



# Agricultural Moisture Situation Update

## September 21, 2022

### Synopsis

Since the last report, (September 7, 2022) precipitation has been highly variable across the provinces growing areas (**Map 1**). Most agricultural lands across the Peace Region received at least 20 mm of rain, ranging up to more than 50 mm through the southern portions of the region. In contrast, conditions have remained dry across parts of the North East, North West, Central and Southern Regions with many lands receiving less than 1mm. Most of these areas remain in a drying trend and moisture is needed to replenish well below normal soil moisture reserves and dwindling surface water supplies.

Over the past week conditions have turned cooler; however, most areas have escaped damaging frosts with only a few lands along the foot hills and through the Peace Region experiencing temperatures in the -2°C to -3°C range (**Map 2**).

### 60-day precipitation Trends

Over the past 60-days most lands south of the Peace Region experienced a continued drying trend, with areas around Edmonton, Bonnevillie, Red Deer , Olds and Medicine Hat experiencing conditions this dry on average less than once in 25 years (**Map 3**). For many of these areas less than 30 mm of rain has fallen since late July with lands around Medicine Hat receiving less than 20 mm (**Map 4**).

### Soil moisture reserves

The drying trend that followed ample June rains has depleted soil moisture reserves to well below normal levels across about 70% of the agricultural areas of the province, with many lands experiencing reserves this low less than once in 12 to 25 years (**Map 5**).

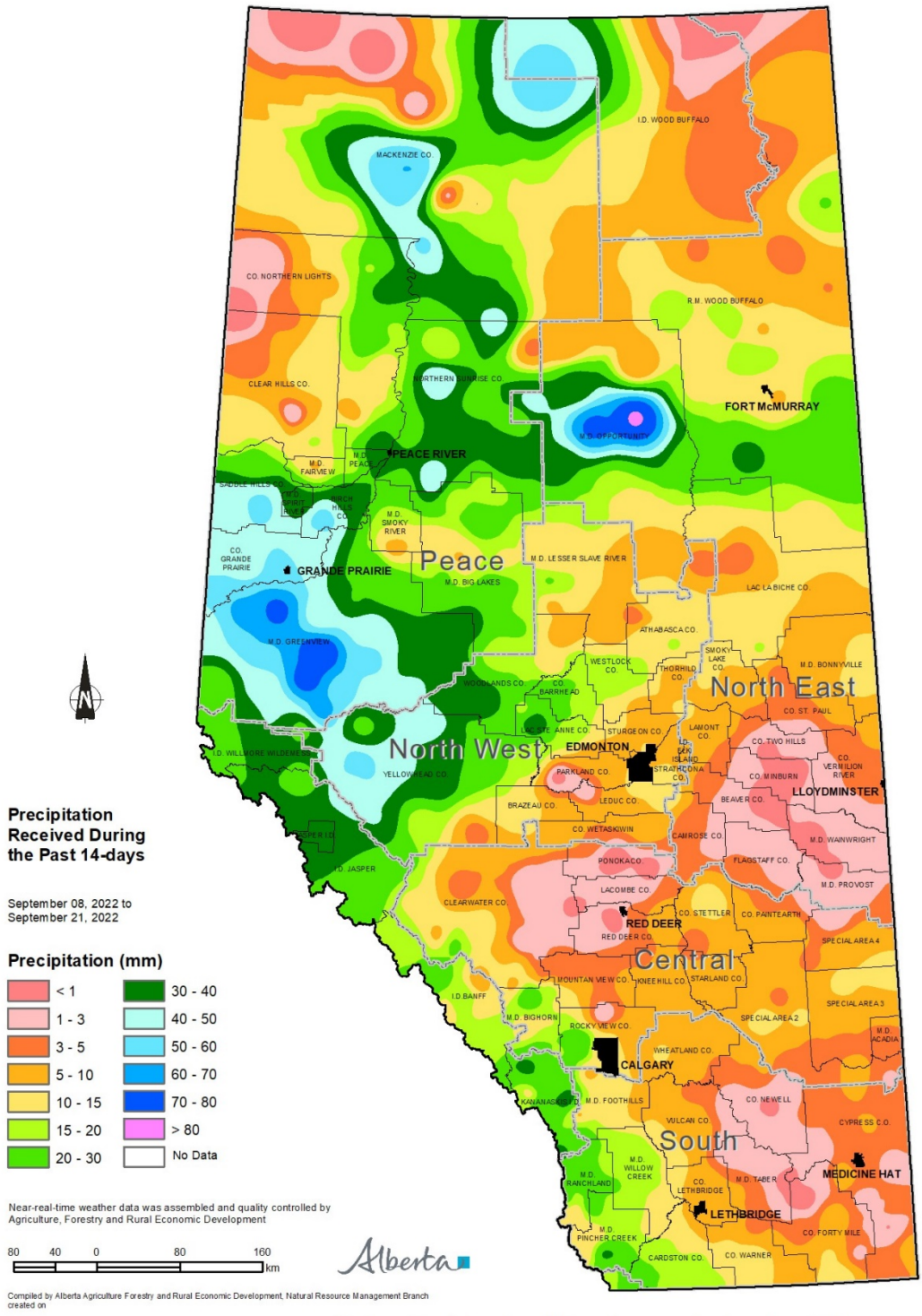
### Perspective

As cold weather descends, the acute need for immediate moisture across agricultural eases significantly with respect to cropping. While many areas are still very dry, harvest has progressed rapidly and pastures and hay land are at or nearing the end of their productive annual growth cycle. Moisture is needed now throughout many areas to build soil moisture reserves and surface water supplies for next year and there is still ample time for this to occur during the remainder of the fall, over winter and into early spring.

Conditions in Alberta can change dramatically over a short period of time. Let the growing season of 2022 serve as a recent reminder of how quickly conditions can reverse. Early this spring many feared the drought of 2021 would continue unabated as dry conditions continued well into May. Fortunately, the weather quickly turned wet for several weeks, and then, just as suddenly, the current drying trend emerged.

It's impossible to predict with accuracy what Mother Nature holds in store for next year's cropping season, and there is still ample time to reverse the overly dry conditions that many areas are currently experiencing.

# Map 1



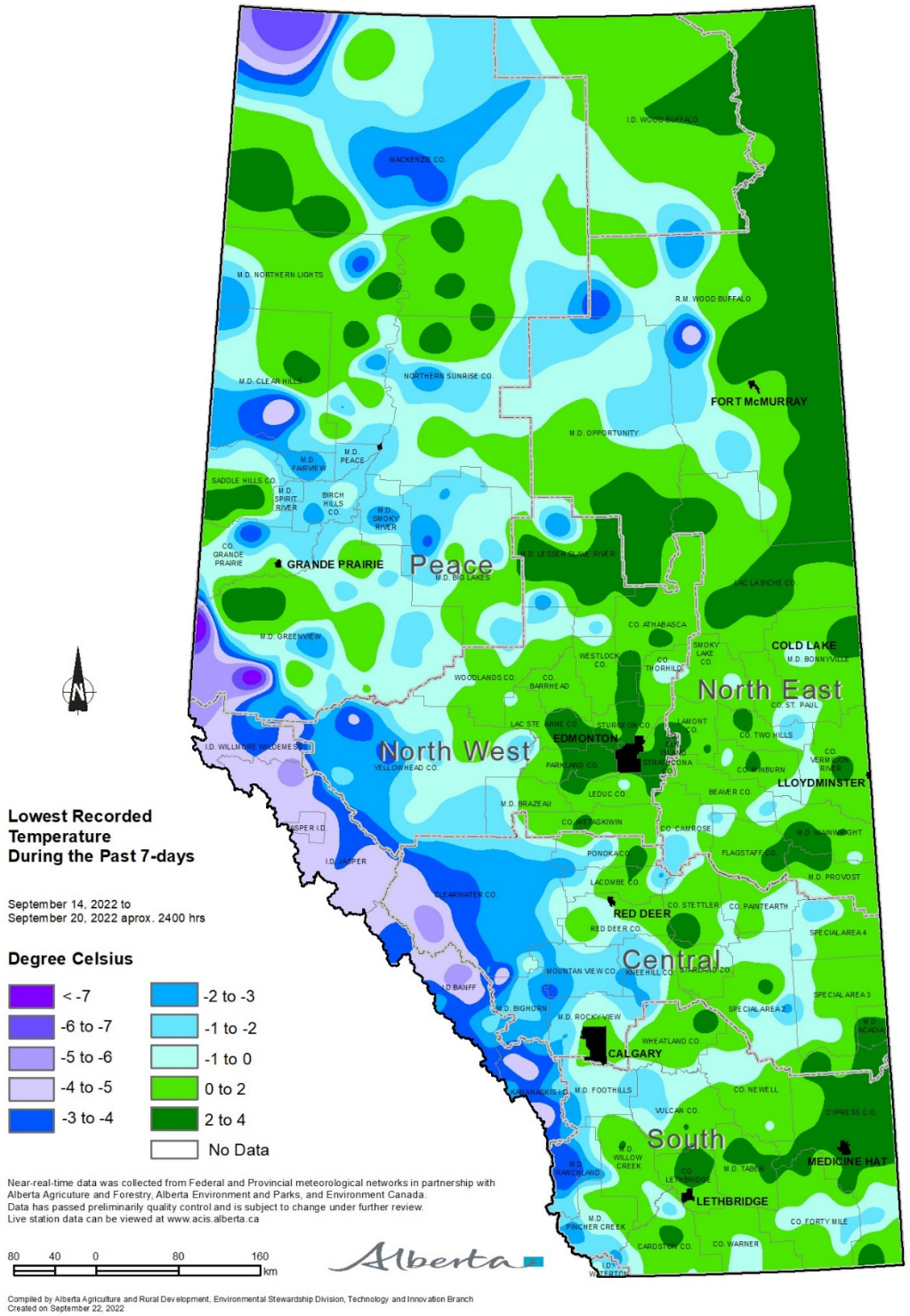
Visit [weatherdata.ca](https://weatherdata.ca) for additional maps and meteorological data

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

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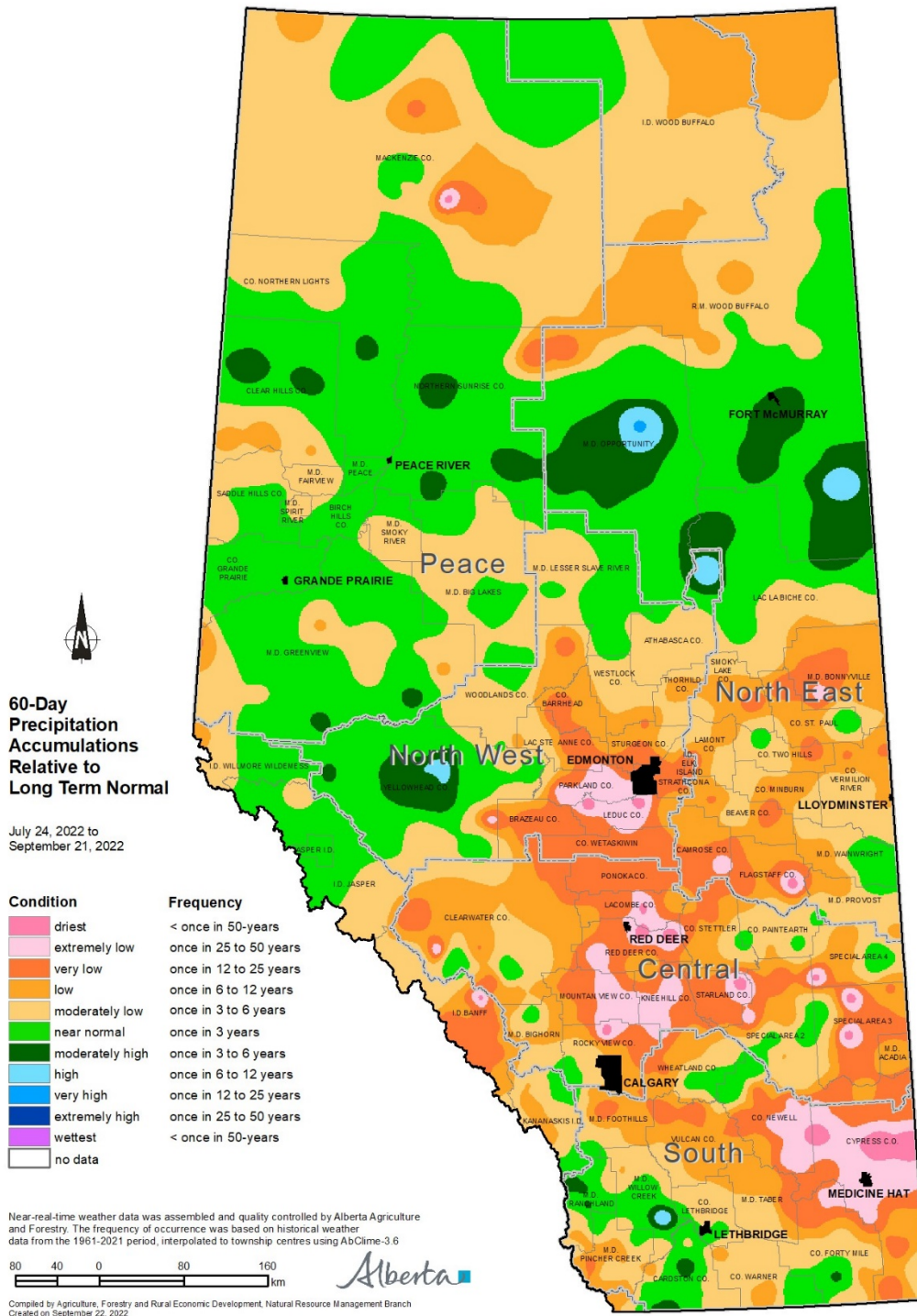


# Map 2



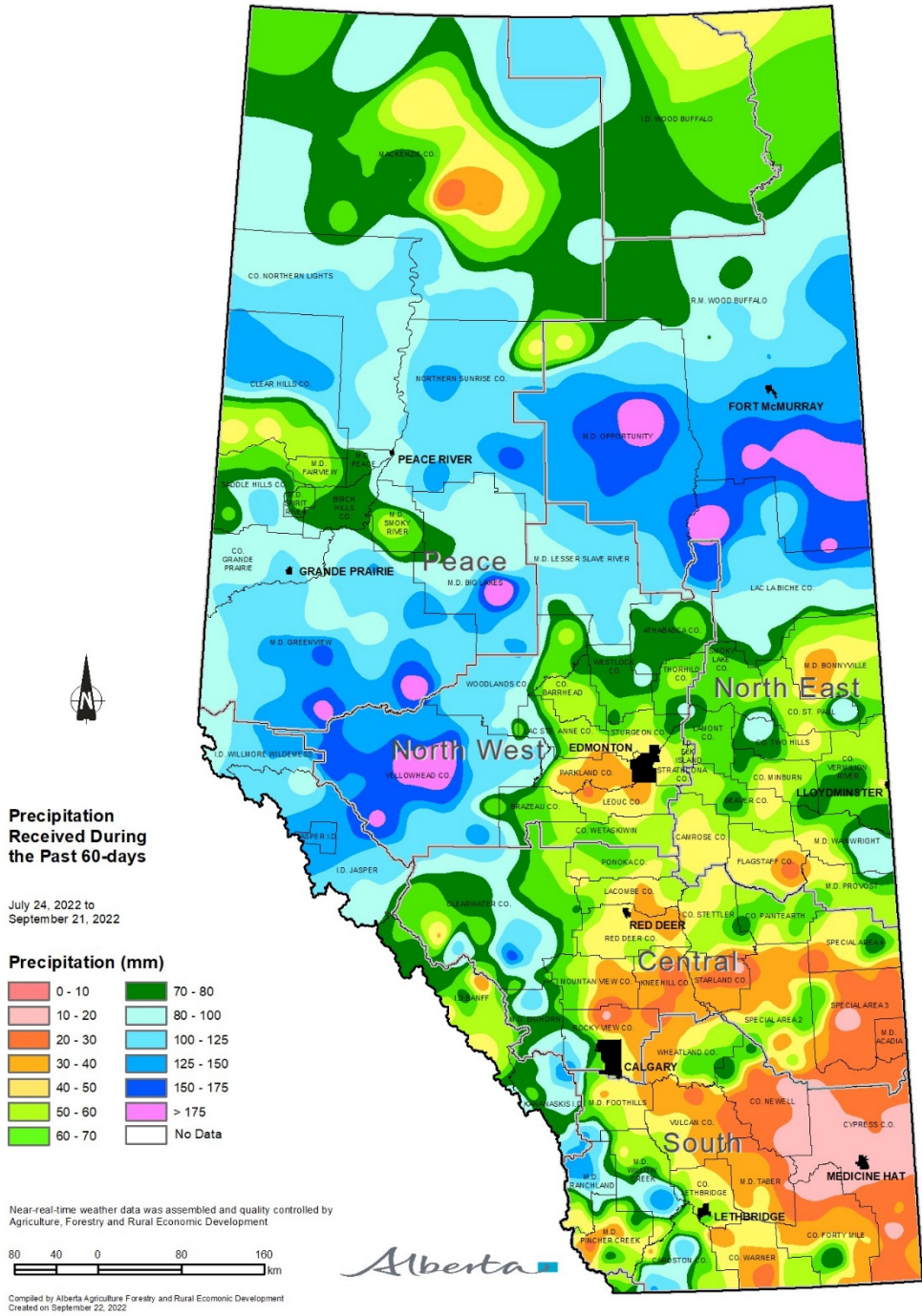


# Map 3



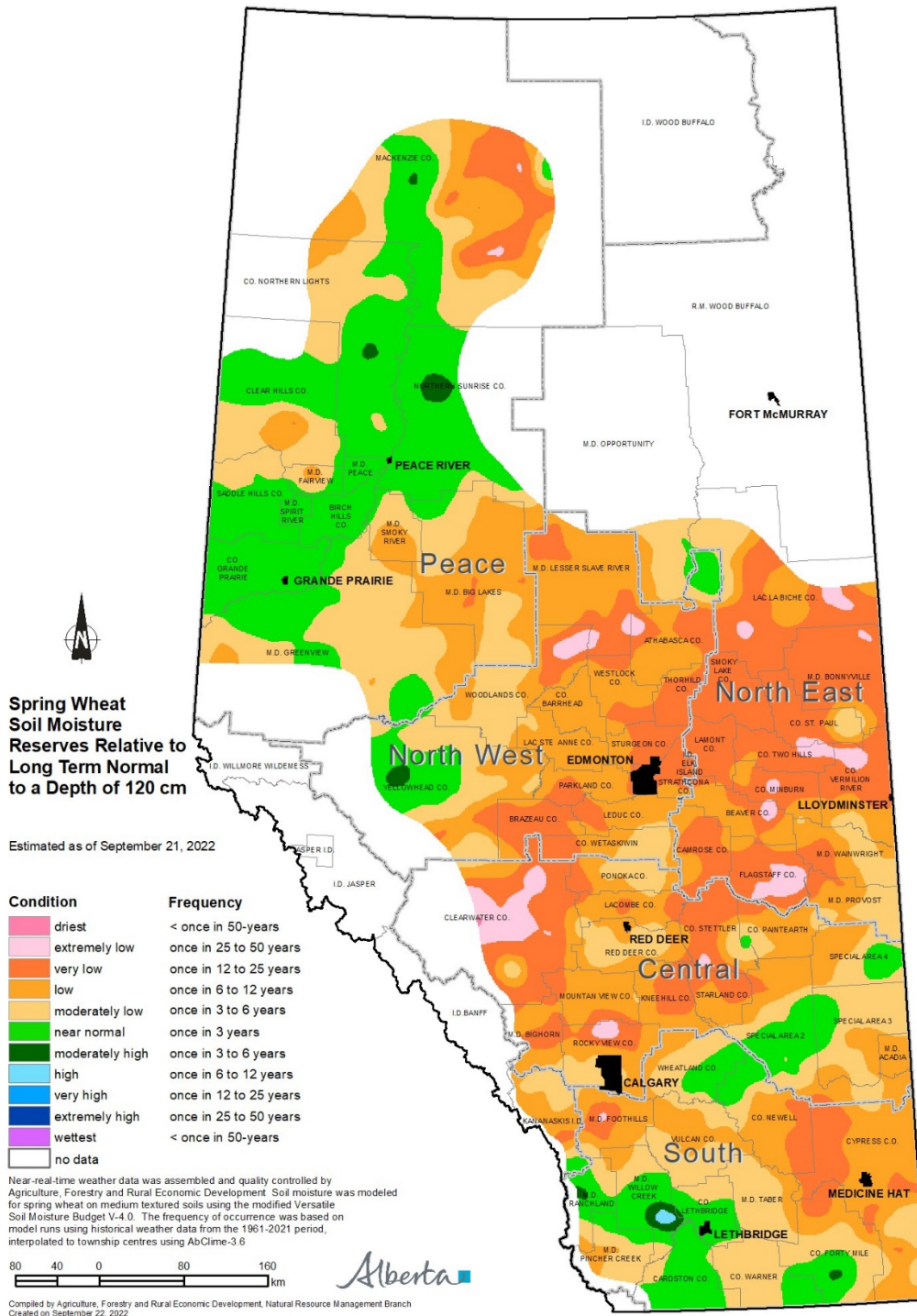
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# Map 4



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# Map 5



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