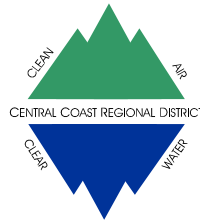


MEDIA ADVISORY



Central Coast Regional District

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

BELLA COOLA FOREST FIRE & ROAD CLOSURE INFO UPDATE **August 18, 2009 1000 hrs**

NEW BELLA COOLA FIRE INFORMATION

The BC Fire Service has provided current statistical information for the fires affecting the Bella Coola Valley region. These are listed on page 2 of this brief.

Travellers are still able to access the region using daily scheduled highway openings and many are enjoying the great weather and the nonexistent crowds.

The Highway 20 stretch known as 'The Hill' continues to open daily between the hours of 8am and 6pm subject to fire conditions. The road closes overnight for safety reasons.

The Central Coast Regional District Emergency Operations Centre is available for information from 8am to 6pm daily.

The number is **(250) 982-0062**

ROAD ACCESS

- Hwy 20 at Heckman Pass is open between 8:00 am and 6:00 pm daily for all traffic. Drivers are advised to follow instructions from traffic control personnel. The route is closed nightly in both directions 80 km east of Bella Coola to 30 km west of Anahim Lake for reasons of safety.

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FIRE CONDITIONS



Fire Service Crews continue to provide significant resources to address the many active fires in the Bella Coola Valley area.

New information on the fires of note is as follows:

* Nuxalk Mountain Fire. This 368 hectare interface fire is 80% contained and a crew of 40 continue patrols and mop-up. Property rehabilitation is in the planning stage. The 'Bella Coola Ground-Pounders' are assigned to this operation.

* Saloompt Mountain Fire. This fire remains 141 hectares in size and is now 95% contained. 28 firefighters are working in mop-up stages and de-mobilization of equipment is underway.

* Stuié Complex of Fires. These fires are presenting no issues to the Fire Service and are now in Patrol Status. A related fire on the south side of the Atnarko River near Alger Creek has 2 Initial Attack crews sourcing water from a portable tank for use on what's been described as a creeping ground fire. A helicopter provides air support to keep the tank full and to respond to any flare-ups in the upper areas of the fire.

* Heckman Pass Fire. This fire is holding at 2826 Hectares in size and is now listed as 75% contained. While some flare-ups have occurred the fire has had no new 'runs' in the past day. A crew of 100 firefighters supported by 8 helicopters and 7 pieces of heavy equipment continue to work the perimeter and scan for hot spots.

* Junker Lake fire. This fire offered nothing new through yesterday and the Forest Service continues to provide structural protection to important recreational buildings along historic Turner Lake in Tweedsmuir Park.

There are no evacuation orders or alerts currently in place in the Bella Coola region.

Information on all fires is available through the Ministry of Forests site at www.bcwildfire.ca

The Bella Coola EOC is providing information between the hours of 8 am - 6 pm daily until further notice. The contact number is: (250) 982-0062. For further highway information, travellers can also log onto to: www.drivebc.ca.

Information releases are now being issued once daily between 11am and 5 pm as new information becomes available.

Updated information can be obtained from the Central Coast Regional District website at www.ccrd-bc.ca under public notices.

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