

2013 – 2014 Peace River Report No. 41

A ground observation located the Peace River ice front at km 377.4 at 09:32 MST this morning. This is near the Brick's Hill (Hwy 684) and McAllister Creek locations. It has been receding at a rate of between 13 and 22 km/day since yesterday's observation flight. The ice cover on the Peace River upstream of the confluence of the Smoky River continues to deteriorate and darken in color, and open leads continue to develop.

Yesterday afternoon, a localized breakup of the ice cover occurred through the Town of Peace River. Throughout the afternoon and evening, the ice cover broke up in a series of short ice runs cutting into an intact ice cover, eventually releasing further downstream. There was a short ice jam in place upstream of the rail bridge for most of the afternoon, as well as another ice jam near Good Shepherd School (north end of 98 St). The ice jam near the bridge released downstream between 18:30 and 19:00 MST, while the jam near Good Shepherd School released overnight. The water level gauges in the Town of Peace River indicated that water levels increased by less than 1 m during this breakup. Water levels are now 1 m below yesterday morning's levels.

Ground observations this morning confirm that there is an open channel from downstream of the Smoky River confluence (km 388), through the Town of Peace River to past the DMI bridge (km 414). There is an ice jam in place downstream of the DMI bridge (km 414), which has resulted in localized elevated water levels.

Although there is open water through the Town of Peace River, there remains approximately 15 km of ice upstream for the Smoky River confluence (from km 377.4 to km 388 of intact ice, with 5 km of brash/slush ice upstream of km 377.4). This ice is expected to release and pass downstream through the Town of Peace River in the next day. This may temporarily elevate water levels in Peace River. Conditions continue to be monitored closely.

A breakup advisory was issued for the Peace River at the Town of Peace River on Wednesday, April 16. This is a routine advisory issued in advance of breakup to inform residents of changing ice conditions.

Alberta Environment and Sustainable Resource Development, BC Hydro, and the Town of Peace River are in close contact regarding river ice conditions and operation of the BC Hydro Peace River facilities.

Observation Details

Monday, April 21

Peace River – ground observation, afternoon

- Localized movement of the ice cover in the Town of Peace River began shortly after noon.
- A small ice jam formed just upstream of the rail bridge in the Town of Peace River.
- In short fits and starts, the moving ice (ice run) pushed its way through the intact ice cover. This jam remained in place until approximately 18:30 MST.
- Downstream of the Hwy 2 bridge, the ice cover continued to break up and eventually jammed near the north end of 98 St (km 398.5).

Peace River – ground observation, evening

- km 363.8 – Location of the ice front at 18:58 MST. This location is further upstream from Early Gardens, but downstream of Mushikitee Island off the end of the Shaftesbury Trail.

Tuesday, April 22

Peace River – ground observation, evening

- Channel is clear from downstream of the Smoky River (km 388) to downstream of the DMI bridge (km 414).
- km 376 – Ice front at 8:04 MST.
- km 377.4 - Ice front at 9:32 MST.
- km 381 – Ice front at 11:00 MST (Correctional Institute).

The next observation report will be posted on or before Wednesday, April 23rd, 2014.

Observed Peace River Ice Front Locations 2013-2014

