

# WATER MANAGEMENT REPORT – June 1, 2017

Following the opening of Ontario's electricity market in 2000, and in order to ensure a balance between environmental, social, economic values among operators, First Nations, resource users, interest groups and resource managers, the Ontario Lakes & Rivers Improvement Act gave the MNR jurisdictional authority to order the preparation of Water Management Plans (WMPs). The Matabitchuan River Water Management Plan was finalized in 2007, with a ten-year term. CALA lakes form an integral part of the Matabitchuan River watershed.

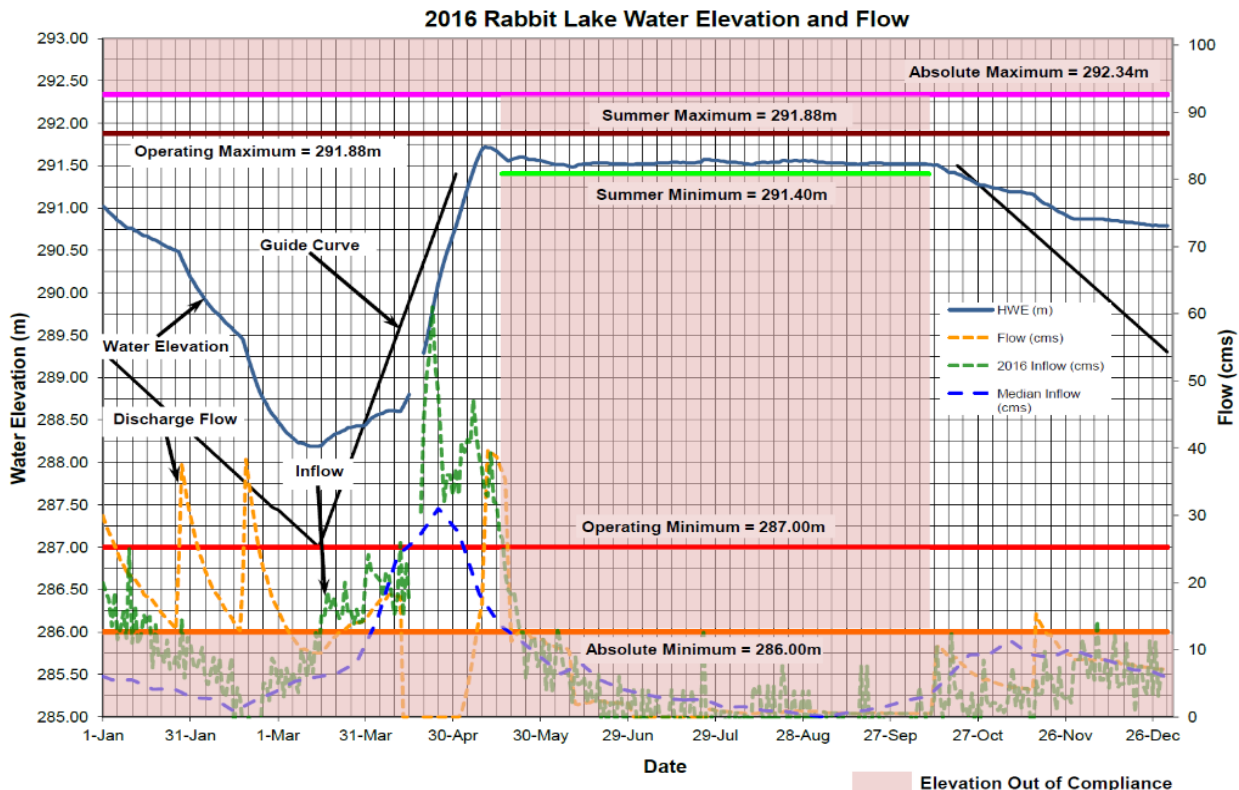
The Matabitchuan River has its headwaters on the heights of land between Hudson Bay and the St. Lawrence River, 296.5 m above sea level. The length of the river is approximately 70 km with a drainage area of 933 sq.km. The headwaters extend to Rib Lake to the northeast of Temagami and takes in other major tributaries such as Net, Cassels, Rabbit and Fourbass lakes, before emptying into Lake Temiskaming.

Ontario Power Generation owns and operates the Matabitchuan Generating Station, the lone generating station on this river system, as well as the control dam at the outlet of Rabbit Lake. The MNR owns and operates two control dams at the head of the river system, the North Milne Lake and the Net Creek dams. For CALA lakes (essentially Cassels, Rabbit & Obashkong):

- Between May 15 and October 15, OPG endeavours to maintain water level at the Rabbit Lake dam between 291.4 and 291.88 m. This range is known as the "summer operating band".
- By agreement with the MNR, to protect Lake Trout spawning, water level is to be maintained above 290.63 m until January 15th of each year.

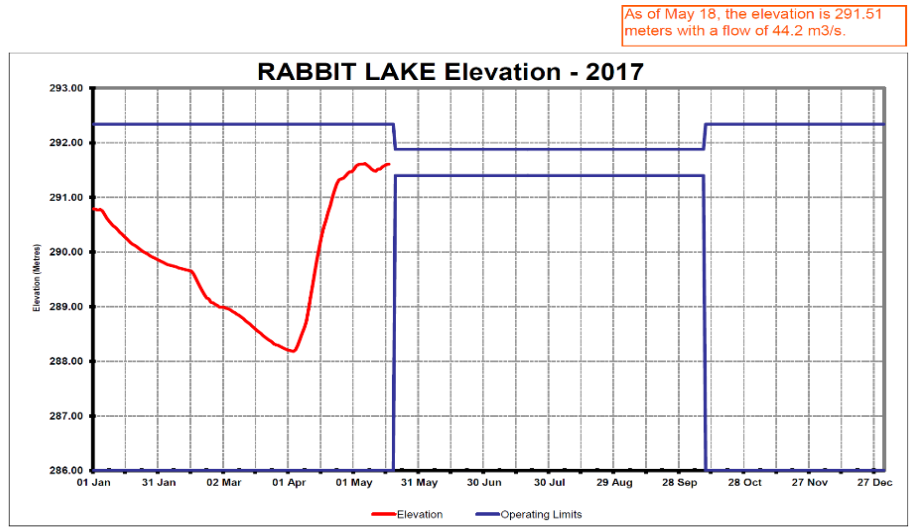
Each year both MNR and OPG issue Compliance Monitoring Reports. In their 2016 Compliance Report, OPG reported that water elevation was maintained between the compliance boundaries defined in the WMP and that no public complaints had been received with respect to the operation of the Rabbit Lake Dam. The MNR has not yet issued its 2016 Annual Report regarding the Net Creek Dam.

The following chart is from the **OPG 2016 Annual Report**.



The solid dark blue line is the water level at the Rabbit Lake Dam. To be in compliance, this curve should always be on the white background areas of the chart. Pink means out of compliance. The dotted green line indicates an estimate of water flowing into Rabbit Lake. You can see increased inflows in late March 2016, with large inflows beginning in the second half of April. These increases align with the “Spring Freshet” of that year. The dotted orange line indicates flows through the Dam. Each time there is a spike in this flow, OPG has removed logs. Note that during the high-volume spring freshet no flow was allowed out at the dam. Water levels in the lake rose quickly.

Finally, here is the **water level chart as of May 18<sup>th</sup>, for 2017.** Water levels were in compliance ahead of the Victoria Day weekend target.

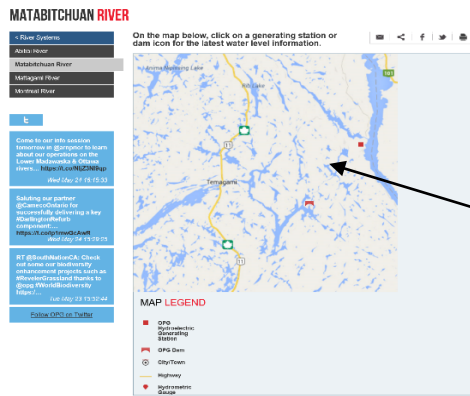


For those who wish it, this chart is updated weekly by OPG and may be found at:

<http://www.opg.com/generating-power/hydro/northeast-ontario/river-systems/Pages/matabitchuan-river.aspx>

Ontario Power Generation, Dam Safety and Water Resources Division  
"as collected" data

as of 5/18/2017



Click on the little Dam symbol to bring up the chart.

**2017 Changes to the WMP and the SAC**

A provincial policy change occurred in late 2016. The WMP will continue to exist but no longer have an expiry date, planned reviews or term. There will be a process to make amendments to the plan. The SAC will no longer be mandatory but will still be considered best practice.

Sue Olynyk represents CALA as a member of the Standing Advisory Committee (SAC) of the Matabitchuan River Water Management Plan (MRWMP). THE MRWMP SAC meets 3-4 times per year. The next meeting will be held June 22, 2017 at 2 pm in the Temagami Wellness Centre. Visitors are welcome to sit in as “observers”.

**Sue Olynyk**, Water Management Director