



Municipality of West Perth North End/Henry St. Bridge Construction FAQ

Municipality of West Perth - Henry Street Bridge Construction 2019-2020

The Municipality of West Perth will be constructing the new Henry Street Bridge over the North Thames River in Mitchell. To facilitate the construction and allow for the contractors to gain access to the streambed and abutments, plans are for the Mitchell Dam to remain in an open position. Water levels at the Mitchell Dam and the reservoir upstream will be lower than normal. Based on the anticipated construction schedule, we expect levels to be low for the remainder of 2019 and 2020.

Who is monitoring the project?

This project has been reviewed by environmental agencies including the Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) and the Upper Thames River Conservation Authority (UTRCA) which has issued its approval. Staff from the Municipality and the UTRCA will be monitoring the project, sediment and erosion controls, and water levels in the North Thames River. They will also be monitoring for any potential impacts to aquatic and terrestrial species.

How do you know how much water is in the river?

The UTRCA has stream gauge stations that monitor water levels in the vicinity of the project and staff will be monitoring flows during the project. While residents may note lower than normal water levels at various times, we will be monitoring to confirm sufficient flows are being maintained for wildlife and adjacent (riparian) owners.

Will the low water levels affect the aquatic environment?

While construction of the new pier and abutments will require dewatering of a small section of the river, any natural water flow from upstream will be maintained around the construction site at all times. With the dam remaining in an open position, water levels will follow a more natural pattern dependent entirely upon weather and precipitation conditions. Any anticipated impacts to the aquatic environment will be temporary and are expected to rebound following closing (reinstatement) of the dam after construction is complete.

What will the reservoir look like?

Watercourses naturally move sediment; some is eroded and deposited throughout the watercourse while other sediment is eroded from fields, washed into the watercourse and deposited where water velocities are low such as upstream of a dam. With the dam remaining in an open position, low water levels may expose sediment that has

accumulated on the riverbed. Temporarily the river's edge may colonize with grasses and other vegetation.

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