

High streamflow advisory – Yukon River

July 23, 2021 at 3 p.m.

A high streamflow advisory is being maintained for:

- Yukon River at Whitehorse

Flow on the Yukon River at Whitehorse remains at historically high levels but is currently stable and flowing at just under 700 m³/s. Water level measured at the gauging station in Marwell is at 631.2 metres above sea level, down 23 centimetres from a high July 9.

The Southern Lakes are currently approximately 8 centimetres below the July 10/11 peak. Dry weather since mid-June, combined with below seasonal temperatures in mid-July have allowed outflows from the Southern Lakes to exceed inflows and lake levels to decline as a result. Flow on the Yukon River will rise and fall in concert with the water level in Marsh Lake.

The Southern Lakes system remains at record levels and sensitive to additional inputs. Widespread moderate to large rainfall events, as well as above average temperatures promoting continued snow and glacier melt, will result in increased inflows. This has the potential to increase water levels in the lakes, and as a result, flow on the Yukon River. Currently, temperatures are forecast to remain close to seasonal with minimal rain over the next week.

Yukon Energy models water levels and flows in the Southern Lakes, with forecasts updated regularly. Current model results project a peak flow of 750 m³/s for the Yukon River at Whitehorse. This assumes average July temperatures and precipitation. Below and above average July rainfall could result in lower and higher flows from 710 m³/s to 790 m³/s. Forecasted peak flow estimates may change as the model is rerun with updated observations. The Government of Yukon is in continuous communication with Yukon Energy regarding water level modelling forecasts for the Southern Lakes and the Yukon River as conditions change.

Rainfall remains the greatest source of uncertainty as precipitation timing and severity will likely determine the peak water level in the Southern Lakes, and associated peak flows and water levels on the Yukon River.

The public is advised to stay clear of the fast-flowing rivers and potentially unstable riverbanks during this high-streamflow period. River users should be equipped to handle strong flows and underwater currents, as well as increased debris in the river. Flood prone property owners are advised to have a plan in place. See Yukon.ca for more information. We will continue to monitor conditions and will provide updates as conditions change.

Advisory and warning levels

High streamflow or water advisory means that river or lake levels are rising or expected to rise rapidly, but that no major flooding is expected. Minor flooding in low-lying areas is possible.

Flood watch means that river or lake levels are rising and will approach or may exceed bankfull or flood stage. Flooding of areas adjacent to affected rivers and lakes may occur.

Flood warning means that river or lake levels have exceeded or will exceed bankfull or flood stage imminently, and that flooding of areas adjacent to the rivers and lakes affected will result.

Contact

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