

Moisture Situation Update – April 17, 2018

Synopsis:

As of April 15, snow packs were generally well above normal across the entire province, mostly due to a significantly delayed spring melt. This has been particularly evident throughout much of southern Alberta, where lingering snows in some areas were estimated to be at 1 in 50 year highs (**see map 1**). Interestingly enough, these unusual snow packs were not the result of extremely excessive over winter precipitation accumulations (**see map 2**), but rather more so due to the absence of brief warming trends brought on by Chinook winds that typically lay the land bare. In fact, since late December, most areas here experienced very little melting at all, with temperature regimes in some areas estimated to be at 1 in 50-year lows, over the past 90 days (**see map 3**).

Elsewhere over winter precipitation accumulations ranged from well below normal across much of the North East, to about one in six year highs though some parts of the southern Peace Region (**see map 1**). Despite a dry winter across the North East, the delayed spring melt, has led to lingering snowpacks that, as of April 17, were estimated to be a one in three to 6 year highs.

Perspective

While spring is late in arriving, current weather forecasts, are now pointing to near to above average temperatures over the next several days, with relatively dry conditions set to prevail. At this time of year, the days are now longer and the sun is much higher in the sky, providing strong snow melt potential. This should result in a rapid retreat of winter snows and good drying conditions, provided that spring rains hold off for now.

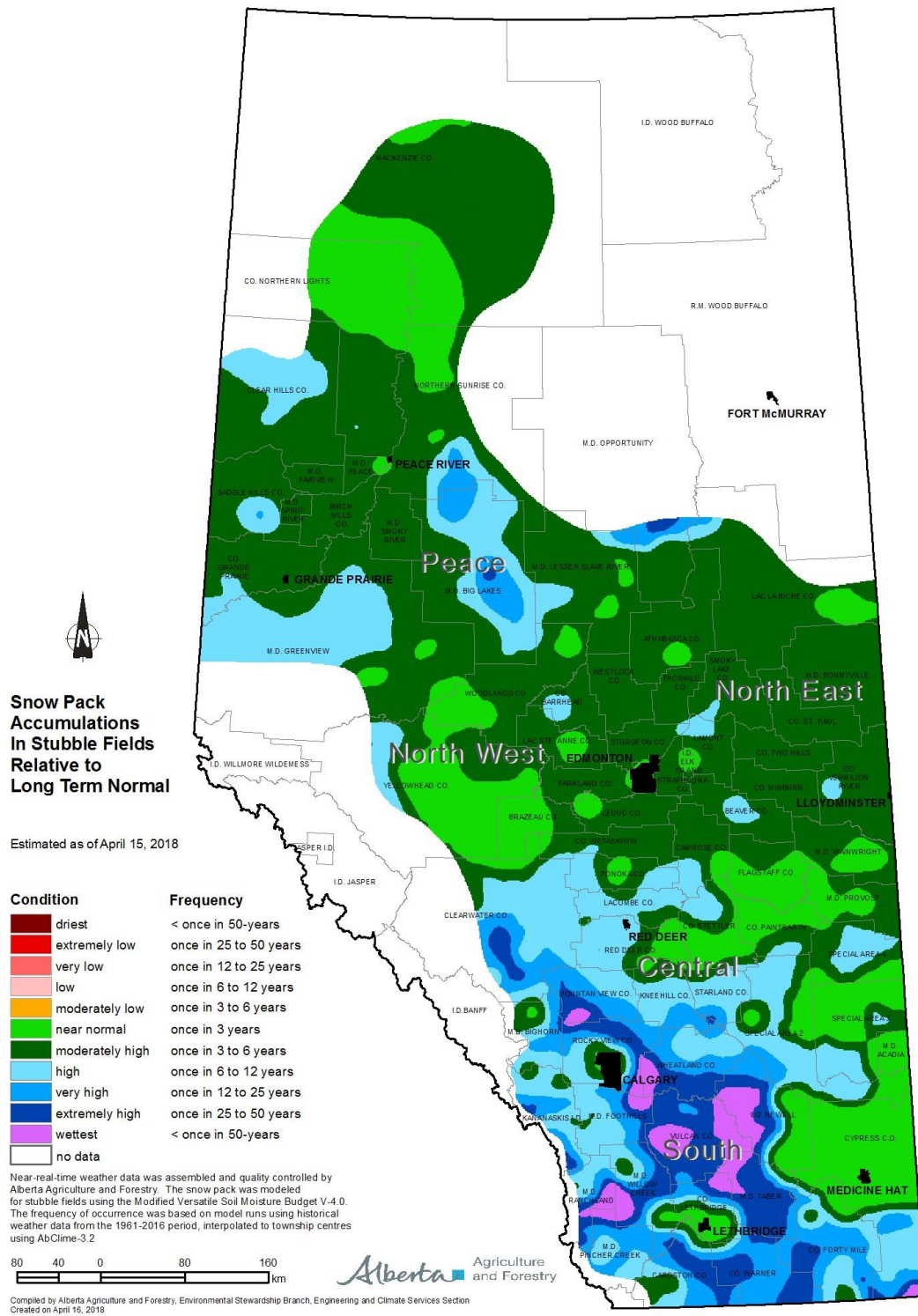
Near-real-time hourly station data can be viewed/downloaded at www.agriculture.alberta.ca/stations

Note: Data has about a two hour lag and is displayed in MST.

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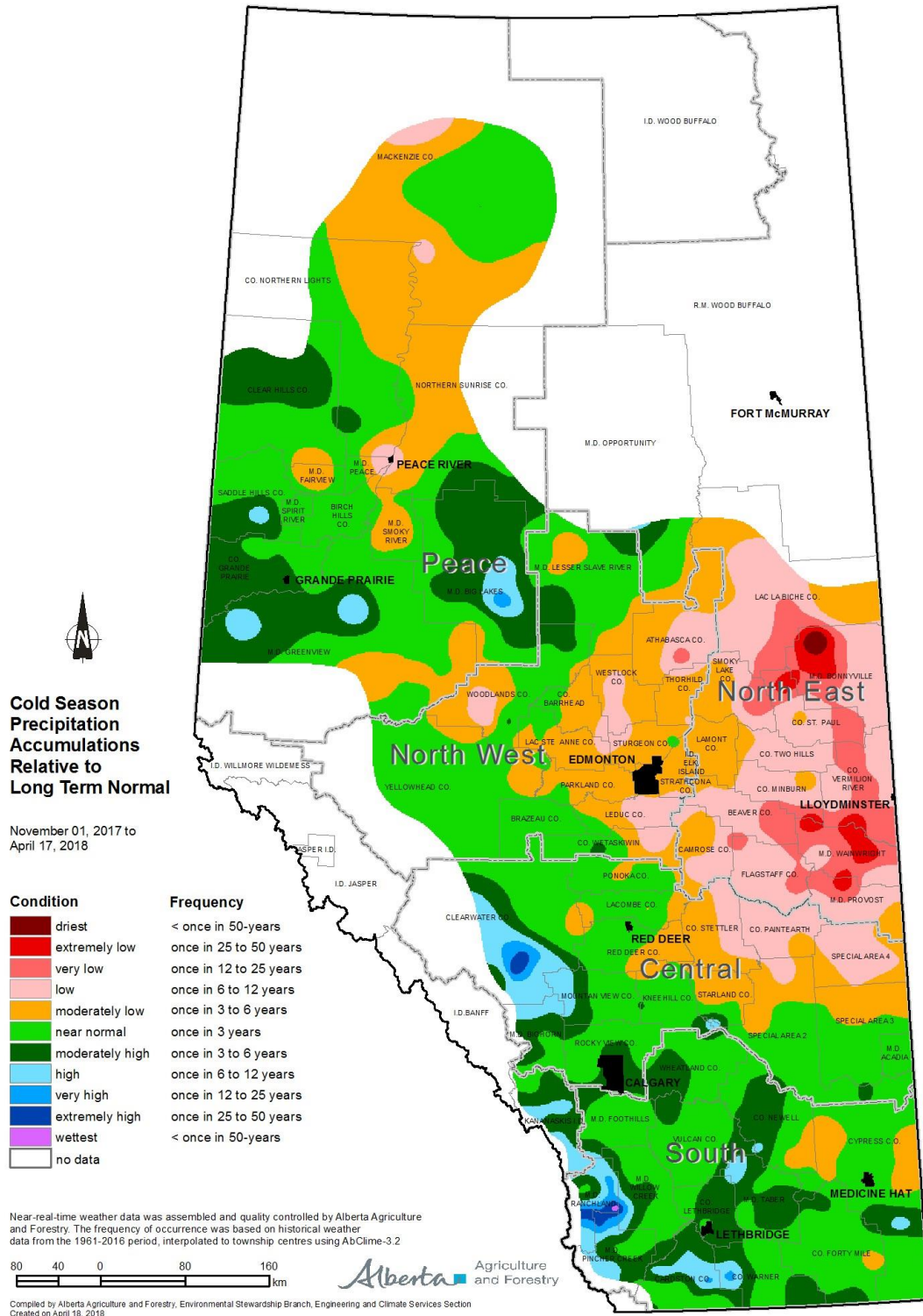
Map 1



Visit weatherdata.ca for additional maps and meteorological data

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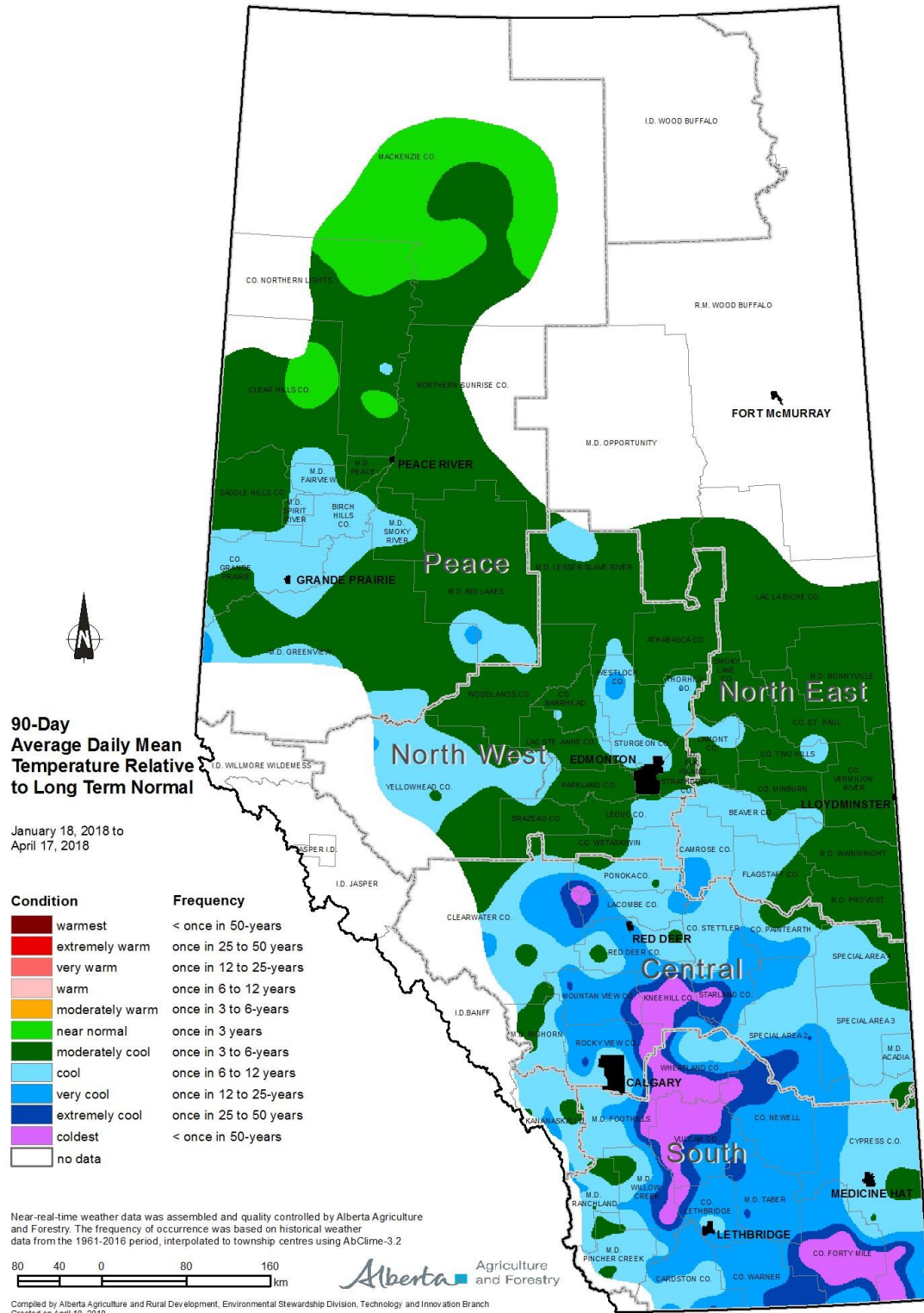
Map 2



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Map 3



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