



*** FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE ***

January 23, 2024

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STATEMENT ON KANKAKEE RIVER AND YELLOW RIVER CONDITIONS

LAPORTE COUNTY — Kankakee River Basin and Yellow River Basin Development Commission Executive Director Scott Pelath issued the following statement regarding the conditions of the Kankakee and Yellow Rivers in Indiana:

“Recent days have brought an unfavorable mix of conditions to the Kankakee River Basin.

“Several days of sub-zero have caused heavy ice and deepened permafrost. These temperatures were accompanied by episodes of heavy snowfall, particularly lake-effect snow throughout the central watershed.

“When warmer temperatures and liquid precipitation follow such conditions, the risk of ice jams increases. This winter, we already have seen the hazards posed by a major ice jam on the Kankakee River at Wilmington, Illinois. They can block the normal flow of water and pose flood risks to people and property.

“Conversely, the deepening of permafrost renders soil less able to retain liquid water. This hastens its flow to creeks and ditches that feed the main stems of the Kankakee and Yellow Rivers.

“The Commission is directly inspecting changing river conditions and monitoring up-to-date projections from the National Weather Service. It also retains emergency service contractors in the event of bridge obstructions or bank breaches.

“Citizens are urged not to cross any ice and to use extreme caution on and around riverbanks during flood conditions. River levels, flood forecasts, and current flood status information can be found at the National Weather Service website at <https://water.weather.gov/ahps/>.”
