

Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship

High Streamflow Advisory - South Coast, South and West Vancouver Island

Issued: 1:00 PM December 16, 2024

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

- South Coast including Sunshine Coast, Howe Sound, Sea-to-Sky, North Shore Mountains, Metro Vancouver, and Fraser Valley
- South and West Vancouver Island

Weather Synopsis:

Another strong, warm Pacific storm is expected to bring moderate to heavy precipitation to the South Coast and Vancouver Island early this week. Precipitation will likely begin Tuesday morning (December 17) and continue through early Wednesday morning (December 18). Elevated freezing levels accompanying the storm will generate rainfall and snowmelt at low to mid elevations, particularly for Vancouver Island and the North Shore Mountains possibly extending as far north as Squamish. Current forecast precipitation totals are typical for fall/winter storms in the region; however, the precipitation will likely be high intensity, falling in a relatively short period of time.

River Conditions:

Rivers are anticipated to respond quickly to rainfall and snowmelt, with rapid increases beginning on Tuesday. Currently, hydrologic modelling is indicating the potential for peak flows up to the 2-year to 5-year return period range, but peaks may be higher.

Going into the storm, rivers across the South Coast and Vancouver Island are generally at near-normal to above normal seasonal levels. Although precipitation has generally been normal to below normal for much of the region over the past month, storms over the first two weekends of December boosted river levels and likely recharged soil moisture. The wetter antecedent (pre-existing) conditions could generate a relatively larger runoff response to the upcoming storm. High flows and localized flooding are possible, particularly at lower elevations and in areas with poor drainage.

Fast-flowing rivers pose increased risk to life safety. The [River Forecast Centre](#) continues to monitor the conditions and will provide updates as conditions warrant.

For information on how to prepare for flood hazards, visit [PreparedBC](#).

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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.