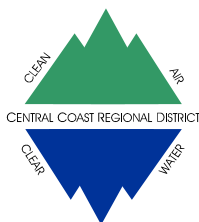


MEDIA ADVISORY



Central Coast Regional District

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

BELLA COOLA FOREST FIRE & ROAD CLOSURE INFO UPDATE **August 21, 2009 1300 hrs**

BELLA COOLA: HWY 20 HECKMAN PASS TRAVEL RESTRICTIONS LIFTED

Following 3 weeks of intermittent closures of Highway 20 at Heckman Pass the route is now open for regular traffic as of 1pm August 21st.

Nightly closures that were required to ensure public safety have been discontinued and traffic will now be flowing normally 24 hours a day.

Forest Service personnel gave the section an all clear as of Friday morning.

Travellers are reminded that Forest Service crews and equipment are still working within the area and they should observe all traffic signs.

The Central Coast Regional District and all ministry partners wish to thank the public for their cooperation throughout this difficult period.

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 now fully open for all traffic 24 hours a day. Drivers are advised to watch for Forest Fire crews and equipment working in the area and to observe all traffic signs. Check www.Drivebc for further information.

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FIRE CONDITIONS



Bella Coola Fire information will be updated in a subsequent bulletin as the Forest Service is assessing the impact of last night's thunderstorm activity. Details will be provided as available.

Recent information on the fires of note is as follows:

- * Nuxalk Mountain Fire. This 368 hectare interface fire is 80% contained and patrols continue through the mop-up stages. Property rehabilitation is forthcoming. This is no longer considered a 'Wildfire of note' and Forest Service website updates are being discontinued at this time.
- * Saloompt Mountain Fire. This fire remains 141 hectares in size and is now 95% contained. This is no longer considered a 'Wildfire of note' and Forest Service website updates are being discontinued at this time. Patrols will continue on this fire.
- * Stuié Complex of Fires. These fires are presenting no immediate issues to the Fire Service although flare-ups have occurred. All Stuié fires are currently in Patrol Status. This is no longer considered a 'Wildfire of note' and Forest Service website updates are being discontinued at this time.
- * Heckman Pass Fire. This fire is holding at 2826 Hectares in size and is still listed as 75% contained. 56 firefighters, 2 helicopters and 7 pieces of heavy equipment continue to work on containment of the SW front and the ski hill area. Burn off operations to eliminate un-consumed fuels may cause increased smoke conditions along the highway.
- * Junker Lake fire. No updated information concerning this fire will be available until tomorrow.

Information on other 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 will continue for another 24 hour period to ensure all stakeholders are informed of the return to normal.

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

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