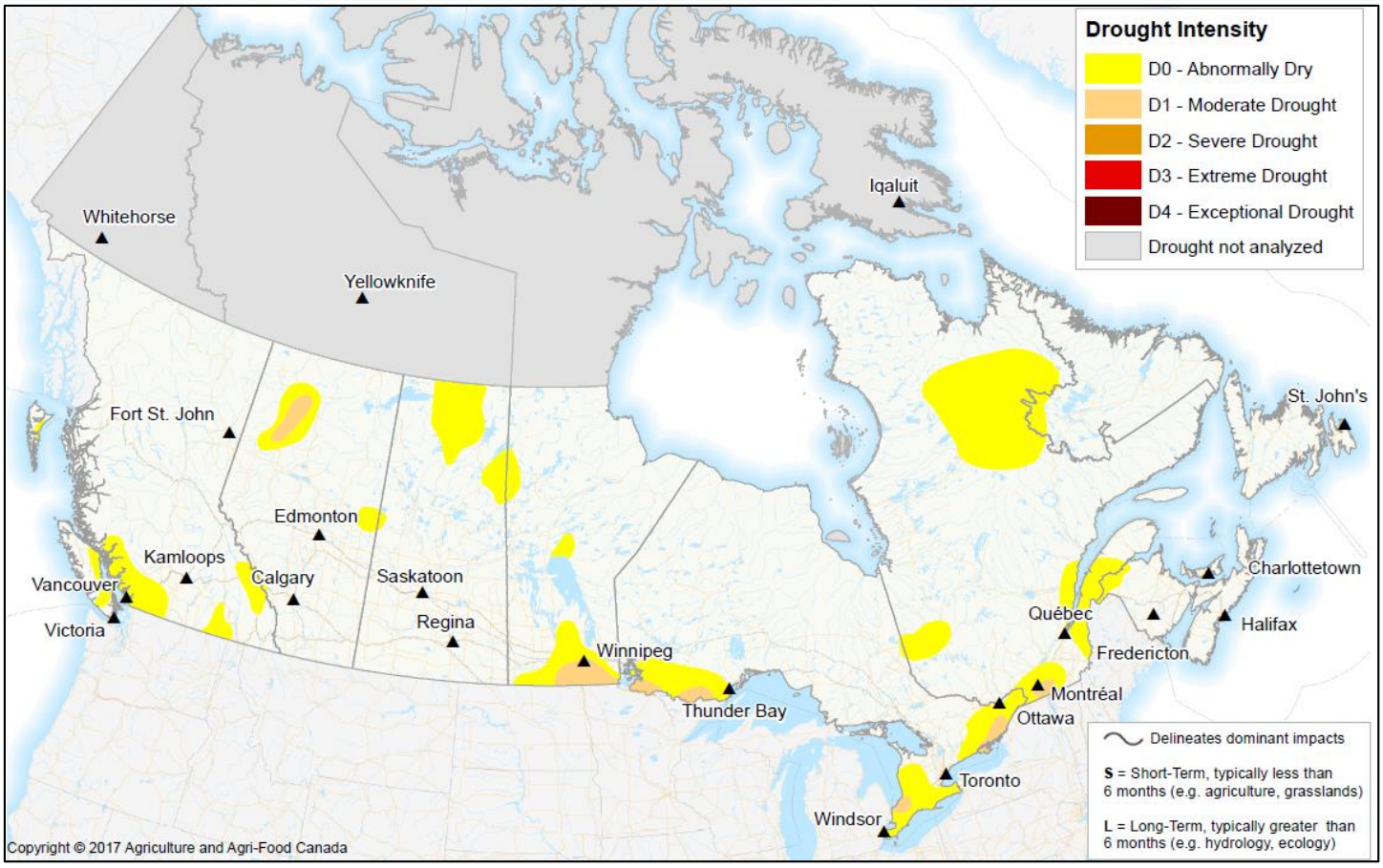
Canadian Drought Monitor

Conditions as of March 31, 2015



During March Canada began its transition from winter to spring, as temperatures rose across most of the country and winter's snowpack began melting. At this point in the early spring, conditions have been fairly stable with no major current drought. As the season progresses, more dramatic changes in soil moisture will likely occur.

Pacific Region (BC)

March was particularly warm throughout all of western Canada, where a weak El Nino produced above average temperatures from the Pacific coast all the way to Northern Ontario. These warm temperatures caused much of the region's snow pack to melt fairly early, notably through the valleys in southern British Columbia and on Vancouver Island. While some of this run off did recharge soil moisture, the Abnormally Dry (D0) area has expanded norward along

the southern coast. Sufficient rainfall in the late spring to early summer will be crucial to alleviating these dry conditions.

Prairie Region (AB, SK, MB)

On the other side of the Rockies, spring runoff in Alberta and Saskatchewan has caused conditions to vary between the north and south. The current snowmelt in northern Alberta is only slightly below average; however the cumulative dry conditions north of Grande Prairie will require more substantial moisture to recover. Similarly, Northern Saskatchewan had a dry month, with less than 10cm of snow on the ground by the end of March and potential runoff well below normal. As a result, an Abnormally Dry (D0) has emerged in the area, extending towards the North West Territories. Looking towards the southern half of Alberta and Saskatchewan, areas along the central grain belt where soil moisture was low going into winter have received sufficient run-off and additional snowfall this past month. Further south, less snowpack was present; however this was offset by fully charged sub-soil from wet autumn conditions. In southern Manitoba, the Abnormally Dry (D0) area has retracted slightly following significant snowfall in the area. While the extent of the dry conditions has withdrawn, the area of Moderate Drought (D1) along the shared border with North Dakota persists. Soil moisture in the area is significantly below normal, due to a year of below average precipitation and little to no snow available for spring runoff. This dry area is continuous with a much broader region of Moderate Drought (D1), stretching across the Midwestern United States towards northwestern Ontario.

Central Region (ON, QC)

For Central Canada, notably along the Windsor-Quebec City corridor, March brought a continuation of winter's dry weather. Over the past 6 months the region has seen record dry conditions, with precipitation more than 120 mm below average. As a result, a pocket of Moderate Drought (D1) has emerged west of London; however it is likely a meteorological drought at present. Further north between Kingston and Montreal, the previous patches of Moderate Drought (D1) since January have persisted through March. While the effects of a dry winter are apparent in the region, a much more severe drought has been avoided due to a particularly cold winter and slow spring warming. Thanks to this delayed melting of snowpack, the amount of spring run-off has been near normal, despite the winter's snow drought. The progression of conditions in the area will be highly dependent on the coming spring precipitation.

For more information reach us at www.agr.gc.ca or call us toll-free 1-855-773-0241.