



Drought Conditions in Northeastern British Columbia

FORT ST. JOHN: The BC Oil and Gas Commission (Commission) is urging industry to be diligent in licensed water withdrawals and ensure withdrawals are in compliance with permit approvals. In some cases it may be necessary to reduce water withdrawals from some streams and lakes and use alternate approved sources of water.

Northeastern B.C. has been dry for the past two months, with Fort St. John and the Peace River area receiving only 30 per cent of normal rainfall since June 1st. Fort Nelson and the Liard River area received approximately 70 per cent of normal rainfall.

As a result, water levels on some rivers and lakes in the northeast are low and anticipated to drop further through the remainder of July. Some rivers in the Peace River area (Pine River, Kiskatinaw River, Pouce Coupe River, Moberly River) are very low, and are currently at or near record lows for this time of year (as of July 20, 2010).

The Ministry of Environment has classified northeast B.C. as Drought Level 3 (Very Dry Conditions), indicating that low stream and lake levels may lead to water shortages in some basins, potentially affecting community and domestic water supply, agriculture, industry and aquatic life. River and lake levels in the northeast are anticipated to continue dropping until such time as significant rainfall occurs in the area.

The Commission will advise industry of any further developments that may affect oil and gas operations in northeastern B.C. It would be prudent to prepare for further water shortages for late July and August should the drought persist.

Information of drought and drought response can be obtained from the Ministry of Environment:

http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/wsd/public_safety/drought_info/

Should you have any questions regarding this Information Bulletin, please contact:

Allan Chapman
Hydrologist
Regulatory Affairs and Stewardship Division
BC Oil and Gas Commission
Allan.Chapman@gov.bc.ca
Tel: 250-419-4435