

For Immediate Release: January 8, 2007

## **Mountain snowpack average or better in most of southern and south central Alberta**

Snow accumulations in the mountains as of January 1, 2007 are variable but generally average for this time of the year in the Oldman, Red Deer, and Elbow River basins, and above to much above average in the remainder of the Bow River basin.

Mountain snowpack is an important source of water supply to reservoirs in the spring. Accumulations at this time of year typically account for only 40 per cent of the season's total.

Preliminary forecasts produced this month for the Milk River at Milk River predict 89 per cent of average natural runoff volumes this spring and summer. Natural runoff volume forecasts for rivers in the Oldman, Bow, Red Deer and North Saskatchewan river basins begin in February.

Most plains regions in Alberta recorded much below normal precipitation totals during December, while mountain and foothill areas recorded generally below normal to normal totals. Winter (November 1, 2006 to January 1, 2007) precipitation totals have been above to much above normal across most of north central Alberta and in southern mountain and foothill areas, and generally below to much below normal in the rest of the province.

Environment Canada and Alberta Agriculture estimations of plains snowpack as of January 1, 2007 show generally above average snowpack in central Alberta, and little snow in much of southern Alberta. Snowpack in northern Alberta is approximately below average.

As of January 1, 2007, water storage in the major irrigation and hydroelectric reservoirs of southern and central Alberta ranges from normal to above normal, with the exception of several reservoirs in the Bow River basin, which are below normal.

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