

Lake Level and Ice Update – FAQs April 2014

Since Keuka Lake was just about totally covered in ice this year, there continues to be concern by many about recent and potential future additional ice damage to shoreline assets. Depending where you are located on the lake, dealing with ice may be an annual event, or for the more Southern residents, significantly more infrequent.

There has been a lot of conversation and incorrect information exchanged lately on various social media sites. The following Frequently Asked Questions and answers are provided below to help clarify some lake level facts. Please also reference the “Keuka Lake Water Level Management” page on the KLA web site for more detailed information, now easily accessible from the Current Lake Level page, or at (<http://www.keukalakeassociation.org/post.php?id=90>).

Q: Why isn't the KLA lowering the lake level?

A: The KLA does not control the lake level, KLOC does. The KLOC (Keuka Lake Outlet Compact), an inter-municipal corporation consisting of representatives from the eight municipalities around the lake shoreline, has ultimate responsibility for management of water levels and upkeep of the outlet gates. The recommended process for daily operation and management of the gates is outlined in the "Reservoir Regulation Manual-Keuka Lake Outlet" (developed by the Army Corps of Engineers), which describes the purpose and the procedures for maintaining the lake level. The Chair of the KLOC and the Director of Public Works for the Penn Yan Municipal Utility Board (contracted to operate the outlet gates) consult on a regular basis to determine if the gate settings need to be changed to increase or decrease the outflow or discharge of water from the lake.

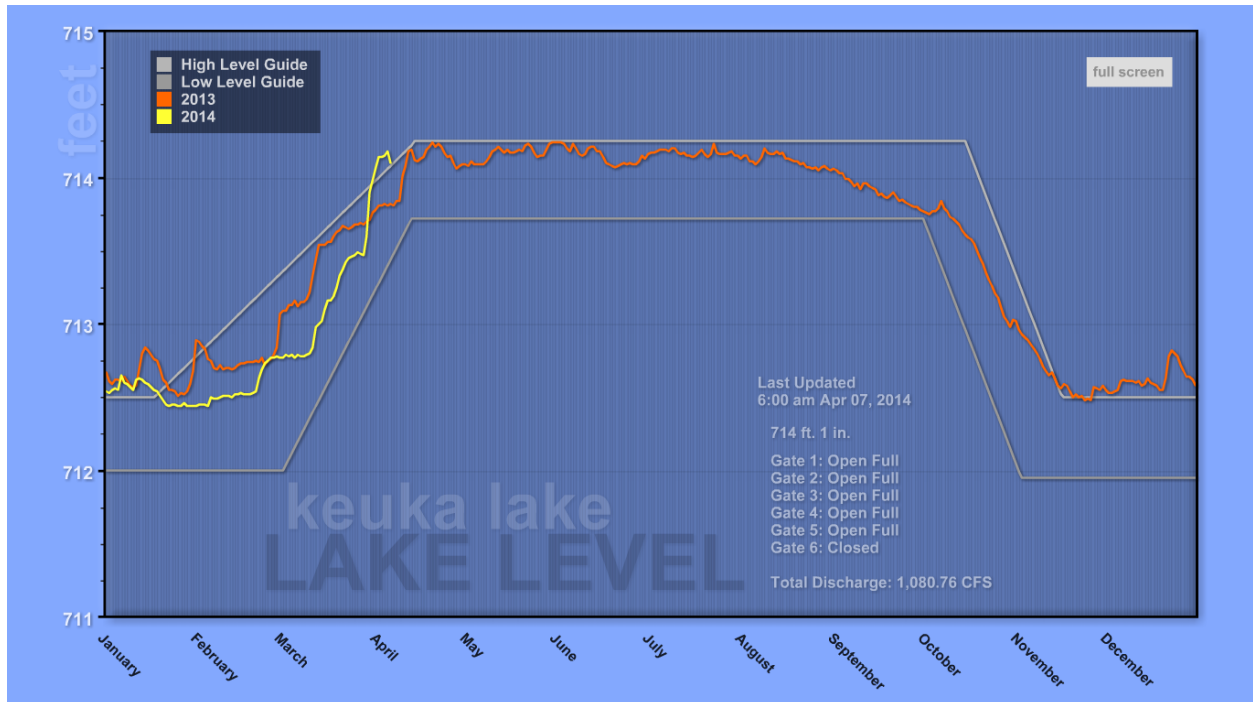
Q: What role does the KLA play in lake level management?

A: The KLA has funded and supplied numerous systems and equipment which provide KLOC with accurate live water level and water discharge information, allowing better proactive management. The current lake level web page is updated every two hours with accurate information, accessible to anyone, at any time, from anywhere. Key KLA members attend every KLOC meeting, usually scheduled monthly, providing input and recommendations in the best interests of their members. Periodically, member surveys are electronically conducted on key issues, with results quickly provided to KLOC revealing insight on member opinions and concerns.

Q: Why is the lake level so much higher than it normally is for this time of year?

A: As can be seen in the chart below (a screen shot from the lake level chart on 4/7/14 at http://www.keukalakeassociation.org/charts/keuka_lake_level.php), KLOC has been very successful thus far this year in maintaining the lake level within the objectives, even staying below the actual 2013 level. Up until March 29th, the level continued to be well within the objectives. Precipitation and melting temperatures over the next couple of days then raised the level several inches, quickly reaching the maximum guideline. KLOC quickly responded by opening 5 gates wide open on March 31st. Because April 1st is the opening day of trout season, KLOC decided to close two of the gates to reduce

the water flow through the outlet, due to safety concerns for the outlet fisherman on opening day. By 10:00 AM on April 2nd, the other two gates were then reopened, where five gates are now wide open, and will remain that way until the level drops a few inches to the mid point between the guidelines. Depending on precipitation and runoff, this should only take a few days. As can be seen, the level has already begun to decrease.



Q: Why isn't the lake level being kept lower until the ice clears?

A: KLOC's mission is flood control, arresting and preventing damage to property resulting from floods and erosion. They are charged with maintaining the lake level within the objectives defined by the Army Corps of Engineers, along with minimum and maximum water discharge levels into the outlet defined by the NYSDEC.

Q: What can be done to minimize ice damage to shoreline property?

A: Unfortunately, the best defenses against potential ice damage are proactive efforts like removing all assets from areas which ice can reach, or for fixed items like permanent docks or seawalls, using bubblers to prevent any ice buildup and installing ice breakers to protect against winds blowing in large foreign ice sheets. However, as experienced in late March South of the Bluff, there is no ice breaker that can stop huge thick ice sheets being blown by heavy winds from destroying anything in its path. A few inches of reduced water level would probably do little to reduce this impact.

May the spring winds be favorable to your property.