

Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations

BC River Forecast Centre

UPDATE - Flood Watch: Bulkley River and surrounding areas

Issued: 26May2011 3:30 PM

The BC River Forecast Centre is maintaining a **Flood Watch** for the Bulkley River (Houston, Quick, Smithers) and is extending the area encompassed by the Flood Watch to include the surrounding areas to the south and east (Burns Lake, Francois Lake, Fraser Lake, and surrounding area).

River levels throughout the region have remained elevated over the past week. The Bulkley River had slight declines in river levels through Wednesday as snowmelt rates eased.

Heavy precipitation fell Wednesday in the western portion of the region. Rainfall rates were typically in the 15-25mm range, with a high of 28mm recorded at the McBride Lake Fire Weather Station. Rainfall rates were lower towards the east, with the Houston Fire Weather Station recording 2.5mm of precipitation on Wednesday.

The Bulkley River has been rising sharply since early on Thursday morning, and is continuing to rise at approximately 1cm/hr at the Water Survey of Canada gauges at Quick (08EE004) and Smithers (08EE005). Water levels at these locations are at or near their previous high water levels from earlier in the week. Rainfall amounts observed yesterday in the eastern portion of the Bulkley watershed were not as high, and the Bulkley River at Houston (WSC 08EE003) continues to recede.

Water levels on the lakes in the region (Francois Lake, Stuart Lake, Babine Lake, Fraser Lake) continue to increase due to snowmelt and rainfall runoff from their inflow tributaries.

Environment Canada is forecasting 20 to 35mm of additional precipitation for the Bulkley and Lakes region through Friday. River and lake levels throughout the region are expected to rise through Friday and into the weekend. The amount and rate at which rivers rise will depend on how much rain falls during this weather system.

The River Forecast Centre will continue to monitor conditions and will provide an update as 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.

Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations

BC River Forecast Centre

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.