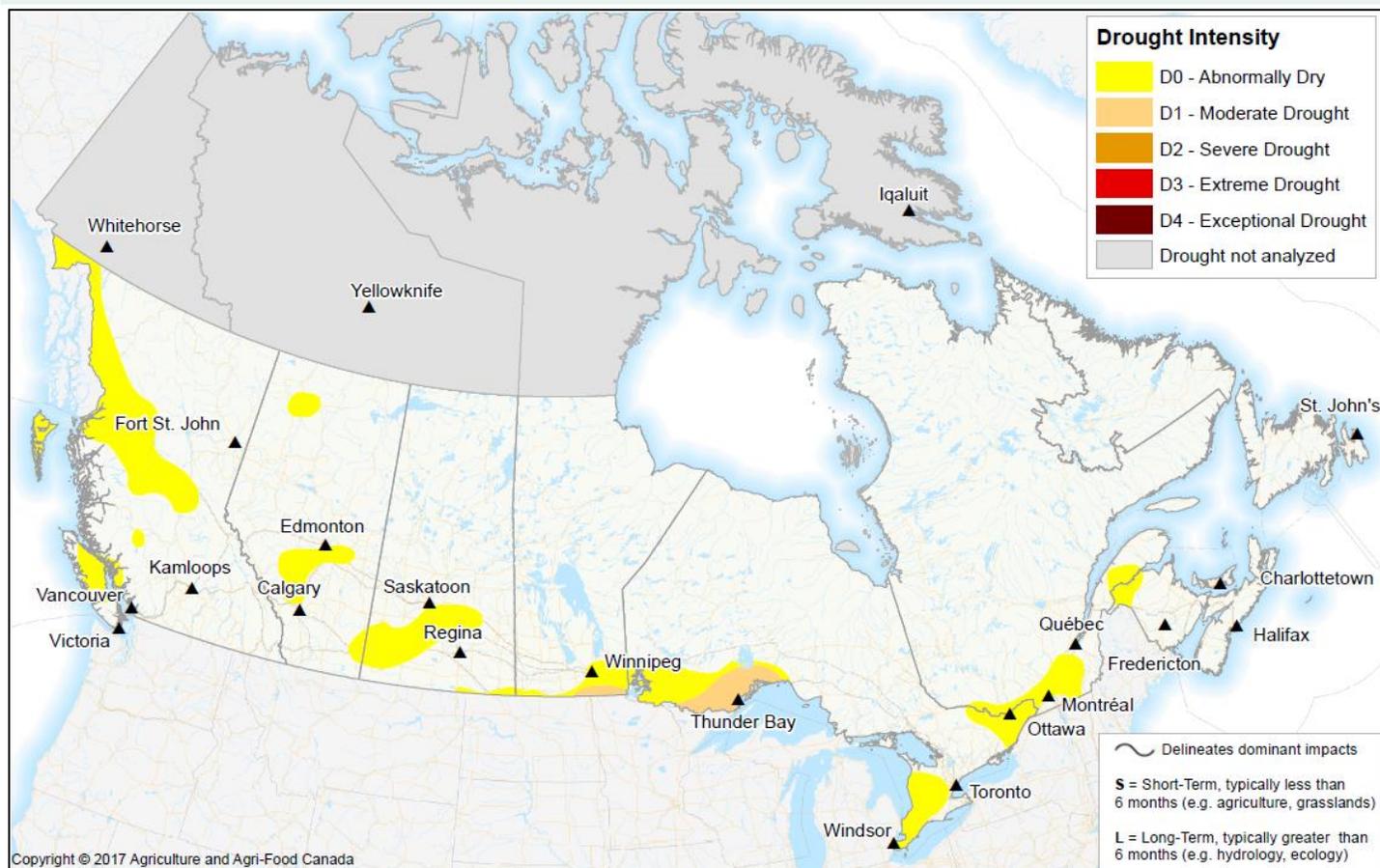


Canadian Drought Monitor

Conditions as of December 31, 2012



Drought conditions generally diminished across the country in December. Above normal precipitation for the winter period throughout much of the prairie region has provided great potential for spring soil moisture recharge. Although diminishing, drought continues in eastern Canada particularly southern Ontario. The primary cause of abnormally dry and drought areas that remain in Canada are as a result of long term moisture deficits and drought impacts. That is especially the case in southern and eastern regions of Ontario which suffered through significant drought during the spring and summer of 2012. Temperatures in December were above normal from northwest Ontario eastward, and in southern interior British Columbia. The Prairie Provinces and northern BC were colder than normal.

Pacific Region (BC)



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In British Columbia, below normal precipitation on Vancouver Island brought on the D0 classification; D0 was also indicated in northern interior regions where snowfall was not as much as expected for the time of year. The same was noted in the Atlantic region, in northern New Brunswick.

Prairie Region (AB, SK, MB)

The western Prairie region had an abnormally dry couple months; however this did not result in the development of any drought concerns. An Abnormally Dry pocket increased slightly in Southern Alberta, representing precipitation deficits over the fall and early winter period. The Abnormally Dry regions in northwestern Alberta persisted due to long term precipitation deficit in this area. Satellite and radar derived data indicated dryness around Peace River and between Jasper and Banff; thus two additional D0 pockets developed in these areas. Eastern Saskatchewan and southern Manitoba received above normal precipitation in December which added to spring flood risks, as their soils remained saturated from a wet summer and early fall.

Central Region (ON, QC)

In Eastern Canada, normal to above normal precipitation over the past month continued to alleviate dry conditions. Moderate Drought (D1) classifications were downgraded to D0 (Abnormally Dry) in southwestern Ontario and southern Quebec due to the recent snow accumulations. Although the snow will not immediately improve the soil moisture and other related drought impacts, there is a lot of optimism for spring conditions at this time. Long term effects of the severe drought in 2012 remained. Lake levels in the Great Lakes ranged from below normal to near record lows. In particular, Lakes Michigan and Huron set a record low for December at 71 cm (28 in) below the long term average. That is the lowest recorded level since records began in 1918. The low water levels on all lakes renewed calls for all boating users to be cautious. Lake Superior was 33 cm (13 in) below average for the month. Areas along the north shore, including the Thunder Bay region, remained classified D1.