



LEVEL 1 LOW WATER CONDITION - ENDED

TO: GANARASKA REGION WATER RESPONSE TEAM, LOCAL MUNICIPALITIES AND CONSERVATION AUTHORITIES, MNRF, LOCAL MEDIA, GRCA STAFF

ISSUED: February 9, 2017

SUBJECT: WATERSHED CONDITIONS RETURN TO NORMAL

With several rain events so far this winter, the watersheds in the Ganaraska Region have recovered to normal conditions. In January alone, the region received 95mm or 142% of normal rainfall. This has brought stream flows up and is likely resulting in some groundwater recharge where there is little ground frost. The 3-month and 18-month total rainfall indicators are currently at 90% of normal. When all three rainfall indicators are above 80%, watersheds are considered to be in the normal range. In addition, stream flows indicators are well above normal for this time of year as a result of the winter rain events.

Drought conditions occurred from April to December last year. This caused widespread hardships for residents whose wells went dry, farmers who suffered crop losses and anyone whose livelihood depends on consistent water supplies. The natural environment suffered with dry wetlands and streams. A few creeks were very shallow at their outlet to Lake Ontario this fall, which prevented some migratory fish from entering to reach their spawning grounds. Extended periods with no rainfall occurred while temperatures soared in the middle of the summer, which heightened the demand for water to be pumped and transported to where it was needed. Many watershed residents and businesses reduced their water consumption according to the conditions, which helped to conserve our most important natural resource.

Last year shallow monitoring wells in the GRCA watersheds showed a deep decline in water levels but have been recovering over the past two months and should continue this trend through the spring. If normal or above normal rainfall occurs this year, there should be no reason to anticipate drought conditions returning.

The Conservation Authority will continue to monitor local conditions and provide updates as conditions warrant. For further information, please contact the following GRCA staff at 905-885-8173 during regular business hours or 289-251-1010 or 289-251-2094 (after normal business hours).

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