

## Moisture Situation Update – July 3, 2013

### Synopsis:

Across most of the agricultural areas of the province warm weather over the past few days has seen temperatures get as high as 30 to 35 degrees. Province-wide, growing season precipitation received to date is near normal or above, with the exception of a few areas experiencing 1 in 6 year lows, (extreme north, as well as through the St. Paul area). Similarly, soil moisture reserves are generally near normal across about half of the province, with some widely scattered areas experiencing at least 1 in 12 year lows. However, in these drier areas precipitation over the past 30-days has generally been adequate to sustain crop growth. In contrast, central parts of the province with excess moisture are likely looking for a break from rainy skies.

### Forecast From ESRD's fire weather section (Thanks to Alice OU)

- Starting tomorrow (Thursday June 4th), an upper-level low pressure trough will move through the southwestern portions of the province, sweeping northwards through the Peace Region, by the weekend. This system is expected to bring rain and showers to much of the west-half of the province, with localized accumulations of no more than about 40 mm expected.
- Early next week it appears that a ridge of high pressure will begin to build over the province again, bringing a return to very warm weather, at least for a few days; however, this ridge of high pressure is not expected to persist to long, with another cooler moist air mass likely to take its place a few days later.
- Please bear in mind that accurate long range forecasts (greater than 3-days) are difficult to make and as always Alberta's weather remains quite unpredictable.

### Growing season precipitation accumulations relative to long term normal April 1 to July 2, 2013 - see map

- Most agricultural areas of the province have seen at least near normal growing season precipitation accumulations so far this year.
- The driest areas can be found in and around St. Paul, with some locals seeing accumulations this low on average about once in 12-years.
- In contrast, many areas between Nordegg and the southwestern parts of the Province see growing season accumulations this high less than once in 50-years.
- Some prime agricultural land between Red Deer and Calgary has had extremely high accumulations thus far, seeing this much, on average less than once in 25-years.

### Soil moisture reserves relative to long term normal as of July 2, 2013 -see map

- Generally south of Red Deer, soil moisture reserves are at least near normal with the exception of a wide swath of land classified as moderate low (1 in 3 years), that can be found between Medicine Hat and Strathmore.
- North of Red Deer the situation is mixed, ranging from one in 25-year lows through the central parts of Lake Land County, to one in 6-year highs in and around the town of Peace River.
- At the current time, low soil moisture reserves are likely not causing any immediate concern as a result of well-timed rainfall. However these areas are at risk of moisture stress, should a moderately long spell of hot and dry weather persist.

### Perspective:

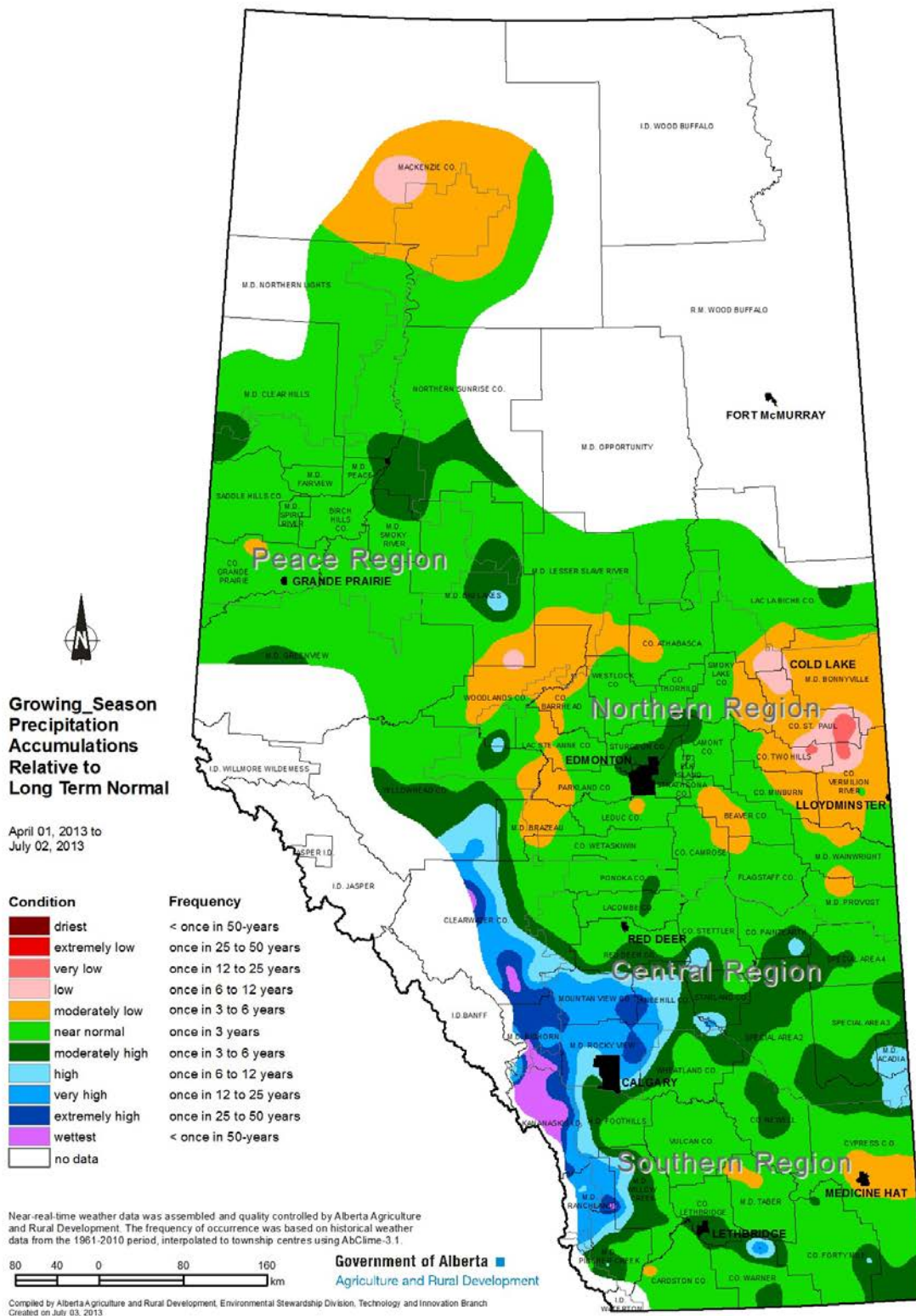
- Once again Alberta is a land of stark contrasts, ranging from extreme flooding in through the Calgary region, to notably dry conditions through the northeast.
- Through the dry areas, timely rains are generally leading to adequate crop growth.
- Across the wet areas, standing water in low lying field areas, may be hampering field activities and reducing yields, but elevated, well drained areas will be seeing vigorous growth.

**Near-real-time hourly station** data can be viewed/[downloaded](#) at [www.agriculture.alberta.ca/stations](http://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)

### Ralph Wright

Agrometeorology Applications and Modelling Section, ARD

# Moisture Situation Update – July 3, 2013



# Moisture Situation Update – July 3, 2013

