



REGIONAL DISTRICT OF CENTRAL KOOTENAY

Media Release

For Immediate Release

May 16, 2018

Flood protection efforts continue in Salmo Firefighters arrive to lend a hand

Nelson, BC: The Regional District of Central Kootenay (RDCK) continues with flood protection efforts in Salmo, in anticipation of potential flooding in the area. Today, more than 40 firefighters from fire halls across the RDCK arrived on-site to help fill and place sandbags to protect critical public infrastructure.

Tuesday evening, Salmo firefighters and firefighters from eight RDCK fire halls—Beasley, Blewett, Canyon-Lister, Ootischenia, Robson, Riondel, Tarrys and Ymir—were trained in the use of Rapid Barrier System dams. These water-filled dams are designed to be quickly deployed in emergencies.

“I’d like to thank everyone for giving their time and energy to help the people of Salmo prepare for potential flooding—your efforts are greatly appreciated by the community and by all of us in the EOC,” said Andrew Bellerby, the RDCK’s Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) Director.

Sandbagging remains the priority. Chief Bellerby expressed his thanks to the City of Nelson for providing a truck with a custom sandbag-filling attachment that is making the process go much faster. “The truck is filling sandbags at a phenomenal rate, meaning our team can move right ahead with sandbag placement and other activities.” The Village of Salmo has deployed a similar truck, and members of the community have volunteered to fill sandbags.

Water levels on Erie Creek and Salmo River are expected to rise over the next few days due to precipitation and melting snow packs, which could potentially lead to a breach of the Salmo dike on Erie Creek or overland inundation. The RDCK, in consultation with engineers and other experts, are working to determine the potential location and direction of water flows, and where ongoing flood protection efforts should be focused.

Water levels throughout the region are rising due to rapid snow melt and expected precipitation. Anyone situated in lower-lying areas or close to lakes, rivers and water systems should stay vigilant and be prepared.

An evacuation alert was issued on Monday for all of Salmo and some outlying areas. The alert remains in place. Residents and visitors under alert are not required to evacuate at this time. However, the RDCK advises people to be prepared to leave the area at short notice. This alert may be followed by an immediate evacuation order should conditions worsen.

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The EOC is in constant contact with local and other authorities to coordinate flood protection and emergency response activities, ensure emergency social services are in place if needed, and to support vulnerable populations with any potential evacuation.

What residents can do to be prepared:

- Sandbags that residents can use to protect their properties can be accessed at the Salmo Village lot at 111 Main Street. Please take only what you need.
- If you have livestock or pets, take this time to prepare your animals for possible evacuation.
- If you are not physically able to evacuate yourself, contact the EOC public inquiry line at 250-352-7701 now, so authorities are aware of your circumstances.
- If you have questions about how to prepare for an evacuation, where to get sandbags or other questions relating to emergency preparedness, contact the EOC at 250-352-7701.
- Report flooding emergencies by calling 911.
- Report any new hazards, such as potential flooding or debris flows, to the 24-hour toll-free provincial emergency number at 1-800-663-3456.
- Sign up for the RDCK Emergency Notification System to receive instant notification of evacuation orders. Go to www.rdck.ca and select “Emergency Alerts” from the home page, or go to the notification system sign-up page at <https://rdckemergency.connectrocket.com>.
- For information about emergency preparedness for floods (including sandbagging) and evacuations, please visit www.rdck.ca/befloodprepared or the PreparedBC website.

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Photos from the site and a helicopter fly-over are available upon request.

For further information, please contact:

EOC Information Officer

Regional District of Central Kootenay

Tel: 250-352-7701 | Cell: 250-354-3476

Email: eocinfo@rdck.bc.ca