

Ministry of Forests

High Streamflow Advisory – Vancouver Island, South Coast, Lower Mainland Issued: 11:30 AM December 22, 2022

The River Forecast Centre is **issuing a High Streamflow Advisory** for:

- **Vancouver Island**
- **South Coast including Howe Sound, Sunshine Coast and surrounding tributaries**
- **Lower Mainland including the North Shore Mountains, Fraser Valley and surrounding tributaries**

A significant shift in weather is anticipated over the coming days for coastal areas of British Columbia. Cold air is currently entrenched across the region. Warmer and wetter weather is anticipated, starting later Thursday and persisting into the weekend and into next week. The onset of the change will lead to a period of transition from snow to freezing rain and finally rainfall. The timing of this transition may vary by region, however in general will begin late-Thursday and see low elevations experiencing this transition through Friday, and potentially later for more inland areas (including the eastern Fraser Valley and the Sea-to-Sky corridor). While there is abundant snow on the ground in low elevation areas, the snow water equivalent is limited (estimated as 10-25 mm). This snow is expected to melt slowly through the Friday and Saturday period. Along with rainfall, this may lead to drainage issues in low lying areas as well as potential challenges associated with impacts from snow and ice on drainage infrastructure.

A more significant rainfall pattern is emerging for Saturday and again over the Sunday and Monday period. This weekend and early next week the storm cycle is anticipated to have the potential to bring high streamflow and potential flood hazard to the region. Rivers are anticipated to respond to rainfall and rain-on-snow melt on Saturday, Sunday and Monday, with the potential for high flows throughout the period. Current weather forecasting remains uncertain on the amounts and locations of the heaviest rainfall; however modelling is in good agreement to the overall pattern of a moderate to strong series of atmospheric rivers impacting the west coast (from Oregon to BC) this weekend and into next week.

The public is advised to stay clear of the fast-flowing rivers and potentially unstable riverbanks during the high-streamflow period.

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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. 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.