

# BC Environment

## River Forecast Centre

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### High Streamflow Advisory: BC Interior

**Issued: 14May2008 13:00PM**

Following the very cold weather of April and early May, strong high pressure ridging is forecast by Environment Canada to dominate British Columbia from Thursday through to Monday. This will produce a dramatic shift in temperatures, from below normal at present to near record highs on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, and possibly into Monday. Temperatures are forecast to reach daytime highs of 30+ degrees at valley bottom locations throughout the south and central Interior (Okanagan, Kootenay, Similkameen, Nicola, Thompson) over the weekend. At high elevation (e.g., >1500 metres) temperatures are expected to reach 20+ degrees. Night-time temperatures will stay well above freezing.

The cold spring weather has resulted in snowpacks being above normal for mid-May, and has resulted in a 3-week delay in the onset of the spring snowmelt period. In some areas, mid-elevation snow (1000-1500 metres elevation) is well above normal. The high temperatures will produce rapid snow melt across a range of elevations throughout much of the B.C. Interior. With the above freezing night-time temperatures, snowmelt will continue during the night. This weekend will mark the first significant snowmelt event of the spring.

The snowmelt will result in rapidly rising water levels on most streams throughout the Interior, and may result in localized flooding along some unprotected small and mid-sized creeks and streams throughout the Interior valleys. In particular, the south and central Interior has the highest risk of this, including the East and West Kootenay, Okanagan, Similkameen, Nicola & Coldwater valleys, North and South Thompson basins, Shuswap, and others.

Larger mainstem rivers along valley bottoms will also begin to rise over the weekend and into early next week, although flooding is not forecast at this time.

The current weather forecast is that temperatures will begin to drop by Tuesday, and be close to normal by Wednesday. This will ease the rate of snowmelt.

The River Forecast Centre will monitor conditions over the holiday weekend and will issue updates as conditions warrant.

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A **High Streamflow Advisory** means that river levels are rising or expected to rise rapidly, but that no major flooding is expected. Minor flooding in low-lying areas is possible.

A **Flood Watch** means that river levels are rising and will approach or may exceed bankfull. Flooding of areas adjacent to affected rivers may occur.

A **Flood Warning** means that river levels have exceeded bankfull or will exceed bankfull imminently, and that flooding of areas adjacent to the rivers affected will result.