



Agricultural Moisture Situation Update

April 13, 2023

Synopsis

Snowmelt got off to a late start this April as we slowly turned the page on winter. This followed a warm, dry fall through many parts of the province that left soil moisture reserves well below normal heading into fall freeze-up. So far this April, precipitation has been variable, but notably a large area stretching east to west across the province from Red Deer up at least as far north as the Yellowhead Highway has received upwards of 10-15 mm (**Map 1**). This represents a good start to replenishing moisture supplies ahead of spring green up. In contrast, relatively dry conditions are still prevailing through parts of the Central Region, but lingering snows and a slow melt have complicated an accurate moisture assessment as of writing.

Over the past 180 days, precipitation has generally been below normal across most of the province (**Map 2**) but there is still ample time to receive adequate moisture in the coming weeks. **Map 3** shows typical moisture patterns that steadily build through April May and June.

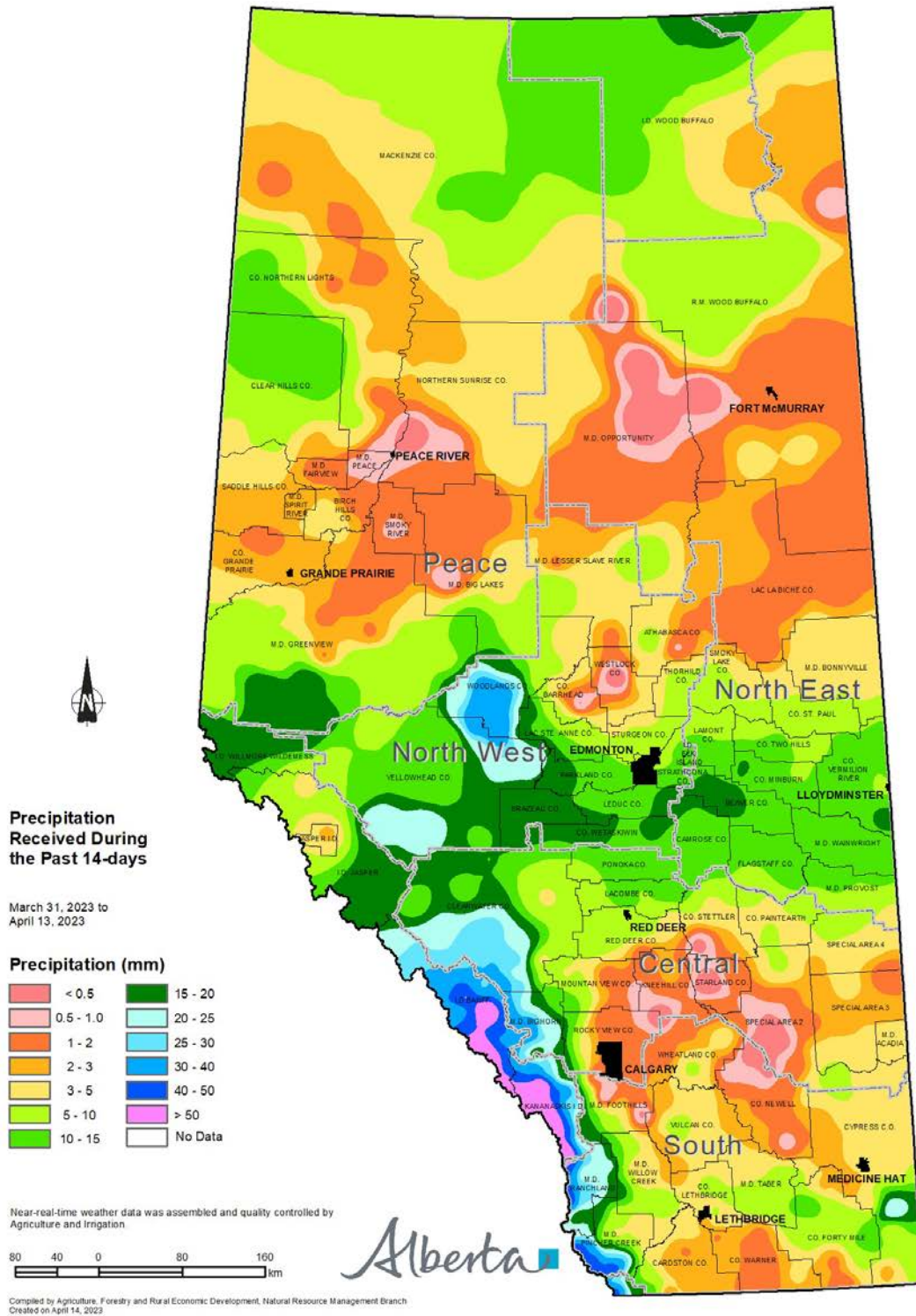
At this point in time, it's too soon to tell how early soil moisture reserves will shape up. Only in the past few days have the snows begun a hasty retreat from the Peace Region, the North East Region, as well as across a small portion of the far southeast corner of the province. Once snow melt is fully complete (province wide) we will provide a soil moisture assessment.

Perspective

Next week the jet stream is expected to dip southward and moisture from the Pacific is expected to bring further rain and or snow to at least the north-half of the province. However, April is a tricky month to forecast and looking out this far comes with a great degree of uncertainty. We are very much in a wait and see scenario. The next Moisture Situation Update will be issued during the last week in April and this should allow us to have a better look at soil moisture conditions following the spring melt, providing the land is snow free.

Currently, a long running La Nina has reportedly ended and the prospect of an El Nino event is developing, for which an El Nino watch has been [issued](#). This typically is associated with an interruption in "normal" moisture and temperature patterns, usually favoring the prospect of warmer weather for Alberta; however, no definitive projection can be made with respect to the positive or negative impact this may have on our weather patterns this growing season.

Map 1



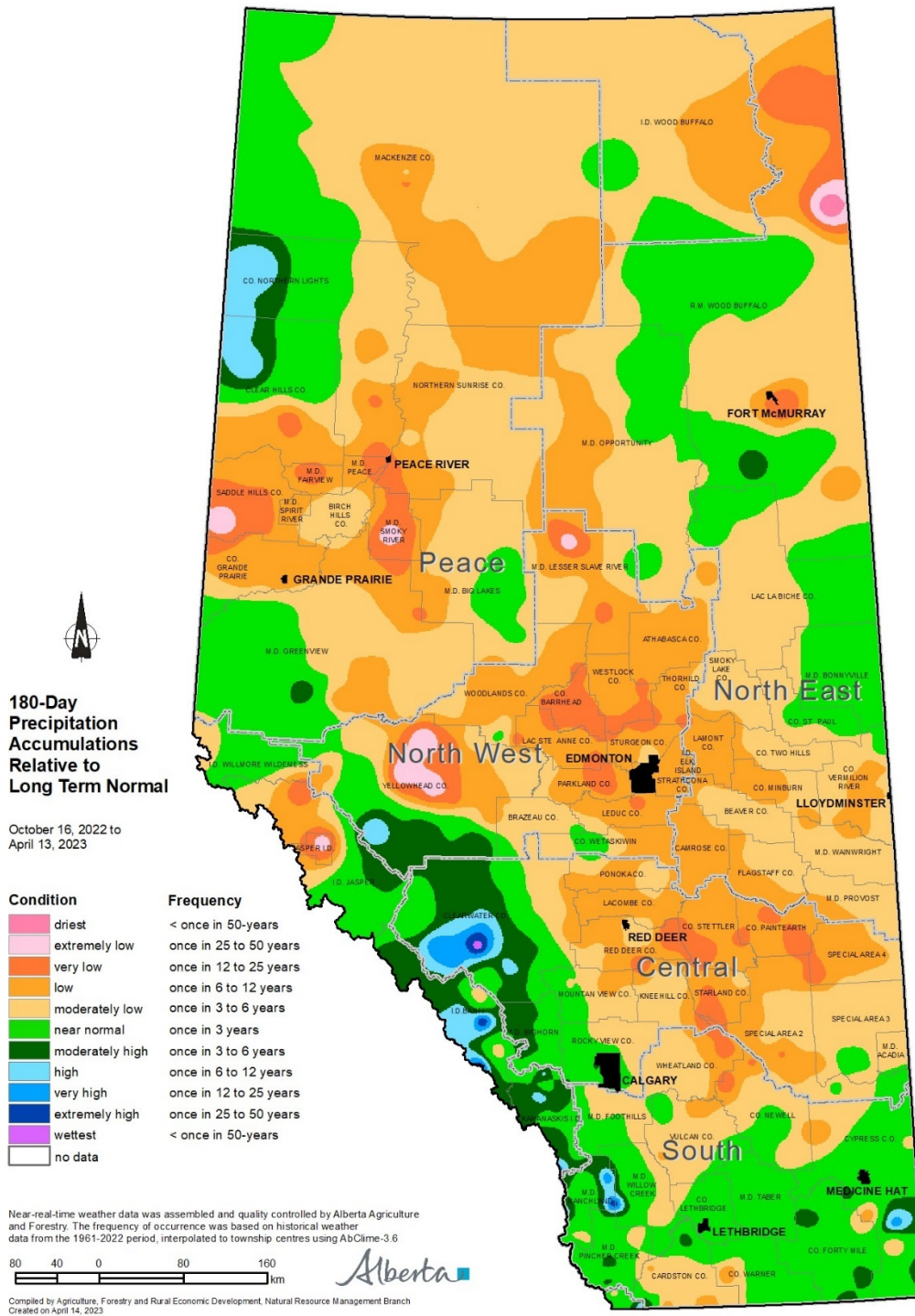
Visit weatherdata.ca for additional maps and meteorological data

<https://open.alberta.ca/publications/moisture-situation-update>

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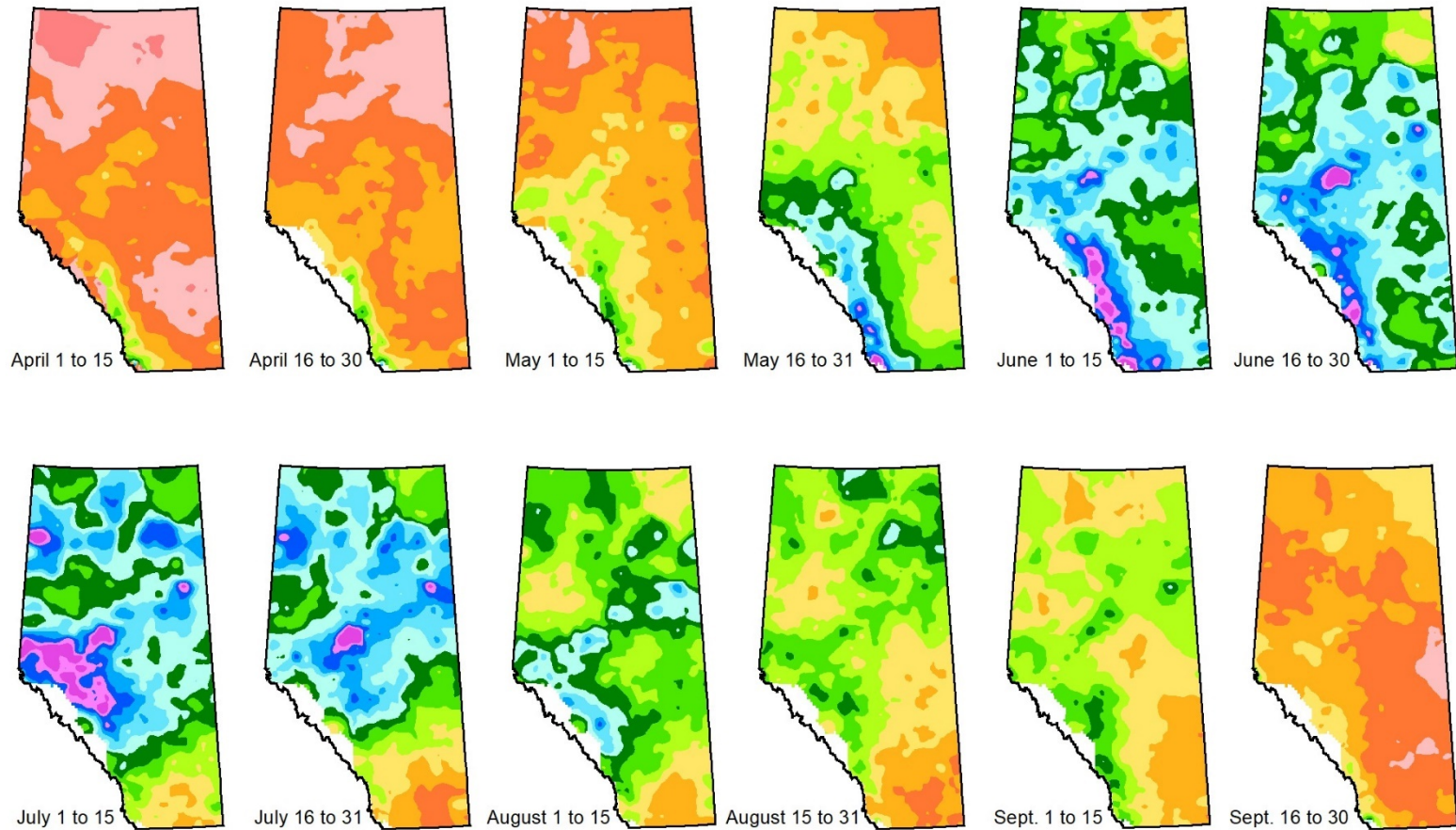


Map 2



Visit weatherdata.ca for additional maps and meteorological data

Map 3



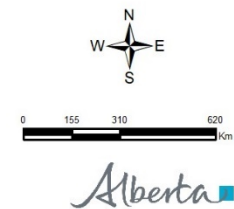
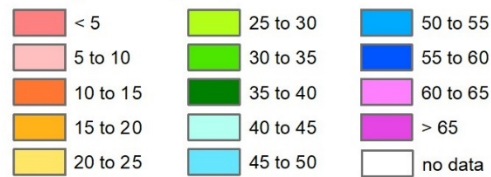
Normal Semi-Monthly Growing Season Precipitation Accumulations

1991-2020

Weather data was assembled and quality controlled by Agriculture Forestry and Rural Economic Development then interpolated to township centres using AbClime-3.6

Compiled by Agriculture, Forestry and Rural Economic Development, Natural Resource Management Branch
Created on March 29, 2022

Precipitation (mm)



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