

Moisture Situation Update – November 6, 2016

Synopsis

October 2016, was unseasonably cool and wet across most of the province. This was particularly true for lands north of the Yellowhead Highway, as well as many other areas, west of Highway 2, stretching roughly from Red Deer, well up into the western Peace Region (**see map 1**). Across these areas precipitation accumulations ranged from 40 to 80 mm, with much of the province north of Red Deer covered in a substantial, but temporary, snow fall by October 17th. This moisture, coupled with cool weather, made harvesting some crops very difficult.

As of November 6th, soil moisture reserves are well above average for almost all agricultural areas of the province, with some areas estimated to have levels this high on average less than once in 50-years (**see map 2**). This is largely due to excessive accumulations of moisture that began in late August, following a major storm system that brought well over 100 mm of rain to many areas west of Highway 2, affecting a wide area stretching from Sundre through to Athabasca and beyond. Since then, wet weather has persisted, with total precipitation accumulations ranging from 150 mm to well over 250 mm (**see map 3**). This has resulted in soil moisture levels that are at or near capacity, making field access difficult for many with crops still awaiting harvest (**see map 4**). The areas that are most likely to be affected are depicted in blue on map 4. These areas are generally west of Highway 2 ranging from as far south as the US border, all the way to the town of Peace River. However, several other wet areas do exist along the Red Deer-Edmonton corridor and across many other areas extending through the Lake County, north of the Yellowhead Highway and east of Highway 2.

Forecaster's comments from AF's Fire Weather Section

Today's weather map is quite complex with many variables affecting conditions to come. Currently, Alberta is under the influence of a warm high pressure ridge. Tomorrow a weak disturbance will move through, likely bringing showers along the foothills between Edson and Rocky Mountain House. The ridge will then rebuild, bringing warm weather to most of the province. By Saturday a brief cooling trend will develop, resulting in isolated and windy conditions over the weekend.

Note that although unseasonably warm weather will dominate over the next several days, drying conditions are not expected to be ideal. At this time there appears to be no major dome of cold arctic air likely to invade Alberta, at least in the short term.

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

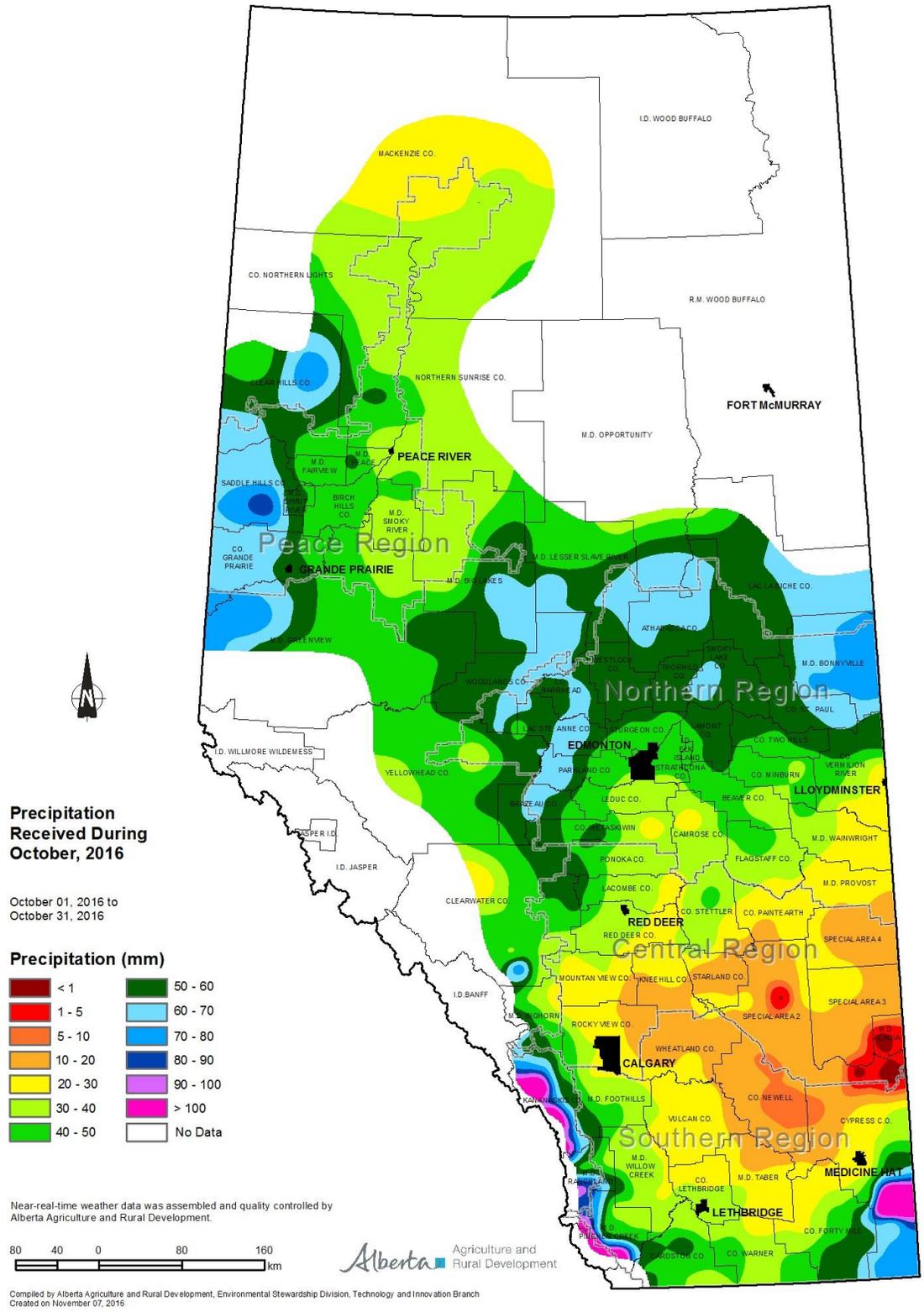
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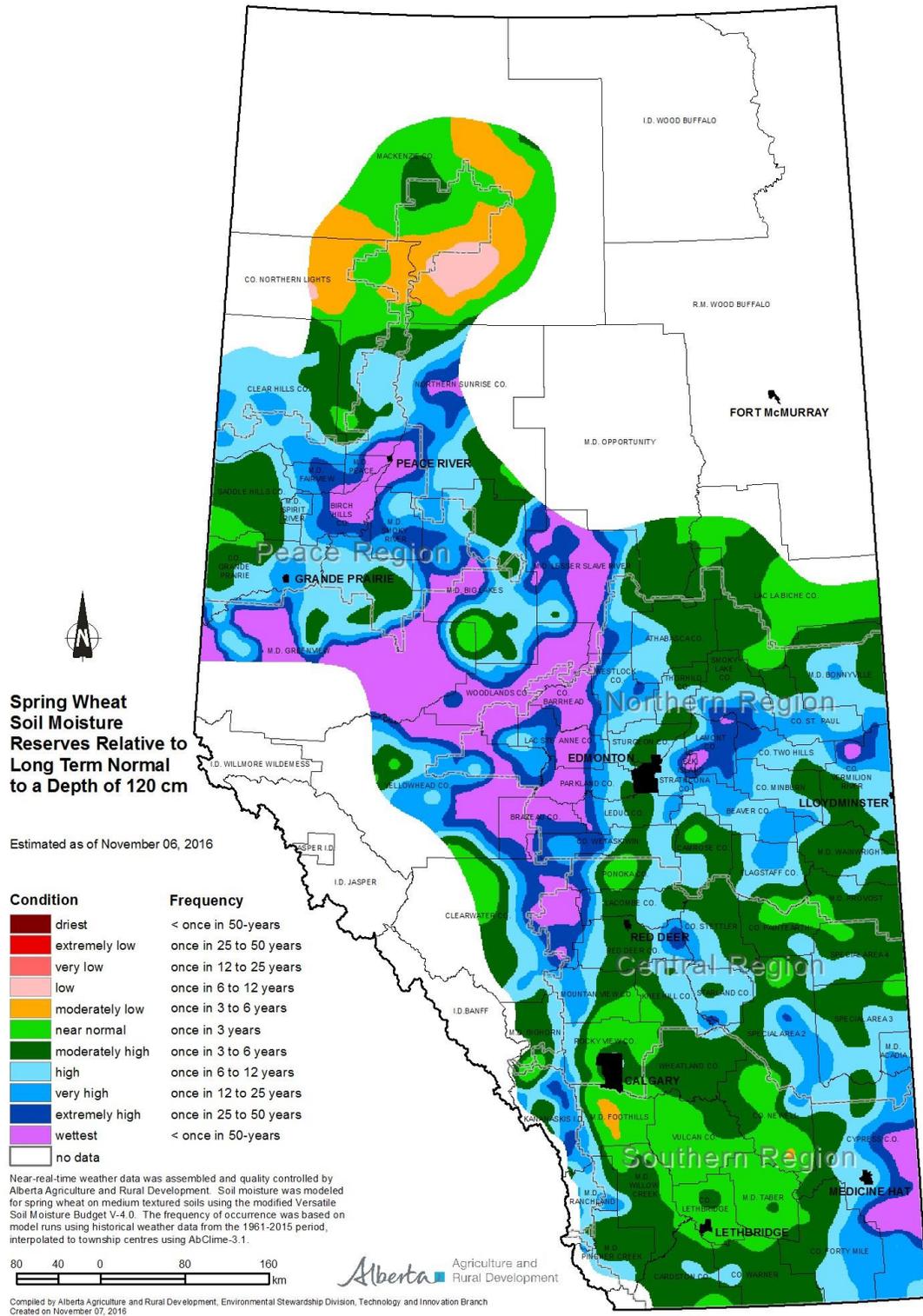
Map 1



Visit weatherdata.ca for additional maps and meteorological data

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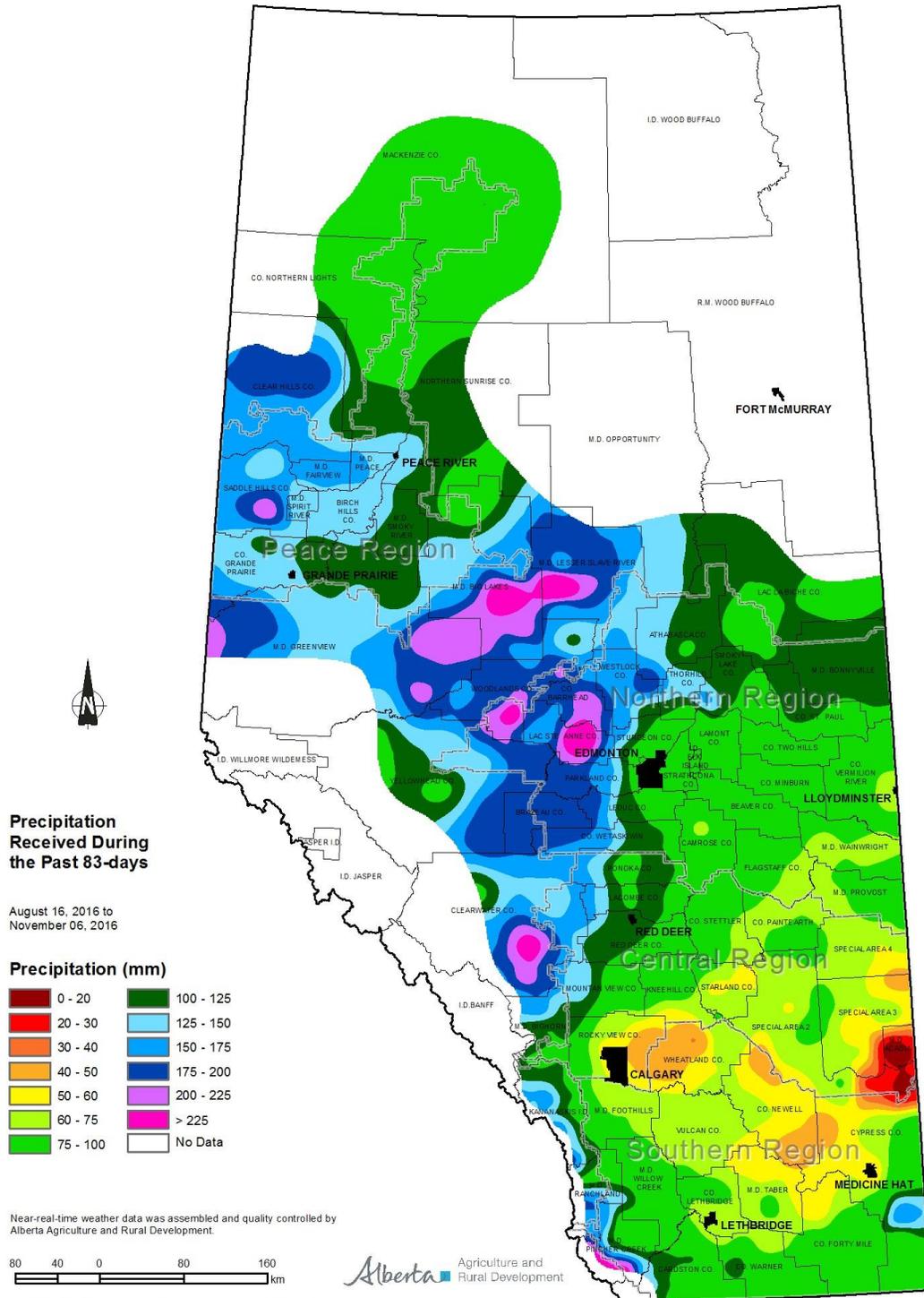
Map 2



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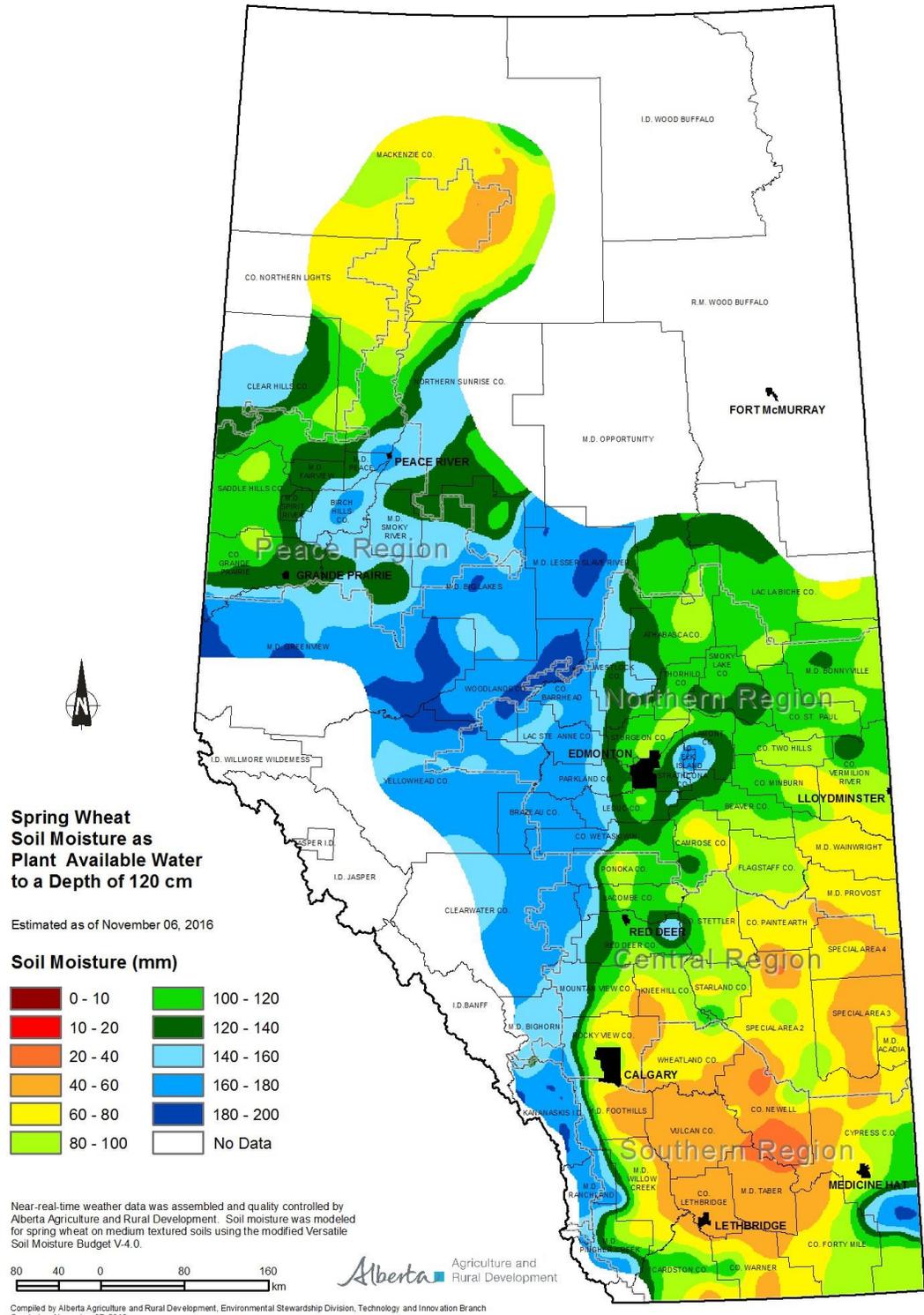
Map 3



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Map 4



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