

For Immediate Release: February 14, 2006

## **Mountain snowpack average to above average in most areas south and west of Calgary**

As of February 1, 2006, snow accumulations in the mountains are above average for this time of year in the Oldman and Elbow River basins, and average in the Kananaskis area. Mountain snowpack is below average in the remainder of the Bow River basin and below to much below average in the Red Deer, North Saskatchewan, Athabasca, and Peace River basins. Snowpack measured at lower elevations of the Oldman River basin is below to much below average.

Mountain snowpack is an important source of water supply to reservoirs in the spring. Accumulations at this time of year typically account for almost two-thirds of the season's total.

Satellite estimates of plains snowpack as of February 1 shows little to no snow in the southern and central plains areas, and much below average snowpack in the northern areas.

As of February 1, preliminary forecasts for basins in the mountains call for below average natural runoff volumes from March to September in the Milk, Red Deer and North Saskatchewan River basins, and range from below average to average in the Oldman and Bow River basins. As it is still early in the year, precipitation over the next several months could affect these forecasts significantly.

### ***Other Highlights (as of February 1, 2006):***

- Precipitation during January was above to much above normal in southern mountain regions and in the Medicine Hat area. Normal precipitation was recorded in the High Level area, while the remainder of the province recorded much below normal precipitation.
- Winter precipitation totals to date (November 1, 2005 to February 1, 2006) have been normal to above normal in the Waterton Park area and range from below normal to normal in other mountain areas. In plains areas, precipitation has been much below normal in northern and central Alberta, and below to much below normal in southern Alberta.
- As of February 1, water storage in the major irrigation and hydroelectric reservoirs of southern and central Alberta is normal to above normal.