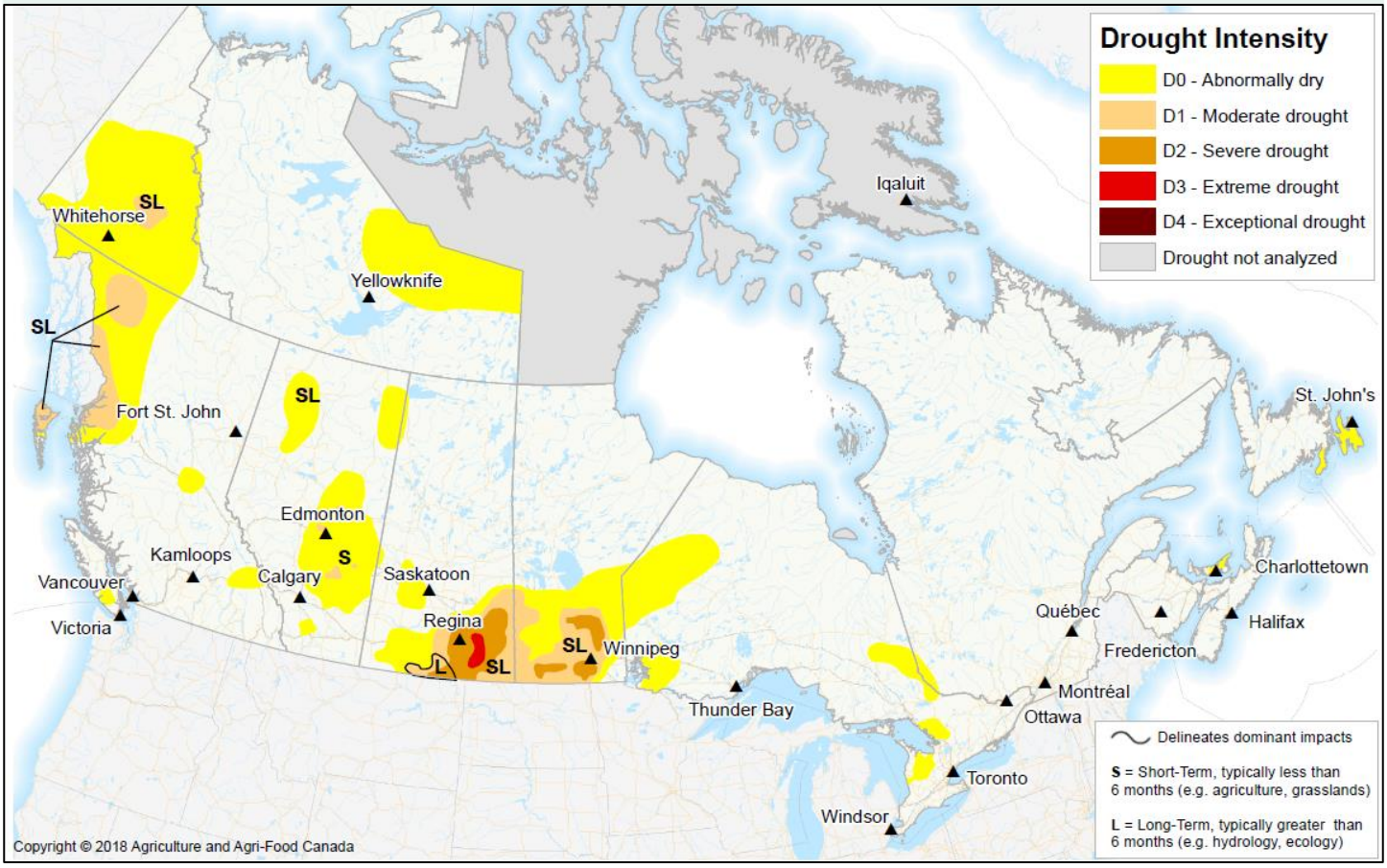
Canadian Drought Monitor

Conditions as of March 31, 2018



Throughout March, drought conditions generally improved across most regions in Canada. Dry conditions in the central interior of British Columbia improved greatly over the month with abundant precipitation, relieving most moisture concerns. Dryness concerns in Alberta expanded to the northern parts of the province. Following a very dry growing season and early winter, relief was finally provided to southern Saskatchewan with two large precipitation events over the month reducing moisture deficits. Drought conditions in southern Manitoba worsened due to persistent precipitation deficits. Precipitation was variable across Central and Atlantic Canada, with dryness emerging in Ontario while conditions continued to remain relatively wet for Québec and Atlantic Canada. Overall, long-term drought conditions remained across the northern regions and the southern Prairies.

Pacific Region (BC)

In the Pacific region, overall conditions improved with some persisting dryness along the coast. Conditions improved greatly along the central interior region, as normal to above normal winter precipitation and snow storms continued to improve lingering soil moisture deficits. Abnormally Dry (D0) conditions emerged in the southeast near Revelstoke following below normal precipitation. Dry conditions continued to worsen along the coastal regions with a Moderate (D1) Drought pocket emerging in the north, with a small D0 pocket emerging on south Vancouver Island.

Prairie Region (AB, SK, MB)

Overall, drought conditions in the Prairie region were variable throughout March, with some regions experiencing improved moisture conditions and others experiencing further degradation. In southern Alberta, high levels of snow pack accumulation, coupled with warmer temperatures over the last month, have contributed to significant snowmelt and runoff. This has caused significant flood risks including a local state of emergency in the Municipal District of Taber. While moisture concerns in southern Alberta were alleviated, dry conditions continued to develop in the north, where precipitation levels dropped below seasonal averages prompting the northward expansion of Abnormally Dry (D0) conditions. Long overdue relief was provided to southern Saskatchewan in March due to two significant and heavy snowfall events at the beginning and end of the month, which resulted in an overall reduction of drought coverage. For some areas the precipitation was not sufficient to eliminate soil moisture deficits caused by a drought-intensive growing season; as such, Severe (D2) and Extreme (D3) drought remained in the areas hardest hit over the growing season. Moderate (D1) drought conditions continued to cover the southeast portion of Saskatchewan leading into Manitoba. Drought conditions persisted and worsened over the month in Manitoba, as the region continued to receive below seasonal winter precipitation. As a result, multiple D2 pockets emerged in the southern portion of the province. However, snowmelt over much of the region has been gradual this spring, potentially allowing for greater water infiltration into dry soils.

Central Region (ON, QC)

Conditions degraded slightly over March in Ontario, while sufficient moisture levels persisted in Québec. Much of southern Ontario remained free of drought despite below normal precipitation over March. Moisture levels remained adequate due to heavy rainfall, snowmelt and flooding last month. However, poor streamflow indicated that Abnormally Dry (D0) conditions continued to persist and expand east and south of Georgian Bay. In northern Ontario, Abnormally Dry (D0) conditions developed and expanded due to below normal precipitation. The province of Québec also remained drought free over March, as the region continued to receive normal to above normal precipitation.

Atlantic Region (NS, NB, PE, NL)

Over March, most of Atlantic Canada continued to receive normal to above normal precipitation levels as the region received multiple winter storms. However, in southern Prince Edward Island dry conditions continued to persist as precipitation levels remained below normal over the month. Therefore, a small Abnormally Dry (D0) pocket remained in this region. Conditions worsened in southern Newfoundland with the emergence of a D0 pocket.

Northern Region (YT, NT)

In the Northern Region, drought conditions remained relatively unchanged from last month's assessment. Precipitation deficits persisted in the Yukon, as Abnormally Dry (D0) and Moderate Drought (D1) conditions remained. D0 conditions persisted in the Northwest Territories, as indicated by poor streamflow over a large area north and east of Yellowknife.

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