

# north shore news

## Heavy rains trigger Capilano Lake debris slides

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Capilano Lake goes muddy brown after a series of landslides. Photo supplied, Doug Carter

Metro Vancouver crews are doing cleanup work at Capilano Lake after heavy rains triggered a series of debris slides last week.

The slides happened sometime between Oct. 21 and 22 in the Sisters Creek drainage, which flows from the Lions to the north end of the lake.

"It was about 140 millimetres came down in a 12-hour period," said Bob Cavill, Metro's watershed division manager. "You can kind of get a grip on the amount of rainfall that was.. .. There was a break in the weather on Friday and we got up in a helicopter and had a look about. We tallied six slides in the Sisters Creek drainage."

The result was piles of debris and uprooted trees winding up in the reservoir and a plume of muddy sediment turning the water brown.

But the slides and resulting turbidity shouldn't result in any human health concerns as the Lower Mainland's water is drawn entirely from Metro Vancouver's facilities at Mount Seymour and Coquitlam this time of year, Cavill said.

"Hopefully the turbidity will clear with time but right now we're in a real stormy period so there could be more turbidity events," he said.

As for wildlife, Cavill said he doesn't expect any lasting effects.

"There are resident trout and there are small salmon that overwinter in the watershed but they've survived for millennia in that system and there's been debris flows over that period of time as well," he said.

Metro staff were on site on Thursday to "bag up" debris but heavy lifting will come when the lake's water level rises.

"Right now the lake has been drawn down to do some work at the south end but as the lake goes up, any of the logs that are sitting high and dry will start to float. That gives us an opportunity to bundle them up and take them out the reservoir," he said.

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