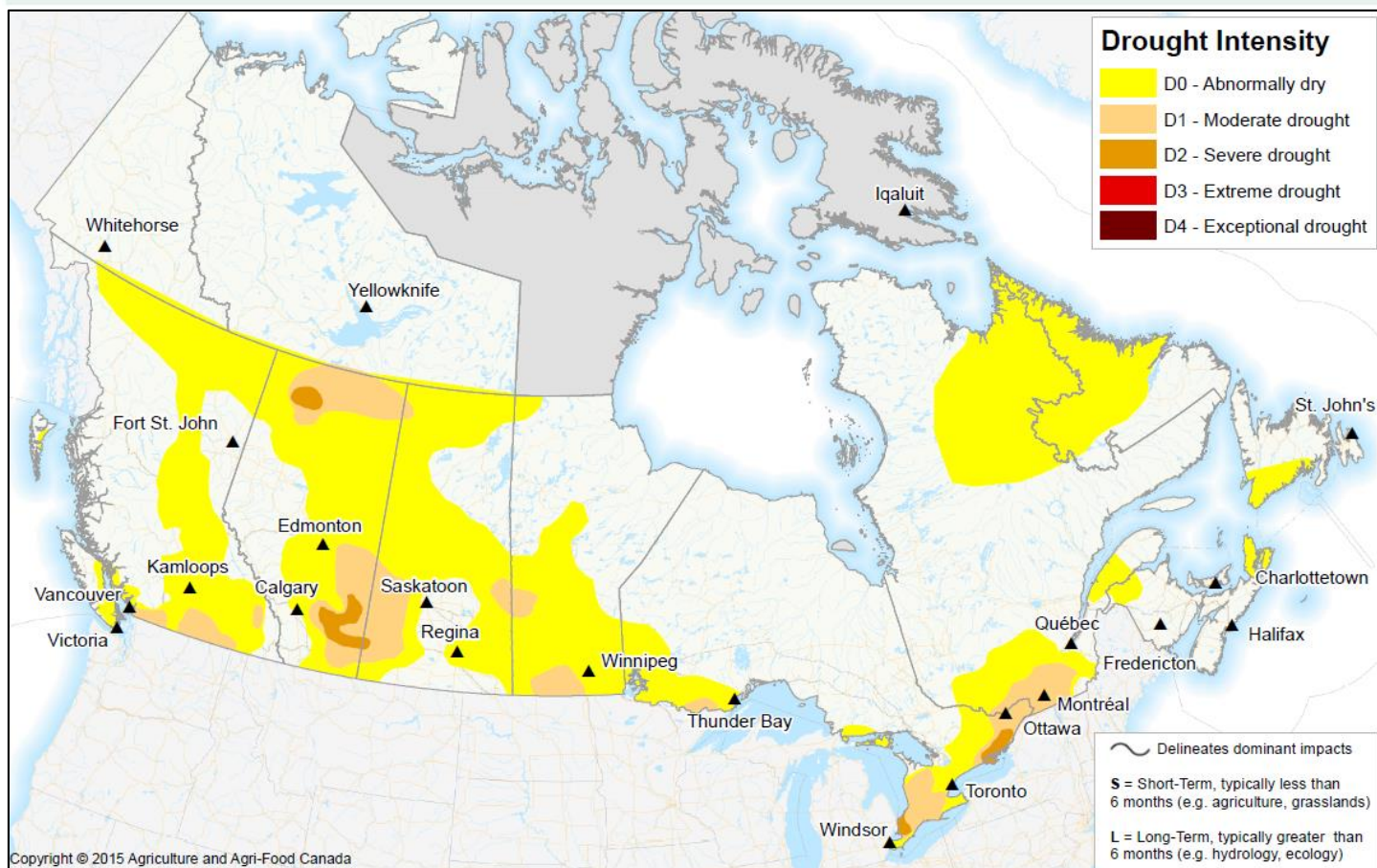


# Canadian Drought Monitor

Conditions as of May 31, 2015



Dry conditions continued across much of Canada in May. Western Canada experienced an early and very dry spring characterized by below-normal precipitation and above-normal temperatures. This weather was, in part, caused by a split in the jet stream that resulted in a warm and dry ridge over the west. Strong winds also dominated the Prairies, which compounded the already dry conditions and further reduced soil moisture reserves. Southeastern Manitoba, Ontario and Quebec received a few significant rainfall events that improved the short-term drought concerns; however, long-term drought remained an issue. A few areas in the central Atlantic region also received below-normal precipitation this spring following a record wet and cold winter.

## Pacific Region (BC)



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In British Columbia, Abnormally Dry and Moderate Drought conditions continued throughout the southern, north-central and eastern regions of the province, and Abnormally Dry conditions emerged across the north. Northern regions have received less than 40 per cent of average precipitation in the past three months and forest fire risk was high-than-normal in May. Record low winter snow pack (as low as 12 per cent of normal at some gauges in the south coast) and early freshet and peak flows (due to the warm temperatures) have increased the risk of water shortages. The provincial government has requested that the public undertake voluntary water conservation measures on Vancouver Island and Haida Gwaii and reduce water use by 20 per cent.

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

The past three months have been extremely dry for the most of the Prairie region resulting in a significant degradation of soil moisture and increase in drought classifications. A large patch of Abnormally Dry conditions emerged covering much of the region. Large portions of Alberta and Saskatchewan received less than 40 per cent of average precipitation in May and experienced record dry conditions. Many locations along the Alberta and Saskatchewan border received between 20 and 30 per cent of normal precipitation; some regions have received little to no precipitation since March, resulting in a Moderate or Severe Drought classification. This has negatively affected germination rates and crop growth in the country's grain belt, and caused higher-than-normal rates of grassland fires in the south and forest fires in the north. For much of the western Prairies reports show pasture and rangeland was in poor to very poor condition. The majority of southern Manitoba remains classified as drought due to longer term water deficit, but a couple of intense rainfall events that delivered up to 90 mm of precipitation helped improve soil moisture and reduce drought concerns. Although temperatures were generally above-normal across the Prairies, minimum temperatures on a few nights dipped below zero and damaged crops; for example, frost damaged 10 per cent of the Prairie canola crop.

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

Abnormally Dry and Moderate Drought classifications continued in Ontario and Quebec although the situation has improved. After a record dry winter, Ontario has had a relatively dry spring, although a couple of significant rainfall events in May improved the short-term drought concerns. Significant rain on May 30 and 31 significantly improved the situation of Southern Ontario. The long-term water deficit was still present and being monitored closely. Conditions improved slightly in southeastern Quebec compared to last month. This area of the province received a significant amount of precipitation (up to 75 mm) which recharged soil moisture and water supplies. Similar to the rest of Canada, temperatures were above-normal, but nighttime temperatures dipped below zero on two occasions and caused minor crop damage.

## **Atlantic Region (NS, NB, PE, NL)**

There were a few small pockets of Abnormally Dry throughout Atlantic Canada however there was no concerns for drought in this region.