

Muskrat Falls Generation Project Stakeholder Update

MAY 16, 2019

Providing public updates about important topics regarding the Muskrat Falls generation facility is a priority for us. We are committed to keeping people living in the area up-to-date on our activities.

Spring Thaw

With warming temperatures in parts of central Labrador, the annual spring melt of ice and snow in the Churchill River watershed has begun. This melting ice and snow is increasing the amount of water that is flowing in the Churchill River. This is a normal process that occurs every spring. We are maintaining a constant water level of approximately 25m in the reservoir. To allow the increased water flow occurring as a result of melting ice and snow to pass through the spillway, we will need to further raise the spillway gates. Raising the gates allows the naturally occurring increasing flows to pass through the spillway. All of the additional water that will be seen in the Churchill River watershed is due to the spring melt.

We monitor the flow rate in the lower Churchill River (this is the volume of water that passes over time). With the spring melt happening, the current flow rate at Muskrat Falls is currently approximately 3,500 cubic metres per second (m^3/s). Over the next couple of days this rate is expected to increase to approximately 4,000 m^3/s . As the melt continues it is forecasted that further increases to over 5,000 m^3/s are likely early next week. For context, this is approaching a rate that would only be expected once every ten years. Stakeholders should be aware that this information is based on forecast data and is subject to change.

River Safety

The river around the Muskrat Falls facility is unsafe for recreational use. The ice cover has deteriorated, and strong currents are associated with high flows on the river. We advise people to avoid the areas upstream and directly downstream of the facility. During the spring melt, raising water levels and flooding from runoff and/or ice jams is possible. People should be aware of this risk and the possible consequences of a flood during this period.

Monitoring on the lower Churchill River

The Department of Municipal Affairs and Environment - Water Resources Management Division (WRMD-MAE) regularly reports water and ice levels on the lower Churchill River on its website. Please visit the following pages to learn more about water and ice levels during the spring melt.

- Churchill River Early Flood Warning and Alert System:
https://www.mae.gov.nl.ca/waterres/flooding/lc_flood_warning.html
- Ice Jam Risk Forecast for the lower Churchill River:
https://www.mae.gov.nl.ca/waterres/flooding/LC_Ice_Jam_Risk_Forecast.html

CONTACT US

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