



Media Release

July 27, 2023

For immediate release

Severe drought conditions impact the RDCK

Nelson, BC: Severe drought levels and unprecedented conditions are being experienced not only in the Regional District of Central Kootenay (RDCK), but across the entire Province of BC. In BC, drought levels are measured on a 0-to-5 scale and the RDCK is at level 4. This means adverse impacts to socio-economic or ecosystem values are likely. As of July 20, two-thirds of BC's water basins are a drought level 4 or 5. Follow the links for more information on:

- [BC's response to drought conditions](#)
- [BC Government Drought Information](#)
- [BC Drought Information Portal](#)

Drought Level Classification		
Level	Impacts	General Response Measures
0	There is sufficient water to meet socio-economic and ecosystem needs	Preparedness
1	Adverse impacts to socio-economic or ecosystem values are rare	Conservation
2	Adverse impacts to socio-economic or ecosystem values are unlikely	Conservation Local water restrictions where appropriate
3	Adverse impacts to socio-economic or ecosystem values are possible	Conservation Local water restrictions likely
4	Adverse impacts to socio-economic or ecosystem values are likely	Conservation and local water restrictions Regulatory action possible
5	Adverse impacts to socio-economic or ecosystem values are almost certain	Conservation and local water restrictions Regulatory action likely Possible emergency response

Below average snowpack in addition to low spring and summer precipitation has resulted in less water in our lakes, rivers, streams and reservoirs. Lower streamflows can cause warmer river temperatures, affecting fish and other aquatic life, as well as have an impact on groundwater levels.

Drought also means the land is susceptible to wildfire. Currently the fire danger rating in our region varies between moderate, high and extreme. Extreme fire danger means extremely dry forest fuels and the fire risk is serious. New fires can start easily, spread rapidly, and challenge fire suppression efforts.

Unfortunately, there is no relief in sight, as Environment Canada is forecasting hot and dry weather for the coming weeks. [Click here](#) for the latest forecast from Environment Canada.

What can you do to conserve water? Shorter showers, turn off the tap when brushing your teeth, water your lawn sparingly if at all or collect and reuse water for outdoor plants. For more information on how best to conserve water in your home or business, [click here](#).

Currently all RDCK water systems are at stage 2 water conservation measures. Stricter water conservation measures may be required if demand increases significantly, hot and dry weather persists, or if the reservoir declines to critically low levels. [Click here](#) for a complete description of RDCK water conservation measures stages 1 through 4, or visit www.rdck.ca/water.

Preparedness is the key to dealing with any type of potential emergency, so all residents are encouraged to build an emergency kit and grab-and-go bag to be self-reliant for up to 72 hours. These kits include everything from flashlight and batteries, to a first aid kit, to two litres of water per person per day. [Click here](#) for more information on how to build an emergency kit and grab-and-go bag.

Incorporated in 1965, the Regional District of Central Kootenay (RDCK) is a local government that serves 60,000 residents in 11 electoral areas and nine member municipalities. The RDCK provides more than 160 services, including community facilities, fire protection and emergency services, grants, planning and land use, regional parks, resource recovery and handling, transit, water services and much more. For more information about the RDCK, visit www.rdck.ca.

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For further information or media inquiries, please contact:

Dan Elliott

Communications Coordinator

Regional District of Central Kootenay

Tel: 250.354.3476

Email: delliott@rdck.bc.ca