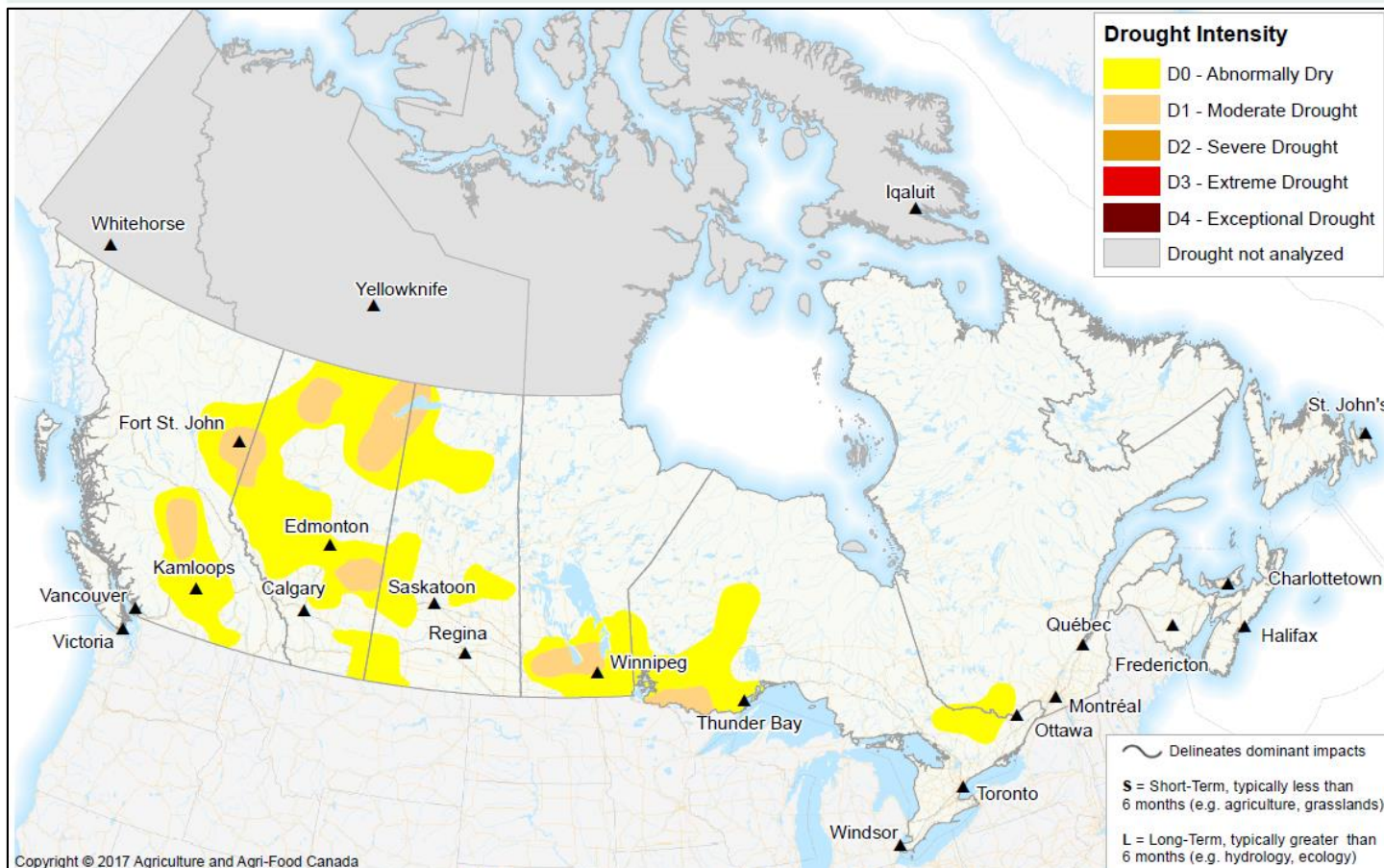


# Canadian Drought Monitor

Conditions as of October 31, 2011



In October dry conditions were maintained in the east, while areas of drought intensified across the west. Monthly precipitation was above normal in Eastern Canada and parts of southern Saskatchewan, Alberta, and British Columbia. Precipitation was well below average across the Prairie Provinces and in northern B.C. For most areas in Western Canada October is the last full month prior to winter freeze-up, meaning that any precipitation received in November and onward will not readily infiltrate and improve soil moisture conditions until the spring thaw.

## Pacific Region (BC)

Following a cool, wet spring and average summer, dry conditions took hold in central British Columbia. Rainfall over the past three months fell to less than 40% or about 80 mm (3.2 in) less than normal. Overall in B.C. the number of forest fires and area burned were well below normal



and most of the rivers across the province have been normal or above all year. Short term, abnormally dry conditions persisted in eastern Ontario where precipitation over the past three months fell below 70% of normal. Local conservation authorities in the region maintained low water condition advisories.

## **Prairie Region (AB, SK, MB)**

Following the fourth wettest summer season ever reported in 2010, summer 2011 ranked as the 31st; a generally average year. Some regions however did not fare as well, such as southern Manitoba where Moderate Drought (D1) persisted. The city of Winnipeg and surrounding area recorded one of the driest July months on record, and rainfall remained low since then. On farm water supplies are short in areas surrounding Winnipeg in south-central Manitoba. Areas west of Lake Manitoba are over 115 mm short of moisture since the end of July, and flows for many streams and rivers across the province were below median as of mid-October. Pastures and hay fields were greatly affected with low productivity and decreased re-growth of cut fields. Cattle producers had to begin bale feeding a few weeks to a month earlier than normal. Long term drought continued in the Lake Athabasca region of northern Alberta and Saskatchewan, and in the Rainy River-Thunder Bay region of northwest Ontario. Long-term moderate drought (D1) continued in the Lake Athabasca region of northern Alberta and Saskatchewan. Rainfall was 20-30 mm less than normal over the past month, and since April 1, has been less than 60% of average. Drought conditions intensified in east-central Alberta, where an area along the Saskatchewan border was rated D1. Rainfall has been about 100 mm less than normal over the past six months. As in Manitoba, the dry conditions reduced pasture productivity through autumn and brought about bale feeding ahead of time. Dugouts and other surface water sources in the region have been drying out due to the low rainfall, and soil moisture reserves are low. In northwest Alberta a D1 area emerged in the northern Peace Region where precipitation has generally been less than 70% of normal over the past six months. Looking ahead, a weak to moderately strong La Niña event is expected for the duration of 2011, and into the first couple months of 2012. For western Canada La Niña typically brings below normal temperatures and above normal precipitation.

## **Central Region (ON, QC)**

Long-term drought also remained in northwest Ontario. Over the past year precipitation has been about 130 mm (5 in) less than normal, and stream flows throughout the region have been below average as well. Forest fire drought codes have been high since May, which brought on a hectic fire season. At the close of monitoring in September more than 628,000 hectares (1.5 million acres) were burned in Ontario, which is more than ten times the ten year average of 62,100 ha (153,000 ac).

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