

Moisture Situation Update – April 18, 2017

Synopsis

Over the Easter long weekend a major storm event brought between 20 to 60 mm of precipitation to a large area of the province lying generally north of Wetaskiwin, extending well up into to the central Peace Region (**see map 1**). For many areas north of the Yellowhead Highway, this translated to fresh snow fall accumulations that exceeded depths of 30 cm in some places. The areas that received the most precipitation included:

- M.D of Bonneville and much of Lac La Biche County (50 mm).
- Swan Hills and Woodlands County (Upwards of 60 mm)
- The western Peace Region centered on Saddle Hills County (upwards of 60 mm).

For most of the north-half of the province, March 28th marked an abrupt end to the dry conditions extending back into mid-November 2016. During the three weeks since March 28, above average moisture has fallen, with many areas north of the Yellowhead Highway, seeing accumulations this great, less than once in 50-years (**see map 2**). However, of note is the fact that the northern tip of the Peace Region (Fort Vermillion and surrounds) still remains relatively dry, running about 70% of normal year over year (one in 12 to 15 year lows). Lands in this area would benefit greatly from above average precipitation over the coming growing season.

Perspective

Historically, in an average year (more than 50% of the time) most areas north of Red Deer are not snow free by April 18th (**see map 3**). At this time of year, soils here are typically frozen or very wet, and unlike last year accessing land with heavy machinery in mid-April is typically not possible. Fortunately, the remaining snowpack is currently melting rapidly, and standing and running water are evident in many areas. Once the soils thaw, standing water should recede faster, provided that normal or drier than normal conditions prevail.

Additional maps can be found at www.agriculture.alberta.ca/maps

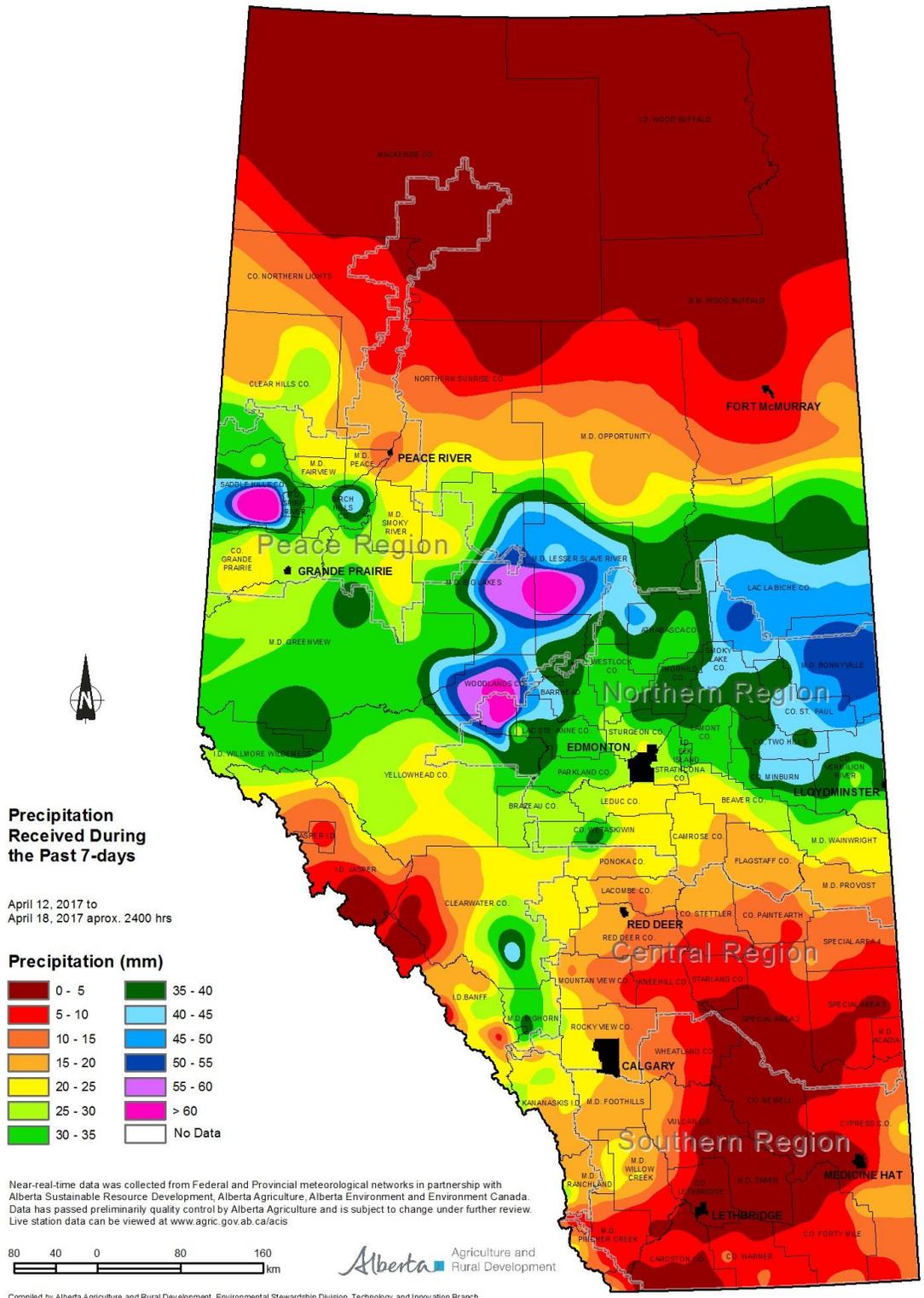
Near-real-time hourly station data can be viewed/downloaded at www.agriculture.alberta.ca/stations

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

Ralph Wright
Manager, Agro-meteorological Applications and Modelling Unit
Alberta Agriculture and Forestry
Phone: 780-446-6831

Moisture Situation Update – April 18, 2017

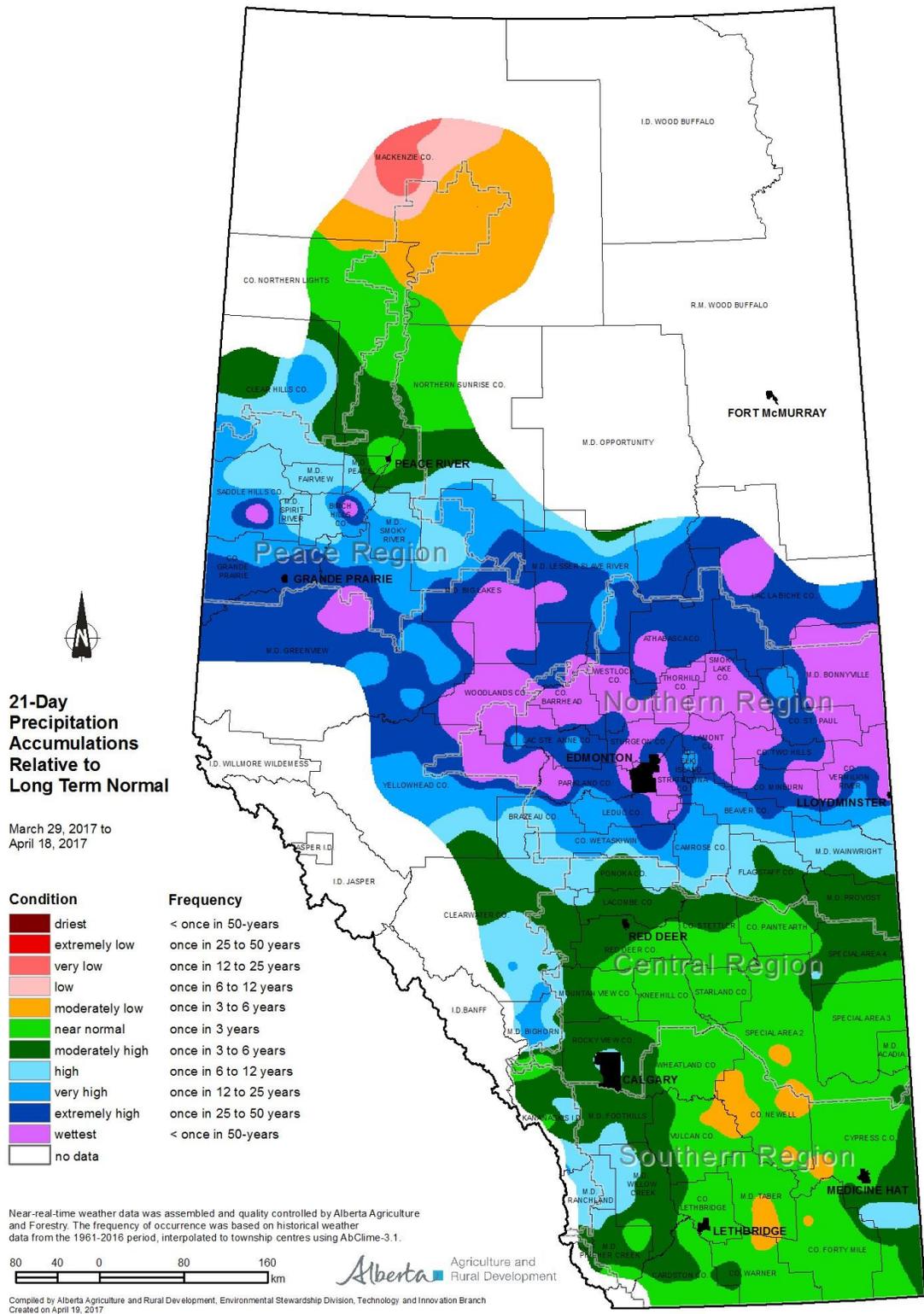
Map 1



Visit weatherdata.ca for additional maps and meteorological data

Moisture Situation Update – April 18, 2017

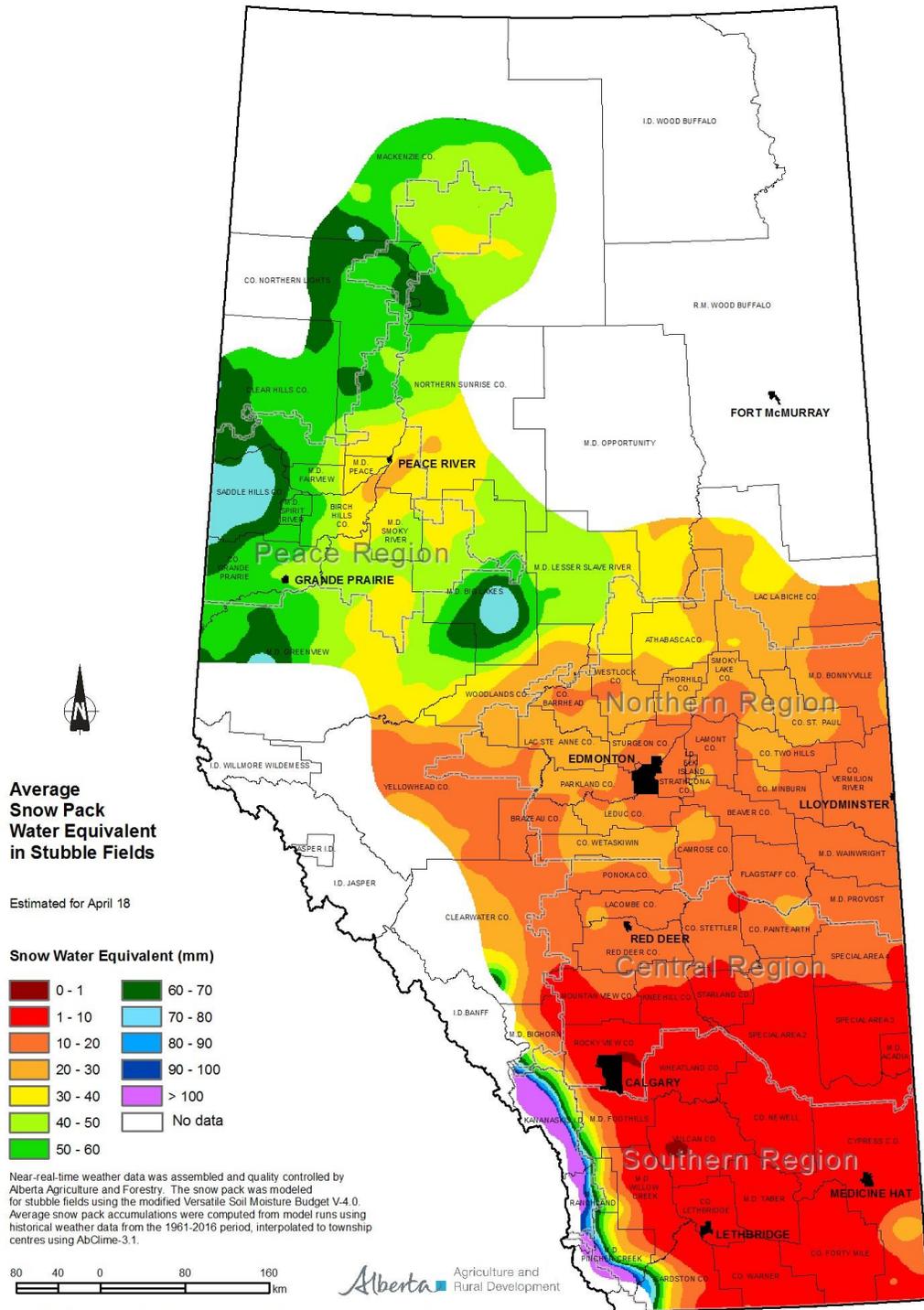
Map 2



Visit weatherdata.ca for additional maps and meteorological data

Moisture Situation Update – April 18, 2017

Map 3



Visit weatherdata.ca for additional maps and meteorological data