
INTERNATIONAL RAINY LAKE BOARD OF CONTROL (IRLBC) INTERNATIONAL RAINY RIVER WATER POLLUTION BOARD (IRRWPB) NEWSLETTER 1st Quarter 2009

This newsletter provides a summary of the activities of the International Rainy Lake Board of Control (IRLBC) and the International Rainy River Water Pollution Board (IRRWPB) during the 1st Quarter (January-March) of 2009.

Basin Conditions and Regulation

The above-normal inflows that had developed during the 4th quarter of 2008 persisted through the 1st quarter of 2009 for both Namakan and Rainy Lakes. With above-normal outflows as well, Namakan Lake levels declined slowly, remaining very close to the middle of the rule curve band through to the end of the 3rd week in March. Rainy Lake's winter outflows were high as well, with Rainy Lake levels dropping from about 80 percent (%) of band in early January to mid-band by the end of January, and remaining close to mid-band until the last quarter of March.

The March 1 US Army Corps of Engineers snow survey indicated snowpack water content at almost 90th percentile. A severe winter storm early the second week of March dropped another half metre of snow in the International Falls – Fort Frances area. This was followed by a dramatic warm period the third week of March with temperatures exceeding 10°C and a significant rain event at the end of that week. March precipitation was the 2nd highest in 104 years of record and the highest in the last 30 years. As a result, inflows in the Rainy-Namakan basin rose dramatically the last week of March. Overall, March inflows to Namakan and Rainy were the highest in the last 30 years. Namakan Lake ended the quarter at 77% of its rule curve band, while Rainy Lake rose to 93% of band. Water levels, inflows and outflows are shown on the attached graphs for both lakes.

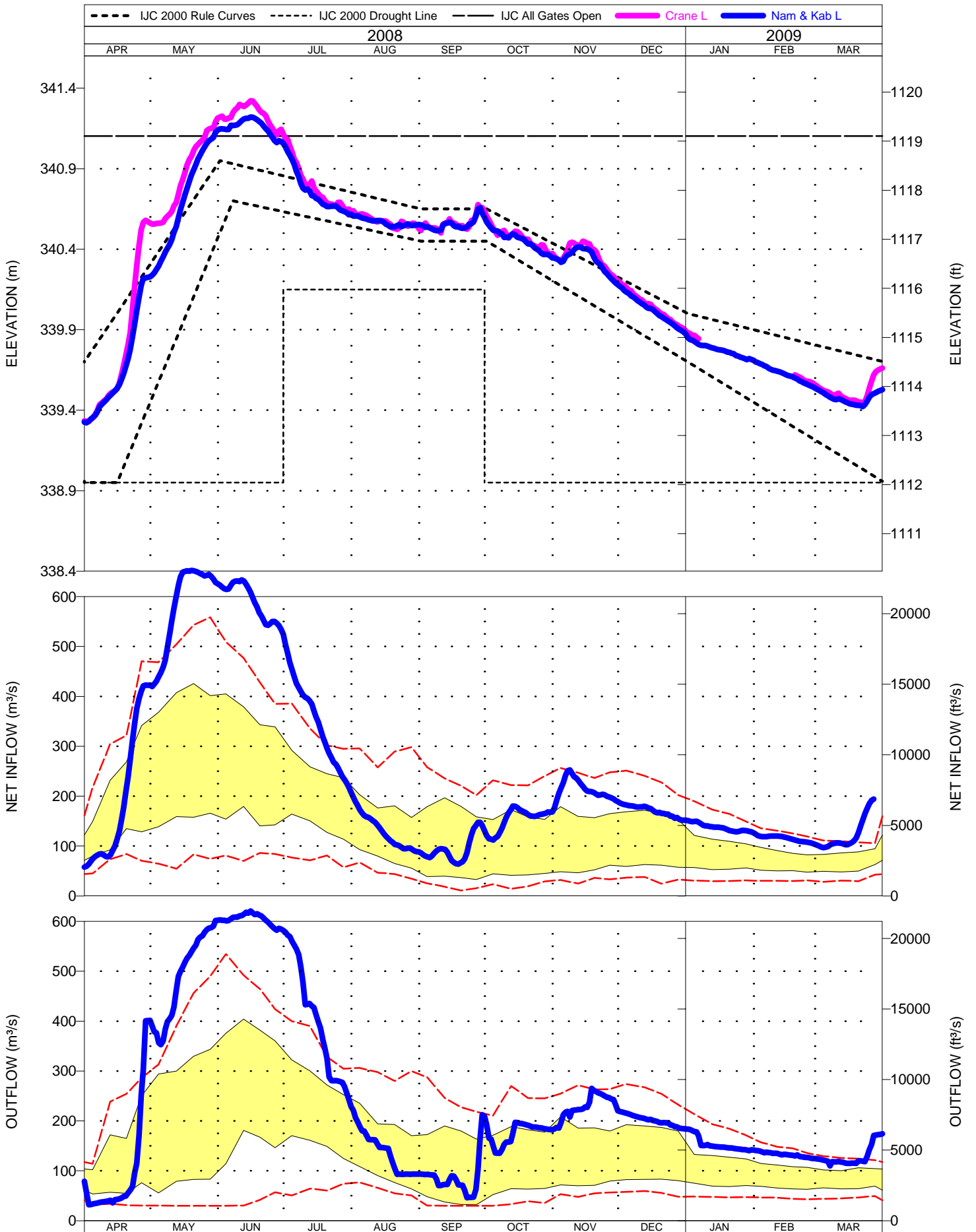
Board Meetings and Activities

The Boards held one conference call during the quarter, on March 2. There was also frequent exchange between members via email and telephone to continue to move the work of the Boards forward. Activities during the quarter included:

- The 2009 spring report was prepared and submitted to the IJC.
- A draft joint Boards' presentation was prepared for the IJC spring semi-annual meeting in Washington.
- Several members and staff attended The Lake of the Woods International Water Quality Forum in International Falls March 24-26. The IJC centennial display was set up by the Board at the forum.
- The Boards reviewed the IJC's Health Professionals Task Force proposal for an IWI project pertaining to water-related health issues in the basin. The Boards agreed to support the study.
- An IWI project proposal for a cross-section survey of the upper Rainy River from the dams at International Falls / Fort Frances to Rainy Lake, to support future development of a hydraulic model, was prepared and submitted to the IJC by Environment Canada on behalf of the Boards.
- The Rainy River Peaking Work Group met on February 12 and agreed to continue the informal arrangement for the 2009 spring spawn.
- The Boards contributed to the IJC IWI Third Report to governments.

- The Boards reviewed the Plan of Study (for rule curve assessment in 2015) Workgroup Draft Final Report.
- A Board presentation was prepared for the IWI Workshop to be held in Washington in early April.
- Following significant discussion, aquatic invasive species links to DFO and MNDR websites were added to both Boards' websites.
- The Boards continued to monitor proposed mining projects and related water quality concerns within the basin.

NAMAKAN LAKE



RAINY LAKE

