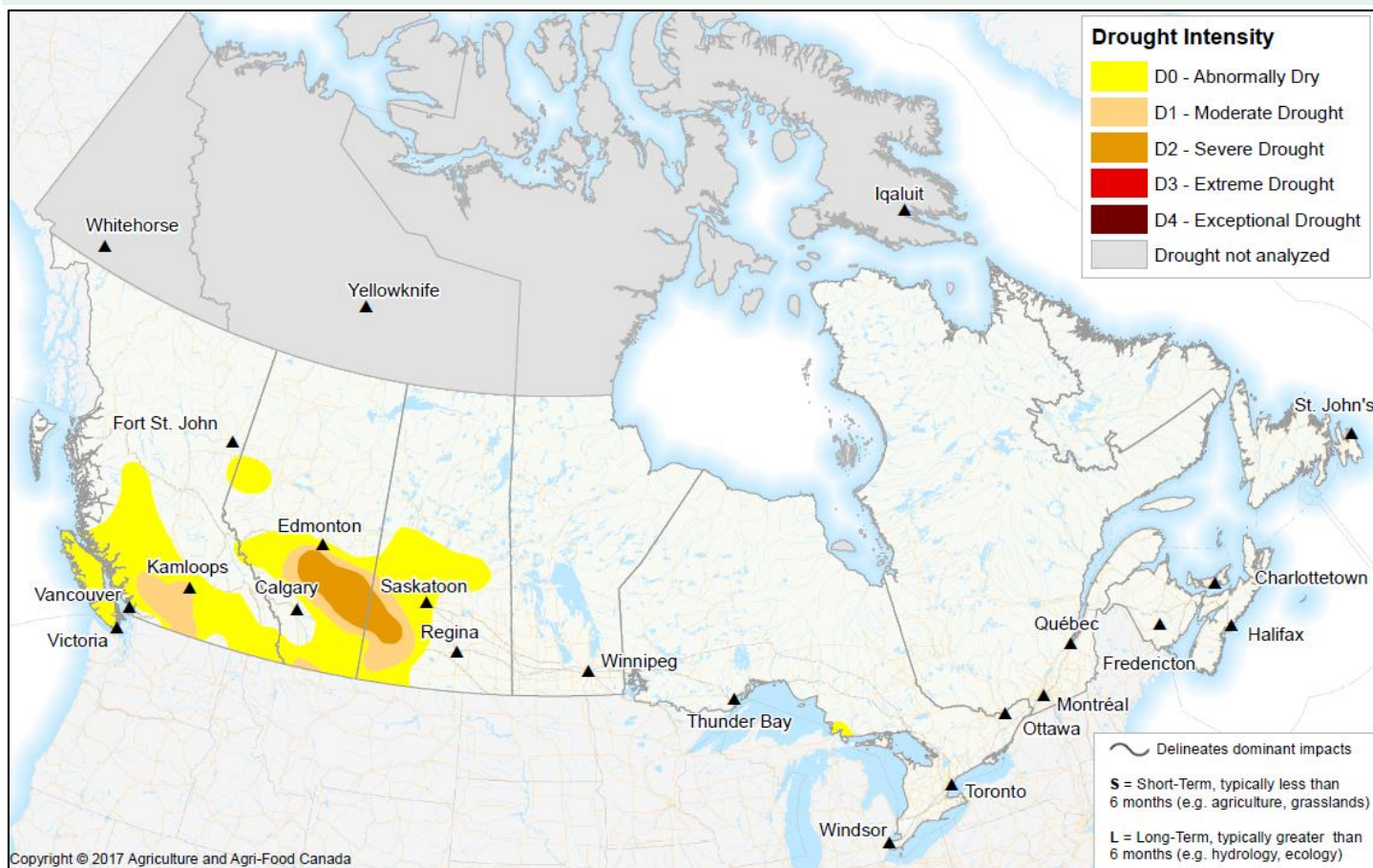


Canadian Drought Monitor

Conditions as of April 30, 2009



During April, drought conditions remained relatively unchanged in the western region of the country. Much of southern British Columbia remained abnormally dry due to below normal mountain snow packs over the winter which subsequently resulted in well below normal spring runoff. Central Alberta and west-central Saskatchewan remained in a drought condition with precipitation again below normal in April. Isolated, abnormally dry areas persisted in northern Alberta and north western Ontario.

Pacific Region (BC)

Abnormally dry conditions continued throughout southern British Columbia thanks to well below normal snow accumulation in the mountains. Vancouver Island remained classified in a



D0 (Abnormally Dry) drought condition as snow pillows ranged from 60 to 80% of normal, which is up to 600 mm (2 feet) below normal at this time of year. For the second month in a row this region received 50-60% of normal precipitation, and was 40 to 60% of normal over the past six months. The southern coast and interior of British Columbia were also well below normal, with low snow pack being measured across the entire region. The Vancouver and lower mainland area received near normal levels of precipitation in April, but remained less than 80% of normal over the past six months. Snow pillows in the area were up to 600 mm (2 feet) below normal at month's end. As a result, 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 remained classified as D0 (Abnormally Dry). Southern interior regions were in a similar situation, with extremely low snow packs contributing to low spring runoff. Some snow pillows in the Okanagan Valley were reporting below their minimum historical level. The Kelowna area received about 70% of normal precipitation in April, and was less than 80% of normal over the past six months. The southeast corner of the province also remained below normal; snow pillows near Nelson were up to 500 mm (more than 1.5 feet) below normal and were reporting less than historical minimums. Therefore, this region remained in a D1 (Moderate Drought) drought condition. In contrast, the Peace Region received above normal precipitation in April, though Fort St. John and area continued to emerge from last year's drought condition; so a small portion of the area was still classified D0 (Abnormally Dry).

Prairie Region (AB, SK, MB)

The Peace Region in Alberta received normal precipitation in April and has received sufficient runoff, so the D1 (Moderate Drought) condition has been removed. Because this area was still recovering from last year's drought, it remained classified in a D0 (Abnormally Dry) drought condition. The D0 (Abnormally Dry) classification remained in the Rocky Mountains west of Jasper because this area has seen below normal snow pack over the winter season. Central Alberta saw little improvement in its drought condition, with a D2 (Severe Drought) classification stretching all of the way from northwest of Red Deer eastward to the Saskatchewan border. 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. Due to lack of snow cover and minimal runoff, there was concern that by mid-summer producers will be looking for water and feed to make it through the rest of the year. This lack of moisture has reduced pasture growth, and hay production potential is lower than average. Dry conditions persisted in the east central area of the province around Coronation where just 30 mm (1¼ inch) of precipitation has fallen since November 1 of last year, which is less than half of normal. A few spring storms moved across the region in April, but more moisture was needed as soil moisture reserves were quite low. In addition, the southeast corner of the province around Medicine Hat was now enveloped in a D0 (Abnormally Dry) drought condition because of well below normal precipitation (40-60% of normal) over the past four months. Although the Pincher Creek area in the southwest corner of the province received near normal precipitation in April, it remained in

a D1 (Moderate Drought) to a D0 (Abnormally Dry) condition, having received between 40-60% of normal precipitation for the winter season.

In Saskatchewan, areas around Swift Current and Consul in the southwest corner of the province have received less than 60 mm (under 2 ½ inches) since November 1, which is less than 60% of normal precipitation. As a result the D1 (Moderate Drought) region has been expanded southward towards the US border. This dry region includes areas around Lake Diefenbaker which currently has below normal water levels and was forecast to remain low because of lower streamflow on the South Saskatchewan River. The D2 (Severe Drought) area has also been expanded in areas west of Rosetown to the Alberta border as dry conditions intensified due to less than 40% of normal precipitation being received over March and April. In this region snow cover was light over the winter, and water shortages were now occurring on area farms. Native pastures were quite dry and forage shortages were expected without significant rainfall. To the north an area of dryness has expanded in the North Battleford and Prince Albert areas where fields remained dry due to below average spring precipitation. As a result, much of central Saskatchewan was now in a D0 (Abnormally Dry) drought condition. In contrast, Hudson Bay and area in the northeast received above normal precipitation in April thanks to significant storms that brought 50-60 mm (2-2 ½ inches) over two days. As a result the D0 (Abnormally Dry) classification has been removed.

In Manitoba spring storms that swept across the northwest of the province brought lots of moisture in April, so the Swan River area has been removed from the D0 (Abnormally Dry) classification.

Central Region (ON, QC)

Spring storms also restored moisture levels in north western Ontario where the Thunder Bay area received near normal precipitation in April. As a result, it too has been removed from the D0 (Abnormally Dry) classification. However the Sault Ste. Marie area to the east has had 75% of normal precipitation over the past three months and has been labelled D0 (Abnormally Dry).