



Water Supply Outlook Overview

For Immediate Release: September 9, 2004

August rain above average across most of Alberta

August precipitation was generally above normal to much above normal in most areas of Alberta, with the exceptions of northeastern Alberta and the High Level area, where recorded precipitation was below normal to much below normal. Pincher Creek, Medicine Hat and Empress recorded three to four times normal precipitation for the month.

Precipitation in August generated volumes which were generally above average to much above average in the Bow, Oldman and Red Deer River basins, average in the North Saskatchewan River basin and below average in the Milk River basin. The Oldman, North Saskatchewan and South Saskatchewan Rivers, as well as many foothill streams of the Bow and Red Deer River basins, recorded their highest flows this year in August, a peak which normally occurs in June or July.

Summer (May 1 to August 31, 2004) precipitation ranged from near normal to above normal in most areas of the province, but much below normal in northern areas and much above normal in the Grande Prairie, Pincher Creek and Medicine Hat areas.

Despite near normal or better precipitation in most areas this summer, most natural runoff volumes rank between the ninth and 30th lowest in 91 years of record because of several previous dry seasons. March through August 2004 natural runoff volumes have generally ranged from below average to much below average in the Oldman, Red Deer and North Saskatchewan River basins, below average to average in the Bow River basin, and were much below average in the Milk River basin. Runoff is nearly complete for the season, which runs from March through September.

The October Water Supply Outlook will contain an overview of this year's water supply conditions and will review our forecasts.

Other Highlights (As of September 1, 2004):

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

- 30 -

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