

## 2016 Drought Factsheet

Current Vancouver Island drought conditions: Level 2 - Dry

Local drought conditions affecting the Cowichan Region Valley Regional District: **Level 3 – Very Dry**

### Snowpack

- On May 1, the amount of snow at the Jump Creek snow pillow was 36% of the amount normally seen at this time of year
- Two weeks later, on May 16, the snowpack at Jump Creek had dropped to 7% of normal – this snowpack is normally seen in late August

### Rainfall

- Rainfall for the east coast of Vancouver Island in past 30 days was less than 40% of normal
  - North Cowichan – April rainfall 15.4mm (22.3% of normal)
  - Shawnigan Lake – April rainfall 16.8 mm (23.7% of normal)
  - Lake Cowichan – April rainfall 46.4mm (33.8% of normal)

### Temperature

- Last month was the hottest April on record globally and the seventh month in a row to break global temperature records.
- Monthly temperatures have been above average throughout the Cowichan Valley in 2016. April was particularly warm. Average mean daily temperatures for April were as follows:
  - North Cowichan / Duncan: 12.1°C (3.0°C above normal)
  - Shawnigan Lake: 12.1°C (3.4°C above normal)
  - Lake Cowichan: 11.0°C (2.4°C above normal)

### Streamflow

- Chemainus, Cowichan and San Juan Rivers at lowest levels on record for this date
- Cottonwood Creek is at the lowest level on record for this date
- Bings Creek and the Koksilah River have been close to record low flows since early April
- Flows into the Cowichan River are being reduced to the lowest possible flows (4.5 cubic metres per second) to accommodate fisheries survival and sewage dilution until early September when loss of storage is anticipated to occur without rain inputs.
- Immediate fish salvage operations are being coordinated by Catalyst paper on the Cowichan River.

### Lake level

- Lake Cowichan is at 46% of storage, the lowest level for this date since the weir was built in 1957

### Water Use

- From May 7-13, 2016, users of the 19 CVRD water systems consumed over 37,000 cubic metres of water. This is enough water to fill 15 Olympic size swimming pools, and is a 20% increase over the same week in 2015.
- Stage 1 water use restrictions have been in effect throughout the Cowichan Region since May 1.

### Fire Risk

- Fire danger rating is high throughout the Cowichan Region
- Open burning ban in effect since May 13.

More Information: [www.cvrld.bc.ca/drought](http://www.cvrld.bc.ca/drought)