

The Columbia River has a long history of flooding. Flood stage for the river, as routinely measured near the Port of Vancouver, is 16 feet. It was recently exceeded in May-June 2011.

The following are the 20 highest historical crests of the Columbia, as well as what you can expect when the river reaches certain levels.

All information is courtesy of the National Weather Service.

1) June 13, 1948	31.00 feet
2) June 1, 1948	30.80 feet
3) Dec. 25, 1964	27.70 feet
4) June 4, 1956	27.60 feet
5) Feb. 9, 1996	27.20 feet
6) June 19, 1933	26.30 feet
7) May 31, 1928	26.20 feet
8) June 12, 1921	26.00 feet
9) June 26, 1950	25.90 feet
10) June 16, 1903	25.60 feet
11) Jan. 19, 1965	25.44 feet
12) June 22, 1917	25.30 feet
13) June 3, 1916	25.30 feet
14) June 13, 1913	25.20 feet
15) Jan. 3, 1997	22.55 feet
16) June 12, 1972	21.50 feet
17) June 22, 1974	21.10 feet
18) Jan. 24, 1970	19.54 feet
19) June 5, 1997	19.03 feet
20) Dec. 1, 1995	18.50 feet

Above 16 feet

Expect some flooding of islands and low areas, with minor impacts for parks and trails along the Columbia River.

Above 17 feet

Expect flooding of some lowland access roads, parking areas and trails on Sauvie Island, around Vancouver Lake and near downtown Vancouver. Access to some houseboat communities will be affected, along with recreation and camping areas at Cottonwood Beach near Washougal and on Government Island.

Above 18 feet

Expect flooding of undiked lowland, pasture and farmland to begin. Historically, the main areas affected have been from Sauvie Island downstream.

Above 20 feet

Expect widespread flooding of undiked lowland and agricultural lands, along with flooding of the access road under the north end of the Interstate 5 Bridge. Islands on the Columbia River downstream from the Interstate 5 Bridge are threatened above this level.

Above 24 feet

Expect numerous sloughs to begin flooding in the Portland and Vancouver area. Numerous islands and sloughs on the Columbia River, both upstream and downstream from the Interstate 5 Bridge, historically have begun to flood at this point. Also expect flooding of parks and lowland areas near the Sandy River confluence.

Above 27 feet

Expect widespread flooding of low-lying farmland, islands on the Columbia River and sloughs in the Portland and Vancouver area. Historically, river traffic has been halted to prevent water from overtopping the lowest dikes along the river.

Above 30 feet

Expect widespread inundation along the Columbia River from Vancouver downstream to Longview. Numerous islands and sloughs on the Columbia River upstream and downstream from the Interstate 5 Bridge will be flooded. Many industries along the Columbia River have historically ceased operations at this level.

Above 31 feet

Expect major flooding. Overtopping of some lower levees is possible. Expect widespread inundation along the Columbia River from Vancouver downstream to Longview. Tributary rivers will be backed up. Many industries along the Columbia River and most ship traffic will be affected.

Above 34 feet

Expect flooding of much of downtown Vancouver, along with major flooding along the Columbia River from Vancouver downstream to Longview. Some lower levees may be overtopped.