideau Valley river and stream flows are well below normal for this time of year due to the low precipitation since January. This year's average precipitation at weather stations around the Rideau watershed is 76% of the normal amount for the first five months of 2010.

There is normally about 80 millimetres of rain in Ottawa in May. This May, only about 35 mm of rain fell and most of that was in the first eight days of the month.

The impact on stream flows has been significant. Normal flows for the end of May on the Rideau River in Ottawa are about 32 cubic metres per second (cms). The flow on May 31 was 8.8 cms. On the Jock River, flows are typically around 4 cms in May but on May 31 the flow was 0.6 cms. Jock River flows have been lower on May 31 only twice in the 41 years on record. Kemptville Creek and the Tay River had similar situations with flows well below normal for the end of May.

The rainfall this week could stop the decline in flow and, should there be enough runoff, cause an increase in flows toward normal for the time of year. However, Conservation Authority staff will continue to monitor conditions and, should it be warranted, will issue notice of the declaration of Level 1 low water conditions as part of the Ontario Low Water Response program. At that level, voluntary water conservation measures are recommended. Should Level 2 and 3 conditions occur, mandatory cutbacks may have to be imposed.

The last time the RVCA issued a Level 1 Low Water declaration was in September, 2005.

To learn more about Ontario's Low Water Response program visit:
http://www.mnr.gov.on.ca/en/Business/Water/2ColumnSubPage/STEL02_164583.html
and visit the RVCA's website for local conditions.

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More Information:

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Rideau Valley Conservation Authority is a partnership of municipalities within the Rideau Valley watershed created under the Conservation Authorities Act to deliver a range of programs in watershed management and natural resource conservation. The RVCA Low Water Response Program is done under a partnership with the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources for the residents and municipalities of the watershed.