

Moisture Situation Update – October 27, 2014

Synopsis:

In general, fall weather has been favorable, with no major issues to report surrounding excessive heat, cold, moisture or lack of moisture. While there may be some areas with moisture deficits to watch, the next growing season is still months away and what happens this winter and early spring will, for the most part, dictate the level of climate related risk going into the early part of the 2015 growing season.

Overall, since the start of September temperatures have generally been warmer than normal, with at least near normal precipitation accumulations; however, it has been relatively dry through a large area extending north of the Yellowhead Highway, between Edmonton and Lloydminster. Of significant note is that the central and far northern parts of the Peace Region have finally starting receiving near normal rainfall accumulations.

60-day precipitation accumulations as of October 27, 2014—see map

- Many areas south of the Trans-Canada Highway have seen precipitation accumulations that are near normal to moderately high. Some small pocket areas have been wetter than normal, with areas along the foothills seeing accumulations this high on average only about once in 12 to 25 years.
- Most of the Special Areas have seen above normal accumulations, with the northeastern parts of Cypress County seeing accumulations this high on average only once in 6 to 12 years.
- East of Edmonton and north of the Yellowhead Highway, conditions have been slightly dryer than normal, with the driest areas found in and around Cold Lake, where accumulations are estimated to be this low, on average about once in 25 to 50 years.
- Throughout most of the Peace Region accumulations are near normal, with the exception of the central parts, where accumulations are just above normal, and through a small area in the extreme north where accumulations have been a little below normal.

Soil moisture reserves relative to long term normal as of October 27, 2014—see map

- Province wide, soil moisture reserves are highly variable, ranging from nearly one in 50 year highs (approximately 70 km north of Medicine Hat), to one in 12 to 25 year lows through several parts of the northern half of the province.
- Generally south of Red Deer, soil moisture reserves are normal or above normal, and north of this, they are generally below normal.
- However, those areas with below normal soil moisture reserves still have ample time to see reserves replenish between now and germination in the spring.

Interesting Facts

- Between August 1st and November 10th, the loss of daylight is the most rapid, with central parts of the province losing about 3.5 minutes of daylight each day. In contrast, by December 1st, daylight loss slows to about 2 minutes per day.
- December 22nd marks the point at which days start getting longer again. That's only about seven weeks away!
- Historically, by October 30th, there have been many cases across the agricultural areas of Alberta where temperatures have dropped below -25°C. So far the coldest temperatures seen yet this fall, occurred in the central parts of the province, where on October 28th, the mercury dipped to nearly -12°C.

Additional maps can be found at www.agriculture.alberta.ca/maps

Near-real-time hourly station data can be viewed/downloaded at www.agriculture.alberta.ca/stations

Note: Data has about a two hour lag and is displayed in MST (add one hour for daylight savings time)

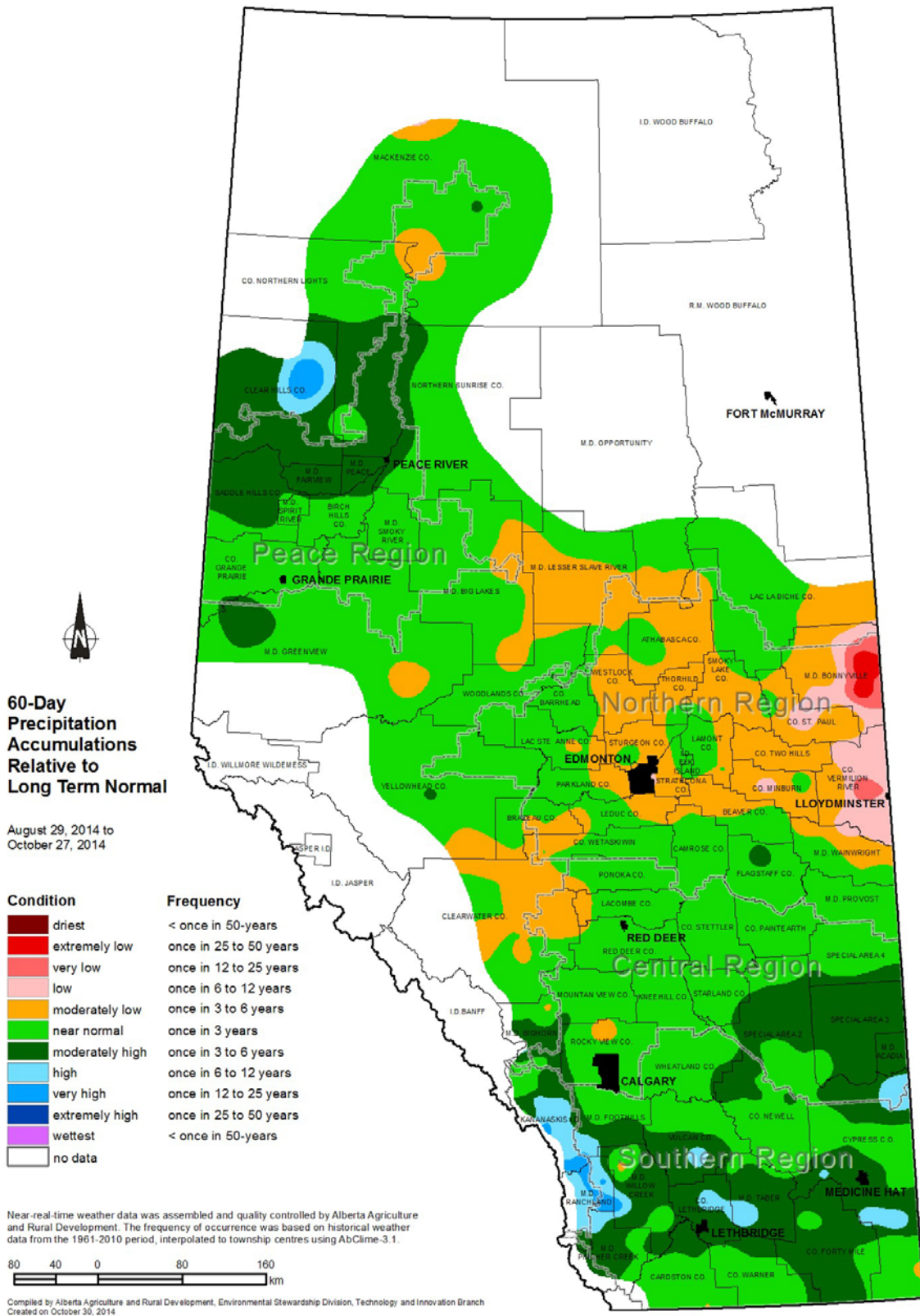
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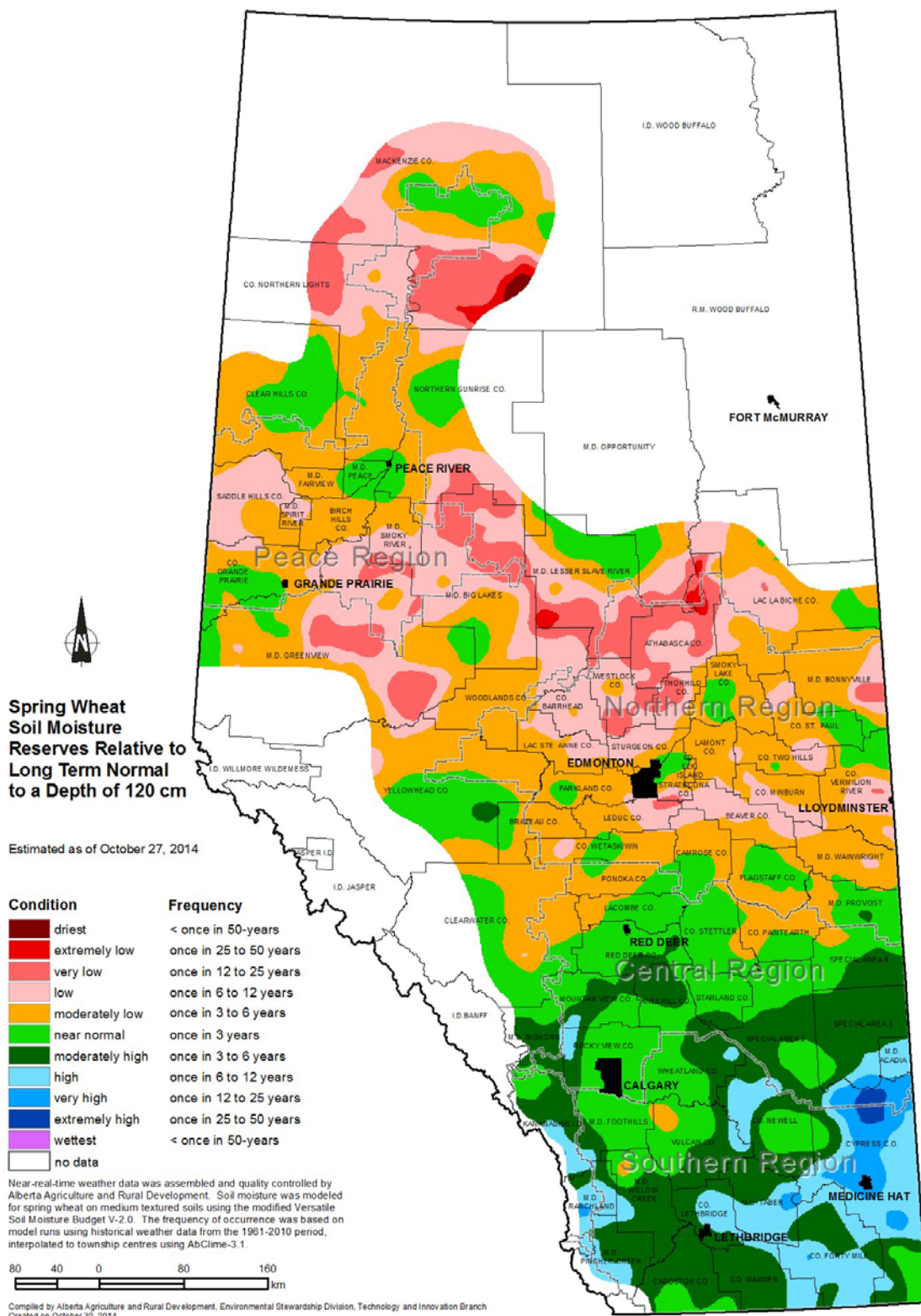
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