

Agricultural Moisture Situation Update

August 5, 2020

Synopsis

During the last week in July, hot and dry weather finally arrived across the province, bringing some relief to many of the wet areas. Since that time, rainfall activity has been mainly through widespread fast moving thunderstorms. This has led to a “hit and miss” situation that has allowed drying to proceed in many areas, but certainly not all.

11-day precipitation accumulations as of August 5, 2020 (Map 1)

Since the start of the warm spell, many of the previously wet areas bordering the North East and North West regions have received less than 10 mm. Similarly, wet areas south of Red Deer have been relatively dry and hot. However, not all wet areas have had a full reprieve; with eastern sections of the North East and parts of the North West receiving up to 25 mm or more (Map 1).

At this time of year, crop water use is likely in excess of 30 mm per week, meaning that most of these areas have had some net drying; however, for these lands the additional rains were generally not welcome. The Mannville AGCM station, just west of Vermillion, received 105 mm of rain on August 3rd, with most of this falling within a two hour period. This suggests that isolated intense thunderstorms potentially brought significant localized rainfall to some lands scattered across a wide area affecting at least the North West and North East regions.

Soil Moisture (Map 2 and Map 3)

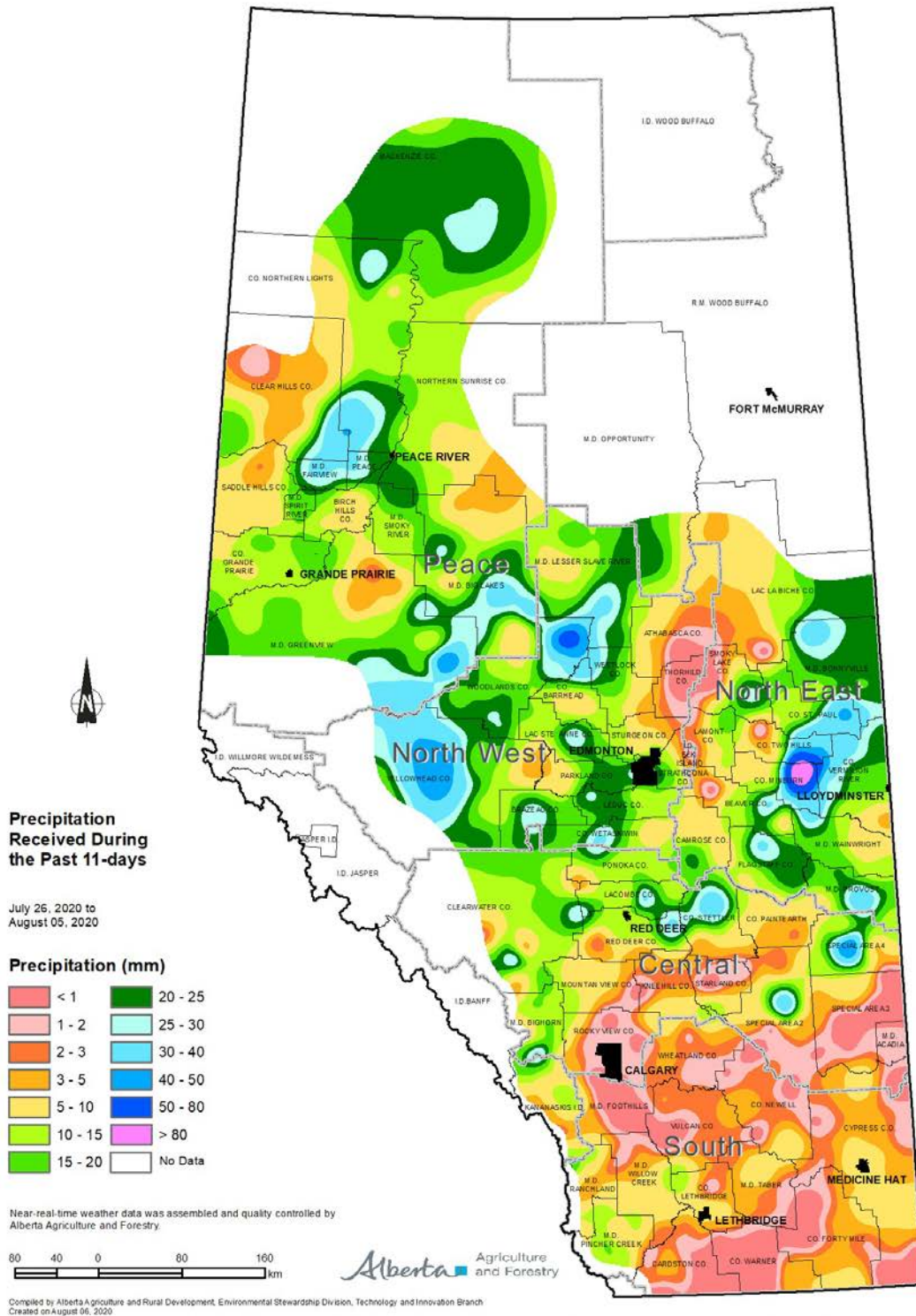
Soil moisture reserves are still well above normal for this time of year through a wide area between Calgary and Edmonton, extending northward towards Smoky Lake. Similarly, parts of the Central Peace region are currently well above normal (Map 2).

Excess soil moisture still exists across many areas west of Highway II between Calgary and Edmonton, (see dark green and light blue areas on Map 3). Here, standing water is still prevalent in low lying poorly drained areas hampering agricultural operations.

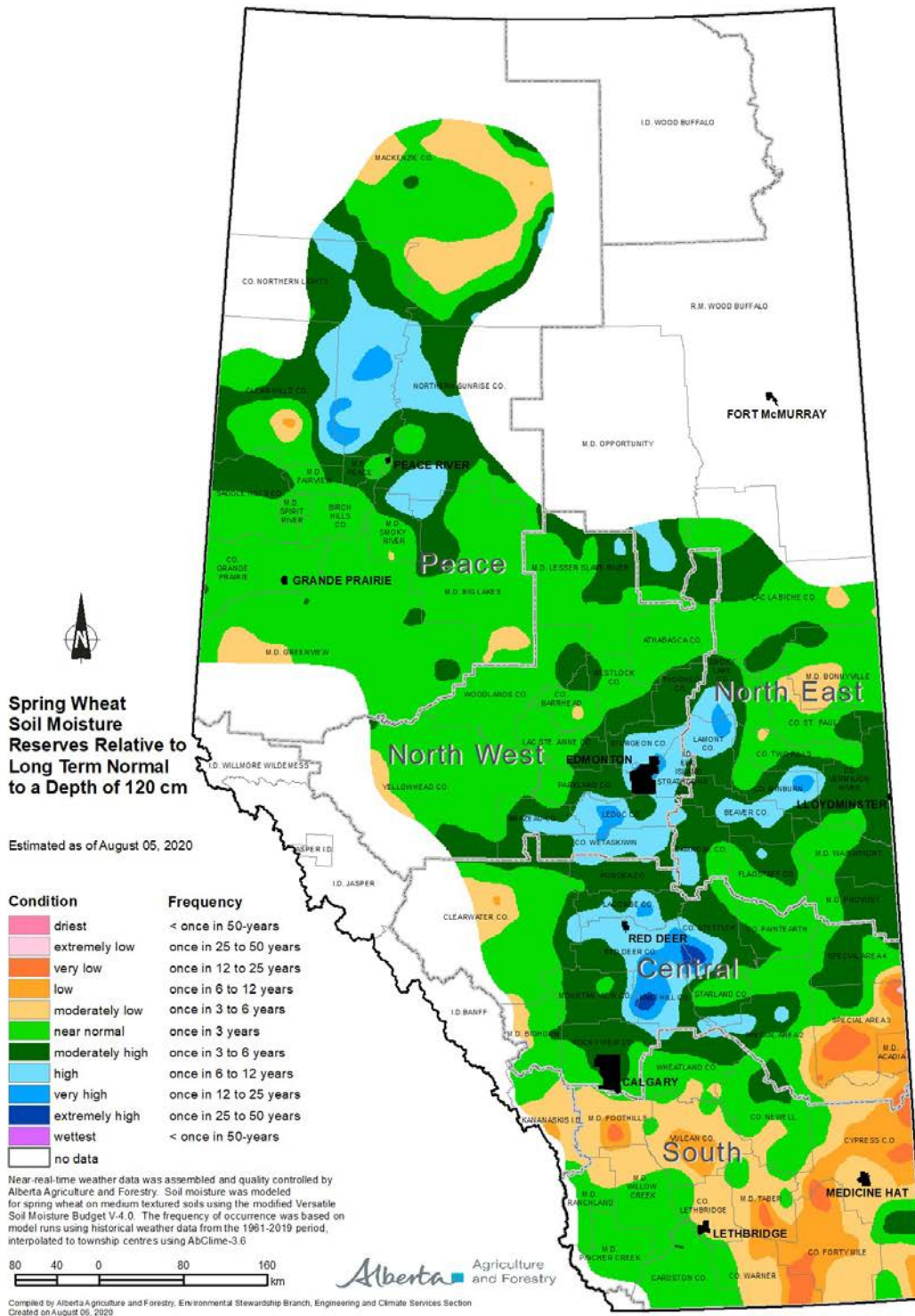
In contrast, soil moisture reserves are generally below normal south of the TransCanada Highway; however, most of these areas have seen at least near normal moisture during the growing season.

For those that have been able to cut hay through the wet areas of North West, North East and west-half of the Central Region, recent weather has been reasonable for drying, providing that thunderstorm activity was light.

Map 1

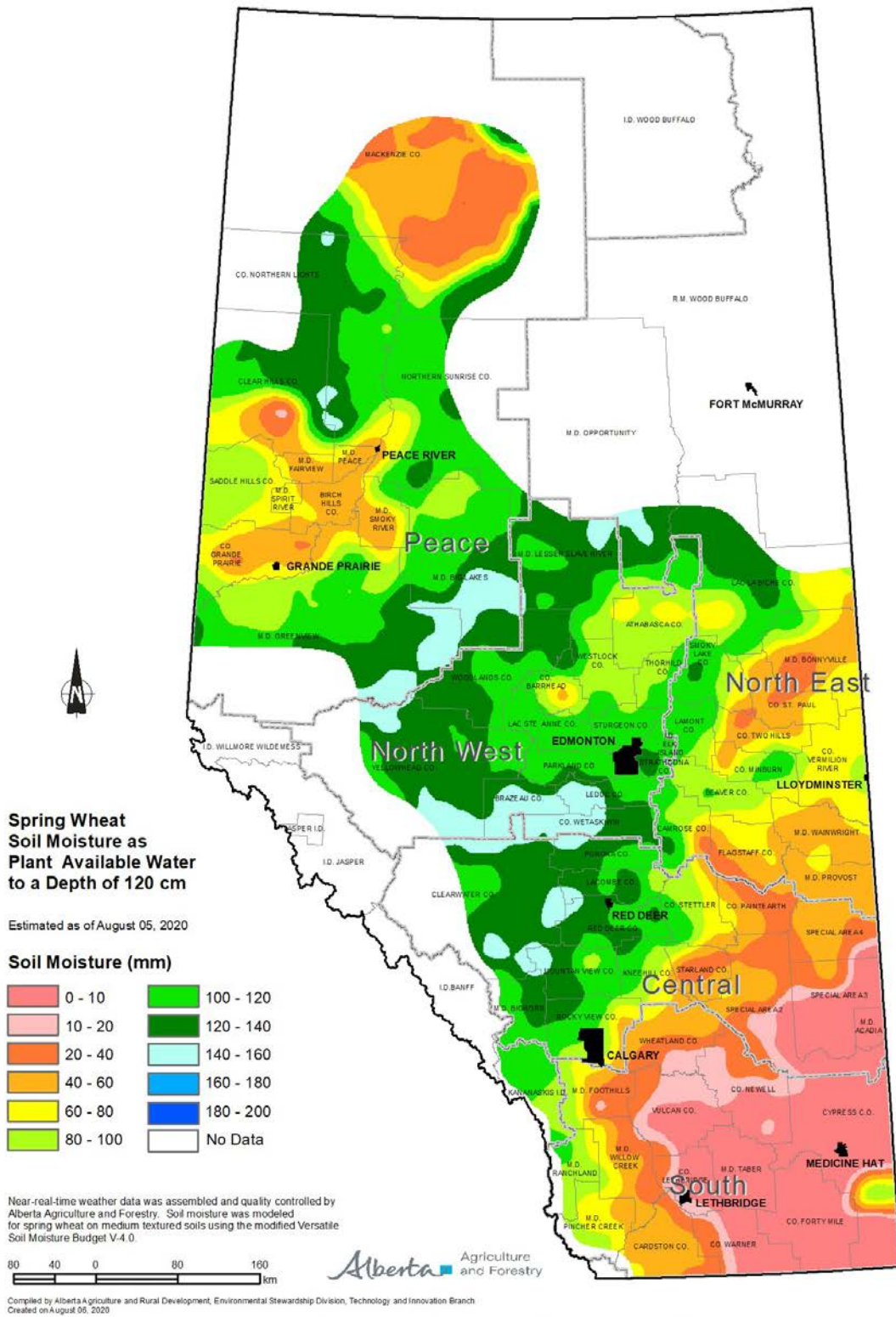


Visit weatherdata.ca for additional maps and meteorological data



Visit weatherdata.ca for additional maps and meteorological data

Map 3



Visit weatherdata.ca for additional maps and meteorological data