



Crowe Valley Conservation Authority

Low Water (Drought) Response Purpose and Objectives

This program recognizes that water management needs to be approached in a coordinated manner at both the provincial and local level. The provincial role is to provide overall direction through policies and guidelines, central information storage and analysis and emergency support. At the local level, the Crowe Valley Conservation Authority (CVCA) is responsible for monitoring levels, information collection and program delivery to support the Crowe Valley Watershed Water Response Team (WRT), which comprised of a number of representatives from various sectors in the Crowe Valley watershed.

The purpose of the Water Response Team (WRT) is to coordinate the activities of water management agencies with respect to dissemination of information, analysis and response to water events, especially in the event of a severe drought.

Specific objectives include:

- To characterize the Crowe Valley Watershed with respect to water resources and water demands.
- To identify water concerns including resource protection and adequate supply.
- To identify and categorize low water conditions through collection and monitoring of precipitation, surface water level/flow, and groundwater level data (if available) and comparison of this data to historical values.
- To recommend action for response to low water conditions and to implement water management strategies.
- To communicate with user groups to fully understand the water demands.
- To provide advice to local, provincial and federal decision makers.
- To evaluate the role of the Team and the effectiveness of the Water Response Program.

The WRT Members' Commitments

- Partnering with the province to ensure coordination and local watershed support
 - Considering and incorporating local knowledge and indicators of low water
 - Ensuring that public concerns are heard and taken into consideration
 - Attending meetings, communicating back to their sectors, sharing relevant data and implementing drought management tools
 - Identify actions needed to manage the response to drought on a watershed basis
 - In extreme drought, the WRT will provide advice to local and provincial decision makers.
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Low Water Condition Level Indicators Explained

Level 1

The 3 different triggers that initiate a Low Water Condition Level 1 Status declaration are as follows:

- A watershed has its 18 month precipitation fall below 80% of average
or
- A watershed has its 3 month precipitation fall below 80% of average
or
- A watershed has a monthly average stream flow that falls below 100% in the spring or 70% of the minimum summer month flow

If a Level 1 Drought Status is declared, users will be asked to reduce usage by 10%

Level 2

The 4 different triggers that initiate a Low Water Condition Level 2 Status declaration are as follows:

- A watershed has its 18 month precipitation fall below 60% of average
or
- A watershed has its 3 month precipitation fall below 60% of average
or
- A watershed has its 1 month precipitation fall below 60% of average
or
- A watershed has a monthly average stream flow that falls below 70% in the spring or 50% of the minimum summer month flow

If a Level 2 Drought Status is declared, users will be asked to reduce usage by 20%

Level 3

The 4 different triggers that initiate a Low Water Condition Level 3 Status declaration are as follows:

- A watershed has its 18 month precipitation fall below 40% of average
or
- A watershed has its 3 month precipitation fall below 40% of average
or
- A watershed has its 1 month precipitation fall below 40% of average
or
- A watershed has a monthly average stream flow that falls below 50% in the spring or 30% of the minimum summer month flow

If a Level 3 Drought Status is declared, users will be **required** to reduce usage further than 20%. At this time, the Province will establish water usage criteria.

Current Status

CVCA staff will be monitoring the primary indicators of low water conditions within the water bodies in the CVCA watershed. At this time, the conditions do not indicate the CVCA watershed has entered into a Level 1 Drought Status. Lake levels remain within the summer recreational level and flow indicators are **hovering** around the threshold to trigger a Level 1 Status.

However, as most residents in the watershed know and understand, conditions have been dry for an extended period of time. It is only recently that rainfall has been received and is forecasted to follow normal seasonal patterns and amounts.

Therefore, the CVCA highly recommends that Crowe Valley watershed residents be **WATER WISE** and voluntarily reduce water usage where and when applicable. This will be important especially if current conditions change or the anticipated rainfall does not happen in the next 7 to 10 days.

At the end of June, CVCA staff will compile the June data and determine if the Low Water Team needs to convene to make a decision regarding Low Water Levels and what status is needed to be declared.

Respectfully,

CVCA Water Management Staff
