



Deep Roots
Greater Heights

District of Maple Ridge News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 27, 2012 #12-24

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Update: Maple Ridge Freshet Activities for Wednesday, June 27, 2012

Maple Ridge, BC: The BC River Forecast Centre is maintaining a High Streamflow Advisory for the Lower Fraser River. Here are the key points of the advisory released at 8:30 am on Wednesday, June 27, 2012:

- As of this morning, the Fraser River at Hope (08MF005) is flowing at approximately 11,000 cubic metres per second (m³/s), and is rising. The Fraser River at Mission (08MH024) is currently at 6.15 metres and has begun to rise.
- Heavy rainfall and rapid snowmelt occurred over the weekend, particularly in the Thompson River Basin (a major tributary to the Lower Fraser River) and to a lesser extent in the Upper Fraser River Basin. Typically it takes six days for water from rain and snowmelt in these headwaters to travel down to the Lower Fraser Valley. Due to heavier rain across the Fraser River tributaries, another pulse of water is expected to travel downstream through this week. A rise in river levels is expected over the next few days, and levels are expected to reach their peak levels over the late-Thursday to Saturday period at Hope and the Friday to Sunday period around Mission and downstream. Current forecasts are estimating the flows to be in the range of 11,400-11,800 m³/s at Hope, and a height of approximately 6.30-6.40 metres at the Mission Gauge. This is slightly below levels that were observed last weekend.
- Once the pulse of water has passed, levels are expected to recede towards the end of the weekend, and into next week. Unless additional severe weather (extreme heat or heavy rainfall in the Upper Fraser Basin) occurs, river levels are expected to drop through the remainder of the freshet season.

For daily updates of five-day forecasts of water levels and timing of daily peak levels for various locations down the Lower Fraser River, see the River Forecast Centre website: http://bcRFC.env.gov.bc.ca/bulletins/Freshet2012/WL_Prediction.pdf

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

COMMENTS FROM COUNCIL

At the Council meeting held on Tuesday, June 26, 2012, Mayor and Council received a briefing on the freshet by the Emergency Program Coordinator, Ceri Marlo, prior to the regular agenda. Ms. Marlo's presentation reviewed the factors that have contributed to this year's high water levels and a map that the BC River Forecast Centre has been using to describe how each of the watersheds along the Fraser River impacts the flows in the Lower Fraser River. Ms. Marlo also updated Council on some of the specific actions taken before the freshet, and how District staff responded to the rising levels. She concluded her presentation with the continued warning that citizens need to be careful around the Fraser River and its tributaries as the water levels and flow rates will remain high for a number of days.

Mayor Daykin, on behalf of Council, spoke about the situation and said, "First and foremost we all acknowledge the stress that some residents have been under since the water levels rose last week. These types of incidents tend to bring neighbours closer together. We all saw how people worked together to take steps to protect their families, homes and personal possessions. We also recognize the generosity of the folks at Albion Flats Landscape Supplies who stepped up to run the sandbag depot. They were assisted by volunteers from our Community Policing Team who showed up to fill bags and help citizens load their vehicles. This is the spirit of our community."

Mayor and Council also acknowledged the work of District staff in the execution of the Flood Management Plan and thanked all the front line and support staff who have been working to keep on top of the situation, while also maintaining their regular work duties.

MAPLE RIDGE OVERALL

The District of Maple Ridge remains activated at Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) Level 1 and is closely monitoring conditions along the river, localized weather impacts and conducting twice daily dyke inspections. The EOC will remain active and staff will be meeting daily until river levels have receded to safe levels.

The latest information from the BC River Forecast Centre and Environment Canada can be found on our website, mapleridge.ca, through the 'Flood Watch on the Fraser' link. We will post updates on the

District's Facebook page at www.facebook.com/yourmapleridge and you can also follow us on Twitter @yourmapleridge. We will be using the hashtag #FraserMR for local updates.

The Operations Centre telephone lines will be open, as usual, from 8:00 am to 4:00 pm, Monday to Friday. Calls received after hours will be routed to appropriate staff members who are on-call. **The Operations Centre telephone number is 604-463-9581.**

WHARF STREET

There is no change in the situation for this part of the community. As noted in previous updates, on the evening of Friday, June 22, 2012, as a precautionary measure, 43 properties on the unprotected section of Wharf Street in the Hammond neighbourhood were given an 'Evacuation Alert' in accordance with the District's Flood Management Plan.

District staff continue to monitor the water levels and respond to enquiries from residents in this area. We ask that people who do not live in this area avoid the area and respect the privacy of the residents.

KANAKA STREET (just north of the Lougheed Highway)

The Kanaka Creek Estuary still has large volumes of water, and local rainfall has kept levels high in this part of the community. We will continue to monitor levels in this area. While the Fraser River is dropping, water levels may remain relatively unchanged in this specific area due to the outflow from Kanaka Creek.

224 STREET NORTH OF 136 AVENUE

The water has receded off 224 Street. District Operations staff will continue to monitor road conditions for any changes.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Dyke patrols are being conducted twice daily and detailed water level and elevation measurements are being taken to enhance the specific mapping and forecast models for our community.

The public space at the Haney Wharf remains open, however, the boat mooring ramp remains closed due to the high river levels and fast flowing water. Inspections are being conducted daily. Water levels on the Fraser River and tributaries remain very high and water flows are fast. The District strongly recommends that the public exercise extreme caution when in the vicinity of the river. We also recommend that people stay off the Fraser River for recreation purposes. If you need to be on the river for work, please ensure that you are wearing appropriate safety equipment and use extreme caution.

The sandbagging depot at Albion Flats Landscaping Supply has resumed their normal business hours (Monday to Friday from 7:00 am to 7:00 pm, Saturday from 8:00 am to 6:00 pm and Sunday

from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm). The depot is located at 23549 Lougheed Highway, Maple Ridge, telephone: 604-477-1971. If conditions change, notification of extended hours will be provided as required.