



Water Supply Outlook Overview

For Immediate Release: August 11, 2004

July rain generally above normal in the plains; below normal in the mountains

July precipitation was generally above normal in northern plains areas and normal to above normal in southern plains areas of Alberta. However, below to much below normal precipitation was recorded in the mountains, in the High Level and Fort McMurray areas and in a narrow band from Rocky Mountain House through Calgary, Brooks, and Medicine Hat.

Overall summer (May 1 to July 31, 2004) precipitation has generally ranged from near normal to much above normal in most areas of the province, but below normal to normal in the upper Oldman River basin and below to much below normal in the High Level and Fort McMurray areas.

Despite near normal or better precipitation in most areas this summer, natural runoff volumes rank between the tenth and thirtieth lowest in 91 years of record as a result of several previous dry seasons. March through July 2004 natural runoff volumes have generally ranged from below average to much below average in the Oldman, Bow, Red Deer and North Saskatchewan River basins, and were much below average in the Milk River basin. Runoff is 75 to 90 per cent complete for the season, which runs from March through September.

August through September 2004 natural runoff volumes are forecast to be below average in most areas of the Red Deer, North Saskatchewan, Bow and Oldman River basins and much below average in the Milk River basin. Natural runoff forecasts have dropped slightly in most locations since July 1, due to below and much below normal precipitation in the mountains during July.

Other Highlights (As of August 1, 2004):

- Water storage in major irrigation reservoirs in the Oldman River basin is generally average to above average.
- Water storage is below average to average in the major hydroelectric and irrigation reservoirs of the Bow River basin, except in the Glenmore and Travers reservoirs, which are above average.
- Water storage levels in the North Saskatchewan and Red Deer River basins are currently above average at Lake Abraham and Glennifer Lake, and average at the Brazeau Reservoir.

- 30 -

Media Contact:
Communications Division, Alberta Environment
Phone: (780) 427-6267