Prairie drought is not a new phenomenon. The extended dry spell over the Canadian Prairies and American mid-west this year, although severe, is one of numerous events this century. It suggests that drought is simply part of the natural variability of the Prairies's semi-arid climate.

How this year's prairie drought compares with previous droughts is shown in Table 1. The "drought intensity" as shown is the precipitation deficit as a percentage of the 1951-80 normal amount that would have been needed to bring the total up to normal over the period from September of the preceding year to the end of August of the year listed. The table shows that the intensity of drought varies greatly from one region to the next for a particular year. On the average, however, of the years listed, 1961 was the worst. The averages listed were calculated using only those locations with negative shortfalls for that year. For 1988, the most severe precipitation deficit occurred at Lethbridge, where the total was $45 \%$ short of normal. In other words, precipitation was $55 \%$ below normal.

The total production of prairie spring wheat, which constitutes $80 \%$ to $90 \%$ of all wheat production, was 438 million bushels compared to 749 million in 1987 while some crops such as canola were not affected by the drought. Surprisingly, ample rain this summer

| DROUGHT INTENSIT IN THE PRAIRIES <br> PRECIPITATION SHORTFALL SEPTEMBRER-AUGUST |  |  |  |  |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| STATION | 1936 | 1937 | 1961 | 1984 | 1988 |
| WINNIPEG | -0.26 | -0.06 | -0.42 | -0.06 | -0.38 |
| BRANDON | -0.31 | +0.35 | -0.43 | -0.06 | -0.22 |
| SASKATOON | -0.05 | -0.19 | -0.19 | -0.24 | -0.21 |
| REGINA | -0.16 | -0.53 | -0.57 | -0.34 | -0.27 |
| SWIFT CURRENT | -0.20 | -0.50 | -0.35 | -0.39 | -0.25 |
| PRINCE ALBERT | -0.33 | -0.13 | -0.23 | +0.34 | +0.03 |
| LETHBRIDGE | -0.30 | 0.00 | -0.31 | -0.33 | -0.45 |
| CALGARY | -0.37 | +0.01 | -0.12 | -0.32 | -0.10 |
| EDMONTON | +0.05 | +0.01 | -0.20 | -0.32 | +0.18 |
| AVERAGE | -0.25 | -0.28 | -0.31 | -0.26 | -0.27 |
| Table 1 |  |  |  |  |  |

yielded a bumper crop in northern and central Alberta. It is encouraging that September precipitation amounts were above normal for most of southern Alberta and Saskatchewan as well as extreme southern Manitoba in that the current soil moisture content,
in some areas, is back to normal, while in other areas, normal winter precipitation would recharge the soil moisture back to normal levels. However, in some areas even a normal winter would still cause surface water supply shortages this spring.

## Across the country



Yukon and N. W. T.

In the Yukon, the overall September pattern was cool, although a number of daily maximum temperature records were broken earlier in the month. The temperatures ranged from $25^{\circ} \mathrm{C}$ at Watson Lake on the 4th to as low as $-12^{\circ} \mathrm{C}$ at Ross River and Beaver Creek the final week of the month. By mid-month, all areas had reported a killing frost, ending the growing season. By the end of the month leaves were off the trees.

With the arrival of autumn, Gulf of Alaska storms intensified, and spawned vigorous low pressure systems which moved across the northern half of the country. Heavy precipitation fell in the western mountains, and snow slowly accumulated lower down the mountain slopes. At times, strong winds hampered aircraft movements in the valleys. Typical fall weather affected the Arctic coast, with low stratus ceilings and fog.

Freeze-up began in the Arctic, and small lakes in the Territories were beginning to freeze over. Difficult ice conditions, due to winds, were becoming evident in the Beaufort near Alaska. Resupply operations to the northern outpost were completed without incident. By the end of the month, temperatures in the Arctic were remaining below freezing.

## British Columbia

September produced typical autumn weather conditions, as slow moving troughs and ridges resulted in fluctuating temperatures and shifting precipitation patterns. Temperatures for the month averaged close to normal, but many maximum temperature records were broken across the southem half of the province during the first half of the month. In contrast, the latter part of the period was cool and weL. At Lytton, the mercury soared to near $39^{\circ} \mathrm{C}$ on the 3 rd .

Many of the dry areas in the southern interior received substantial amounts of
moisture, in some cases more than twice the normal. There was some local flooding in the interior valleys on September 9. Heavy thunderstorms, with hail, rolled across Vancouver on the evening of the 10th. While northern B.C. and the Peace River District received less than normal precipitation, a major storm on September 28 , produced record setting 24 -hour rainfalls on the north coast, which increased monthly totals to near or above average. Wet snow fell in the Peace River and Fort Nelson Districts the second week of the month.

A killing frost occurred in the central interior on the morning of the 10 th, and a light frost was reported in the Okanagan on the 18 th. During the early part of the month, extensive smoke drifted into southern B.C. from Washington, where forest fires raged out of control.

## Prairie Provinces

Temperatures in Alberta during the first half of the month were generally pleasant, reaching well into the twenties during the day. Numerous new daily maximum temperatures were set during the first week of the month. A high of $34^{\circ} \mathrm{C}$ was registered at Medicine Hat on the 6th. It turned much cooler and unsettled during the latter half of the month, with all areas except the extreme south experiencing frost by month's end. The coldest temperature was $-8^{\circ} \mathrm{C}$ at Fort McMurray on September 25 . The season's first significant snowfalls occurred on September 25 and 26 in the Alberta foothills. Calgary, Banff, Edson and Whitecourt reported between 7 and 13 centimetres of snow. Precipitation totals, almost twice the normal, were recorded in south-central Alberta. In contrast, the northern regions were unusually dry.

Temperatures in Saskatchewan and Manitoba soared to the thirties during the first week of the month, but overall averaged out very close to normal. By midmonth frost, had occurred in most areas. The weather was typically changeable, but drier overall. Eastern Saskatchewan was the driest area, with Yorkton receiving only 13 mm of rain this month, slightly more than one quarter of their normal. It is


interesting to note that this area had a very wet spring. Surprisingly, September in Winnipeg was both sunnier and wetter than expected.

## Ontario

Compared to the summer months of July and August, September was, on average, comparatively mundane. The month started off cold, with an Arctic air mass sweeping down from the north during the Labour Day holiday. Numerous daily low temperatures were recorded; even frost was reported. Maximum readings on the 5th were the lowest ever recorded on this date. In contrast, an unseasonably warm and humid air mass penetrated into the province during the middle of the month accompanied by heavy thunderstorm activity. Late in the afternoon on the 17th, a small tornado touched down in the northwest corner of Toronto. On September 18, the temperature soared to $31^{\circ} \mathrm{C}$ at Sarnia.

Rainfalls were near seasonal September normals, with the heaviest precipitation falling across northern Ontario and in a small area of the south. Lansdowne House
recorded 144 mm of rain, their heaviest September rainfall since 1969. On the other hand, a precipitation shortfall continued in southwestern Ontario. Samia received only 42 mm , making this the driest month since 1979. To-date, Windsor has only received 387 mm of precipitation during this year. This is roughly half the January - September normal, making this the driest period since records began in 1940.

It is interesting to note that on September 10 and 11 , considerable high level smoke drifted across the province from out-of-control forest fires that ravaged some of the Rocky Mountain States of the American northwest. The smoke was quite noticeable over the southern and central parts of the province, resulting in hazy sunshine. The smoke was also responsible for setting off cockpit smoke sensors on two commercial jetliners, forcing the crew to make emergency landings at Toronto. It was a good month for bringing in the harvest. In the Niagara Peninsula, 1988 might be a vintage year for grapes and wines. Vegetable growers in southern Ontario did not fair as well though, due to late spring frosts, thunderstorms which produced hail
and damaging winds, and the persistantly hot, dry weather conditions of the summer.

## Québec

Seasonal temperatures were recorded across most of the province this month with temperatures ranging from $0.6^{\circ} \mathrm{C}$ below normal for Quebec City to $1.3^{\circ} \mathrm{C}$ above normal for Kuujjuarapik.

Precipitation totals were below normal from the Ottawa River eastward to Quebec City ranging from 47 percent of normal at Montreal-Dorval to 84 percent for Quebec City. The heaviest precipitation was recorded from James Bay to Sept-Iles and Schefferville. A new record for rainfall was recorded at Schefferville, with 154.8 mm beating the old record by 2.8 mm . Traces of snow were recorded as far south as Matagami and Chibougamau, while Schefferville recorded 14.4 cm.

## Atlantic Provinces

September was cool and generally dry for all three provinces. Precipitation totals were below normal in New Brunswick and most of Nova Scotia, with the exception of Yarmouth, which recorded $89.4 \mathrm{~mm}, 3 \mathrm{~mm}$ above normal precipitation inthe Annapolis Valley of Nova Scotia was well below normal, with several locations reporting less than half their monthly mean. Fredericton, recorded $40 \%$ less precipitation than normal. Newfoundland experienced near normal temperatures, with above normal precipitation in the northern and southwestern parts. St. John's recorded a daily maximum of $24.8^{\circ} \mathrm{C}$ on the 10 th, while Badger reported $-3^{\circ} \mathrm{C}$ on several occasions. For precipitation, St. Anthony recorded 151.6 mm for the month - nearly twice the September mean. On September 29th, St. John's reported a new daily record with an accumulation of 47.8 mm .

Several storm centres brought strong winds to Newfoundland this month. On the 6th, Cape Race winds gusted to $93 \mathrm{~km} / \mathrm{h}$. Unseuled weather prevailed in Labrador, as a series of lows brought measurable precipitation on most days. Nain recorded 141.4 mm for the month - about double the monthly mean.



# THE SUMMER OF 1988 IN REVIEW 

A. Gergye, Monitoring and Prediction Division

North America's upper atmospheric circulation was dominated by an amplified mid-continental ridge with a large positive height anomaly over the Dakotas. The result was an extended drought over the Canadian Prairies as well as Southern Ontario as the anomaly oscillated during the summer period. An amplified trough and a slack 500 mb height gradient in the Gulf of Alaska led to numerous slowmoving lows passing through the Yukon and Northwest Territories accompanied by copious amounts of rainfall.

## Temperature

June was a warm month in the Yukon and the Territories but the Prairies and Southern Ontario were the focal point. The Prairies were 4 to 7 degrees C above normal with some climate stations soaring to $44^{\circ} \mathrm{C}$ as the drought persisted. Drought contined into July over the Prairies and Southern Ontario. Six recordsmashing afternoon highs above $35^{\circ}$ C in Toronto made it the hottest July since 1955. Southwestern Quebec also experienced the warmest July in recent years. During August, temperatures were once again above normal over the Yukon and the Territories, though not as great as previous months. The Prairies were generally cool with Manitoba the most pleasant of the three provinces with temperatures reaching $40^{\circ} \mathrm{C}$ by mid-month. The first two weeks in

Ontario were hot and humid. The passage of a sharp cold front dramatically ended the heat wave for that month. Warm, humid conditions prevailed in the Maritimes. Twenty-nine days of fog finally ended at Yarmouth, N.S. on the 14th of August.

## Precipitation

Most of the heavy rain in the Northwest Territories occurred during June and July with some
stations recording 200 to $400 \%$ of the monthly normal in the month of July. British Colombia experienced wet weather during June with coastal areas recording over $200 \%$ above normal in August. As mentioned earlier, drought contined over the Prairies and southern Ontario during June and July. By mid July, enough precipitation had fallen over most parts of Ontario to effectively end the drought, while the Prairies were generally wet and dreary for most of August. The Maritimes experienced cloudy and humid conditions in July

with thunderstorms being the highlight of that month.

## Impacts

## Yukon and NWT:

- Heavy rain during the months of June and July causes numerous washouts and road closures.


## British Columbia:

- Hay harvesting and cherry splitting problems due to wet weather in June.
- Thunderstorm gusts capsize boats in Lake Okanagan.


## Prairies:

- Camrose, Alberta tornado on June 5th causes $\$ 5$ Million damage.
- Edmonton's worst rainstorm in 35 years dumps 96 mm of rain in 30 hours causing flooding.
- Flooding in Calgary on August 16th caused by thunderstorms.
- Drought reduces Prairie crops to two-thirds its normal size. Only half the usual amount of grains will be available for export. (Canada Grains council; Sept 12,1988, Toronto Star).
- Canada Grains Council predicts Canada's grain handling and transportation sectors could see an average loss of $47 \%$ in revenue this year, railways up to $55 \%$ of grain revenue and a $45 \%$ drop for primary grain elevators (Toronto Star, Sept. 12, 1988).
- Duck population expected to be at its lowest level ever due to drought. (Ducks Unlimited of Canada; Winnipeg Sun, June 20, 1988).
- U.N. organization warns that grain reserves may sink to the lowest levels of the decade if drought in Canada and the U.S. continues for two more weeks (June 28, 1988).

- An estimated 24,000 farmers and farm workers have abandoned agriculture in the last 12 months due to drought(June 1988, Employment and Immigration Canada).
- Avian cholera devastates goose population in Saskatchewan due to drought conditions (Saskatoon Star Phoenix, May 11,1988 ).


## Ontario:

- Soaring temperatures during the week of July 4th cause 6 deaths. Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Seaway grain workers laid off on July 22nd in anticipation of a drop in grain handling requirements as a result of drought reduced yields.
- Great Lakes water levels the lowest in more than a decade. Further drop of 5 inches expected this year(Environment Canada, Centre for Inland Waters).
- 5 year-old boy killed in Luther Village by uprooted tree during thunderstorms on July 29th.
- Property and livestock losses on July 30 th caused by tornado southeast of Woodstock.


## Québec:

- Tornado causes \$3 Million damage June 21st in St. Bernard.
- Thunderstorms cause landslide and train derailment at Couteau Station on June 22nd.
- Basements flooded in Quebec City on July 8th.
- Automobiles damaged by hail in Capital Region first week of July.


## Maritimes:

- Heavy rain on June 30th causes flooding and power outages in Halifax-Dartmouth area.
- Thunderstorms knock out 20 transformers in Yarmouth, N.S. on July 12 th .


Photo financial post


## 50 kPa ATMOSPHERIC CIRCULATION

September 1988


Mean geopotential heights - 5 decametre interval -


Normal geopotential heights for the month - 5 decametre interval


Mean geopotential height anomaly - 5 decametre interval-


Mean heights difference $w / r$ to previous month - 5 decametre interval

The most striking feature of the 50 kPa height field for September is the deep polar vortex with a corresponding 15 dam nagafive height anomaly. Generally the appearance of such a large negative Arctic anomaly means early cold air outbreaks over the Prairies and the east as the vortex shifts southwards. This shift occurs about two weeks after the cyclical southward retreat of the Bermuda high.

The resulting negative height anomalies over British Columbia and the western half of the Territories
gave below normal mean monthly temperatures in these regions. An amplified mid-latitude trough on the east coast of North America produced below normal temperatures over northern Quebec, Labrador and Newfoundland with above normal amounts of precipitation over the Maritime. The Hovmoller* diagram for 45 N latitude shows that the position and motion of the anomaly trough was a persistent feature throughout September.

Two other persistent longwave anomalies appearing on the Hovmbller diagram for 45 N are the stationary negative deviation along 130 E longitude and the slow moving positive anomaly near $120^{\circ} \mathrm{W}$ longitude.

* Note: The Hovmoller diagram represents an hemispheric time-space analysis. It have been temporally smoothed and spacially normalized to enhance longwave components.


## Hovmöller for latitude $45^{\circ} \mathrm{N}$ - all waves

SEP 01
SEP 02
SEP 03
SEP 04
SEP 05
SEP 06
SEP 07
SEP 08
SEP 09
SEP 10
SEP 11
SEP 12
SEP 13
SEP 14
SEP 15
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SEP 27
SEP 28
SEP 29
SEP 30


WOE
60E
120E


120W


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E180W
bOW
WOE

# THE CHANGING ATMOSPHERE : CONFERENCE STATEMENT 

Toronto, June 23-30, 1988

> Second part of a three part reproduction of the conference statement issued by the conference on The Changing Atmosphere, held in Toronto - June 27130, 1988.

## Legal Aspects

The first steps in developing international law and practices to address pollution of the air have already been taken: in the Trail Smelter arbitration of 1935 and 1938; Principle 21 of the 1972 Declaration of the UN Conference on the Environment; the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) Convention on Long Range Transboundary Air Pollution and its Protocol (Helsinki, 1985) for sulphur reductions, Part XII of the Law of the Sea Convention; and the Vienna Convention for Protection of the Ozone Layer and its Montréal Protocol (1987).

These are important first steps and should be actively implemented and respected by all nations. However, there is no overall convention constituting a comprehensive international framework that can address the interrelated problems of the global atmosphere, or that is directed towards the issues of climate change.

## A CALL FOR ACtION

The Conference urges immediate action by governments, the United Nations and their specialized agencies, other international bodies, non-governmental organizations, industry, educational institutions and individuals to counter the ongoing degradation of the atmosphere. An Action Plan for the Protection of the Atmosphere needs to be developed, which includes an international

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Implications for Global Security
Implications pour la sécuritéduglobe

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## $1+1$ Environment Canada Environment Canada <br> Environnement Canada

framework convention, encourages other standard-setting agreements and national legislation to provide for the protection of the global atmosphere. This must be complemented by implementation of national action plans that address the problems posed by atmospheric change (climate warming, ozone layer depletion, acidification and the long-range transport of toxic chemicals) at their roots.

The following actions are mostly designed to slow and eventually reverse deterioration of the atmosphere. There are also a number of strategies for adapting to changes that must be considered. These are dealt with primarily in the recommendations of the Working Groups.

Actions by Governments and Industry

- Ratify the Montréal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer. The Protocol should be revised in 1990 to ensure nearly complete elimination of the emissions of fully halogenated CFCs by the year 2000. Additional measures to limit other ozone-destroying halocarbons should be considered.
- Set energy policies to reduce the emissions of $\mathrm{CO}_{2}$ and other trace gases in order to reduce the risks of future global warming. Stabilizing the atmospheric concentrations of $\mathrm{CO}_{2}$ is an imperative goal. It is currently estimated to require reductions of
more than 50\% from present emossion levels. Energy research and development budgets must be massively directed to energy options which would eliminate or greatly reduce $\mathrm{CO}_{2}$ emissions and to studies undertaken to further refine the target reductions.
- Reduce $\mathrm{CO}_{2}$ emissions by approximately 20 percent of 1988 levels by the year 2005 as an initial global goal. Clearly, the industrialized nations have a responsibility to lead the way, both through their national energy policies and their bilateral and multilateral assistance arrangements. About one-half of this reduction would be sought from energy efficiency and other conservation measures. The other half should be effected by modificalions in supplies.
- Set targets for energy efficiency improvements that are directly related to reductions in $\mathrm{CO}_{2}$ and other greenhouse gases. A challenging target would be to achieve the 10 percent energy efficiency improvements by 2005. Improving energy efficiency is not precisely the same as reducing total carbon emissions and the detailed policies will not all be familiar ones. A detailed study of the systems implications of this target should be made. Equally, targets for energy supply should also be directly related to eductions in $\mathrm{CO}_{2}$ and other greenhouse gases. As with efficiency, a chatlenging target would again be to
achieve the 10 percent energy supply improvements by 2005. A detailed study of the systems implications of this target should also be made. The contributions to achieving this goal will vary from region to region; some countries have already demonstrated a capability for increasing efficiency by more than 2 percent a year for over a decade.

Apart from efficiency measures, the desired reduction will require (i) switching to lower $\mathrm{CO}_{2}$ emitting fuels, (ii) reviewing strategies for the implementation of renewable energy especially advanced biomass conversion technologies; (iii) revisiting the nuclear power option, which lost credibility because of problems related to nuclear safety, radioactive wastes, and nuclear weapons proliferation. If these problems can be solved, through improved engineered designs and institutional arrangements, nuclear power could have a role to play in lowering $\mathrm{CO}_{2}$ emissions.

- Negotiate now on ways to achieve the above-mentioned reduclions.
- Initiate management systems in order to encourage, review and approve major new projects for energy efficiency.
- Vigorously apply existing technologies, in addition to gains made through reduction of fossil fuel combustion, to reduce (i) emissions of acidifying substances to reach the critical load that
the environment can bear; (ii) substances which are precursors of tropospheric ozone; and (iii) other non- $\mathrm{CO}_{2}$ greenhouse gases.
- Label products to allow consumers to judge the extent and nature of the atmospheric contamination that arises from the manufacture and use of the product.


SEPTEMBER 1988




