



District of Maple Ridge News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 21, 2012 #12-18

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District of Maple Ridge Prepares for Fraser River Peak Levels

Maple Ridge, BC: The BC River Forecast Centre has issued a 'High Streamflow Advisory' for the Lower Fraser River and is refining their models of projected flow rates and levels for the region. Communities along the entire river have stepped up monitoring of dyke systems and areas that could be impacted by high water levels. In Maple Ridge, daily dyke inspections began June 17, 2012, and as of noon on Wednesday June 20, 2012, the District activated the Emergency Operations Centre based on concerns that some areas of the community could be impacted based on the combination of rainfall and the predicted level of the Fraser River this weekend.

On the evening of Wednesday, June 20, 2012, and the morning of Thursday, June 21, 2012, District staff dropped off information for residences and businesses whose properties may be impacted by the projected peak in the Fraser River from Thursday evening, June 21, 2012, through to Monday, June 25, 2012.

Information has been provided to 50 homes along Wharf Street in the historic Hammond community, 40 properties in the area east of Maple Ridge Golf Course close to Best Street, 90 properties fronting on Kanaka Creek just north of the Lougheed Highway, and property owners along the Fraser River from the Albion Industrial lands through to the border of Mission. Based on the forecast information available at 5:00 pm on Wednesday, June 20, 2012, the area along Kanaka Creek is the area that could be impacted most by a combination of a high Fraser River level and local rainfall. As a precaution, a neighbourhood information meeting specifically geared to the residents in that area has been set up in the Multi-Purpose Room at Kanaka Creek Elementary School, 11120 234A Street, Maple Ridge, at 7:00 pm on June 21, 2012. The District's technical staff will provide information on the latest forecasts and answer questions from residents.

Maple Ridge Mayor Ernie Daykin noted that there are two key messages that we want to get out to the community. “The first thing, and an issue that we will be dealing with for a few weeks, is that people should use great caution around the Fraser River and the dykes along the tributaries. The water is flowing fast, and even as we move through this peak flow, we all need to make sure that our children and pets are safe and close at hand.” He continued, “The second message is that the folks at the BC River Forecast centre have worked very hard to refine their modeling and forecasts, and we all need to heed their warnings. While the predicted Fraser River levels did not materialize in 2007, it is important that people take the appropriate steps to protect their families, pets, businesses and personal possessions. I’d rather apologize that someone was ‘too prepared’ than ‘unprepared’ for the pulse of water we are expecting.”

Sources for Information:

On Wednesday, June 20, 2012, the District website at www.mapleridge.ca added a button called “Flood Watch on the Fraser” which directs residents to essential information on preparedness and links to weather forecasts, river gauges, the latest forecasts as well as emergency preparedness materials. The District’s social media channels on Facebook and Twitter allow people to get updates on their computers or smart phones. Both channels are *@yourmapleridge*. Beginning late Thursday, June 21, 2012, the Twitter hashtag for updates in Maple Ridge will be *#FraserMR*.

Background Information:

The BC River Forecast Centre and Environment Canada have been monitoring the conditions of the Fraser River and its tributaries for close to two months. Over that time they have been updating communities along the Fraser River of the projected river levels. As late as last week, the cool spring weather had kept river levels below the District of Maple Ridge Flood Plan risk levels.

As has been widely reported in the media, the high snow pack in BC’s interior has been a source of concern throughout the 2012 Spring Freshet. Over the past weekend, high rainfall levels have caused a pulse of water that is flowing down the Fraser River and expected to peak in the Lower Fraser Basin this weekend.

Detailed information on the Fraser River conditions can be found at the BC River Forecast Centre’s website: bcRFC.env.gov.bc.ca.

