BC Environment
River Forecast Centre

Water Supply and Streamflow Conditions:
Issued: Aug 1st, 2008

Weather across British Columbia during the past six weeks has been variable. For much of the northern two-thirds of the province, periodic frontal storm systems have brought rainfall, although the total amount of rain has been generally somewhat below normal. Some locations, particularly in the far north-east, have received well above normal rainfall.

However, in most of the South Interior (Williams Lake, Kamloops, Merritt, Kelowna, Penticton, Grand Forks, Creston, others) and South Coast and Vancouver Island, rainfall amounts have ranged from negligible to slight. Also, temperatures across the South Interior have been generally above normal, with infrequent cloud cover and well above normal hours of sunshine. The dry and warm weather of the last few weeks is being reflected in below normal river levels across much of the southern one-third of the province.

A change in the prolonged dry weather has occurred this week. A frontal system moved onto the British Columbia South Coast and Central Coast, and has resulted in moderated temperatures and widespread light rainfall across Vancouver Island, the South Coast and Mid Coast, and across portions of the central Interior.

As of today, most rivers in the South Interior are below their median water levels for the date, but have stabilized with the moderated temperatures. The majority of rivers with water level gauges are at low levels seen on average once in five to ten years. Most rivers on Vancouver Island and the South Coast appear to be near or above their normal water level for the end of July.

Some specific rivers of note are:

- The Granby River and Kettle River (Westbridge, Midway, Grand Forks) are at 5-year to 10-year low flows;
- Camp Creek (Summerland), Salmon River (Salmon valley), Nicola River and Coldwater River (Merritt) are at 5-year to 10-year low flows;
- The Tulameen and Similkameen rivers (Hedley, Princeton) are near 5-year low flows.
- Penfold Creek and the Horsefly River are near 5-year low flows;
- The Bulkley River (Smithers) is near a 5-year low flow.

Outlook

Weather forecasts indicate continued influence from a frontal system for the next few days, with periods of at least light rain across the South and Mid Coast and the South Interior. Forecasts suggest that warm and dry weather may redevelop again by early August. River levels across the South Interior are currently below normal, but do not appear to be at levels of concern. Cooler weather and rainfall this week will be very beneficial to river levels, depending on the amount of rain received in individual river basins. Should the return to warm and dry weather in early August be sustained, river levels will again begin to drop.