Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship

Flood Warning – Sumas River (UPGRADE)
Flood Watch –South Coast and Vancouver Island
High Streamflow Advisory – Lower Fraser tributaries and Central Coast
Issued: 1:30 PM January 28, 2024

The River Forecast Centre is upgrading to a Flood Warning for:

- Sumas River (UPGRADE)

The River Forecast Centre is maintaining a Flood Watch for:

- South Coast including Howe Sound, Sunshine Coast, Sea-to-Sky and North Shore Mountains
- Fraser Valley – North including tributaries from Port Coquitlam to Harrison
- Vancouver Island

The River Forecast Centre is issuing a High Streamflow Advisory for:

- Lower Fraser River tributaries including areas around Pemberton and Lillooet River tributaries, Fraser Valley – East (except Sumas River), and Fraser Canyon

Weather Synopsis:

A series of potent storms is impacting coastal British Columbia. Initial storms have delivered 50 to 160 mm through most of the region since Friday. Current forecasting is indicating the next atmospheric river event to make contact later on Sunday through Monday, and another system from Monday into Tuesday. The heaviest rainfall is currently forecast over West Vancouver Island and the Coast Mountains. Temperatures are expected to warm during this period, and snowmelt at lower and mid-elevations will provide additional runoff to rivers.

River Conditions:

Rivers have risen, and are expected to experience periods of high flows into next week. Peak river levels are expected to occur in most areas on Sunday to Tuesday and may extend from Tuesday to Thursday for lake-driven rivers. Hydrologic modelling is indicating potential flood conditions to develop in areas with the heaviest rainfall. On Vancouver Island this includes the Gold River, Salmon River, Somass/Sproat Rivers, Englishman River, Qualicum River, Chemainus River, Cowichan River and other surrounding rivers. On the South Coast areas of concern for

flooding include: tributaries around Howe Sound including the Stawamus River, Squamish River, Mamquam River, Cheakamus River; tributaries around the North Shore Mountains and Fraser Valley north; and the Sunshine Coast. Other adjacent areas are currently forecast to have lower peak flows (around 2-year flows).

High flows on the Nooksack River in Washington State have reached local flood stage, with stage at the Nooksack River near Cedarville gauge reaching 147.2 ft at 12:30pm Sunday morning. Water levels have reached 83.53 ft at the USGS gauge at Everson (12211200), and spillover conditions into the Sumas River watershed near Everson are being observed. Spillover into the Sumas River should be short-lived as upstream areas of the Nooksack River have reached peak levels already and are now receding. The Nooksack River near Everson is expected to recede later this afternoon. Flows in the Sumas River are not anticipated to pose a hazard for flooding into Sumas Prairie at this time. Additional hazards for overflow may be present from the incoming storm systems next week.

There remains uncertainty over the amounts of rainfall that will occur and the locations of heaviest rainfall. Elevated flood hazards may be possible in nearby areas, particularly if the storm tracks or patterns change from what is currently forecast.

Fast-flowing rivers pose increased risk to life safety. The River Forecast Centre continues to monitor the conditions and will provide updates as conditions warrant.

For information on how to prepare for flood hazards, visit PreparedBC.

BC River Forecast Centre
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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. Fast-flowing bodies of water increase risk to life safety. 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.