

BC Environment

River Forecast Centre

Flood Warning / Watch Update: Vancouver Island 15Jan2010 2:15PM

The frontal system that brought heavy precipitation to Vancouver Island yesterday and this morning has pushed through, with precipitation on the island largely ended by 10-11AM. The **Flood Warning** for the Cowichan and Koksilah rivers, and the **Flood Watch** for the Chemainus River, are being maintained.

The high river levels from the storm runoff occurred at the time of the high tide this morning. The status of rivers on Vancouver Island is as follows:

- **Cowichan River:** The water level on Cowichan Lake has plateaued, and the Cowichan River at Duncan appears to be at its peak as of 1PM (near a 5-year return period level). Because it drains out of Cowichan Lake, the water level on the Cowichan River at Duncan has a slow recession. From its current water level of 3.32 metres at the Water Survey of Canada gauge, we anticipate the water level to recede by approximately 0.4 metres by the 7:20AM high tide Saturday, with a further recession of approximately 0.2 metres by the 7:40AM high tide on Sunday.
- **Chemainus River:** Peaked near noon at a discharge of 425 cubic metres per second (m^3/s), near a 4-year return period level. The water level has just started to decline.
- **Nanaimo River:** Peaked near noon at a discharge of $600 \text{ m}^3/\text{s}$, near a 3-year return period level. The water level has just started to decline.
- **Englishman River:** Peaked near noon at a discharge of $320 \text{ m}^3/\text{s}$, near a 2-year return period level. The water level has just started to decline.
- **Tsolum River:** Peaked near noon at a discharge of $220 \text{ m}^3/\text{s}$, near a 5-year return period level. The water level has just started to decline.

Environment Canada indicates that some precipitation is expected on Vancouver Island over the next 5 days, but current forecasts are calling only for light amounts, and no effect of river levels is anticipated.

The Warnings will remain in place overnight, and the River Forecast Centre will provide an update by 7AM Saturday, or earlier if necessary

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.