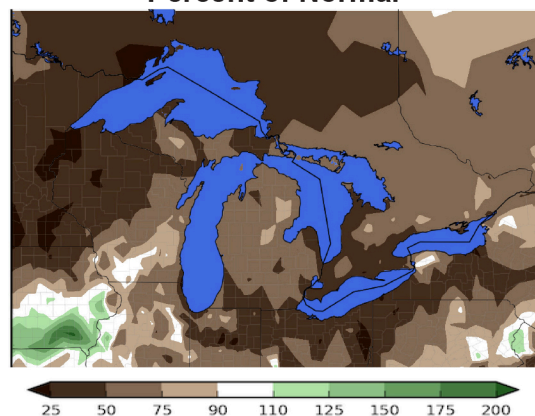


**Recreation:** Below-normal snowfall, reduced snowpack, and limited lake ice had widespread impacts on recreation and tourism across the basin. Numerous dog sled races in [Michigan](#) and [Minnesota](#) were canceled due to poor trail conditions. In Michigan, the [Black Lake](#) sturgeon season was canceled due to marginal ice. Southern Ontario had its worst [ice fishing](#) season in decades, and local businesses in New York reported [economic hardships](#) due to low ice cover. [Emergency loans](#) were made available to Michigan businesses impacted by the lack of snowfall.

**Agriculture and Ecosystems:** Mild winter temperatures resulted in record to near-record early tapping of maple trees in [Michigan](#), [New York](#), [Ontario](#), and [Wisconsin](#). Plant phenology was ahead of schedule basin-wide, creating concerns about the potential for spring freeze damage if development stays ahead of schedule in early spring. [Black bears](#) emerged from hibernation early in Ontario, disrupting residents in their search for food.

**Lake-Effect Snow Events:** On January 13, wind gusts up to 68 mph downed trees and wires and produced a [seiche](#) on Lake Erie. An intense lake-effect snow event ensued through January 15, dumping up to 41 inches (104 cm) of snow east of Lake Erie and up to 22 inches (56 cm) east of Lake Ontario. Whiteout conditions led to a [travel ban](#) and the postponement of a [National Football League](#) game. Another storm, January 16-18, dropped 40-50 inches (102-127 cm) of snow downwind of Lakes Ontario and Erie. At least three storm-related deaths occurred. In Rochester, a [plane](#) slid off a taxiway amid snowy conditions.

## Winter Snowfall Percent of Normal



Lack of snow cover in Minnesota (photo credit: Minnesota State Climatology Office)

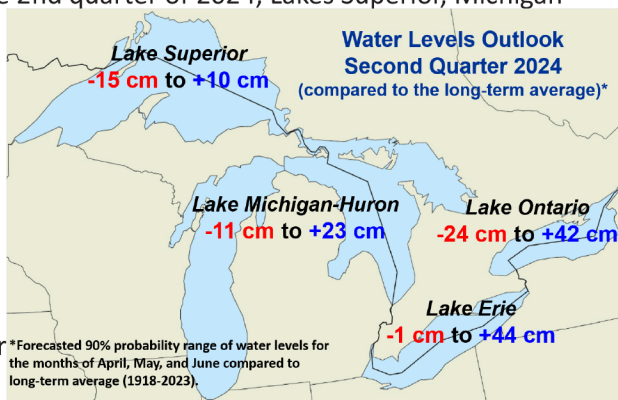
# Regional Outlook – April - June 2024

## Temperature and Precipitation

[American](#) and [Canadian](#) forecasts indicate above-normal temperatures for the entire Great Lakes basin. The American forecast shows equal chances of below-, above, and near-normal precipitation basin-wide. The Canadian forecast shows a slight chance of below-normal precipitation in the western portion of the basin.

## Great Lakes Water Level Outlook

The March forecast indicates that second quarter (April, May, June) water levels on Lakes Superior and Michigan-Huron will be in their period of seasonal rise. Lakes Erie and Ontario are forecast to be in their seasonal rise and peak in May. Water levels typically rise during the spring months due to increased rainfall and snowmelt runoff. In the 2nd quarter of 2024, Lakes Superior, Michigan-Huron, and Ontario could have water levels above or below average, depending on conditions. If wetter (drier) conditions occur, above (below) average water levels are likely. For Lake Erie, above-average water levels will likely continue in the 2nd quarter under most scenarios.



## Wildfire

The [National Interagency Coordination Center](#) (US) indicates an above-normal wildfire risk around Lake Superior and west of Lake Michigan in April. Canadian authorities indicate a near-normal wildfire risk.

## Partners

- [Midwestern Regional Climate Center](#)
- [Environment and Climate Change Canada](#)
- [Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada](#)
- [Northeast Regional Climate Center](#)
- [Great Lakes Region State Climatologists](#)
- [NOAA](#)
- [NCEI](#)
- [GLERL](#)
- [CoastWatch Great Lakes Node](#)
- [Great Lakes and IL-IN Sea Grant Networks](#)
- [North Central River Forecast Center](#)
- [Ohio River Forecast Center](#)
- [Climate Prediction Center](#)
- [Office for Coastal Management](#)
- [GLISA](#)
- [US Army Corps of Engineers, Detroit District](#)
- [NIDIS](#)
- [USDA Midwest Climate Hub](#)