

**PROVINCIAL EMERGENCY COORDINATION CENTRE  
FLOODING SITUATION OVERVIEW  
November 17, 2006 18:00Hrs**

**OVERVIEW**

The storm event of November 15, 2006 is now looking to be one of the most intense to hit south coastal British Columbia in several decades. Recovery and damage assessment activities are underway throughout the impacted areas of Vancouver Island and the South Coast.

**RESPONSE STATUS**

At the height of the response, five local government Emergency Operations Centres were activated, two Provincial Regional Operations Centres and the Provincial Emergency Coordination Centre. BC Ambulance Service also activated its Vancouver Island emergency operation centre due to the extensive traffic and communications disruptions.

Ministry of Transportation and the road maintenance contractors were and continue to be working at full capacity to restore services to communities.

Local governments have been dealing with emergency supply issues, re-establishing critical services and caring for evacuees since the storm first struck the coast. Several volunteer Search and Rescue Teams were activated to assist with response actions in Parksville, Port Alberni and Cowichan Valley. Emergency Social Service volunteer programs continue to assist evacuees in Qualicum, Coombs, Duncan, West Vancouver, Squamish and Lions Bay. The province is assisting Indian and Northern Affairs Canada with providing assistance to Nitnat Village which is currently isolated by road washout and has no power or phone service.

Utilities such as BC Hydro and Telus are also continuing to work at full capacity to restore services to those communities and areas that are without service.

Coordination of the provincial response and support to local governments continues to be provided through the provincial emergency response structure which will remain activated due to ongoing evacuations and significant public safety issues.

There will be many long lasting issues for coastal communities, provincial agencies, utilities and the Provincial Emergency Program Recovery Office. Critical infrastructure, utilities and services may take weeks to restore to normal operational conditions. Recovery for individual homeowners, businesses, non-critical local government services and secondary roads may take months. The

direct damages, response costs, recovery costs and economic impacts from this event are quite significant.

At this time compensable damages under Disaster Financial Assistance are estimated to be approximately \$10 million.

## **SITUATION IMPACTS**

### ***Southwest:***

The Greater Vancouver Regional District issued a Water Advisory on November 16 that water from its regional water system is unsafe to drink due to high turbidity.

Approximately 25,000 customers are still without power, including the whole community of Lions Bay.

The District of Squamish reports that 20 homes suffered flood damage. A municipal road has washed out cutting off access for approximately 500 homes. Emergency repairs are underway.

There is widespread wind damage reported in West Vancouver, North Vancouver and Lions Bay. This type of damage should be covered under homeowners insurance.

### ***Vancouver Island:***

Approximately 30,000 customers are without power on Vancouver Island. Some outages are planned and necessary to make major infrastructure repairs.

Telephone service outages continue for Port Renfrew, Quadra Island, Hornby Island, Kyuquot, large areas of Port Alberni and the Parksville/Qualicum areas.

Several communities have no road access due to washouts. These include Gold River, Tahsis, Muchalat Inlet, Nitnat Village and Fair Harbour. It is expected that it may take several more days or even weeks to complete some of the restoration work. The Ministry of Forests is assisting the Provincial Emergency Program (PEP) and Comox Strathcona Regional District with replacement of a bridge into the community of Tahsis.

Ministry of Forests reports that a number of forests roads on Vancouver Island have been heavily damaged.

Port Alberni/Alberni Clayoquot Regional District damage estimates show approximately 200-400 homes and 50-100 business damaged by flooding. The municipal water system has been contaminated and the whole service area is under a Boil Water Advisory, which may last for several weeks.

Disaster Financial Assistance staff and PEP regional staff will be in Port Alberni next Tuesday and Wednesday providing assistance to the impacted residents and the businesses.

PEP is assisting the Vancouver Island Health Authority with emergency supply of propane to the Bamfield clinic; due to road outages the propane will have to be delivered by barge from Port Alberni.

The Nanaimo Regional District reports that up to 75 people are still receiving services through the Emergency Social Services program due to extensive flooding in a trailer park near Parksville and due to flood damages to a number of homes at Coombs. There are no estimates on the number of damaged structures from either of these locations at this time.

The City of Nanaimo has issued a Boil Water Advisory for its system due to high turbidity in the water system.

The Cowichan Valley Regional District estimates that 75-100 homes have been impacted by flooding.

The Capital Regional District reports that 1-2 homes may have impacted by flooding.

The Comox Strathcona Regional District has not completed a damage assessment, however it is known that the road to Zebellos has been damaged.

The Provincial Emergency Program is providing sandbags to many communities on Vancouver Island to replace those used in this event.

***Interior:***

The Carpenter Lake Road (Highway 40) west of Lillooet remains closed cutting off access to the communities of Gold Bridge, Bralorne and Gunn Lake. The Ministry of Transportation is working with BC Ambulance and local RCMP to ensure that emergency services are available to those in communities as required. The Squamish Lillooet Regional District is monitoring other issues for the community and is prepared to coordinate supplies to the area should they be needed.

**OUTLOOK**

Environment Canada is advising that a new and large weather system is approaching the BC coast. Heavy rains and high winds are forecast to begin on Saturday along the north coast, reaching the central and south coasts by Sunday.

PEP is issuing a notification to communities that more weather fronts are on the way. An Advisory has been issued by the Ministry of Environment River Forecast Centre this afternoon and it will be distributed widely.

Key agencies will be monitoring this new weather system throughout the weekend.

### **CURRENT INFORMATION**

Flood Warnings and Watch

Ministry of Environment – River Forecast Centre

[http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/rfc/river\\_forecast/advisories\\_current.htm](http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/rfc/river_forecast/advisories_current.htm)

Road Closures

Ministry of Transportation – Drive BC

<http://www.drivebc.ca>

Weather Forecast

Environment Canada

[http://www.weatheroffice.ec.gc/canada\\_e.html](http://www.weatheroffice.ec.gc/canada_e.html)