

BC Environment

River Forecast Centre

Central Coast Update – Flood Warning: Bella Coola River 25Sep2010 12:00PM

The Flood Warning for the Central Coast is continuing. This is in effect for the Bella Coola, Salloomt and Atnarko rivers, other tributaries of the Bella Coola River, and other rivers and streams on the Central Coast.

The intense frontal system is stalled over the Central Coast and heavy rain is continuing. Total precipitation amounts for the past 24 hours are 181 mm (MOF Hagensborg), and 175 mm (MOT Bella Coola RAWS). Localized flooding has been reported, and Highway 20 has been closed due to washouts and rock slides. For the latest road information, go to <http://www.drivebc.ca/>.

The most recent water level reading on the Bella Coola River (WSC 08FB007) at 10:40AM is 4.52 m with a flow of $661 \text{ m}^3 \text{ s}^{-1}$. This is just over a 10-year return period flow. On the Salloomt River (WSC 08FB004), the latest water level reading at 11:30AM was 2.2 m with a flow of $135 \text{ m}^3 \text{ s}^{-1}$. The Salloomt peaked at 8:30AM at 2.3 m, which is near a 10-year return period flow. The last reported water level reading on the Atnarko River (WSC 08FB006) at 9:40AM was 3.6 m with a flow of approximately $340 \text{ m}^3 \text{ s}^{-1}$, which is the highest recorded flow in 45 years of record. The previously recorded peak flow was $289 \text{ m}^3 \text{ s}^{-1}$ in 1968.

The water level on the Bella Coola River and Atnarko River is still rising, and the Salloomt River has dropped slightly. Rainfall intensities at climate stations in the Bella Coola valley have eased slightly this morning (5 mm/hour), but the Environment Canada forecast is for heavy rain to continue until mid-afternoon. The total precipitation forecast for today is 50-80 mm. River levels are expected to continue to rise or remain near their peaks until late this afternoon or early evening, before beginning to recede.

The weather is forecast to change to rain and showers by this evening, and the forecast for Sunday is a chance of showers throughout the day. By late Sunday evening, another system is forecast to arrive bringing an additional 40 mm of total precipitation for overnight Sunday and Monday. This next system is not expected to stall over the Central Coast region.

The River Forecast Centre will continue to monitor conditions and will provide an update this evening, or earlier if conditions warrant.

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.