

HIGHWAY 8 INFORMATION & UPDATES

June 2023



Ministry of
Transportation
and Infrastructure

For general enquiries, call 250-378-1452
or email highway8.information@gov.bc.ca

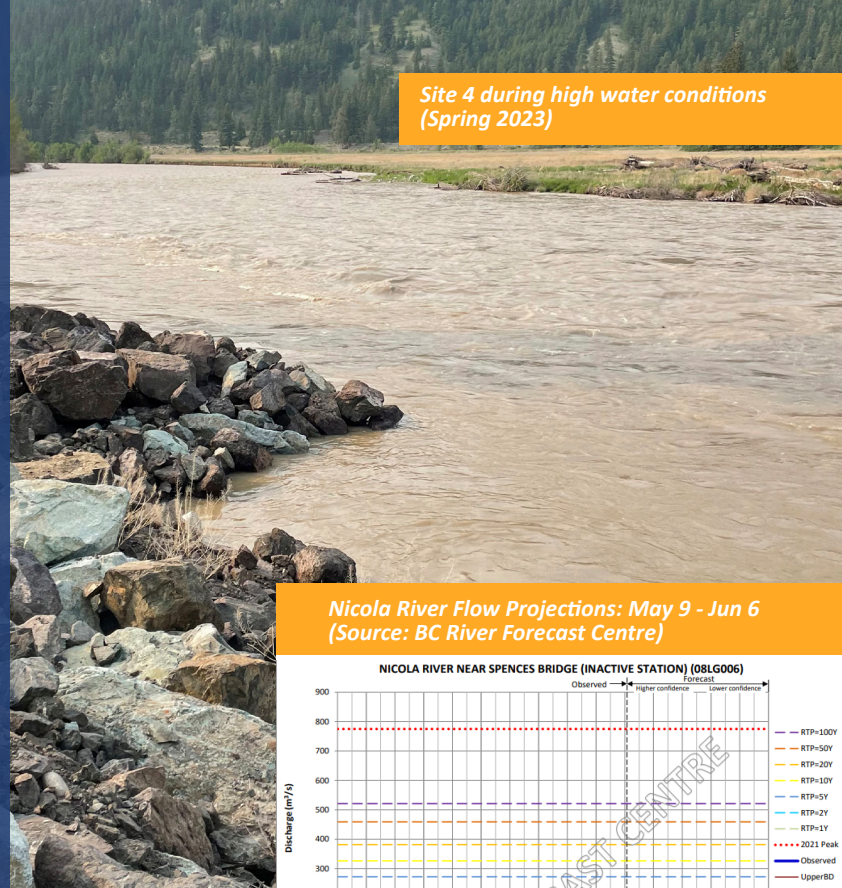
Spring Freshet in the Nicola Valley

Freshet refers to the annual melt of ice and snow that occurs during spring, resulting in high waters. For several weeks, large water systems like the Nicola River experience a period of stronger water flow and rising water levels, typically peaking in June or July.

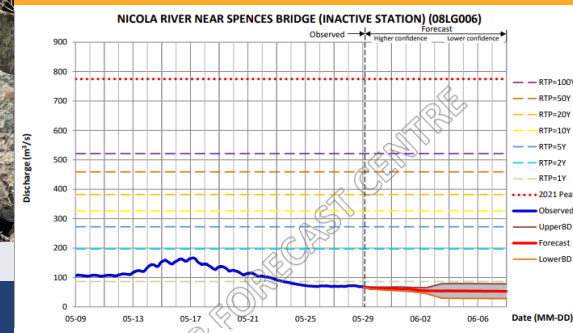
This year, temperatures across British Columbia were cooler than average until May, when temperatures sharply rose to record levels. This led to a more rapid initial melt and rising water levels.

In May, water flows in the Nicola River peaked at ~160 cubic metres per second, four times the volume than the previous month's average. River flows have since decreased after this initial melt. As a comparison, the Atmospheric River Event in 2021 recorded water flows of ~750 cubic metres per second in the river.

The Ministry will continue to monitor the level of the Nicola River as freshet continues through June and July, using the data from the [BC River Forecast Centre](#).



Nicola River Flow Projections: May 9 - Jun 6
(Source: BC River Forecast Centre)



Environmental Enhancements on Highway 8

Throughout the emergency repair works in 2022, the Ministry implemented environmental enhancements as part of highway works to improve fish and wildlife habitats.

These enhancements were installed along Highway 8, within the Nicola River floodplain. They include rock groynes, large woody debris, riparian (streamside) plants, boulder clusters, and off-channel fish habitat restoration.

This spring, the Highway 8 Environmental Team is monitoring these enhancements to both see how well they are working and to help inform future projects.

Early observations have shown that riparian plants (pictured) have begun to grow. Young fish, including salmonoids (trout, salmon, etc.), have started populating the side channels developed by the Highway 8 Team.

Riparian Plantings (Apr-28-2023)



The Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure publishes these newsletters for residents regularly. See digital copies and the latest updates at: gov.bc.ca/highway8recovery

Aerial Seeding



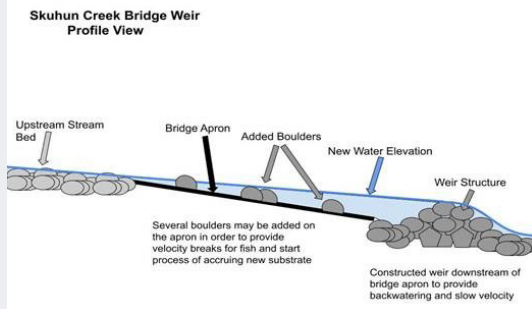
Ministry of Forests team preparing the helicopter for aerial seeding (Spring 2023)

The Highway 8 Team recently supported the Ministry of Forests, who led a program to seed the upland areas above Highway 8 where several debris flows occurred last summer. The same areas were previously impacted by the 2021 Lytton Creek Wildfire.

Over 40,000 kilograms of seed were spread by helicopter, which covered over 2,500 hectares during the 11-day program.

This seeding will support new plant growth, which will reduce the risk of future debris flows in this region and provide food for local animals.

Skuhun Creek Bridge Backwatering



The Ministry is partnering with Shackan Indian Band to improve fish passage at the Skuhun Creek Bridge on Highway 8.

The Skuhun Creek flows into the Nicola River and is known to have spawning habitat for local endangered steelhead and other fish species.

The project includes building small dams called weirs downstream of the bridge. These weirs will create pools of water and raise water levels, causing the water to flow more slowly.

The increased water levels will help fish swim upstream, especially when the water levels are low, which usually happens during spawning seasons.

Manning Creek Road



Manning Creek Road (Spring 2023)

Manning Creek Road, a Ministry-owned side road below Highway 8, provides access to local residents and farms and connects to service roads that local mills use to access timber.

Manning Creek Road has experienced erosion over the past years, and was further impacted by the August 2022 debris flows.

The previous two-lane road is now reduced to a single lane over a 300-metre section and requires widening and repairs for user safety.

The Ministry is planning geotechnical investigations this spring to understand the soil and groundwater conditions and inform an engineered design for these repairs.

The Highway 8 Team

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We aim to reply within 24 hours. Thank you for your patience.