

Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship

Flood Watch – South Coast and Vancouver Island

High Streamflow Advisory – Lower Fraser tributaries and Central Coast

Issued: 3:00 PM January 25, 2024

The River Forecast Centre is issuing 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 (tributaries around Abbotsford, Hope), and Fraser Canyon

Weather Synopsis:

A series of potent storms is forecast to impact coastal British Columbia this weekend and next week, with an initial storm Friday, again on Saturday-Sunday, and another into Monday.

Current forecasting is indicating the strongest atmospheric river event making landfall on Monday, with the potential for additional rainfall in the middle of next week. The heaviest rainfall is currently forecast over West Vancouver Island and the Coast Mountains. In these areas, total rainfall from Saturday to Wednesday is forecasted to be 200 to 300 mm, with the potential for localized areas to receive up to 400 mm. Areas around Howe Sound, Sunshine Coast, other areas of Vancouver Island, Metro Vancouver, Sea-to-Sky, and Fraser Valley are forecast to receive 70 to 250 mm of precipitation. Temperatures are expected to warm during this period, and snowmelt at lower and mid-elevations will provide additional runoff to rivers.

River Conditions:

Rivers are expected to rise over the weekend and 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 a high likelihood for moderate flood conditions (2-year to 10-year flows) to develop in areas with the heaviest rainfall, and a chance

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that more severe flooding (reaching or exceeding 20-year flows) could occur. 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).

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.