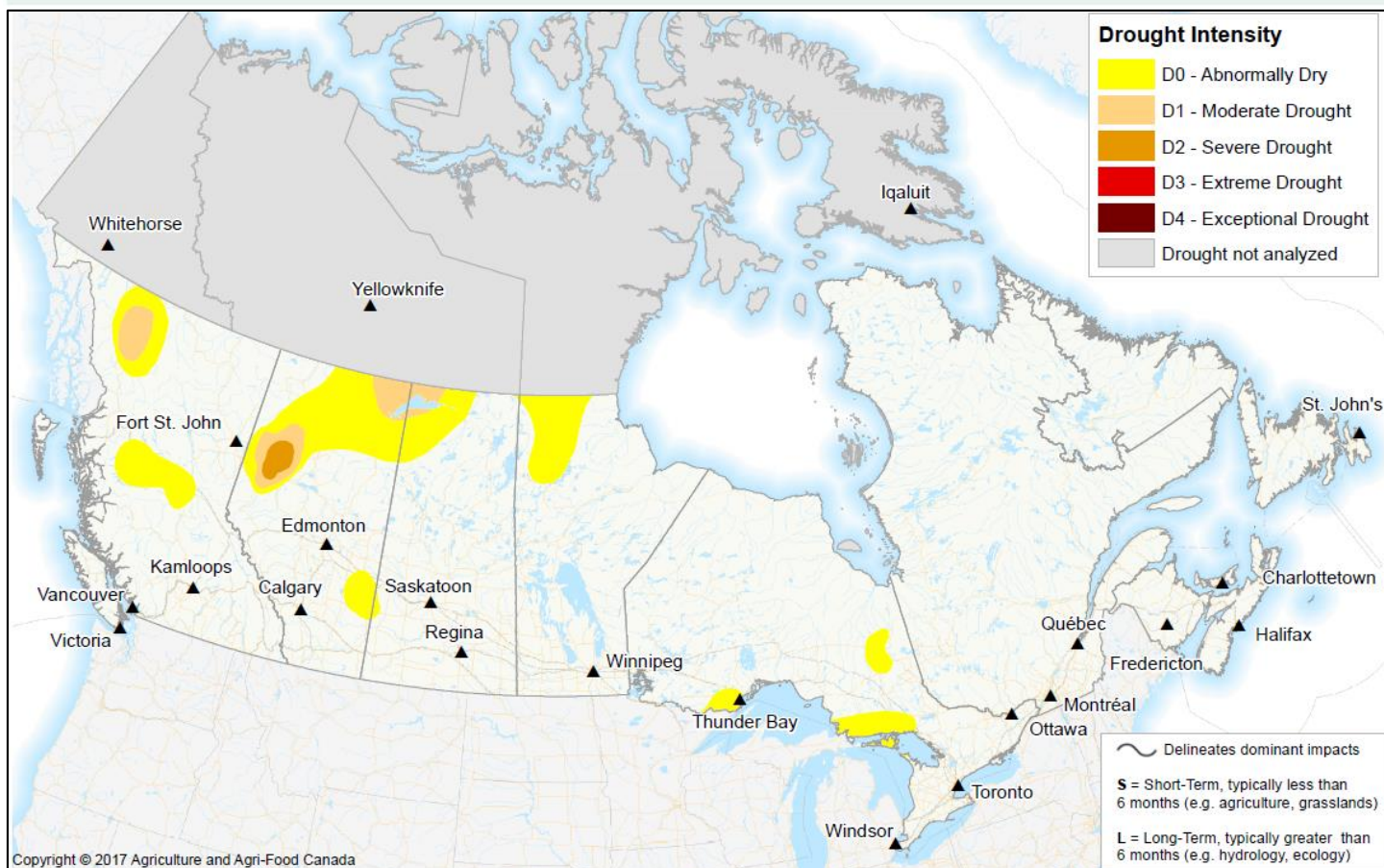


Canadian Drought Monitor

Conditions as of April 30, 2011



The severity and extent of drought continued to decrease across Canada in April. The driest areas were in northern Alberta and small pockets of northern British Columbia. Overall, April marked the fewest number of acres designated as drought in over two years. The majority of the drought areas were outside of the agricultural production extent in the northern Boreal forest region, with the exception of the Prince George region of central British Columbia, the Peace River region of Northern Alberta, and a small area in eastern Alberta.

Across the southern Canadian Prairies, spring flooding caused significant concern for infrastructure damage and spring seeding delays. Throughout the month of April precipitation ranged from well below normal to near normal, with decreasing precipitation amounts going



northward from the US border. However the significant snow pack and resultant spring runoff maintained excess moisture levels in fields throughout the region.

Pacific Region (BC)

In northwest B.C. a region classified D1 (Moderate Drought) remained where precipitation has been less than 60% of normal over the past six months. The same held true in the Lake Athabasca region of northern Alberta and Saskatchewan. The analysis of both these regions was completed using very limited information and climate data, therefore the boundaries on the map may not accurately represent the condition on the ground. These regions have been very dry this spring and with the snow cover now gone, the lack of green vegetation and dry conditions leaves the region susceptible to forest fires. Normal or better precipitation over the next few months is required to suppress the extremely high fire danger in these regions.

Prairie Region (AB, SK, MB)

The Peace River region of northwest Alberta remained in a D2 (Severe Drought) classification as recovery from the extreme drought conditions of last year's growing season and previous years of below normal precipitation continued. Winter snowfall and spring runoff were higher than normal, which helped restore soil moisture reserves; about two-thirds of surveyed fields were rated excellent for moisture levels. Subsurface soil moisture was still very poor and it will take considerable time and precipitation to improve. Long-term impacts from drought conditions since the 2009 growing season remain in pastures affected by over grazing and lower forage yields. In eastern Alberta a small region was designated D0 (Abnormally Dry) where precipitation was less than 40% of normal over the past three months, including a shortfall of 25 mm (1 in.) in April. That was a significant departure in a region that receives most of its 350 mm (13.7 in.) annual precipitation from April to June. At this time there were no significant concerns for this region; however if conditions continue to be dry through May the agricultural sector will be impacted.

Central Region (ON, QC)

The three small areas rated D0 scattered across northern Ontario continued to be dry with precipitation less than 70% of normal over the past six months. However, the spatial extent and severity of impacts of these regions continues to shrink. These areas continue to see slow recovery from previous drought conditions.

In northern Quebec a region designated as D0 saw near normal precipitation and improved conditions, and was removed from the abnormally dry class. Drought conditions also continued to improve in west-central B.C. where a D1 area was downgraded to D0. Mountain snow packs and spring freshets were higher than normal which helped replenish surface water supplies.

There is still some concern in this region but at this time conditions have improved and there are very limited impacts.

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