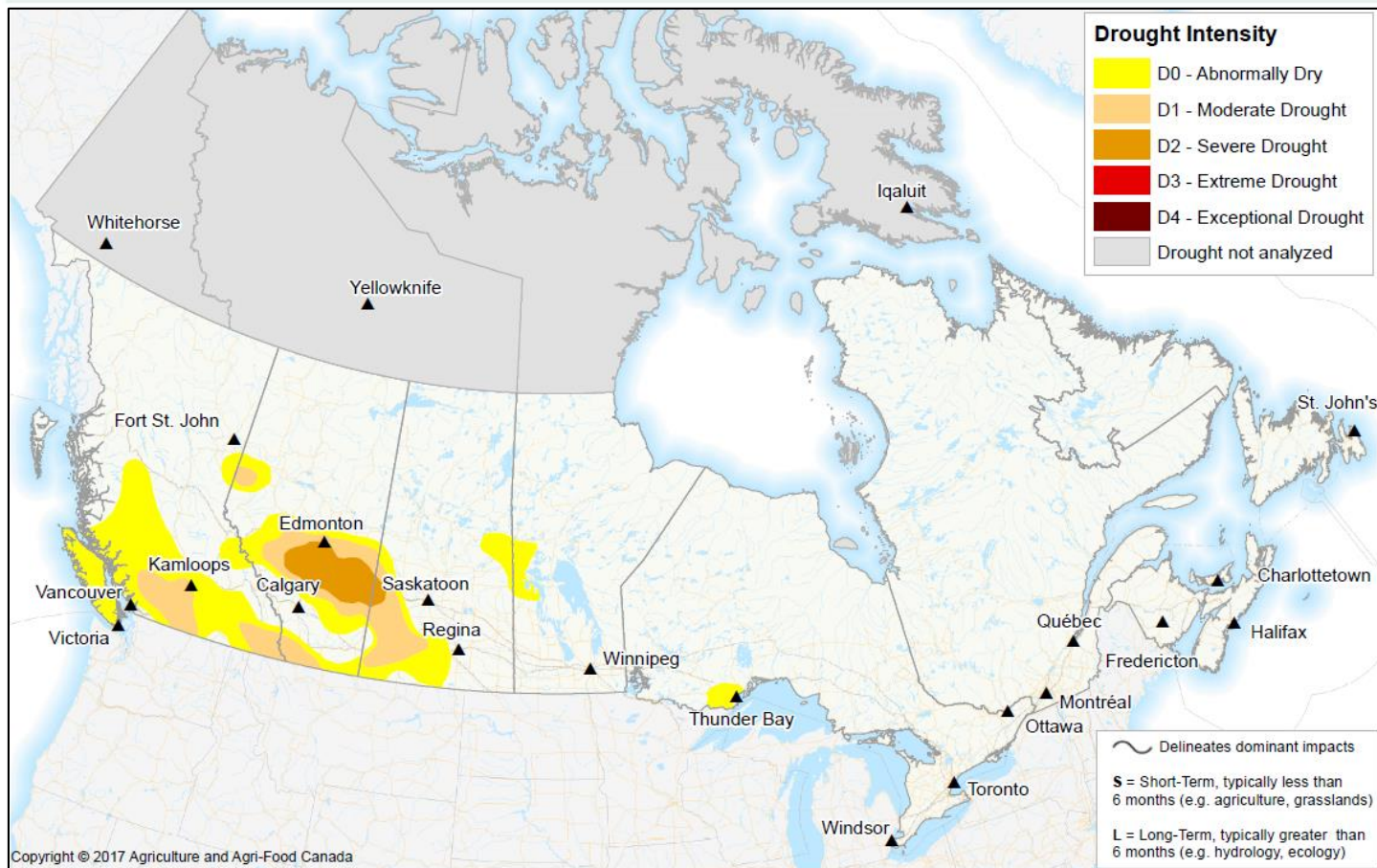


Canadian Drought Monitor

Conditions as of March 31, 2009



During March, drought conditions remained relatively unchanged in the western region of the country. Much of southern British Columbia remains abnormally dry with mountain snow packs well below normal; spring runoff is expected to be below normal as a result. Central Alberta remains in a persistent drought condition. This area of dryness extends into southwest Saskatchewan where precipitation was again below normal in March. As in February, Manitoba received above normal precipitation, but dry conditions continue in the west-central.

Pacific Region (BC)

Well below normal snow accumulations persist throughout southern British Columbia. Vancouver Island remains classified in a D0 (Abnormally Dry) as snow pillows range from 60 to



80% of normal, which is up to 500 mm (20 inches) below normal. This region received 50-60% of normal precipitation in March, and has been between 40 to 60% of normal over the past six months. The southern coast and interior of British Columbia is also well below normal with minimal snow pack across the entire region, and runoff is forecast to be below normal. The Vancouver and lower mainland area as well as regions northward are less than 85% of normal over the past six months, and snow pillows are about 400 mm (16 inches) below normal. The D1 (Moderate Drought) classification here has been expanded. Central interior areas west of Williams Lake and Prince George remain 40-60% of normal over the past six months, so the majority of southern and west-central British Columbia remains classified as D0 (Abnormally Dry). Southern interior regions are in a similar situation, with extremely low snow packs moving into spring. Areas west of the Okanogan Valley have minimal snow pack, with some areas having little to no snow on the ground. The area from Kamloops to Abbotsford received near normal precipitation in March, but due to low snow pack remains classified in a D1 (Moderate Drought). The southeast corner of the province also remains below normal; snow pillows near Nelson are up to 400 mm (16 inches) below normal, and therefore this region remains in a D1 (Moderate Drought) drought condition. The Peace Region received above normal precipitation in March, and snow pack has been average over the winter, though Fort St. John and area continue to emerge from last year's drought conditions; so while the D1 (Moderate Drought) has subsided, the area is still classified as D0 (Abnormally Dry).

Prairie Region (AB, SK, MB)

The Peace Region in Alberta received normal precipitation in March, but is still recovering from last year's drought and remains classified in a D0 (Abnormally Dry) and D1 (Moderate Drought) condition. Central Alberta saw little improvement in its drought condition, with a D2 (Severe Drought) classification stretching from northwest of Red Deer eastward to just across the Saskatchewan border, near Kindersley. Much of this large area has received less than 50 mm (two inches) of precipitation since last September, translating into less than 40% of normal. Because of the lack of snow cover and little to no runoff expected, there is much concern that come mid-summer, producers will be looking for water and feed to make it through the rest of the year! Areas north and east of Edmonton had near normal precipitation in March, so the D1 (Moderate Drought) and D0 (Abnormally Dry) areas have been reduced. The D0 (Abnormally Dry) classification remains in the Rocky Mountains west of Jasper because this area has seen below normal snow pack over the winter season. Late winter storms brought much needed moisture, but dry conditions persist in areas around Coronation and Hanna and along the Saskatchewan border. Much of this area has received just 30 mm (1¼ inch) since November 1 of last year, which is less than half of normal. Therefore this regions remains classified as D1 (Moderate Drought) and D2 (Severe Drought) regions. More moisture is needed or spring planting conditions will be quite poor. The Pincher Creek area in the southwest corner of the province remains in a D1 (Moderate Drought) condition, having received between 40-60% of normal precipitation for the winter season.

In Saskatchewan, areas around Swift Current and Consul, in the southwest of the province, received less than 10 mm (less than one half of an inch) in March, and that has translated into less than 60% of normal precipitation for the entire winter season. In this area, again there is no significant snow cover and very little runoff expected. As a result, the D1 (Moderate Drought) region has been expanded in the southwest and now includes areas around Lake Diefenbaker, where lake levels are currently below normal. In the south-central region of the province, the above-normal snow accumulations and subsequent slow melt during the spring so far are replenishing the on-farm surface water supplies. Thus, improving soil moisture and helping to alleviate some of the lingering drought conditions. As a result, this region has been removed from the D0 (Abnormally Dry) classification. In contrast, although the Hudson Bay area in the northeast has received near normal precipitation for March, it has only reported 60-85% of normal for the past six to twelve months. As a result, it remains classified in a D0 (Abnormally Dry) condition.

In Manitoba, the Swan River area remains classified in a D0 (Abnormally Dry) drought condition. This region has received below normal precipitation over the last month and less than 85% of normal precipitation over the past six to twelve months. At this time, spring runoff volumes around the Pas in northern Manitoba are forecast to be below normal. In contrast, much of Manitoba received above normal precipitation in March, and many southern areas are bracing for extensive spring flooding.

Central Region (ON, QC)

Dry conditions persist in north western Ontario where Thunder Bay received about 70% of normal precipitation in March. This situation has not changed over the past three months, and the region continues to be labelled as a D0 (Abnormally Dry) classification.