

For Immediate Release: July 13, 2006

Natural runoff volumes forecast to be below average to average this year

For July through September 2006, natural runoff volumes are forecast to be average in the Oldman River basin, below average to average in the Bow River basin, and below average in the Milk, Red Deer, and North Saskatchewan River basins.

Wet soils due to last year's heavy rains have dried somewhat this year, but soil moisture is still near average in most southern mountain and foothill areas, and continues to provide good potential for runoff from rainfall that may occur during the remainder of this summer.

Natural runoff volumes during March through June 2006 have been near average in the Oldman and Bow River basins. Natural runoff volumes thus far have been below average in the Highwood, Milk, Red Deer, and North Saskatchewan River basins. Exceptions include inflows to the Waterton, Spray Lakes and Bighorn Reservoirs, which ranged from above to much above average, and to the Brazeau Reservoir, which was much below average.

Total natural runoff volumes for the water year (March to September 2006) are expected to range from below average to average in most forecasted areas.

Other Highlights (As of July 1):

- Precipitation during June was generally much above normal in the southern plains of Alberta and in the northwest corner of the province, and below to much below normal in north-central Alberta. Precipitation elsewhere was generally below normal to normal.
- Precipitation so far this summer (May and June) has been below normal to normal, except in most southern plains areas and some areas of northwest Alberta where it has been above to much above normal.
- Water storage in major irrigation reservoirs in the Oldman River basin is above average, except for the Chain Lakes and Milk River Ridge Reservoirs, where it is average.
- Water storage is average to above average in the major hydroelectric and irrigation reservoirs of the Bow River basin, except for the Barrier Reservoir where it is below average.
- Water storage levels in the North Saskatchewan and Red Deer River basins are currently average at the Brazeau Reservoir and Glennifer Lake, and above average at the Bighorn Reservoir.

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