
NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
2025EMCR0008-000251
March 25, 2025

Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate
Readiness

Province funds replacement of flood-damaged dikes in Merritt

MERRITT – New funding from the Province will allow the City of Merritt to rebuild two damaged dikes to higher standards to better protect against flooding and keep people safe.

The Province is providing the City of Merritt with \$60 million to relocate and rebuild two critical dikes, on both banks of the Coldwater River, that were damaged during the flooding of November 2021.

“Today marks a significant step forward in the City of Merritt’s recovery from the 2021 atmospheric river event, which was devastating for the community,” said Kelly Greene, Minister of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness. “Moving and rebuilding these dikes will allow the river to flow more naturally, bringing ecosystem benefits while better protecting Merritt from future flooding. We’ll continue to support communities throughout B.C. as they recover from the 2021 event to keep people safe and better prepared.”

Intense rainfall caused the Coldwater River to overflow its banks, leading to failure of the dikes and catastrophic flooding in Merritt. Because the flooding changed the course of the river, the dikes could not be rebuilt at the existing locations and must be rebuilt at alternative sites.

“This \$60-million investment is a game-changer for Merritt,” said Micheal Goetz, mayor of Merritt. “The construction of dikes 129 and 130 means our community can finally breathe a sigh of relief, knowing we are taking real steps to protect our homes, businesses, and vital infrastructure. This funding brings us closer to a safer, more resilient future — one where we can face the future with greater confidence and security.”

This funding will allow the City of Merritt to reconstruct the dikes to modern standards and acquire land to build the dikes in new locations. These projects are part of the City of Merritt’s flood mitigation plan to restore and protect the community after the 2021 flooding. Other key projects in the plan, being undertaken with support of the local First Nations, include ecosystem restoration, riverbank restoration and armouring to prevent erosion. Relocating and rebuilding the two dikes will also help reduce flood risks to downstream communities and benefit the local ecosystem by preserving the natural flow of the river.

“The Shackan Indian Band is happy to see our neighbours receive the needed funding for rebuilding these dikes, helping the city mitigate risks from future flooding,” said Chief Lindsay Tighe, Shackan Indian Band. “The flooding in 2021 has been absolutely devastating to our communities; some of our community members remain evacuated as Shackan continues to recover. Our support is a step toward a stronger relationship with the City of Merritt and neighbours, as we all depend on a healthy Nicola Valley. It is encouraging to see various partners throughout the Nicola Valley continuing to work together three years after the

devastating flooding, to make our communities stronger and more resilient. ”

Rebuilding these key dikes is one of several flood-mitigation and restoration projects funded by the Province to support the City of Merritt. Other projects include reconstructing the Middlesboro Bridge, rebuilding dikes and banks along the Coldwater River, road repairs, park restorations and water-well restorations.

Learn More:

For information about disaster and climate-risk reduction, visit ClimateReadyBC:
<https://www.ClimateReadyBC.ca>

For more information about the City of Merritt’s flood mitigation plan, visit:
<https://flood.merritt.ca/>

To learn more about the City of Merritt, visit: <https://www.merritt.ca/>

A backgrounder follows.

Contact:

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BACKGROUND

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Funded projects after B.C.'s most expensive natural disaster

The heavy rains and resultant flooding in southwestern B.C. in November 2021 was the most expensive natural disaster in B.C.'s history with catastrophic impacts to communities, the economy and critical infrastructure.

To date, the Province has committed more than \$130 million, including the \$60 million announced March 25, 2025, to support Merritt's flood mitigation plan. This includes approximately:

- \$9.5 million to support homeowners and business owners following the floods;
- \$11 million to support 24 infrastructure projects through Disaster Financial Assistance;
- \$1.9 million toward the \$5.8 million Stuqi(x) project through Green Adaptation, Resilience and Disaster Mitigation (ARDM);
- \$2 million for the Public Works to Canford Avenue Dike through the Community Emergency Preparedness Fund (CEPF);
- \$2 million for the Voght Street to Garcia Street Flood Mitigation Works through CEPF;
- \$831,879 for hydrotechnical and flood risk assessments, capacity building, and emergency preparedness planning through provincial grants and CEPF;
- \$24 million for recovery and housing supports from the former Ministry of Municipal Affairs;
- \$9.6 million for Vought Street Bridge Replacement (Middlesboro Bridge);
- \$9.2 million for bank stabilization on Fir Avenue; and
- \$60 million for relocating and rebuilding Dikes 129 and 130 on the banks of the Coldwater River.

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