

Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations

BC River Forecast Centre (<http://bcrfc.env.gov.bc.ca/>)

UPDATE: 26November2011 4:00PM

Flood Watch:

- **North Vancouver Island**
- **West Vancouver Island**

High Streamflow Advisory: East Vancouver Island

- **East Vancouver Island**
- **South Vancouver Island**

The BC River Forecast Centre is **upgrading** the advisory to a **Flood Watch** for north Vancouver Island (north of Campbell River) and west Vancouver Island (including areas around Bamfield, Tofino, Gold River, Zeballos and north). The River Forecast Centre is **maintaining** the **High Streamflow Advisory** for east Vancouver Island and south Vancouver Island (including areas from Campbell River south to Duncan).

A low pressure system currently off the Gulf of Alaska is pulling warm moist air from the sub-tropics on to the British Columbia coast. Rainfall on Saturday has been in the 50 to 70 mm range over 12 hours for areas on the west coast and north Vancouver Island, and in the 10 to 30 mm range for areas on East Vancouver Island and South Vancouver Island. The system is forecast to bring the heaviest rainfall tonight and into Sunday. Environment Canada has issued a rainfall warning for west and north Vancouver Island and the Central Coast, with rainfall amounts of 50 to 100 mm today into Sunday, and possibly higher amounts in mountainous regions of the Island. The heaviest rain is forecast for north and west Vancouver Island, including areas around Tofino, Gold River, Tahsis, north to Woss and including the Salmon River at Sayward. While forecast precipitation is lower for watersheds on central Vancouver Island that drain eastward (e.g. Tsolum, Browns, Oyster, Englishman), precipitation may spill over into these drainages, and high flows may result. Areas of southern Vancouver Island are expected to receive less precipitation and rises in river flow are expected to be moderate, however this area is included in the advisory because of concerns over the effects of high tides.

Temperatures have risen through this event, with freezing levels currently above 1100m. As of 3:00pm, temperatures at the Jump Creek snow pillow (1113m) were at 3.4 degrees, however the snow pack had not yet transitioned into melting. Some snow melt may have occurred at lower elevations, and be contributing to additional runoff.

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.

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Rivers on north Vancouver Island and west Vancouver Island have been rising rapidly in response to the heavy rain today. Pugh Creek near Nawhitti Lake (Water Survey of Canada gauge 08HF012) is currently flow at approximately 35 m³/s, or between a 2-year and 5-year flow. The Zeballos River near Zeballos (08HE006) is currently at 3.9 m, or approximately a 2-year level. On eastern Vancouver Island, river levels have just started to rise in response to rainfall, and are currently below levels of concern.

Rivers are expected to rise through Saturday evening in response to the forecast rainfall and snowmelt, with peak levels late Saturday or into early Sunday for north Vancouver Island and west Vancouver Island. Rivers on east Vancouver Island are expected to peak early to late morning on Sunday. For the lower reaches on tidally influenced rivers, periods of very high tides (enhanced storm surges) are expected on Sunday which may exacerbate flood level if peak river levels coincide with high tides. Fisheries and Oceans Canada and the BC Ministry of Environment are forecasting sea levels to peak in Victoria at 1:00pm 1:00pm on Sunday. At Point Atkinson peak sea levels are forecast for 8:00am on Sunday (http://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/sci/juandefuca/storm_surge/storm_surge.htm)

The River Forecast Centre will continue to monitor conditions and will provide updates as conditions warrant.

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