

Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship

Flood Warning – Squamish River (NEW)

Flood Watch – Sumas River, South Coast and Vancouver Island

High Streamflow Advisory – Lower Fraser tributaries and Central Coast

Issued: 5:00 PM January 29, 2024

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

- Squamish River

The River Forecast Centre is maintaining a Flood Watch for:

- Sumas River
- South Coast including Howe Sound, Sunshine Coast, Sea-to-Sky and North Shore Mountains (except Squamish River above)
- Fraser Valley – North including tributaries from Port Coquitlam to Harrison
- Vancouver Island

The River Forecast Centre is maintaining 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 80 to 300 mm through most of the region since Friday, with 40 to 100 mm falling in the past 24 hours. A second atmospheric river is currently bringing another round of rainfall to the coast, with heaviest amounts forecast over West Vancouver Island and the Coast Mountains overnight into Tuesday. 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 overnight. Peak river levels are expected to occur in most areas on Monday 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

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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). A subsequent atmospheric river is expected to impact BC on Wednesday, and while current forecasts for this event are less severe than the past and current storms, on-going high flows and flood hazard may persist through this week.

On the Squamish River, flows in the headwaters (Elaho River) continue to rise. Current flow on the Squamish River near Brackendale (Water Survey of Canada Gauge 08GA022) is at 1540 m³/s (between a 2-year and 5-year flow). With additional rainfall expected into the headwaters through the rest of Monday, on-going rises are possible overnight into Tuesday (flows may reach or exceed 2100 m³/s (10-year flows). Additional rainfall on Wednesday may lead to on-going flood hazard.

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.