

Moisture Situation Update – October 3, 2016

Synopsis

Weather this harvest season has generally been characterized by a series of short duration wet and dry episodes alternating, back to back. As a result, relatively long stretches of warm dry weather, which is ideal for harvest, have been absent. This past weekend was a prime example of the weather patterns of late, with relatively dry weather during the weekdays, followed by a cool and wet weekend. Between Thursday (Sept 29th), and Sunday (Oct 2nd), all but the southern portions of the province, received at least 5 mm of moisture, with large parts of the north-half of the province receiving well over 20 mm (**see map 1**). Across parts of the Peace Region, and at higher elevations snow, was reported.

Since mid-September, most of the agricultural areas north of Red Deer have received above average precipitation accumulations with many areas north and west of the city of Edmonton experiencing conditions this wet, on average, less than once in 12 to 25 years (**see map 2**). This has contributed to at least average growing season moisture province wide, with some widely scattered areas receiving growing season accumulations this great, on average less than once 25-years (**see map 3**).

While for many excess moisture has been a hindrance to harvesting operations, it resulted in well above normal soil moisture reserves across more than 50% of the province (**see map 4**). As a result, most of these areas will likely see deeper soil moisture reserves persist into the early part of the next growing season, helping crop next year get through drier stretches of weather. In addition, pasture lands where moisture reserves are currently well above average are likely to have adequate moisture, allowing a good start to the season.

Forecaster's comments from AF's Fire Weather Section

Weather patterns over the past several weeks have been cycling in a wave like pattern, between alternating high pressure ridges (dry) and low pressure troughs (wet). Looking out over the next several days, this pattern is unlikely to change, with cool moist weather moving in briefly over this weekend, followed by a warmer, drier pattern next week with early indications suggesting another wet episode to follow. Beyond this, it's difficult to predict accurately what the weather will bring.

Real Time Radar can be used to track and monitor thunderstorms at:

<http://www.agric.gov.ab.ca/acis/weather-radar.jsp>

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.

Ralph Wright

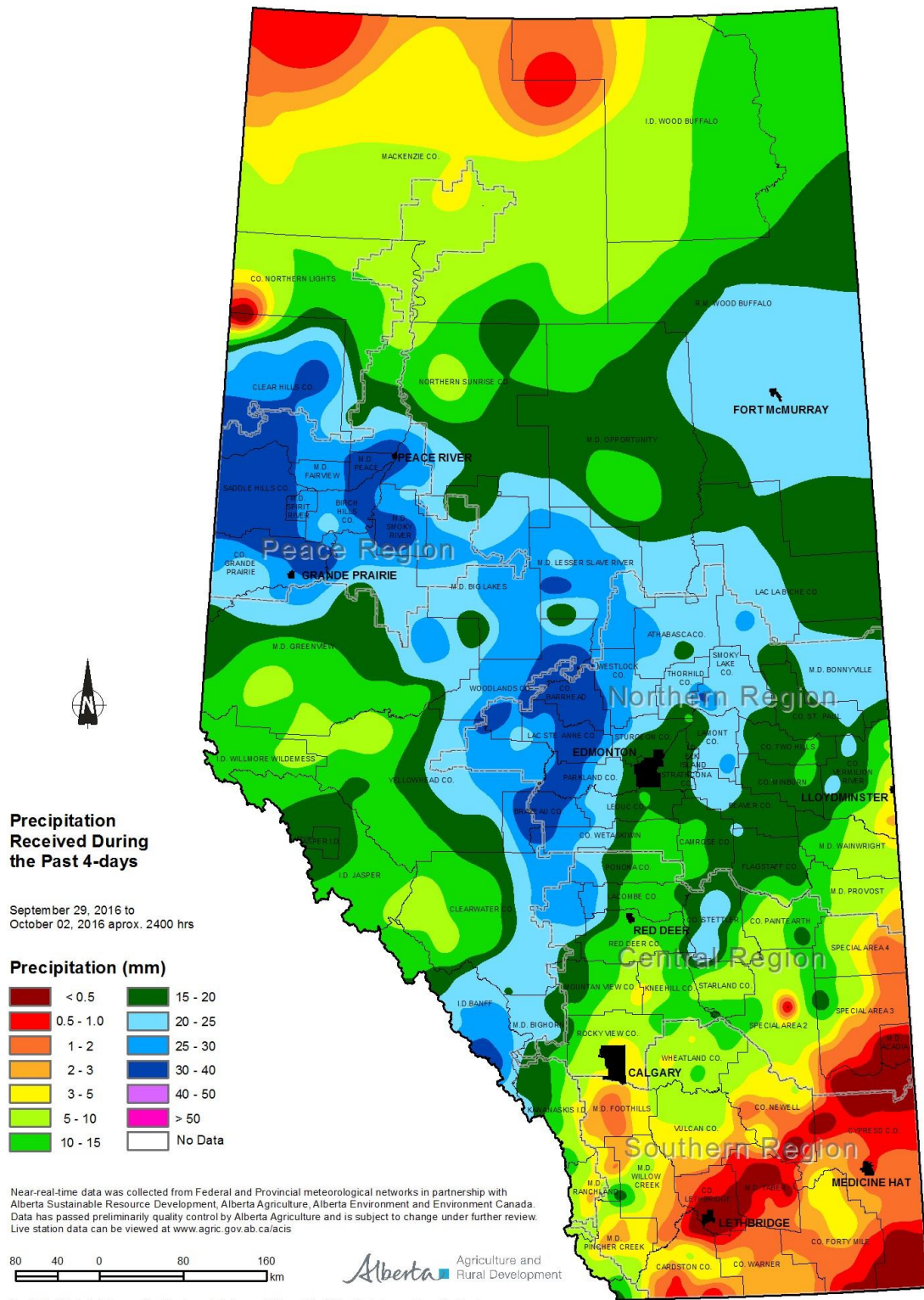
Manager, Agro-meteorological Applications and Modelling Section

Alberta Agriculture and Forestry

Phone: 780-446-6831

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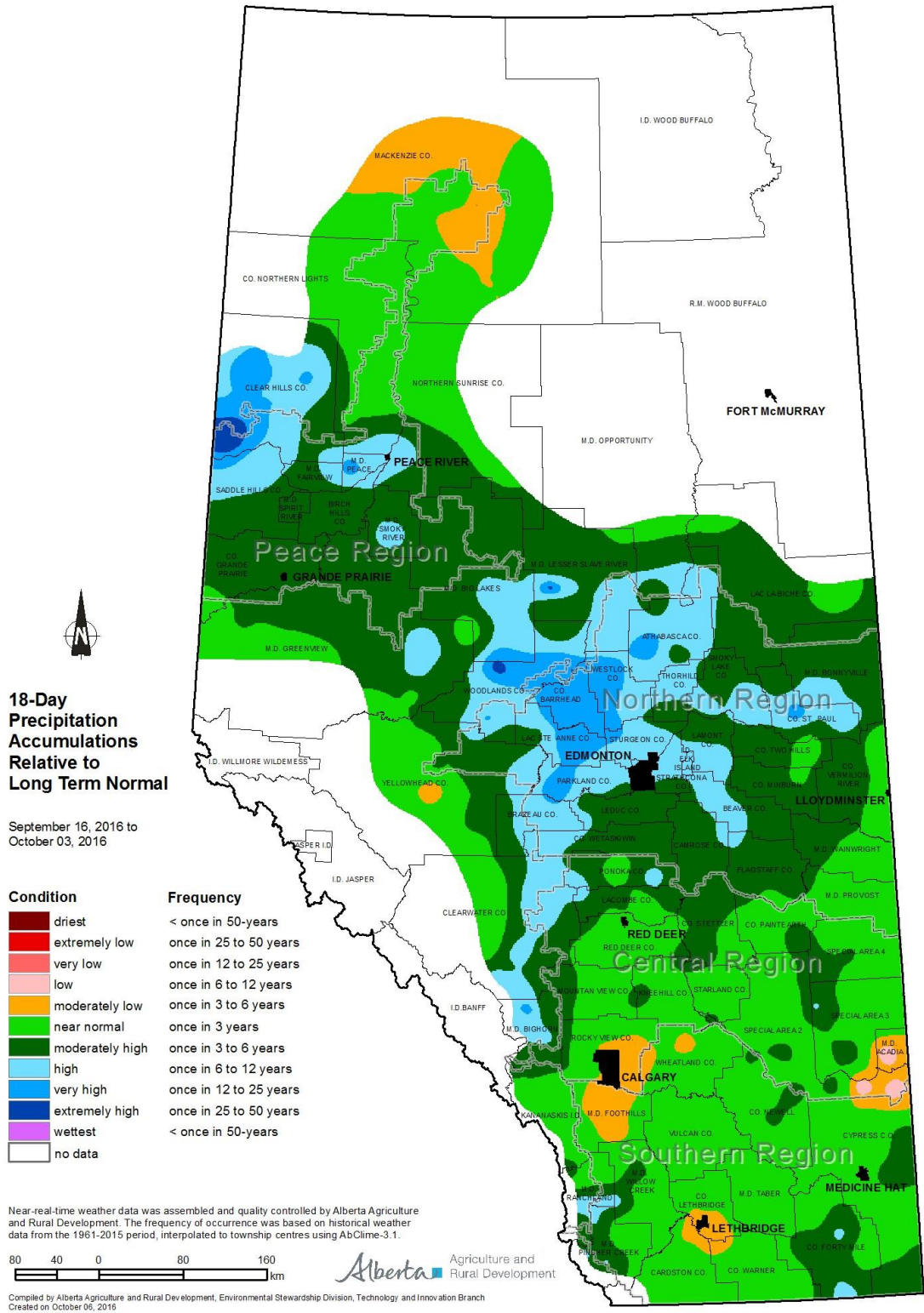
Map 1



Visit weatherdata.ca for additional maps and meteorological data

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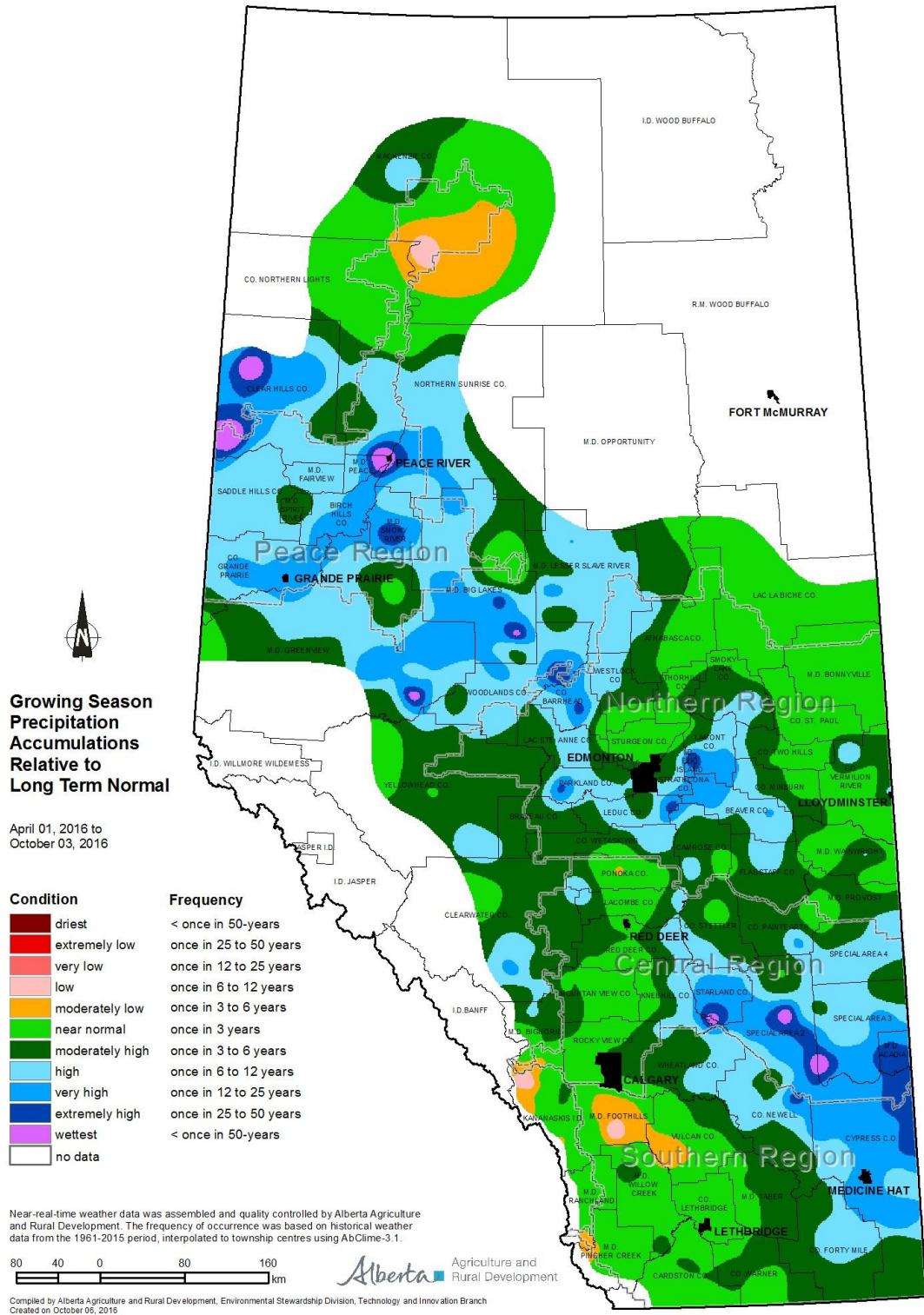
Map 2



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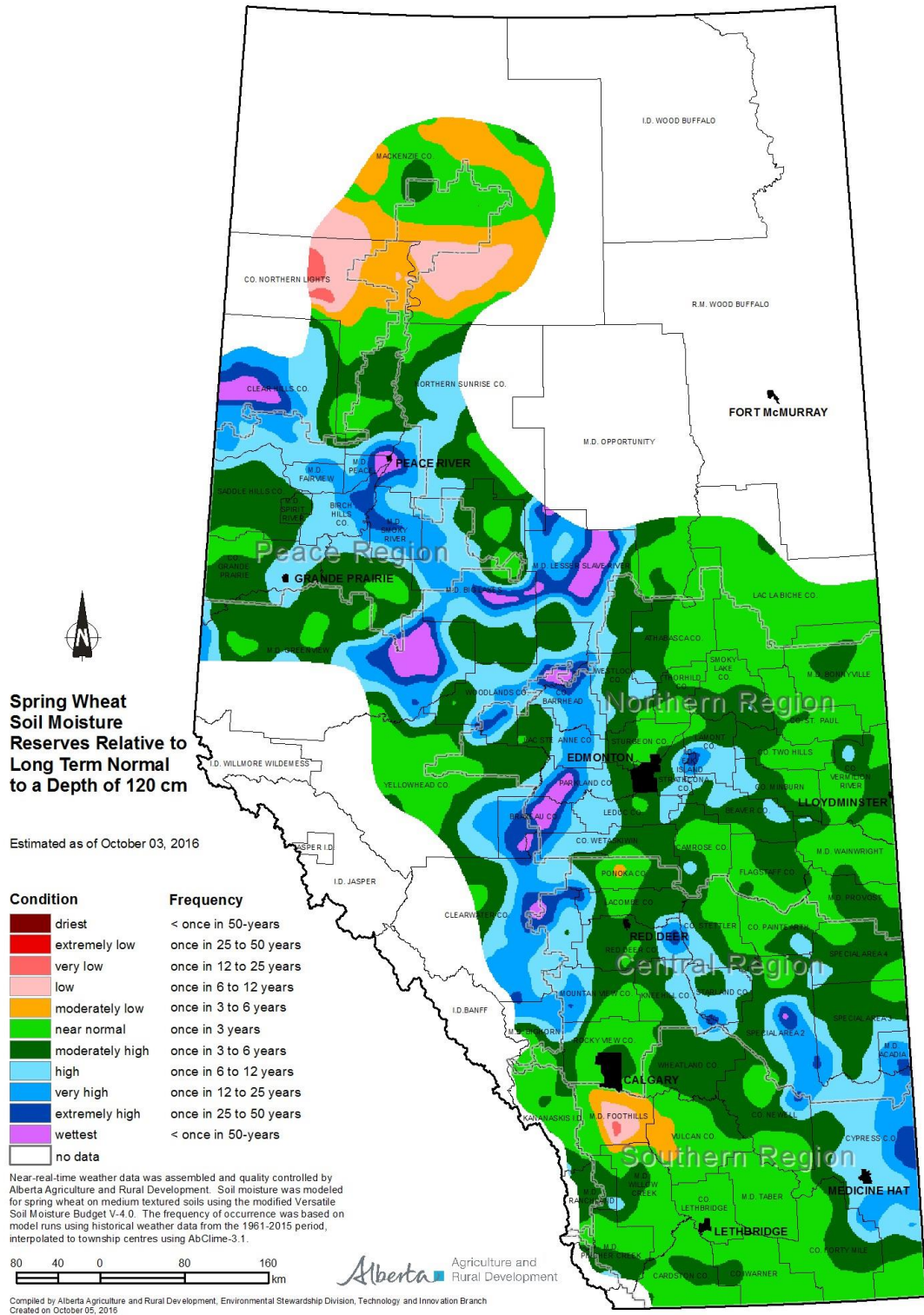
Map 3



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Map 4



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