

Ministry of Forests

UPDATE – Flood Watch – Skeena Region (UPGRADE)

Issued: 11:30 AM May 15, 2023

The River Forecast Centre is upgrading to a Flood Watch for:

- Skeena Region, including the Skeena River, Bulkley River and surrounding tributaries around Wet'suwet'en and Gitksan Territories, Telkwa, Smithers, Hazelton, Kispiox, and Terrace

Weather Synopsis:

Environment and Climate Change Canada has issued a Special Weather Statement for the region, indicating that the B.C. Interior is experiencing unseasonably hot weather.

Temperatures are forecast to be hot throughout the week, with daytime highs 10 to 15 degrees Celsius above seasonal values and overnight lows will be 5 to 10 degrees normal. Hot temperatures are forecasted to last through the week with temperatures in the upper 20's to 30°C.

River Conditions:

Hot temperatures are leading to accelerated snowmelt in the region. Streamflow in most areas has begun to rise in response to increased snowmelt runoff. With hot temperatures expected to persist through next week, on-going rises in river levels is expected. Current hydrologic modelling is indicating the potential for flows in rivers in the region to exceed 2-year flows by Tuesday or Wednesday (May 16-17) and may reach higher levels later in the week. This will approach or exceed flood levels in areas on the Bulkley River near Smithers, and on the Skeena River.

The public is advised:

River levels are rising or expected to rise rapidly. Being near these riverbanks, creeks and fast-flowing bodies of water is dangerous:

- Stay clear of fast-flowing rivers and potentially unstable riverbanks
- Avoid recreational activities such as fishing, swimming, boating or hiking near high streamflow rivers or streams
- Remember, high streamflow can easily trap strong swimmers, increasing risk of drowning

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During a High Streamflow Advisory, conditions can change quickly. Understand the risks and get prepared by visiting www.PreparedBC/floods

The [River Forecast Centre](#) continues to monitor the conditions and will provide updates as conditions warrant.

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A **High Streamflow Advisory** means that river levels are rising or expected to rise rapidly, but that no major flooding is expected. Fast-flowing bodies of water increase risk to life safety. 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.