

Agricultural Moisture Situation Update

March 27, 2022

Synopsis

Since the last report (March 15, 2022) most lands south Red Deer, down to the US border have remained dry (**Map 1**). This is in sharp contrast to many areas across the North East and North West Regions where early spring snows and cooler than average temperatures have been an all too regular occurrence.

Following a long dry winter, moisture is needed desperately across the south-half of the province. This lies in sharp contrast to the northern half of the province where dry and warm weather would be welcome and is needed in order to melt significant winter snowpacks.

90-day precipitation accumulations

Since the start of 2022, most lands lying north of an east-west line near Wetaskiwin have been receiving above normal precipitation (**Map 2**). In sharp contrast most lands south of this line have been experiencing below normal accumulations. Year to date, a large area from Red Deer down to the US border have been this dry on average only once in 6 to 12 years. These areas are in desperate need of moisture now, following a hot dry summer and below normal accumulations throughout the fall and winter of 2021.

Snow Pack conditions as of March 27, 2022

As of writing, most open fields, across the southern-half of the province are generally snow free (**Map 3**). Snow packs increase rapidly moving northward with many areas in the North East and throughout much of the Peace Region estimated to have at least 100 mm of water stored in the snow packs. In these locales, this represents a significant amount of stored water and a rapid melt could lead to excess water in some locales. Both natural and constructed drainages should be kept clear where possible. Warm periods throughout the winter lead to several partial melt episodes and ice build may impede some drainage ways.

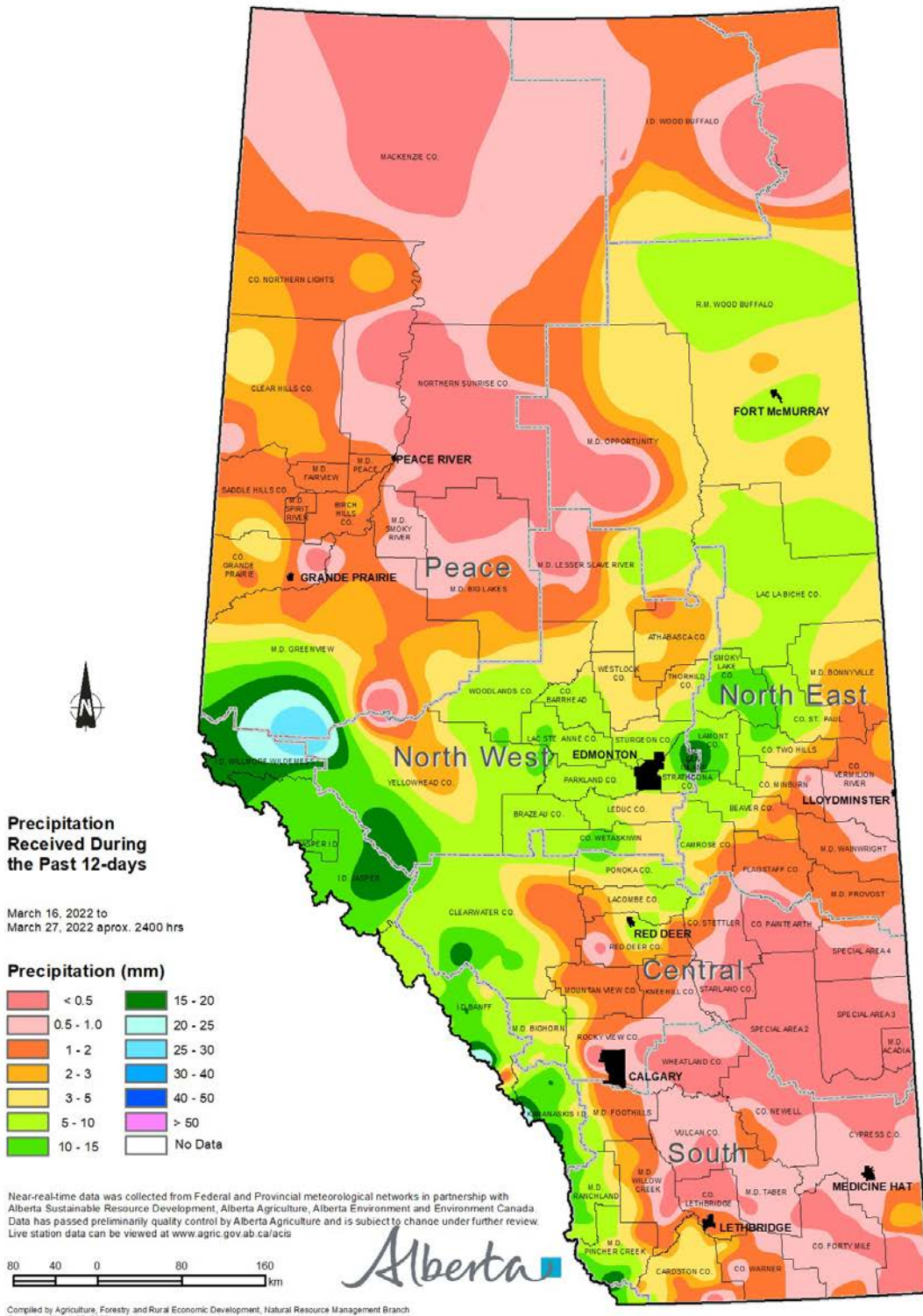
Fortunately, across the north the weather forecast over the next 10-days is calling for near normal temperatures, interspersed with a few days of below normal

temperatures, which should help ease some of the potential for rapid and uncontrolled runoff. Snow packs are now sufficiently “ripe” and are on the verge of releasing water. At this time of year, daily maximum temperatures can be hard to predict. Often they will exceed the forecast highs when it is sunny and relatively calm and snowmelt can be rapid.

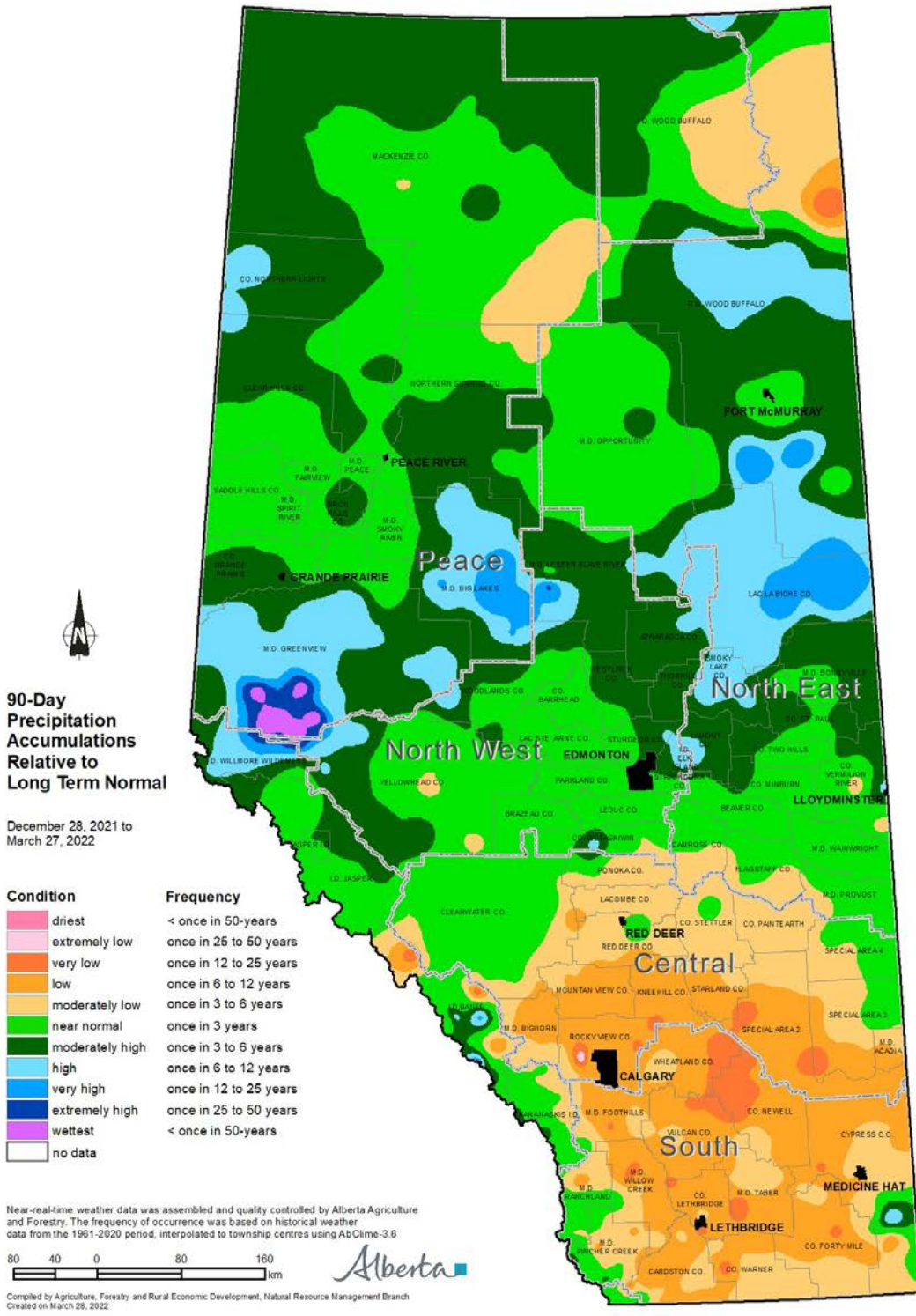
Perspective

As the weather continues to warm, most of the south-half of the province will need moisture very soon. Pastures are beginning to break dormancy and they will need moisture immediately to stimulate good growth following a dry summer, fall and winter.

Map 1

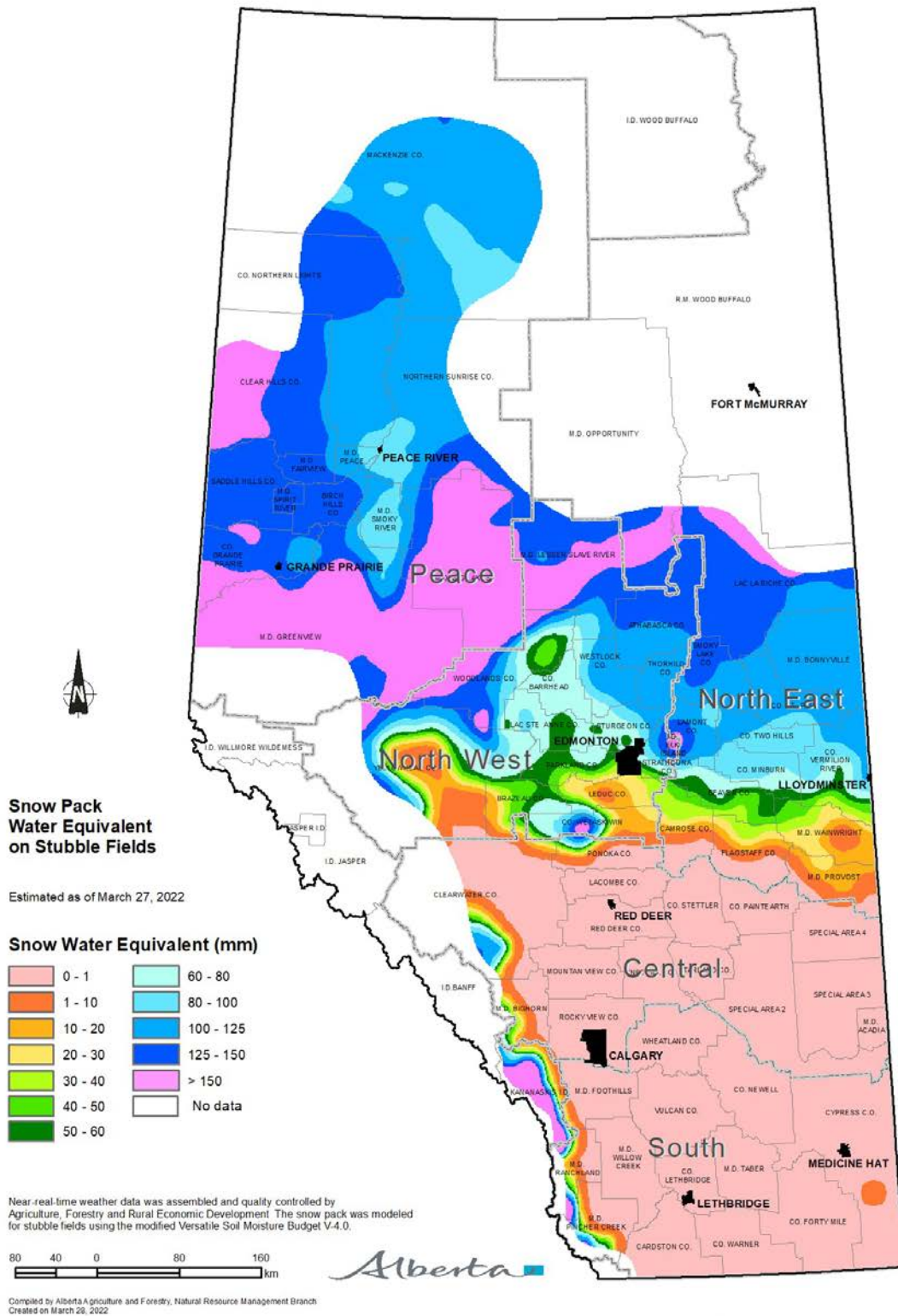


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Map 3



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