

For Immediate Release: August 15, 2008

Natural runoff above to much above average for most mountain and foothill areas

Natural runoff volumes recorded for March-July 2008 were among the thirty highest in up to 91 years of record for the Red Deer, Elbow, Highwood and Waterton Rivers, the Bow River at Calgary, the North Saskatchewan River at Edmonton, and into the Cascade and Brazeau Reservoirs. In other mountain basins, volumes recorded so far have generally ranged from average to slightly above average, except below average for the Milk River at Milk River and at the Eastern Crossing, and the volume recorded for the Bow River at Banff was sixteenth lowest on record.

As of August 1, 2008, natural runoff volumes are forecast for the remainder of the year (August - September 2008) are forecast to be above average for the Red Deer River basin, average to above average for the North Saskatchewan and Bow River basins except below average for the Bow River at Banff, near average for the Oldman River basin, and slightly below average for the Milk River basin. These forecasts assume that precipitation over the remaining summer period will be normal. Precipitation will have a major impact on the summer water supply forecast between now and the end of September, however totals for the year are nearly complete.

Overall, natural runoff volumes ranging from above to much above average are forecast for this year (March to September 2008) in most areas. Average natural runoff volumes are expected for the Oldman and Kananaskis Rivers and the Belly River near Mountainview, below average volumes are expected for the Milk River at Milk River and the Eastern Crossing, and below to much below average volumes are forecast for the Bow River at Banff.

Other Highlights (as of August 1, 2008):

- Water storage in the major irrigation and hydroelectric reservoirs of southern and central Alberta generally varies from normal to above normal, except below normal in the Barrier and Upper Kananaskis Reservoirs.
- Much of Alberta recorded below normal to normal precipitation during July 2008, although above to much above normal precipitation was recorded in the Lethbridge – Medicine Hat, Cold Lake, and High Level areas, and much below normal precipitation was recorded in much of the rest of northwestern Alberta, in the Fort Chipewyan area and in some east central plains areas.
- Precipitation so far this summer, May through July 2008, has been above to much above normal in southern Alberta and in the High Level area, except below normal to normal in the Cypress Hills area of southeastern Alberta and an area of the mountains between Banff and Jasper. Precipitation in the rest of central and northern Alberta varied between much below normal and normal.

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