

Ministry of Natural Resource Operations

BC River Forecast Centre

Flood Watch: South Vancouver Island 12Dec2010 10:30AM

- Cowichan River
- Koksilah River
- Chemainus River

The BC River Forecast Centre is upgrading the High Streamflow Advisory for South Vancouver Island to a **Flood Watch**. This includes all drainages south of the Chemainus River.

Environment Canada is continuing the Rainfall Warning in effect for the South Coast, and has added Greater Victoria and the Southern Gulf Islands. In the Cowichan Valley, moderate to heavy precipitation has been recorded since after midnight. Total precipitation amounts since 6PM last night are 72 mm at the MOE Jump Creek automated snow pillow, and 57 mm at the Mesachie Fire Weather station. Temperatures at Jump Creek (elevation 1134 m) rose to above freezing since midnight, and are currently 4.3°C. Snow water equivalent has just started to decline over the past few hours, indicating that snow melt is just beginning.

The last water level measurement on the Cowichan River near Duncan (WSC 08HA011) was 2.53 m at 9:26AM. The water level on the Cowichan has been rising at a rate of 9-10 cm/hour for the past 4 hours. A 2-year return period bankfull level is 2.75 m. The last water level measurement on the Chemainus River near Westholme (WSC 08HA001) was 2.56 m at 9:01 AM. The Water level has been rising at a rate of 23-28 cm/hour for the past 3 hours. A 2-year return period bankfull level is 3.38 m.

Rain is forecast to ease on south Vancouver Island by mid-afternoon today. Additional precipitation amounts of 20-30 mm are expected before the system moves inland. Freezing levels will fall slowly during the day to about 1200 m this evening. Given the current weather forecast, river levels will continue to rise over the day, peaking late this afternoon. River levels are expected to exceed bankfull by mid-day.

The River Forecast Centre will continue to monitor conditions and will provide an update Sunday afternoon, 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.