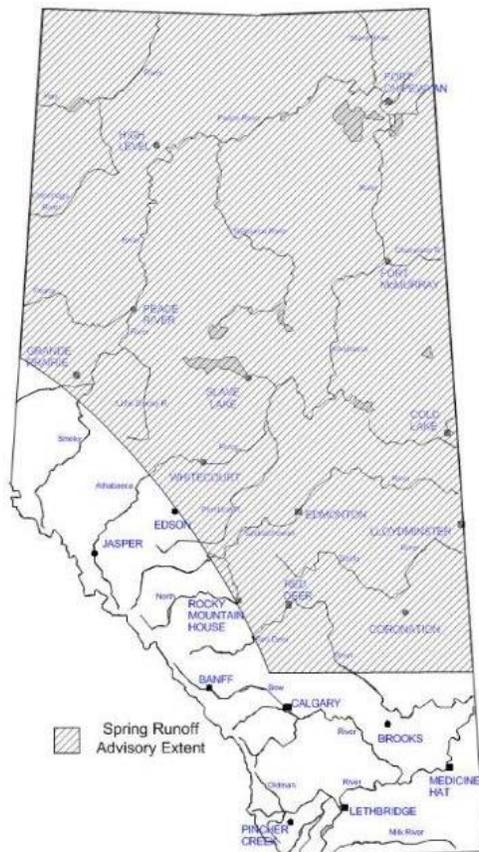


Provincial Spring Runoff Advisory Update – Alberta Plains



Temperatures across Alberta are forecast to be below seasonal averages on Friday, with a return to normal or slightly above normal temperatures over the long weekend. Even though temperatures are below normal, the Spring Runoff Advisory will remain in effect, since overland flooding issues are still present in many counties due to the prior melt. The melt should continue even with the lower temperatures, albeit at a slower rate than previously experienced until a rise in daytime temperatures occurs. Recent precipitation is not expected to significantly effect water levels.

The generally cool spring conditions combined with the heavy snowfalls across the plains during the winter and spring months had resulted in a much above average plains snowpack, that had not had the opportunity to melt gradually. Typical snow melt in Alberta occurs with gradually warming air temperatures, as opposed to the sudden and sustained increases in temperatures that occurred during the past week.

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A rapid melt caused by the quick change to normal and above normal temperatures combined with the existing much above average snowpack in the plains has caused localized overland flooding as the water tries to make its way into streams. In low-lying areas where water does not have a direct route to stream channels localized ponding is occurring. Water levels may continue to rise in the smaller creeks with a continued possibility of flooding in adjacent low-lying areas. No significant water level rises are expected in the major rivers.

In some locations overland flooding can be exacerbated by blocked or frozen culverts, which cannot manage the increase in melt water. People are advised to contact their local municipality of any blocked or frozen culverts that are observed which are currently causing drainage issues or may cause issues in the near future, or with any flooding conditions which may be of concern.

In streams where ice is still present, the rising water levels may cause ice jams. Water levels around ice jams are unstable, and are subject to rapid water level fluctuations, which may occur without warning. In areas where ice jams are present, or are historically common, the public is advised to take extra caution.

Anyone who is situated close to affected creeks, or in areas that have experienced overland flooding or ice jam activity in the past, are advised to be cautious of rising water levels over the coming days.

The mountain snowpack is generally slightly above to above average, although the resulting melt from the mountains is not expected to cause major mountain rivers to over flow their banks. Temperatures at the higher elevations of the eastern slopes may only reach above freezing for a few hours of the day, allowing for the mountain snowpack to melt gradually.

Alberta Environment and Sustainable Resource Development is monitoring river levels closely throughout Alberta, and remains in close contact with affected municipalities. This advisory will be updated if the situation changes and will remain in effect until Friday April 25th, 2014.

Plains snow course data and historical rankings can be viewed at:

<http://www.environment.alberta.ca/forecasting/data/snow/apr2014/plainsscdatarank.html>

A map showing Spring Runoff Potential for the plains can be viewed at:

<http://www.environment.alberta.ca/forecasting/data/snow/apr2014/PROfig1.pdf>

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Mountain snow course data and historical ranking can be viewed at:

<http://www.environment.alberta.ca/forecasting/data/snow/apr2014/mountainscdatarank.html>

Additional near-real-time mountain snow accumulation is monitored using snow pillows. Snow pillow information can be viewed by choosing any mountainous river basin and selected the snow data parameter in the two drop down menus at:

<http://www.environment.alberta.ca/apps/basins/default.aspx>

Information in addition to this advisory may be found at:

<http://www.environment.alberta.ca/forecasting/forecasterscomments>

<http://www.environment.alberta.ca/apps/basins>

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