



SHUSWAP EMERGENCY PROGRAM EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE REPORT

TO: Chair and Committee Members

SUBJECT: 2026 Season Outlook

DESCRIPTION: Report from Tom Hansen, Emergency Program Coordinator, dated March 23, 2026. Highlights of the 2026 season forecast.

RECOMMENDATION: THAT: the SEP Executive Committee receive this report for information.

BACKGROUND:

Each year SEP staff monitor the various conditions that affect natural disaster risks in our area that includes flood and wildfire. Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC) and the BC River Forecast Centre provide valuable information that assists SEP staff in anticipating what kind of season we may experience. It is important to remember that weather forecasting is still a best guess at what may happen so we must be prepared for the unexpected.

The snowpack in our area (South Thompson Basin) was reported as 83% of normal at high elevation monitoring stations from the [Snow Survey and Water Supply Bulletin – March 1st, 2026](#). The provincial average was reported as 91% of normal. There has been some significant snowfall in March that has likely bumped that number up slightly, however. The updated April 1, 2026, level will be posted before the SEP Executive Committee meeting April 14. The three high elevation snow survey stations in our area include Celista (located at 1500 meters elevation, north of Seymour Arm) that is above average, Enderby Tower (located at 1950 meters elevation, on Hunter's Range) that is significantly above average, and Park Mountain (located at 1890 meters elevation, east of Mabel Lake) that is below average.

The [Shuswap Lake level](#) is slightly higher than average for this time of year due to warmer conditions over the winter that led to early snow melt at mid to lower elevations. Significant lake flooding is not anticipated this season because of the lower snow levels at mid to lower elevations as mentioned above. It is important to note that flood hazard associated with extreme rainfall and rain-on-snow during the freshet period remains a hazard regardless of current snowpack levels.

The warmer winter and lower snow at mid to lower elevations has raised concern over possible drought and increased wildfire risk later this summer if we do not receive adequate rainfall throughout the spring and early summer.

SEP has reviewed and updated flood management plans and has stockpiles of empty sandbags just in case the unexpected occurs.

All four of our Structure Protection Unit (SPU) trailers have been inspected and are ready for the 2026 season. SPU deployment team spring proficiency training is planned for April 18-19, 2026.

NEXT STEPS:

SEP staff will continue to monitor conditions including future ECCC, BC River Forecast Centre and BC Wildfire Service (BCWS) updates and reports. Staff will encourage residents to stay informed of weather conditions and be prepared for the various emergencies that may impact our area.

Report Approval Details

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Attachments:	
Final Approval Date:	Mar 25, 2026

This report and all of its attachments were approved and signed as outlined below:



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