Manitoba
Transportation and Infrastructure

2025 Manitoba Basins Fall Conditions Report

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 2025 Fall Conditions Report describes the hydrologic conditions of Manitoba basins at the time of freeze-up. Hydrologic conditions at the time of freeze-up and weather conditions in winter and spring are the main factors that affect the extent of the spring runoff potential. This report describes the current state of two hydrologic factors for which data is available at the time of reporting. The two known factors covered in this report are the soil moisture at the time of freeze-up and base flows in rivers and water levels on lakes prior to freeze-up. The report also contains long-term forecasted winter precipitation as a general indication of probable future weather and forecasted flows and levels throughout the winter for various rivers and lakes.

Summer and Fall Precipitation

There was a wide range of precipitation amounts observed throughout Manitoba basins in the summer and fall of 2025. Most Manitoba basins, including areas in eastern Manitoba, the Interlake Region, and much of western and central Manitoba received below normal to well below normal precipitation between May and October. Northern Manitoba also experienced below normal to well below normal precipitation over the summer and fall. However, parts of southern Manitoba, and the United States portions of the Red River and Souris River basins received normal to above normal precipitation.

November to Early December Precipitation

Recorded precipitation from November 1 to December 1 was below normal to well below normal for most Manitoba basins, resulting in a generally drier start to winter across the province. Southern and central Manitoba were particularly dry, with many areas receiving less than half their typical early-winter precipitation.

Soil Moisture at Freeze-up

Soil moisture at the time of freeze-up is one of the major factors that affects spring runoff potential and flood risk. Soil moisture at freeze-up was generally near normal to below normal for most Manitoba basins, except for parts of southern Manitoba and the U.S. portions of the Red River and Souris River basins, which have near normal to above normal soil moisture. Parts of northern and central Manitoba, including parts of the Interlake Region, have below normal soil moisture. Near normal to below normal soil moisture levels thus far indicate a potential for near normal to

below normal spring runoff within these river basins; however, the extent of spring runoff is still largely dependent on future weather conditions, including the amount of winter and spring precipitation, as well as snowmelt conditions.

River Flows and Lake Levels

Another factor that affects the spring runoff potential is the amount of water currently in the system, as represented by base flows in rivers and the water levels on lakes prior to freeze-up. Base flow is a portion of the stream flow that is not from surface runoff; it is water from the ground, flowing into the river channel over a period of time. Water levels on lakes indicate how much capacity the lakes have to receive spring runoff. Base flows on most southern Manitoba rivers, including the Red and Assiniboine Rivers, are near normal for this time of the year. Baseflows in northern and eastern Manitoba, including the Winnipeg River and Churchill River systems, are well below normal.

Lake Manitoba is well below normal and tracking near the historic 5% level for this time of the year (*historic levels have exceeded the current level for 95% of the time*). Lake Winnipeg is well below normal and is near the historic 10% level (*historic levels have exceeded the current level for 90% of the time*). Lake Winnipegosis and Lake St. Martin are below normal and Dauphin Lake is near normal for this time of year. Lake St. Martin is near the historic 30% level. Inflow into Lake of the Prairies (Shellmouth Reservoir) is tracking near normal condition for this time of the year. The Shellmouth dam is being operated in consultation with the Shellmouth Reservoir Regulation Liaison Committee to drawdown the reservoir in preparation of spring runoff. Whiteshell Lakes are mostly near normal, though a few lakes in the North Whiteshell remain elevated due to late-season precipitation; these are expected to decline over the winter.

Long-term Precipitation Outlook

Winter precipitation is another factor that affects spring runoff potential. Experience shows that long-term weather forecasts may not be very accurate, however, they provide an indication of potential future precipitation amounts. Environment and Climate Change Canada's latest long-term precipitation forecast indicates a potential for near normal to above normal precipitation from December to February for most Manitoba basins. Both Environment and Climate Change Canada and the National Weather Service Climate Prediction Center forecasted above normal precipitation from December to February for the U.S. portions of the Red and the Souris basins.

In contrast, the Columbia Climate School's International Research Institute (IRI) outlook predicts below normal precipitation for most parts of Manitoba basins. Global weather prediction centres indicate that a weak La Niña climate condition is expected to continue in December, with a high probability of transitioning to neutral conditions in January to March 2026. The effect of La Niña is variable across the globe; for Manitoba, it is generally characterized by below normal temperatures and above normal precipitation.

Forecasted Winter Flows and Levels

The Fall Conditions Report also contains forecasted flows and levels on major rivers and lakes for near normal winter weather conditions prior to the spring runoff. Flows and levels on major rivers, including the Red and Assiniboine, Waterhen, Fairford, and Dauphin rivers are expected to remain near normal through the winter period. Lake Manitoba is expected to remain well below normal near 810.9 ft throughout the winter and Lake Winnipeg is expected to remain well below normal near 712.3 ft throughout the winter to the end of March. Lake Winnipegosis will remain below normal near the current level of 830.2 ft throughout the winter, and Lake St. Martin is expected to be near 798.0 ft before the spring runoff.

The Hydrologic Forecast Centre of Manitoba Transportation and Infrastructure works in collaboration with Environment and Climate Change Canada, the National Weather Service of the United States, and flood forecasters in neighbouring jurisdictions to regularly monitor the winter precipitation patterns throughout Manitoba basins.

At this point in time, it is not practical to provide a reliable long-term flood forecast for Spring 2026 as conditions could change significantly during the coming months. Basins with below normal to normal soil moisture and base flow conditions indicate a higher chance for below normal to near normal flows in spring runoff. However, there is a possibility of receiving above normal spring runoff if heavy winter or spring precipitation is received and a fast snowmelt occurs. Conversely, the risk of spring flooding could decrease if less winter precipitation occurs, or if a gradual snowmelt rate or less precipitation were to occur in early spring.

Looking back at some of the most significant historic flood or drought events, each event is caused by a combination of unique circumstances. There is an inherent risk of over-estimating or under-estimating the extent of spring runoff if one considers the conditions and available precipitation four months in advance of the spring runoff. The Hydrologic Forecast Centre will continue to

monitor watershed conditions closely and will release spring runoff outlooks through the winter as required.

BACKGROUND

The spring runoff potential is generally dependent on six major factors:

- Soil moisture at freeze-up
- Winter precipitation
- Effective spring rain (April to May rainfall)
- Melt rate
- Depth of frost; and
- Base flow conditions

All of the above factors combine to determine the magnitude of spring runoff, which could range from a major flood event to an extremely low runoff event. The combination of these factors is generally unique for each specific year and for each specific watershed across the province. Generally, the soil moisture at freeze-up, winter precipitation, and base flow conditions are well known before spring melt and give a strong indication of the runoff potential.

SUMMER AND FALL PRECIPITATION

There was a wide range of precipitation amounts across Manitoba basins during the summer and fall of 2025. Most Manitoba basins, including areas in northern Manitoba, eastern Manitoba, the Interlake Region, and much of western and central Manitoba, received below normal to well below normal precipitation from May to October, compared with data over the period since 1981. Parts of southern Manitoba and the U.S. portions of the Red River and Souris River basins experienced the highest precipitation totals during this period, with conditions ranging from normal to well above normal (Figure 1).

The wettest areas in southern Manitoba received between 25 and 125 millimetres of precipitation above the historic normal for period from May to October. Areas in central, western and northern Manitoba received between 25 and 125 millimetres less than normal precipitation (Figure 2). Compared with historic records, precipitation received in the wettest areas of southern Manitoba from May to October rank in the 60 to 90%, or wet to very wet, while the driest areas in northeastern and northern Manitoba rank in the lower 5%, or extreme dry condition (Figure 3).

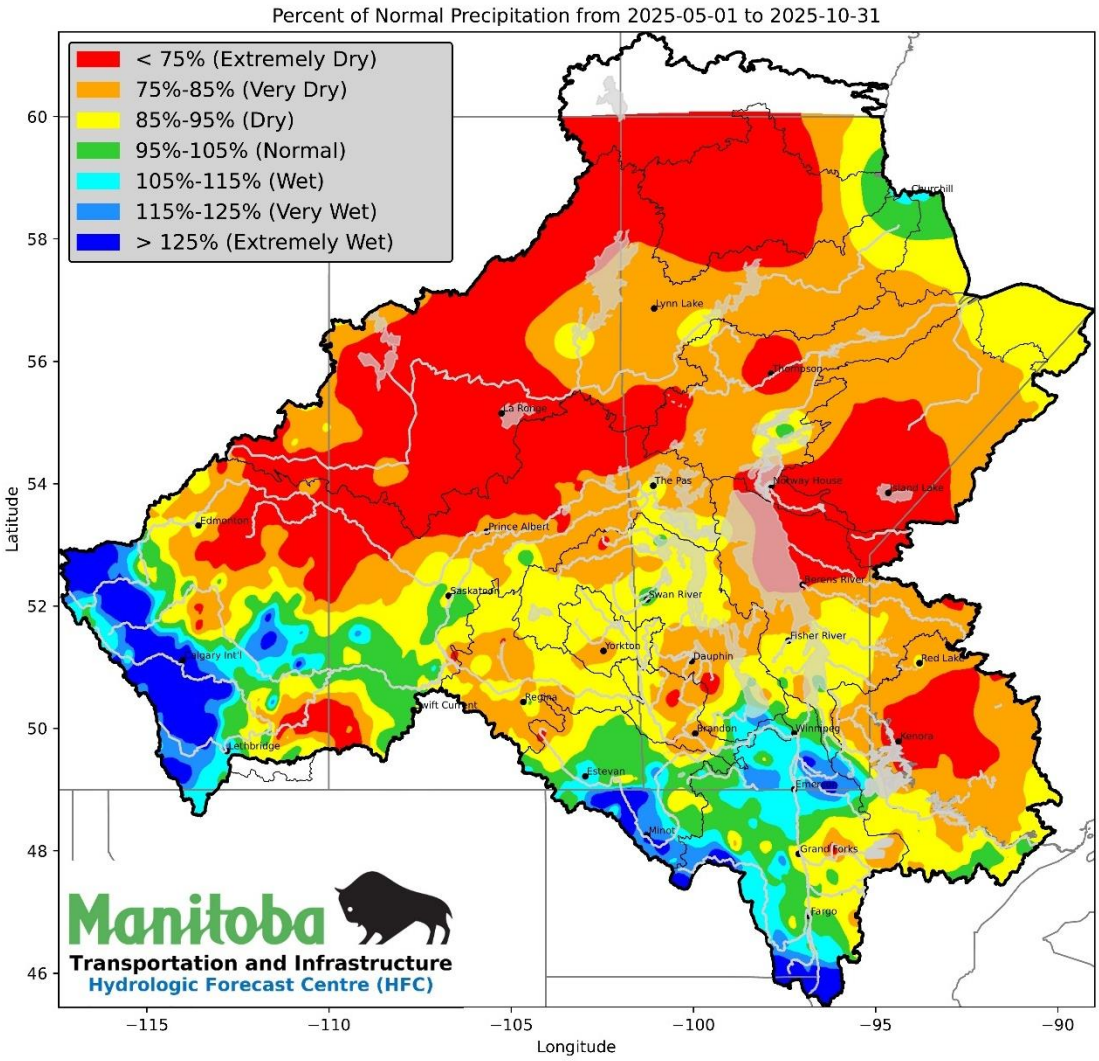

Figure 1. Percent of normal precipitation (%) from May 1 to Oct. 31, 2025.

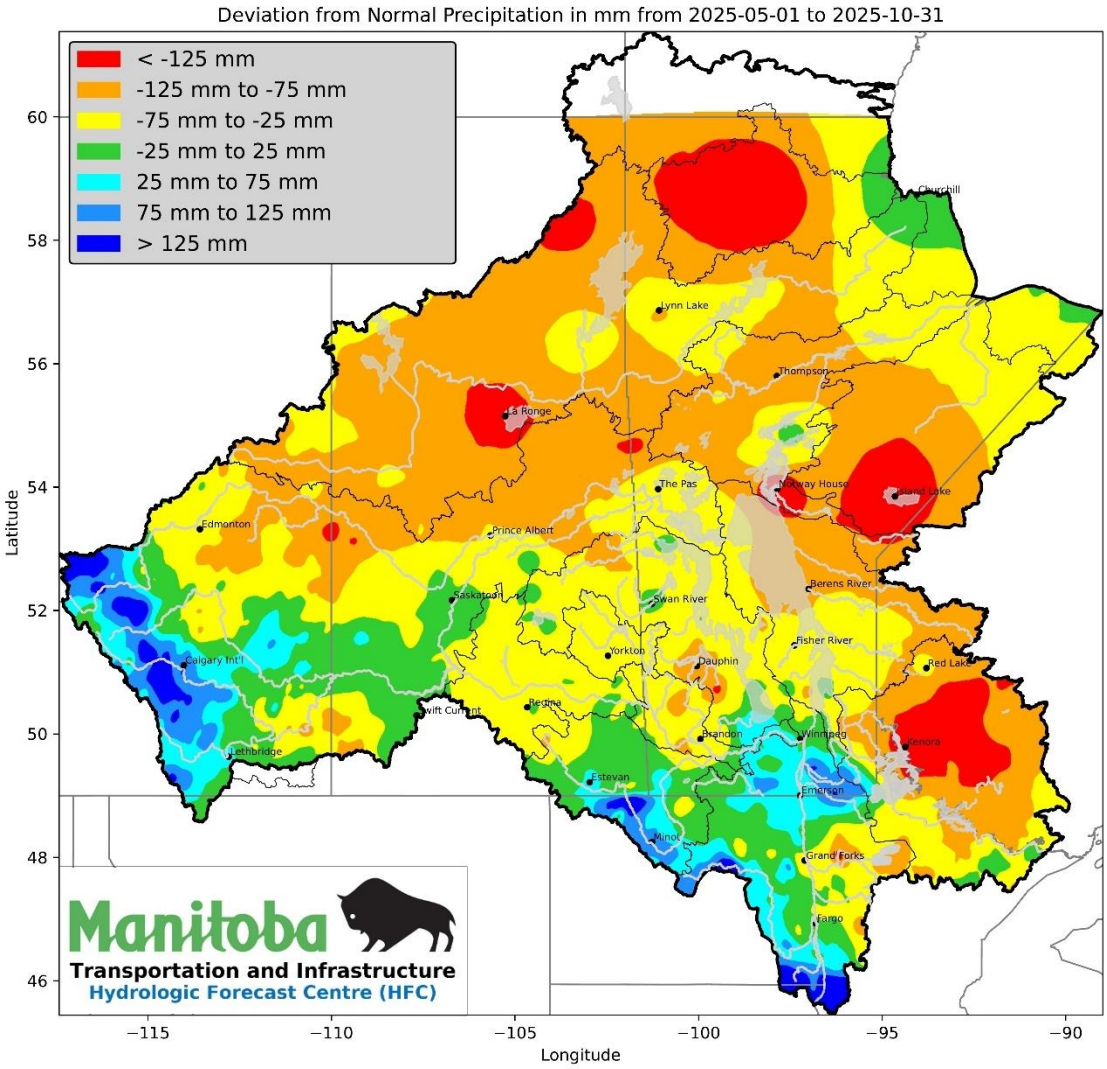

Figure 2. Deviation from normal precipitation (mm) from May 1 to Oct. 31, 2025.

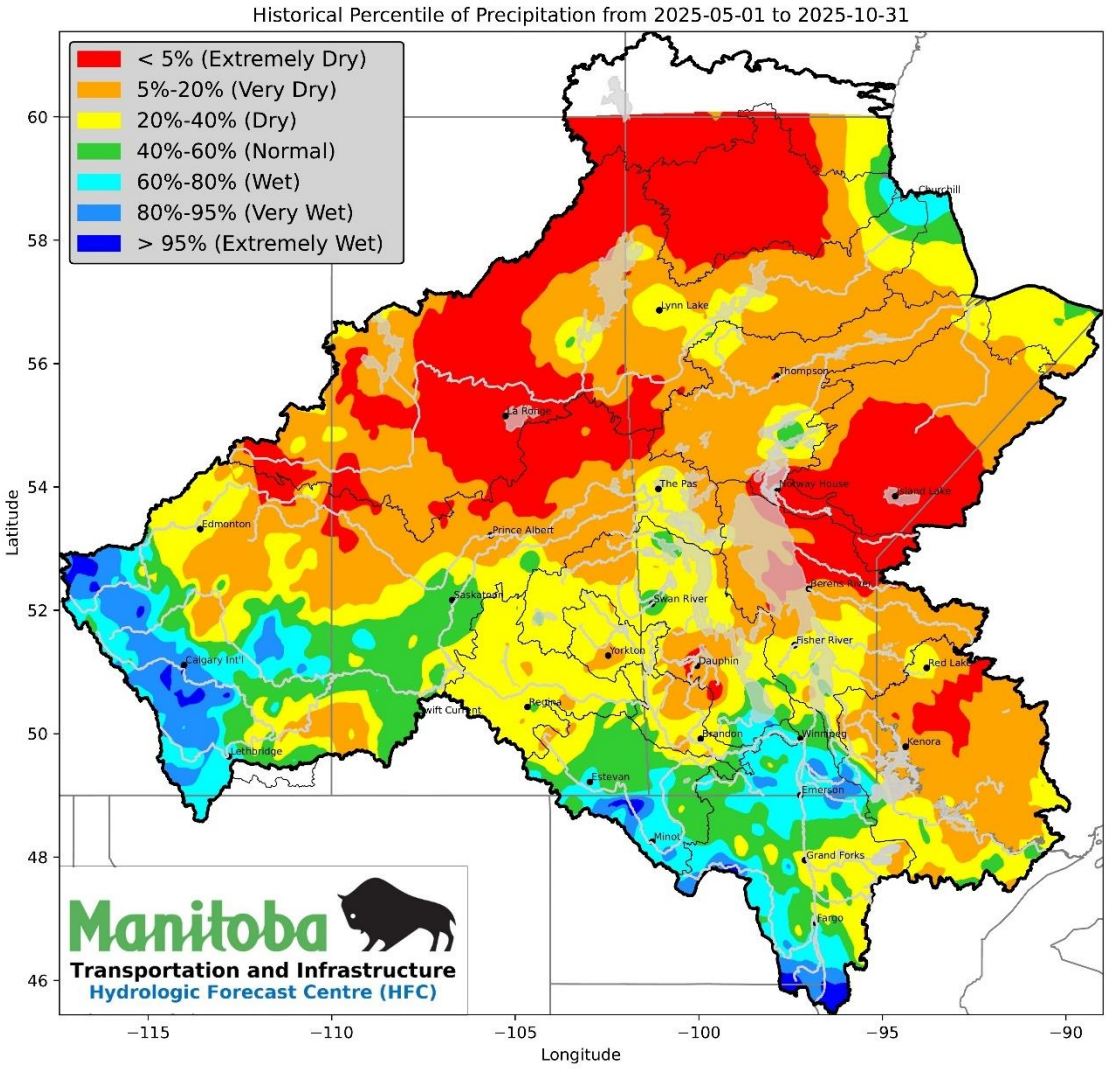

Figure 3. Percent ranking precipitation (%) from May 1 to Oct. 31, 2025.

NOVEMBER TO EARLY DECEMBER PRECIPITATION

Recorded precipitation from November 1 to December 1 was below normal to well below normal for nearly all regions of Manitoba with little snow accumulation reported across the province. Southern Manitoba has been especially dry over the past month, with most areas receiving less than 50% of normal precipitation (Figure 4). Most basins received 5 to 25 millimetres less precipitation than they would receive in a normal year (Figure 5), ranking lower than 40% (Figure 6). More detailed information can be found in Figures 4 to 6. These figures show the percent of

normal precipitation, deviation from normal precipitation, and historical precipitation percentile, respectively, for this early-winter period since 1981.

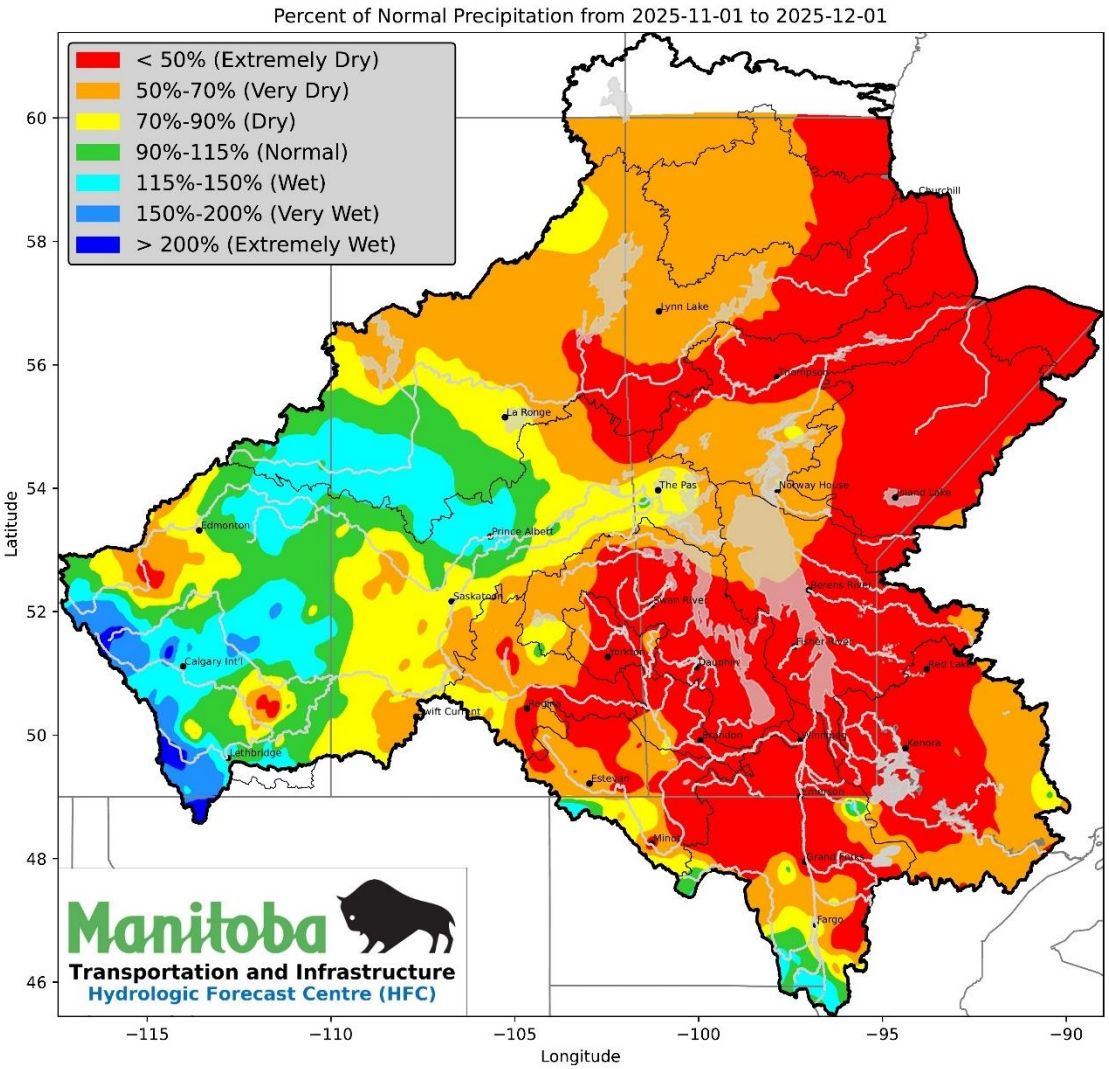

Figure 4. Percent of normal precipitation (%) for Nov. 1 to Dec. 1, 2025.

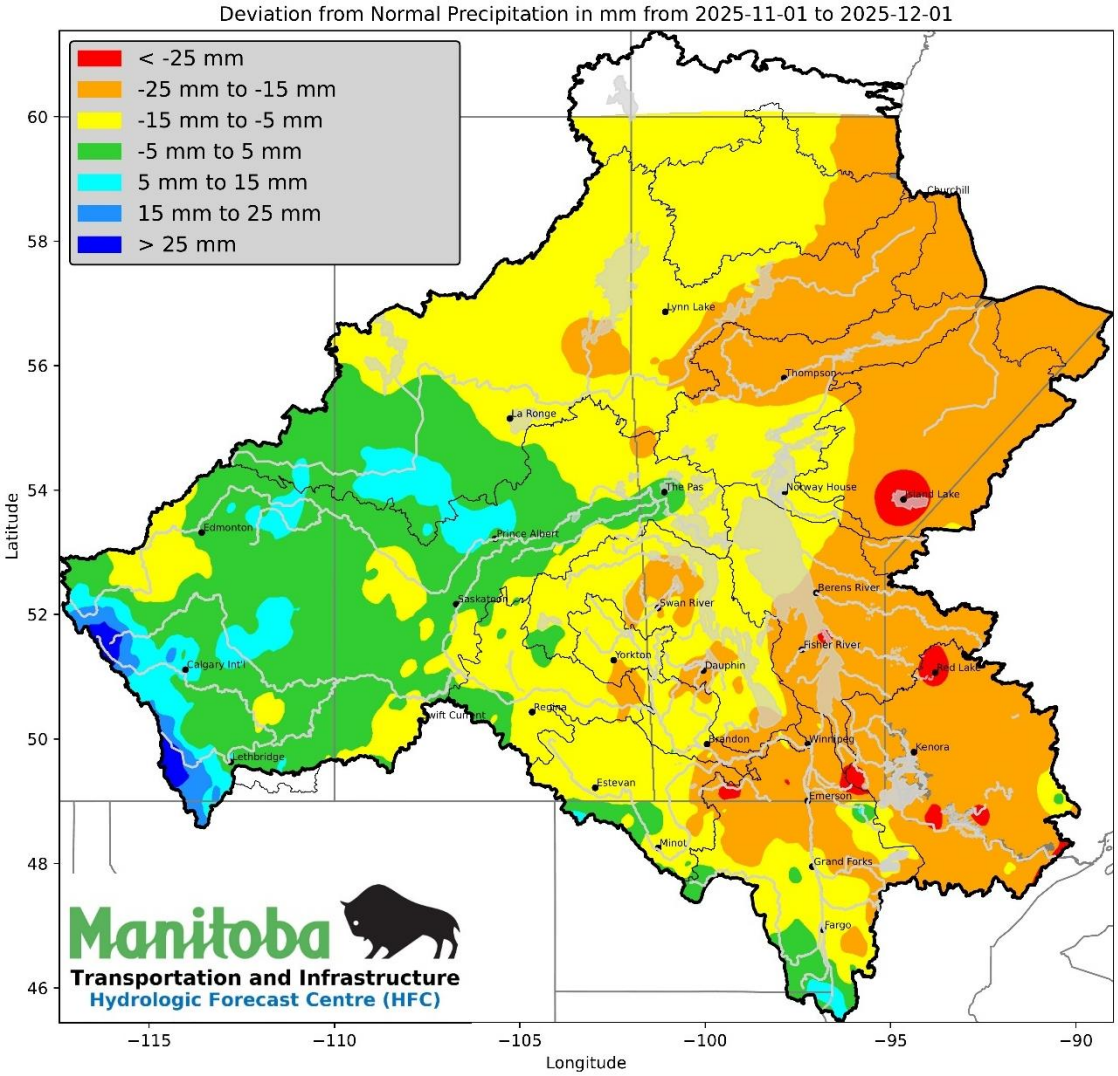

Figure 5. Deviation from normal precipitation (mm) from Nov. 1 to Dec. 1, 2025.

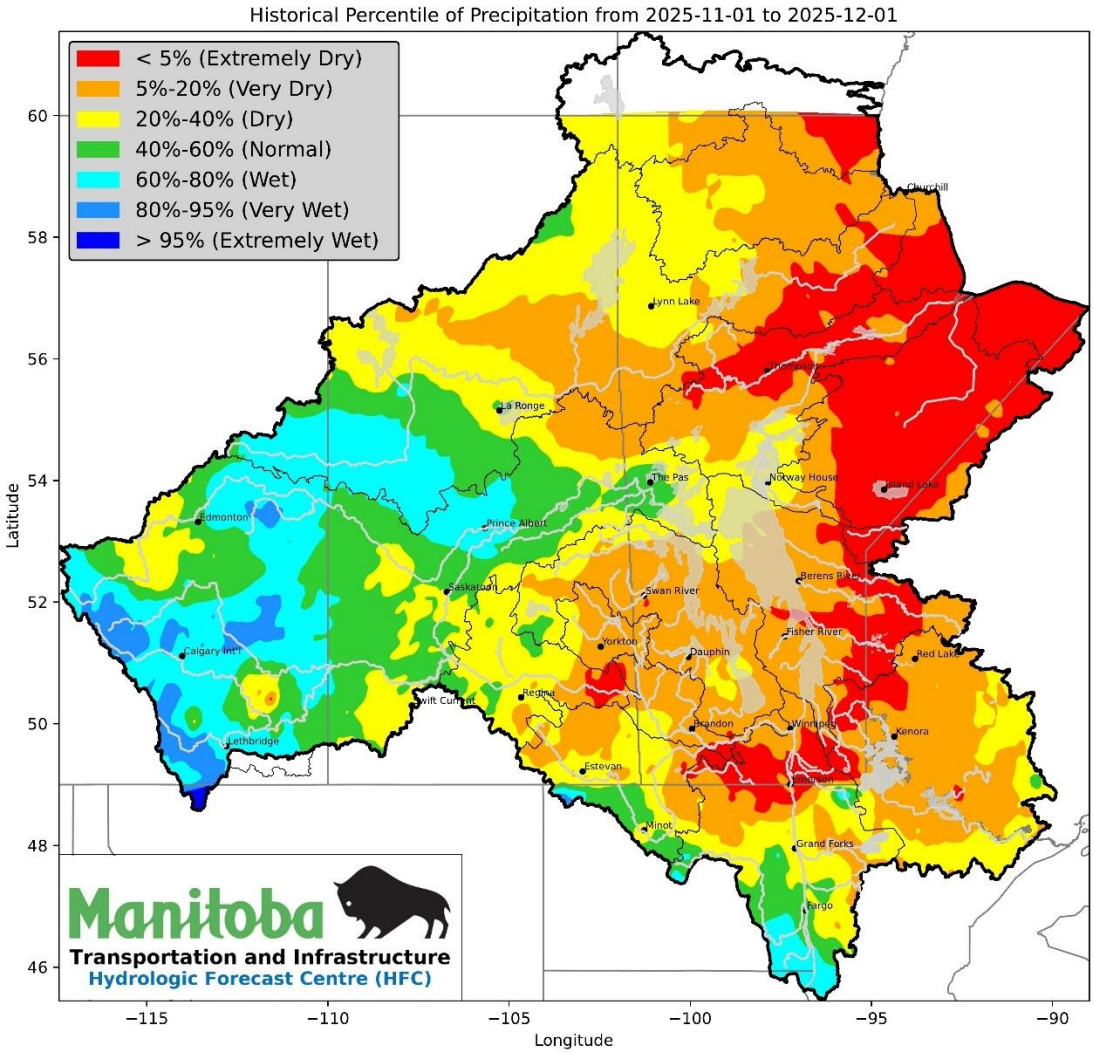

Figure 6. Percent ranking precipitation (%) from Nov. 1 to Dec. 1, 2025.

SOIL MOISTURE CONDITIONS

A number of different tools have been used to determine the soil moisture at freeze-up. The most common method, which has been used for years, is Manitoba's MANAPI model, which is expressed by the API (Antecedent Precipitation Index). The MANAPI model indicates the degree of saturation in the soil. This method uses the recorded precipitation at a large number of meteorological stations throughout the various basins to calculate the amount of water from summer and fall rain that remains in the soil layer and has yet to contribute to runoff. Figure 7 shows the API map for the fall of 2025 expressed in percent of normal. The API model results indicate that soil moisture at freeze-up was normal to well above normal throughout central, western and southern Manitoba basins, including the Red River and Souris River basins in the U.S. and normal to below normal in northern Manitoba and parts of the Interlake Region.

Manitoba Agriculture also measures soil moisture within the top 120 centimetres of the soil at its automated weather monitoring stations located at various places across the province. Soil moisture measurements collected in the top 120 cm through monitoring sensors indicate the soil moisture throughout southern and central Manitoba as of October 26 is generally optimal to wet except in localized areas that are considered dry (Figure 8).

Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) models soil moisture levels through its national drought model. Results as of December 1 indicate wetter than normal soil conditions across much of southern Manitoba, near normal to wetter than normal conditions through western Manitoba and the Interlake region, with some localized areas of drier than normal soil moisture (Figure 9).

The U.S. National Weather Service Climate Prediction Center also monitors soil moisture conditions and indicates near normal to above normal soil moisture across the U.S. portions of the Red and Souris River basins (Figure 10).

Overall, soil moisture at freeze-up was near normal to above normal for parts of southern Manitoba and the U.S. portions of the Red River and Souris River basins. Soil moisture is below normal in parts of the Interlake region and parts of northern Manitoba.

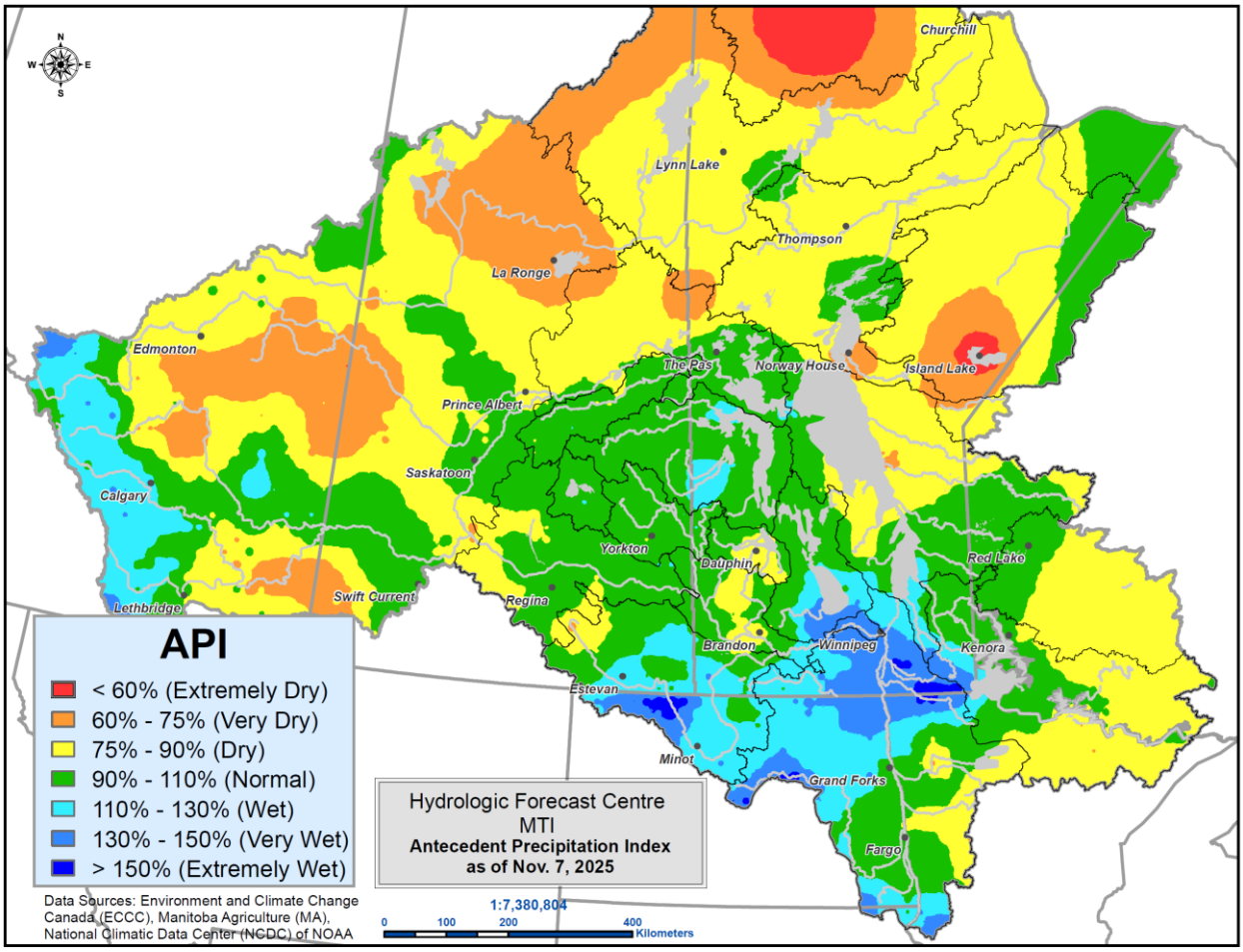

Figure 7. Antecedent Precipitation Index (API) (%) for 2025.

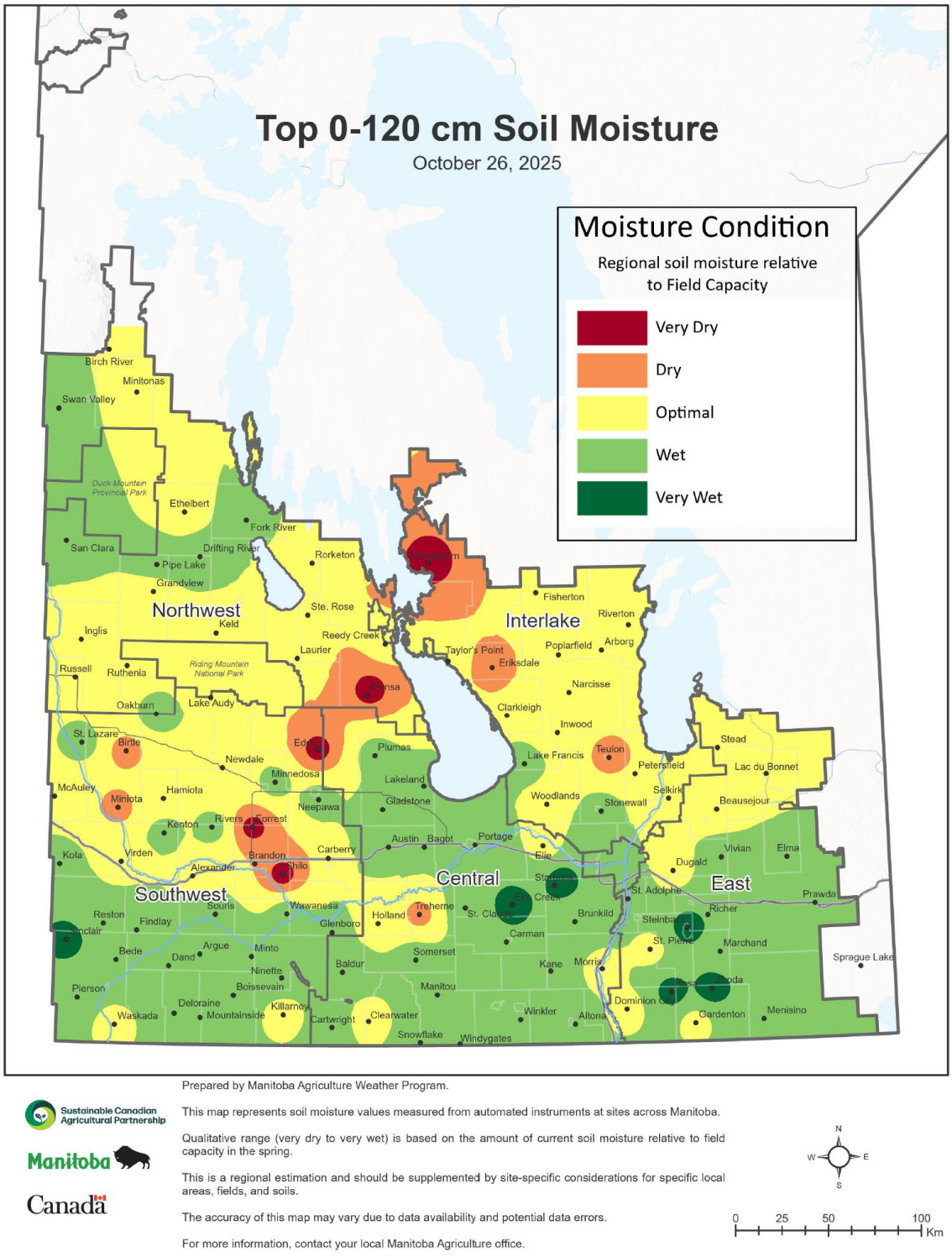

Figure 8. Soil moisture in top 0 to 120 cm based on field measurements as of October 26, 2025.

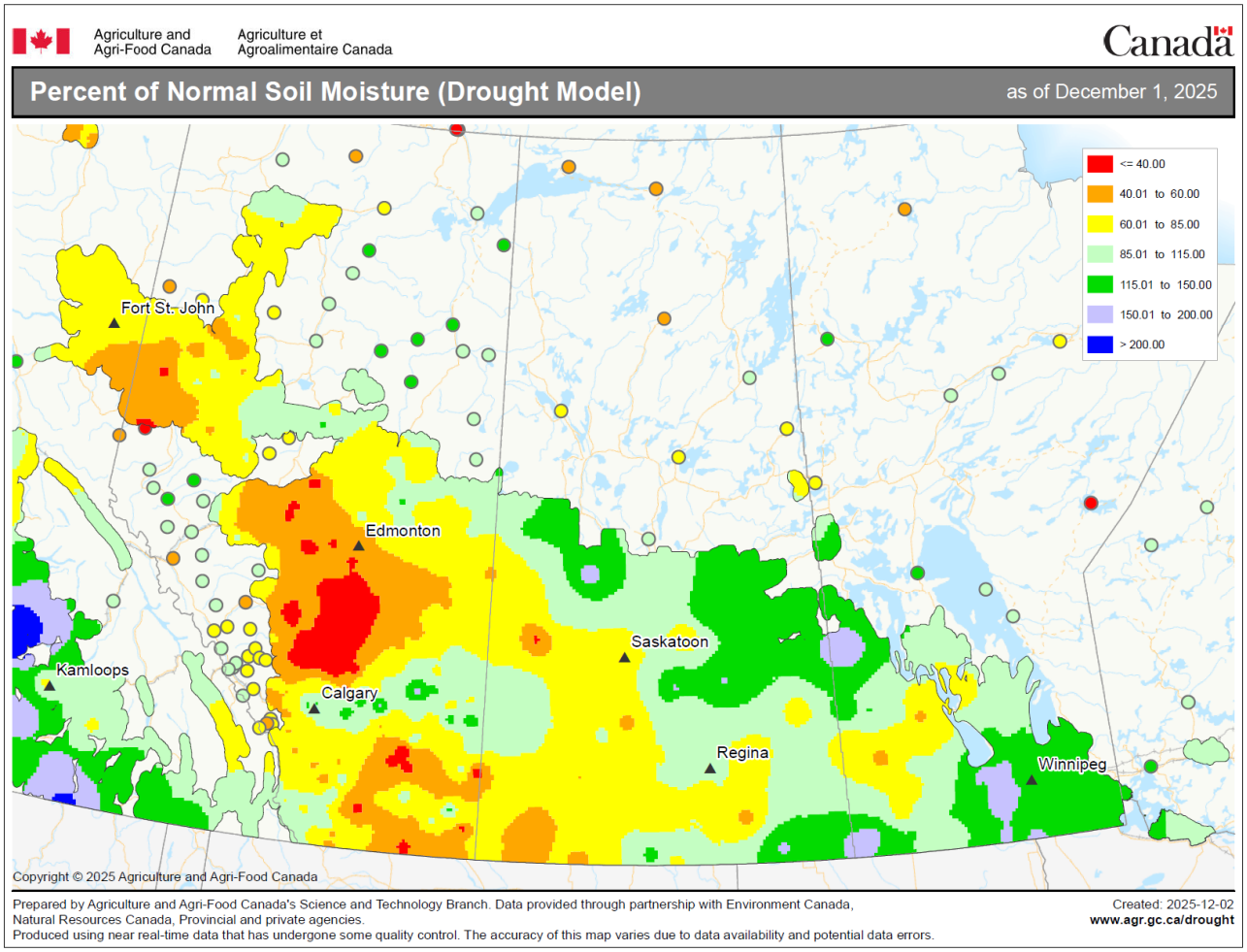

Figure 9. Percent of Normal Soil Moisture from Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada as of Dec. 1, 2025.

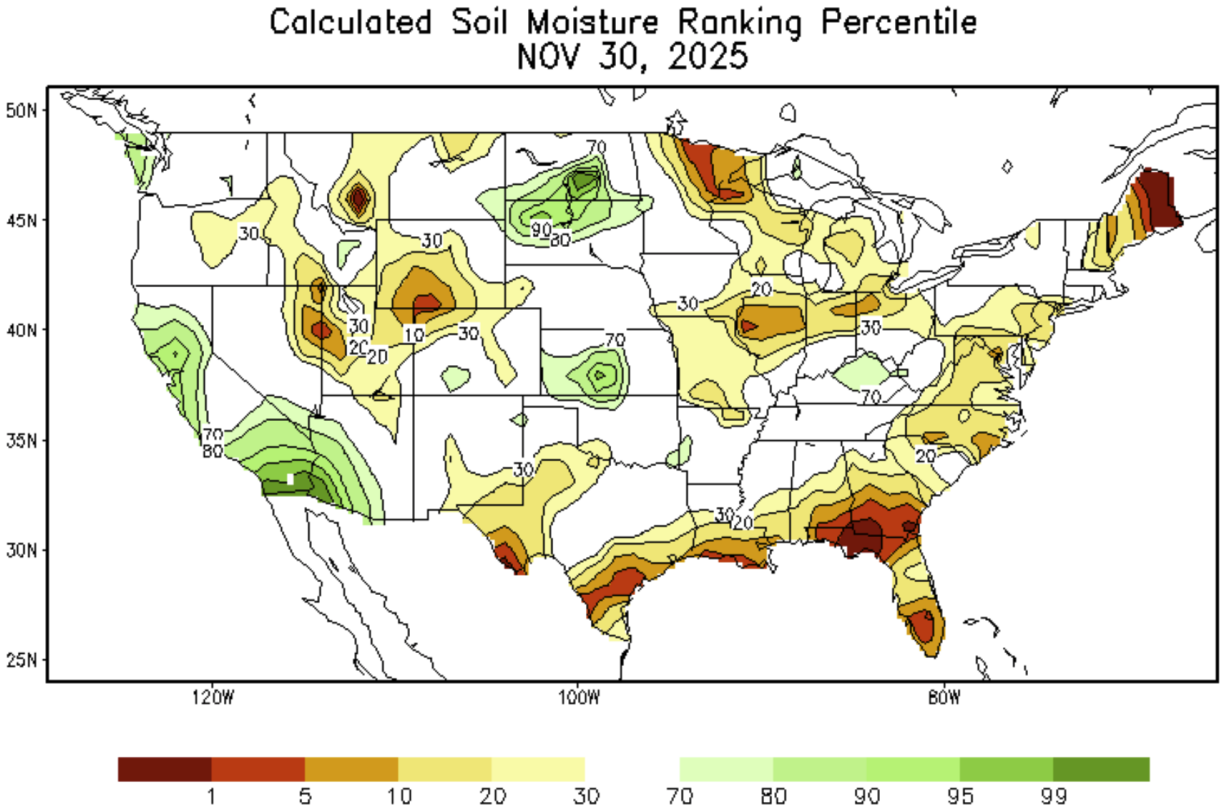

Figure 10. Calculated soil moisture ranking percentile as of November 30, 2025 from the National Weather Service.

RIVER BASE FLOWS AND LEVELS

Rivers

Base flow is a portion of the stream flow that is not from surface runoff; it is water from the ground flowing into the river channel over a period of time. Near normal base flows indicate near normal ground saturations or near normal soil moisture content. Below normal base flows indicate below normal soil saturation level while above normal base flows indicate above normal soil saturation levels.

Base flows and levels in most Manitoba rivers are near normal to below normal for this time of year. As of December 1, 2025, flows on the Red and Assiniboine rivers are generally near their long-term median values for this time of year. On the Red River, current flows at Emerson, Ste. Agathe, Winnipeg and Selkirk remain close to their historical median values.

Along the Assiniboine River, flows at Russell, Brandon, and Holland are all near their historical median values for early December, while the flow at Headingley is slightly above normal. Flows along the Assiniboine are being influenced by the release of water from the Shellmouth Dam.

Across the rest of Manitoba, most rivers are within their typical ranges for this time of year. The Qu'Appelle, Waterhen, Dauphin, and Fairford rivers are all tracking near normal for early December. The Churchill and Winnipeg rivers are well below normal. Flows on the Saskatchewan River are below normal, while Souris River is slightly above normal for this time of year.

Hydrographs illustrating measured or estimated flows on major Manitoba rivers as of December 1, 2025, are presented in Figures 11 to 22. These figures also show current conditions relative to their statistical lower decile, median, and upper decile values. Current measurements for all key river locations are summarized in Table 1. (Note: Some flow readings might be affected by ice).

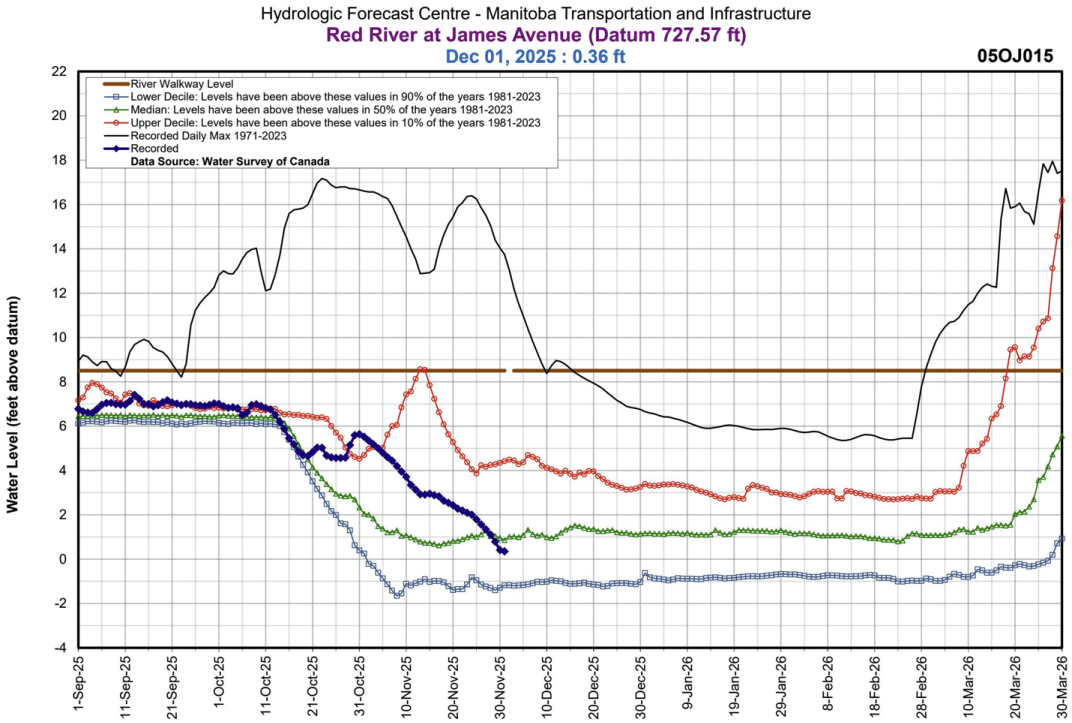

Figure 11. Red River water levels at James Avenue.

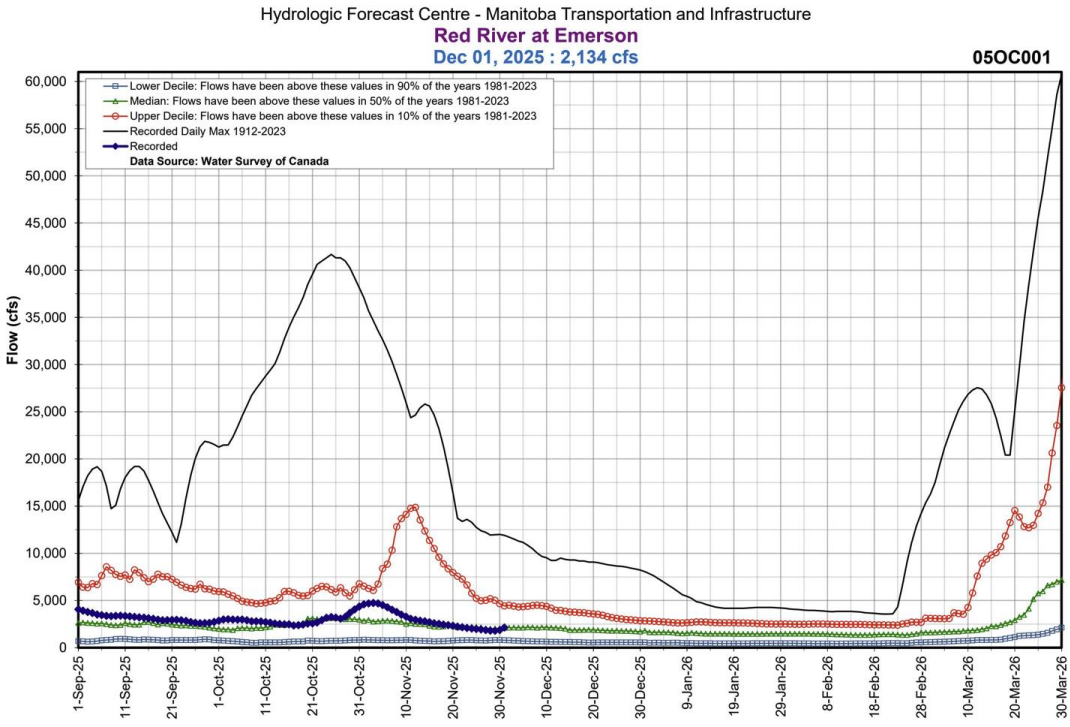

Figure 12. Red River flows near Emerson.

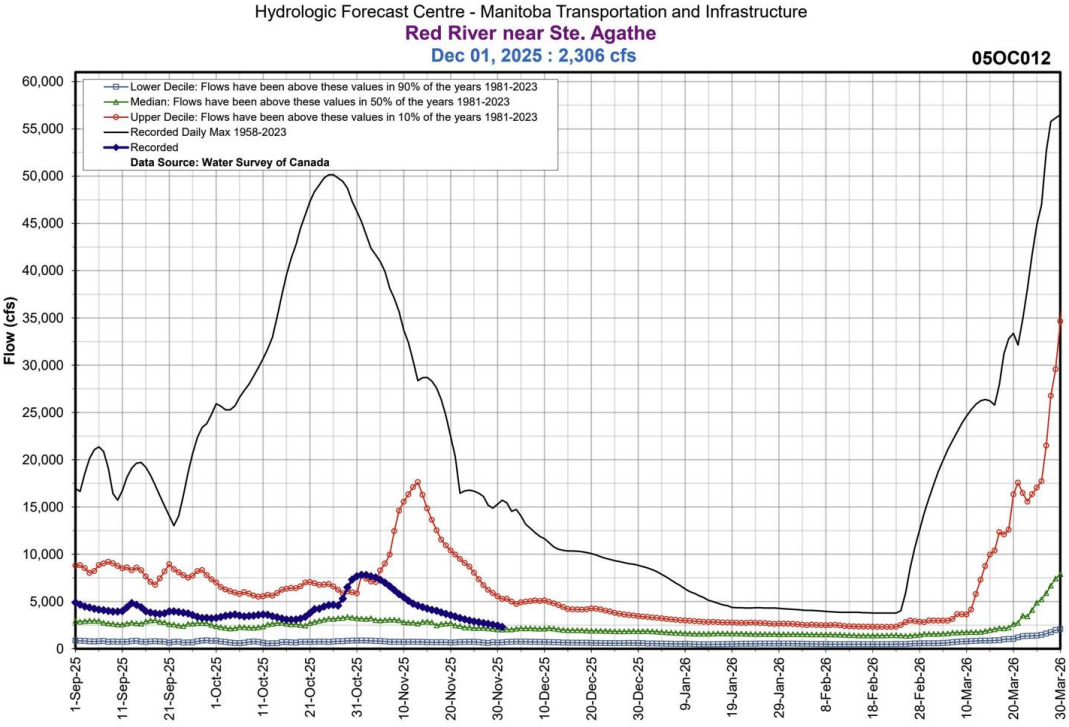

Figure 13. Red River flows near Ste. Agathe.

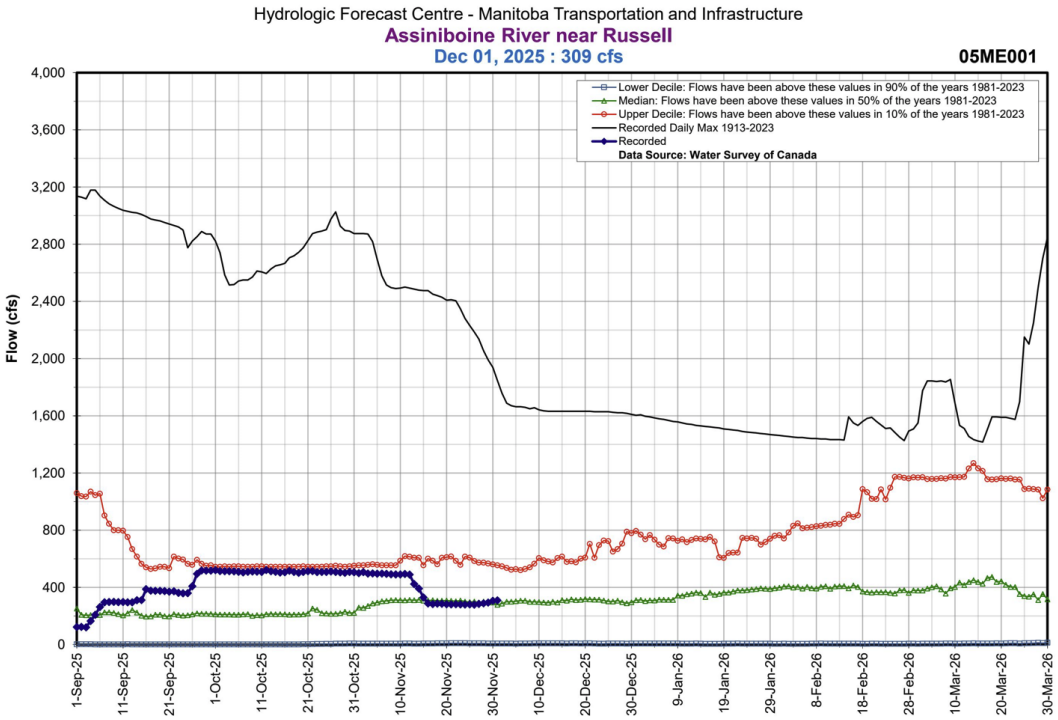

Figure 14. Assiniboine River flows near Russell.

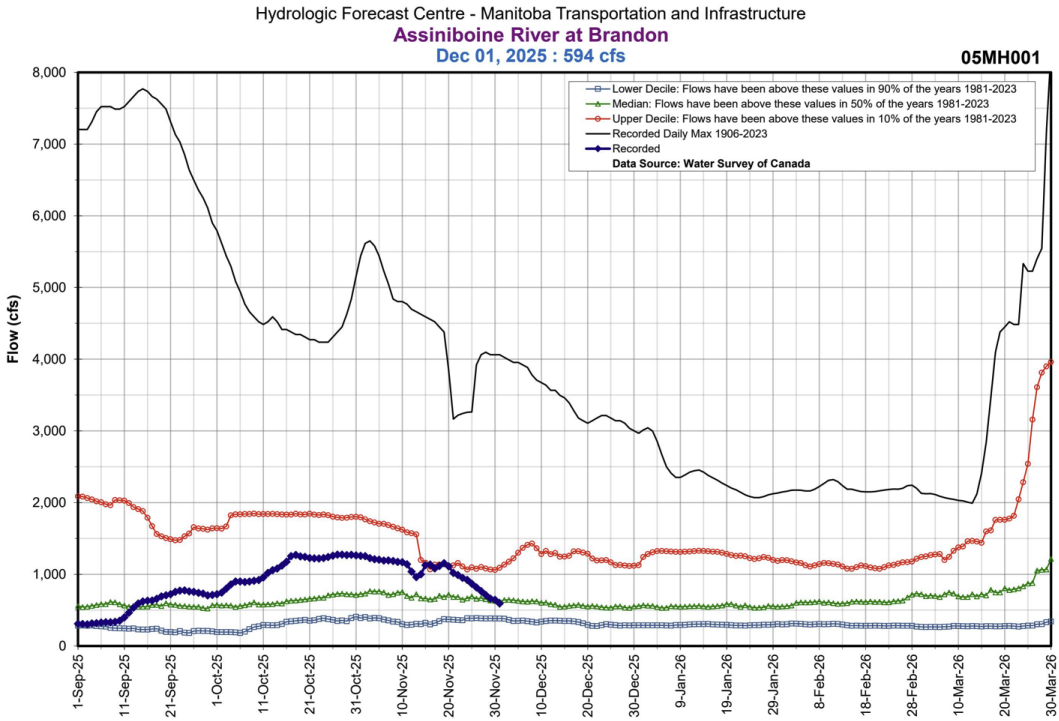

Figure 15. Assiniboine River flows at Brandon.

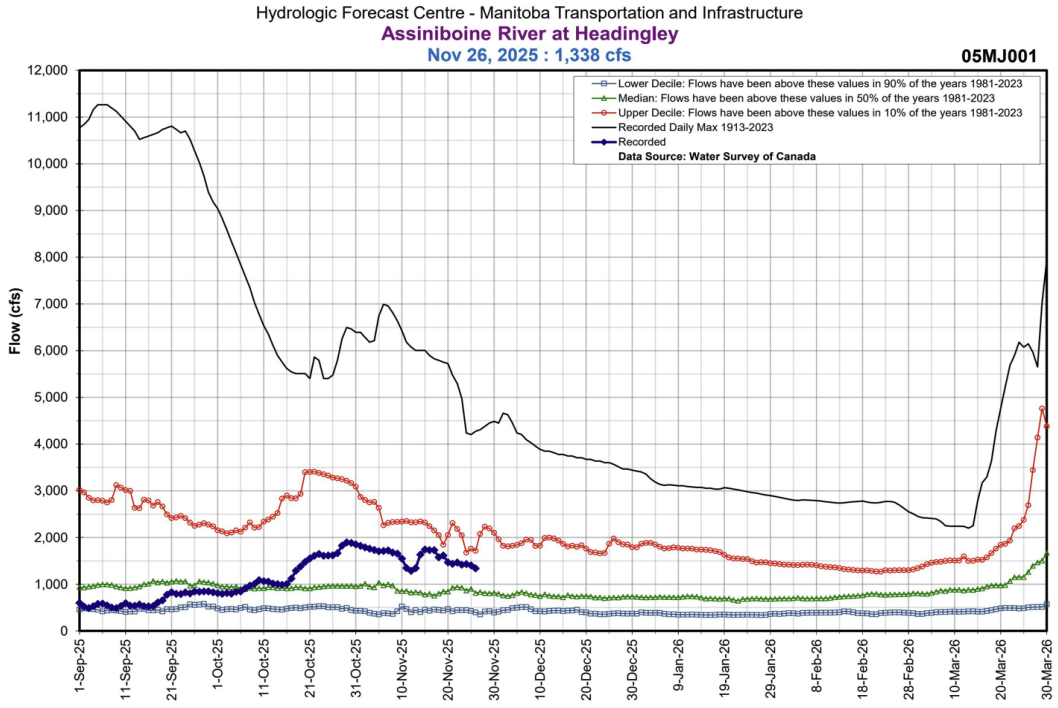

Figure 16. Assiniboine River flows at Headingley.

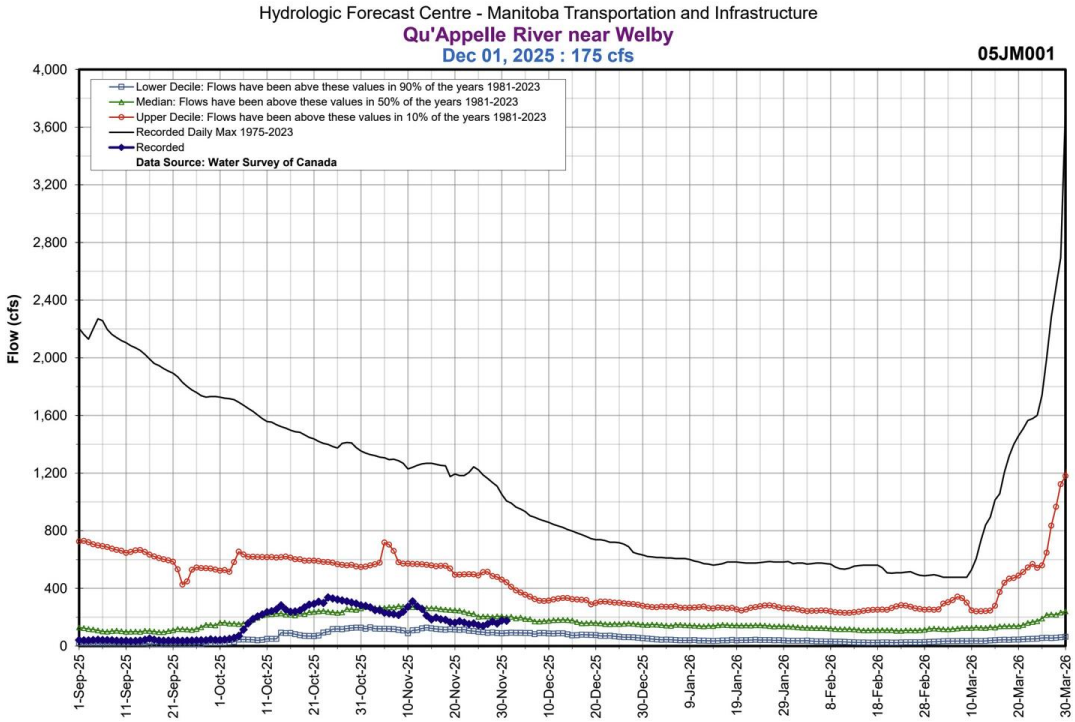

Figure 17. Qu'Appelle River flows near Welby.

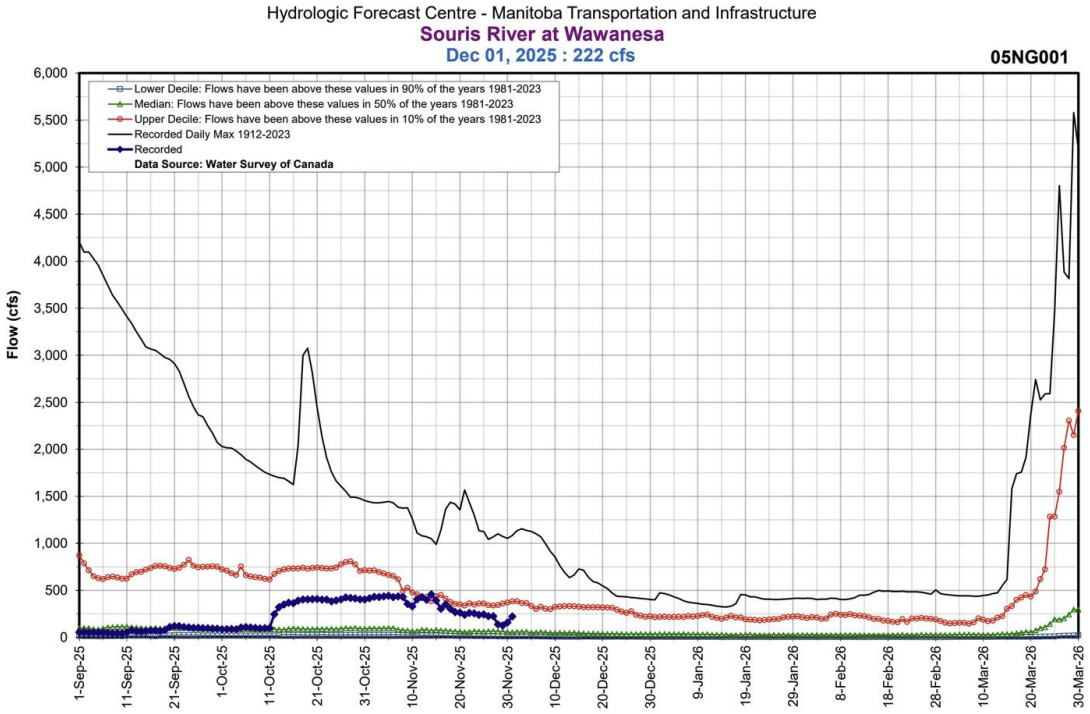

Figure 18. Souris River flows at Wawanesa.

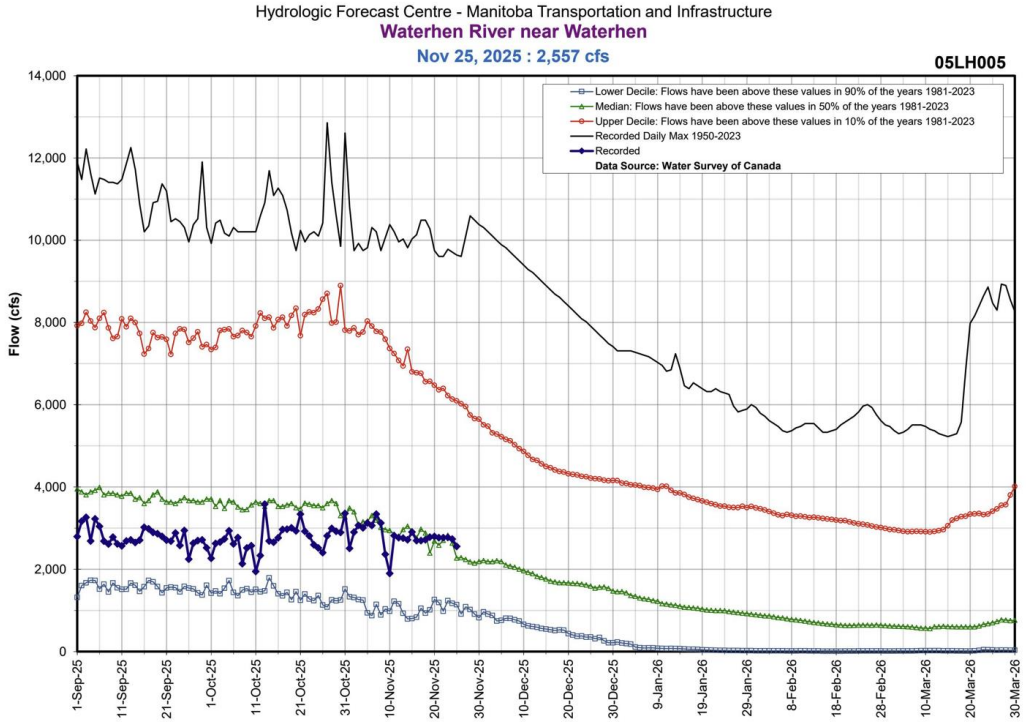

Figure 19. Waterhen River flows near Waterhen.

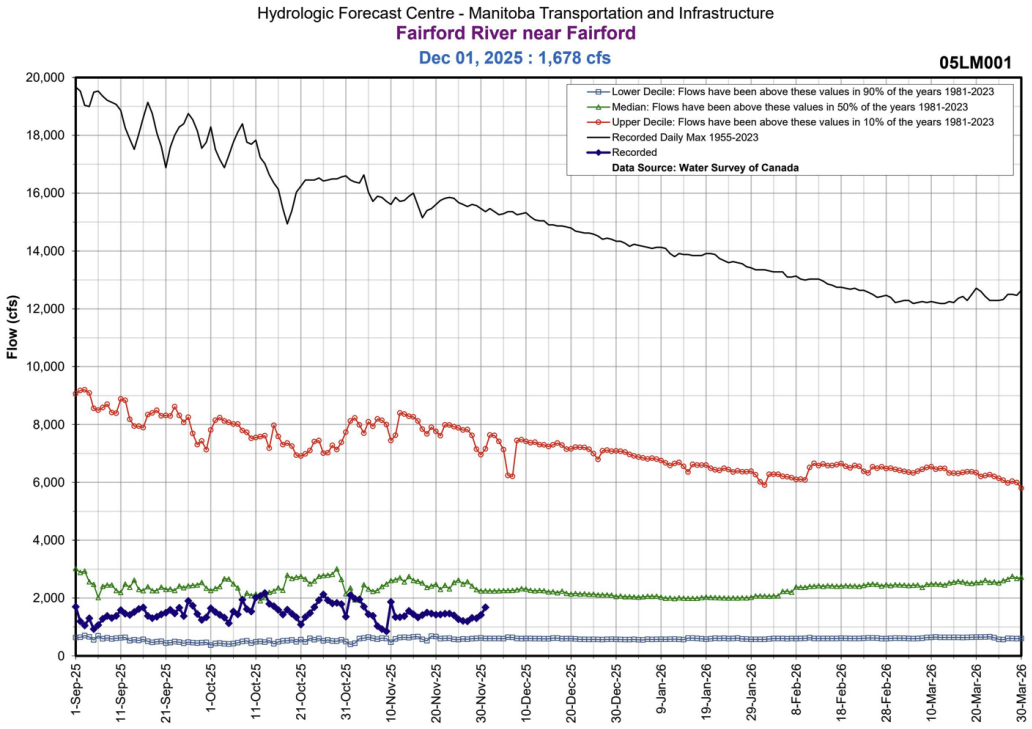

Figure 20. Fairford River flows near Fairford.

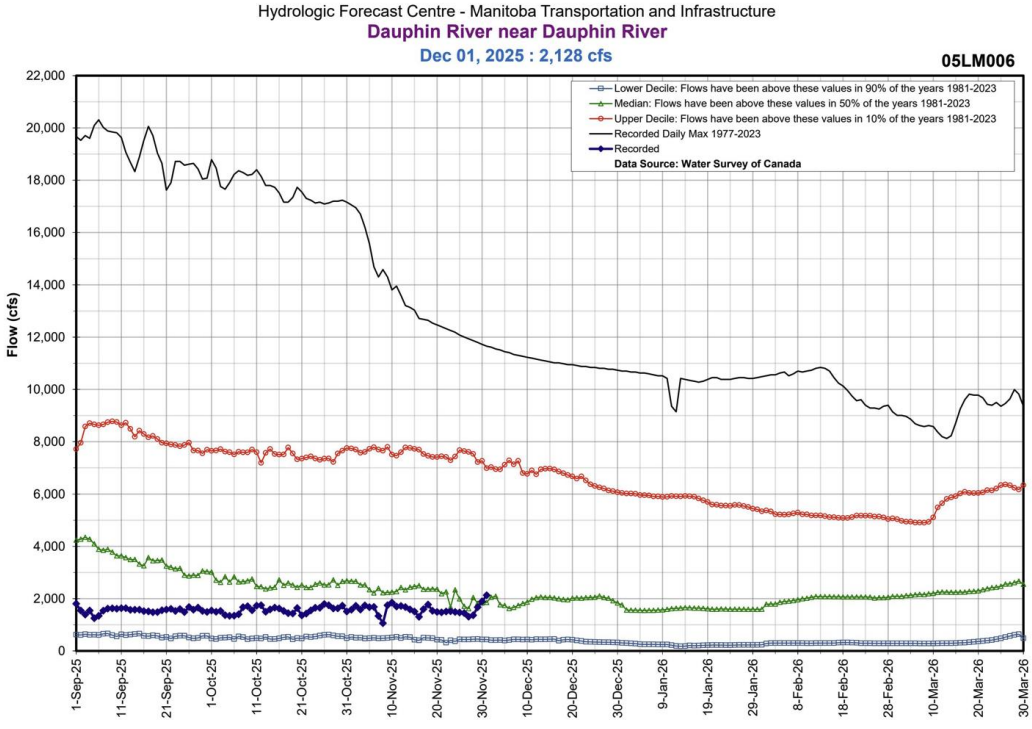

Figure 21. Dauphin River flows near Dauphin River.

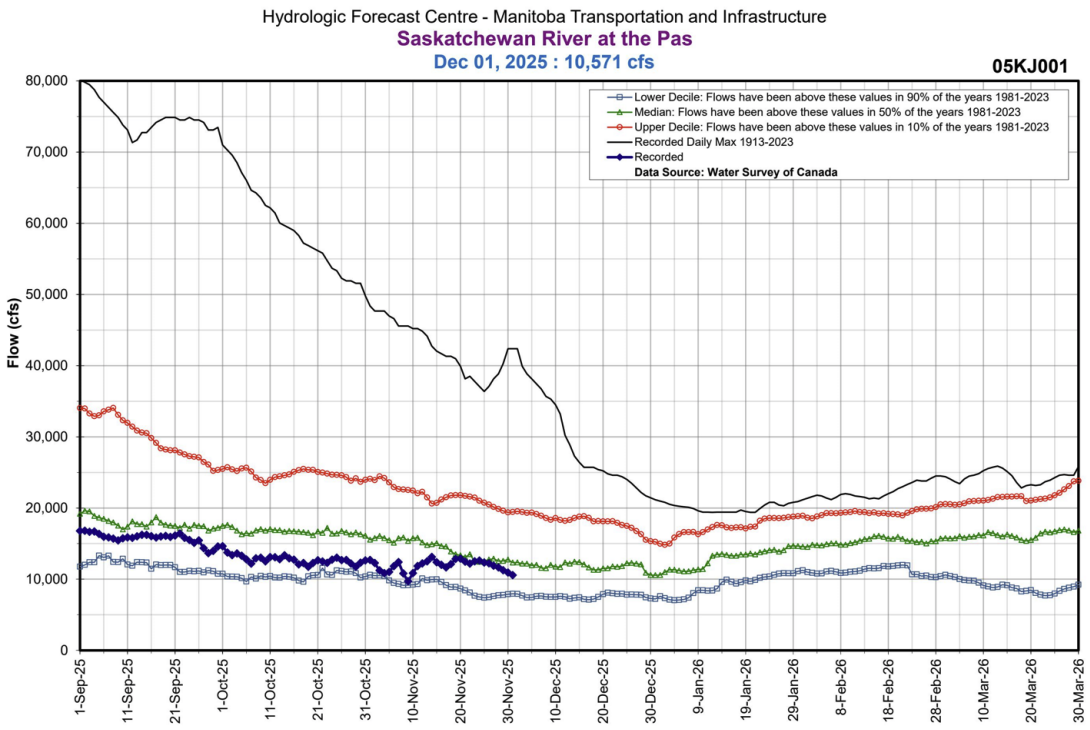

Figure 22. Saskatchewan River flows at The Pas.

Table 1. Flows for main rivers at selected locations as of December 1, 2025.

River	Location	Flow/Level as of Dec. 1, 2025	Minimum Flow/Level	10th Percentile	Normal Flow/Level	90th Percentile	Maximum Flow/Level	Last time Flow/Level was lower than the current value	Period of Record
Red River	Emerson	2,134 cfs	28 cfs (1936)	800 cfs	2,070 cfs	4,390 cfs	11,901 cfs (2019)	1,105 cfs (2024)	112 years
	Ste. Agathe	2,306 cfs	219 cfs (1976)	680 cfs	2,020 cfs	5,230 cfs	15,715 cfs (2019)	1,706 cfs (2018)	64 years
	James Avenue (level)**	0.4 ft	-2.1 ft (1988)	-1.1 ft	0.8 ft	4.4 ft	13.7 ft (2019)	0.2 ft (2018)	54 years
	Selkirk	2,305 cfs	219 cfs (1976)	2,170 cfs	3,290 cfs	8,050 cfs	10,450 cfs (2016)	1,501 cfs (2024)	17 years
Assiniboine River	Russell	306 cfs	20 cfs (1968)	110 cfs	280 cfs	550 cfs	1,847 cfs (2010)	173 cfs (2024)	112 years
	Brandon	594 cfs	45 cfs (1937)	390 cfs	630 cfs	1,420 cfs	4,061 cfs (2010)	494 cfs (2024)	112 years
	Holland	679 cfs	215 cfs (1967)	470 cfs	860 cfs	1,290 cfs	4,450 cfs (2016)	607 cfs (2024)	64 years
	Headingley (from Nov. 26)	1,338 cfs	110 cfs (1941)	400 cfs	810 cfs	1,700 cfs	4,273 cfs (2016)	583 cfs (2024)	112 years
Shellmouth Dam Release	Shellmouth	298 cfs	97 cfs (2001)	130 cfs	290 cfs	720 cfs	1,600 cfs (2010)	244 cfs (2024)	56 years
Souris River	Wawanesa	222 cfs	0 cfs (1938)	10 cfs	50 cfs	380 cfs	1,084 cfs (2014)	31 cfs (2024)	112 years
Qu'Appelle River	Welby	157 cfs	7 cfs (1988)	90 cfs	200 cfs	440 cfs	1,006 cfs (2010)	137 cfs (2023)	82 years
Fairford River	Fairford	1,678 cfs	38 cfs (1964)	600 cfs	2,420 cfs	7,150 cfs	15,362 cfs (2011)	558 cfs (2021)	70 years
Waterhen River	Waterhen (from Nov. 25)	2,557 cfs	66 cfs (1963)	1,140 cfs	2,270 cfs	6,050 cfs	9,641 cfs (2016)	2,200 cfs (2024)	74 years
Dauphin River	Dauphin	2,128 cfs	248 cfs (1988)	450 cfs	2,020 cfs	6,950 cfs	11,654 cfs (2011)	1,858 cfs (2023)	48 years
Saskatchewan River	The Pas	10,571 cfs	2,571 cfs (1929)	7,970 cfs	12,310 cfs	19,160 cfs	42,378 cfs (1954)	9,924 cfs (2024)	112 years
Fisher River	Dallas (from Oct. 31)	24 cfs	6 cfs (1990)	10 cfs	20 cfs	190 cfs	3,408 cfs (2010)	8 cfs (2020)	65 years
Winnipeg River	Seven Sisters Dam	19,400 cfs	-	17,800 cfs	33,900 cfs	56,500 cfs	-	-	-
Churchill River	Leaf Rapids	14,520 cfs	120 cfs (1940)	22,400 cfs	27,600 cfs	44,000 cfs	71,300 cfs (1997)	lowest on record	53 years

*****Note to the Assiniboine River flows and levels are regulated by the operation of Shellmouth Dam.*

*** Note to The Red River Level at James Avenue is measured in relative to the long term mean winter ice level at James Avenue, which is 727.57 feet geodetic or 0 ft James.*

Lakes

As of December 1, 2025, water levels on Manitoba's major lakes are generally near normal to below normal, and within their operating ranges for this time of year (Table 2; Figures 23 to 27).

Lake Manitoba is well below normal at 810.9 ft, which is within its operating range of 810.5 ft to 812.5 ft and approximately 0.8 ft below the long-term normal level for December 1. Lake Winnipeg is well below normal at 712.3 ft, also within its operating range of 711.0 ft to 715.0 ft but tracking 1.2 ft below its normal early-December level. Lake St. Martin is currently at 797.1 ft, within its operating range of 797.0 ft to 800.0 ft and about 1.0 ft below its long-term normal. Lake Winnipegosis is below normal at 830.2 ft and tracking below its historical normal level of 830.5 ft, while Dauphin Lake is at 854.2 ft, which is near the upper end of its operating range of 853.0 ft to 854.8 ft and close to its long-term normal level of 854.3 ft for this time. Most lakes in the Whiteshell region are tracking near normal for early December; however, a few lakes in the North Whiteshell are higher than seasonal normal due to late-season precipitation.

The Shellmouth Reservoir (Lake of the Prairies) is at 1399.2 ft, slightly below its long-term normal level of 1400.0 ft for December 1 and within the operating guideline range of 1386.0 ft to 1400.0 ft for winter drawdown. Shellmouth Dam is being operated in consultation with the Shellmouth Reservoir Regulation Liaison Committee. Regular spring runoff forecasts will be issued and the lake level will be dropped to the appropriate level prior to the spring runoff in order to prevent downstream flooding while also storing sufficient water for water supply purposes and upstream reservoir users. Figure 28 shows the observed lake level, inflow, and outflow conditions along with the forecast through mid-January, based on median inflow assumptions. As conditions on the ground change, a revised inflow forecast will be issued and the outflow from the reservoir will be adjusted accordingly.

Figures 23 to 27 illustrate the current lake levels in relation to the statistical lower decile, median, and upper decile, and Table 2 summarizes observed levels as of December 1, 2025.

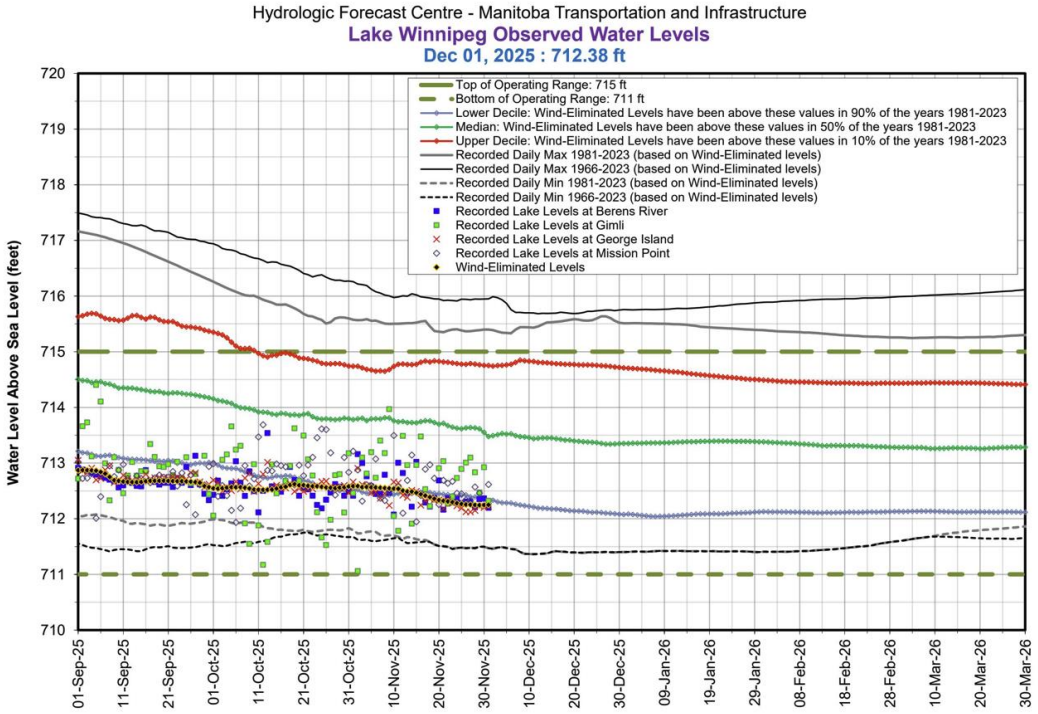

Figure 23. Lake Winnipeg water levels.

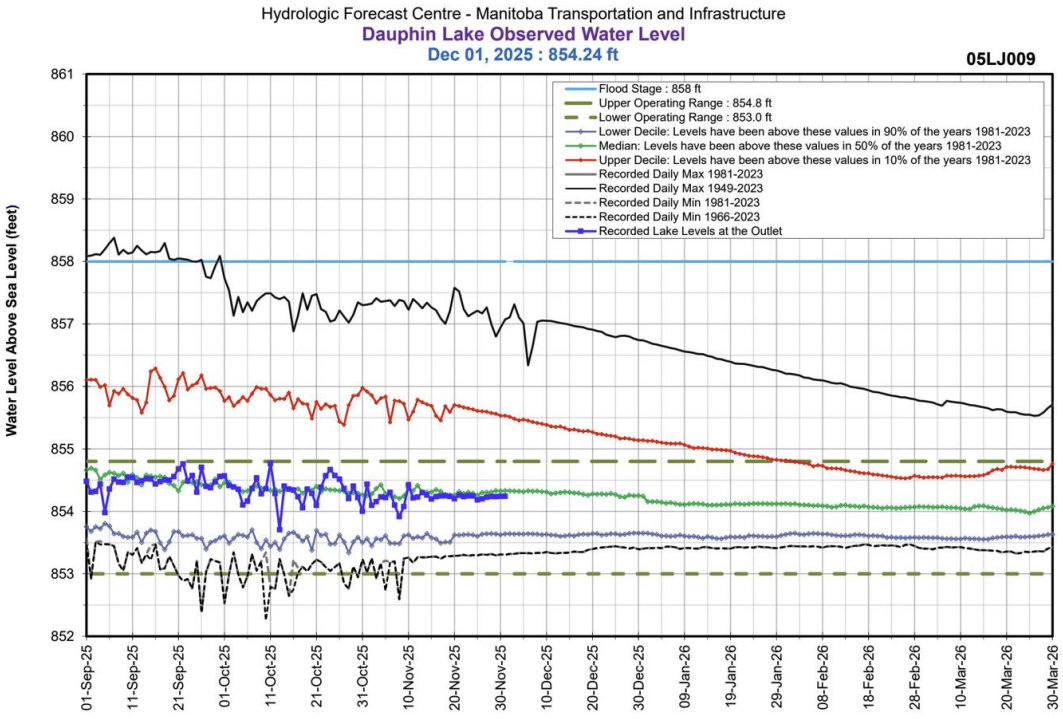

Figure 24. Dauphin Lake water levels.

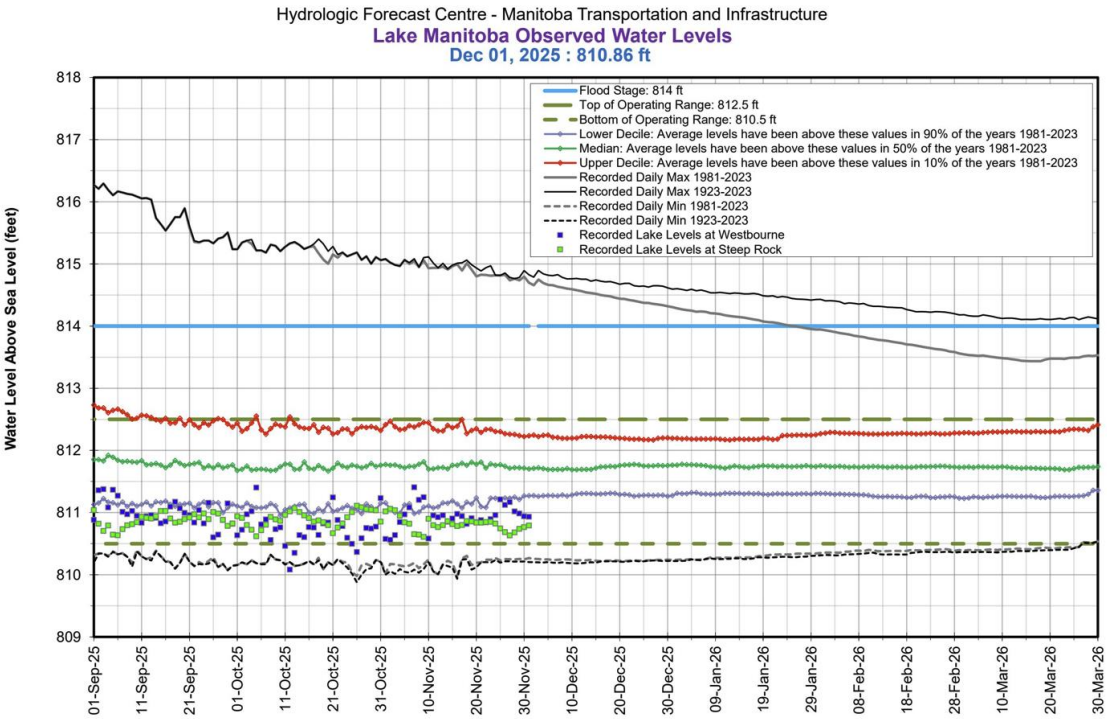

Figure 25. Lake Manitoba water levels.

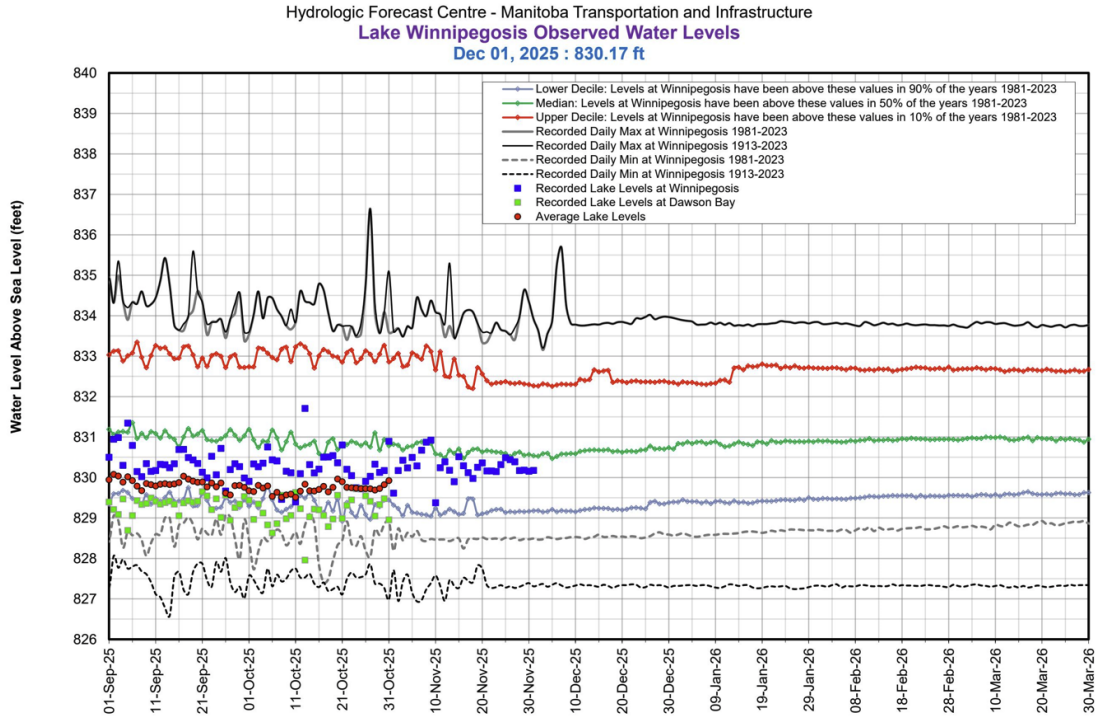

Figure 26. Lake Winnipegosis water levels.

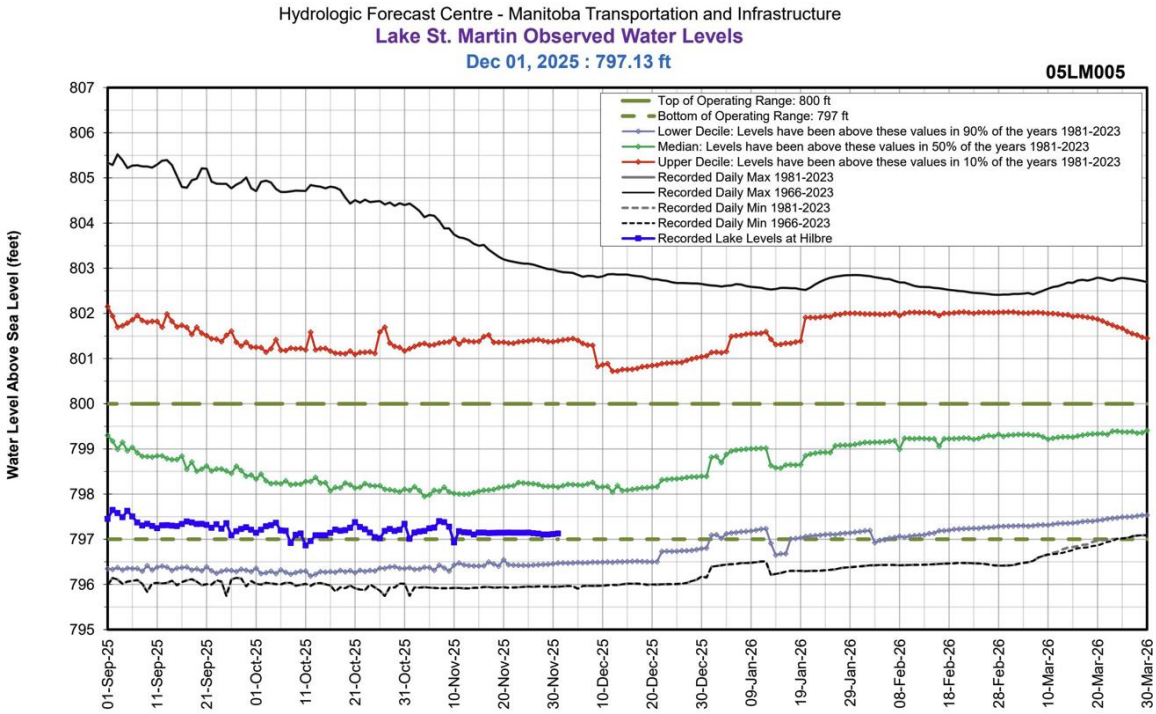

Figure 27. Lake St. Martin water levels.

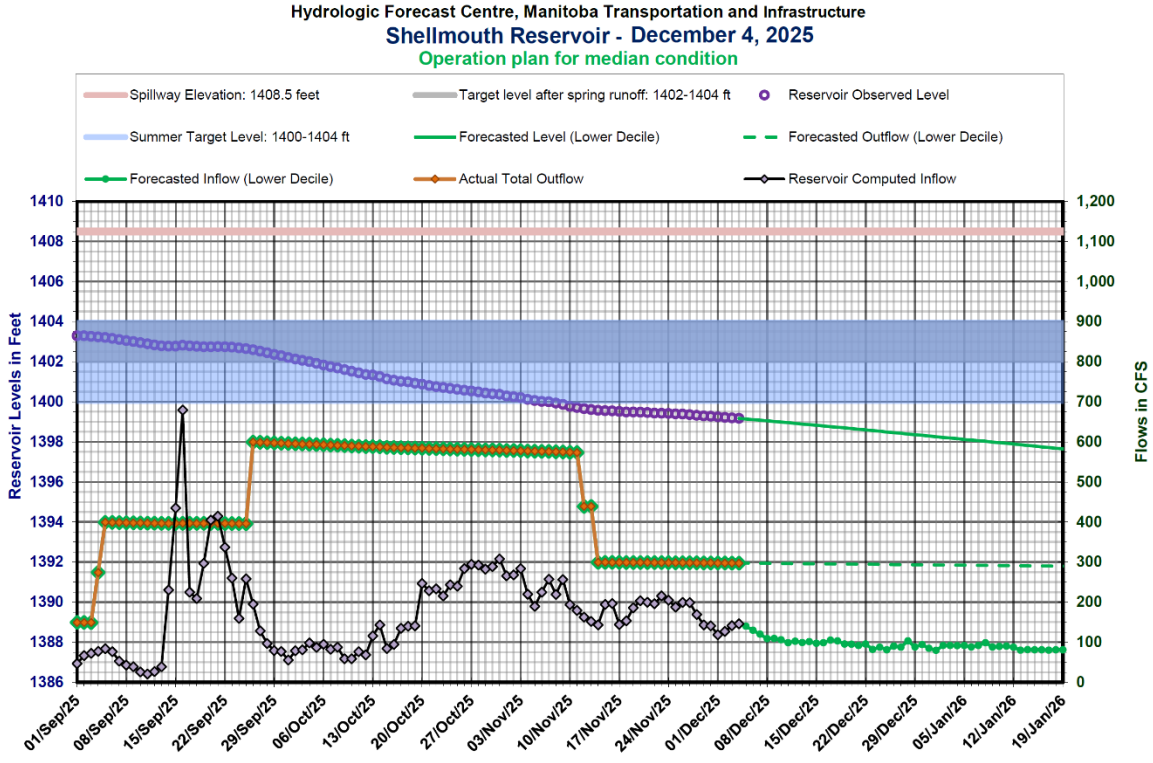

Figure 28. Lake of the Prairies (Shellmouth Reservoir) water levels and flows.

Table 2. Water levels for selected lakes as of December 1, 2025.

Lakes	Level as of Dec 1, 2025 (ft)	Change from Nov 24, 2025 (ft)	Operating range (ft)	Normal level for Dec 1 (ft)	Last time level was equal or higher than the current level	Historical comparison
Lake Manitoba*	810.9	0.0	810.5 - 812.5	811.7	811.4 (2024)	*Historic water level for this time of year is above the current level 95% of the time*
Lake Winnipeg*	712.3	0.0	711 - 715	713.5	712.9 (2024)	*Historic water level for this time of year is above the current level 90% of the time*
Lake St. Martin*	797.1	0.0	797 - 800	798.1	798.0 (2024)	*Historic water level for this time of year is above the current level 70% of the time*
Lake Winnipegosis	830.2	-0.2	---	830.5	830.4 (2024)	*Historic water level for this time of year is above the current level 65% of the time*
Dauphin Lake*	854.2	0.0	853.0 - 854.8	854.3	855.0 (2024)	*Historic water level for this time of year is above the current level 55% of the time*
Shellmouth Reservoir*	1399.2	-0.2	1386 - 1400	1400.0	1400.6 (2023)	*Historic water level for this time of year is above the current level 60% of the time*
Lake Wahtopanah near Rivers*	1536.5	0.1	---	1535.1	1536.6 (1975)	*Historic water level for this time of year is above the current level less than 5% of the time (highest since 1975)*
Lake Minnewasta	1082.2	0.0	---	1079.6	1082.3 (2019)	*Historic water level for this time of year is above the current level 10% of the time*

**Levels on these lakes are managed by operation of dam structures*

WINTER PRECIPITATION (LONG-TERM PRECIPITATION OUTLOOK)

Global weather prediction centres indicate that a weak La Niña climate condition is expected to continue in December to January, with a high probability of transitioning to neutral conditions in January to March 2026. The effect of La Niña is variable across the globe; for Manitoba, it is generally characterized by below normal temperatures and above normal precipitation.

Environment and Climate Change Canada's long-term precipitation outlook, issued on November 30, indicated above normal precipitation for most parts of Manitoba from December to February, with the exception of northern Manitoba basins, which are favoured to receive near normal precipitation (Figures 29 and 30). The U.S. National Weather Service Climate Prediction Center's outlook, released on November 20, indicates a slight chance of above normal precipitation for the U.S. portions of the Red and Souris River basins from December to March (Figures 31 and 32). Long-range climate projections from the Columbia Climate School's International Research Institute (IRI) predicts below normal precipitation for most parts of Manitoba from December to March, except for parts of northeast Manitoba that are favoured to have equal chance of normal, above normal, and below normal precipitation (Figures 33 and 34).

Differences among these long-term precipitation forecasts reflect variations in modelling approaches, input data, and assumptions. Historically, long-range outlooks tend to be more reliable for the first month of the forecast period, with uncertainty increasing as the projection extends further into the season. Overall, long-term precipitation forecasts carry considerably more uncertainty than short-term forecasts.

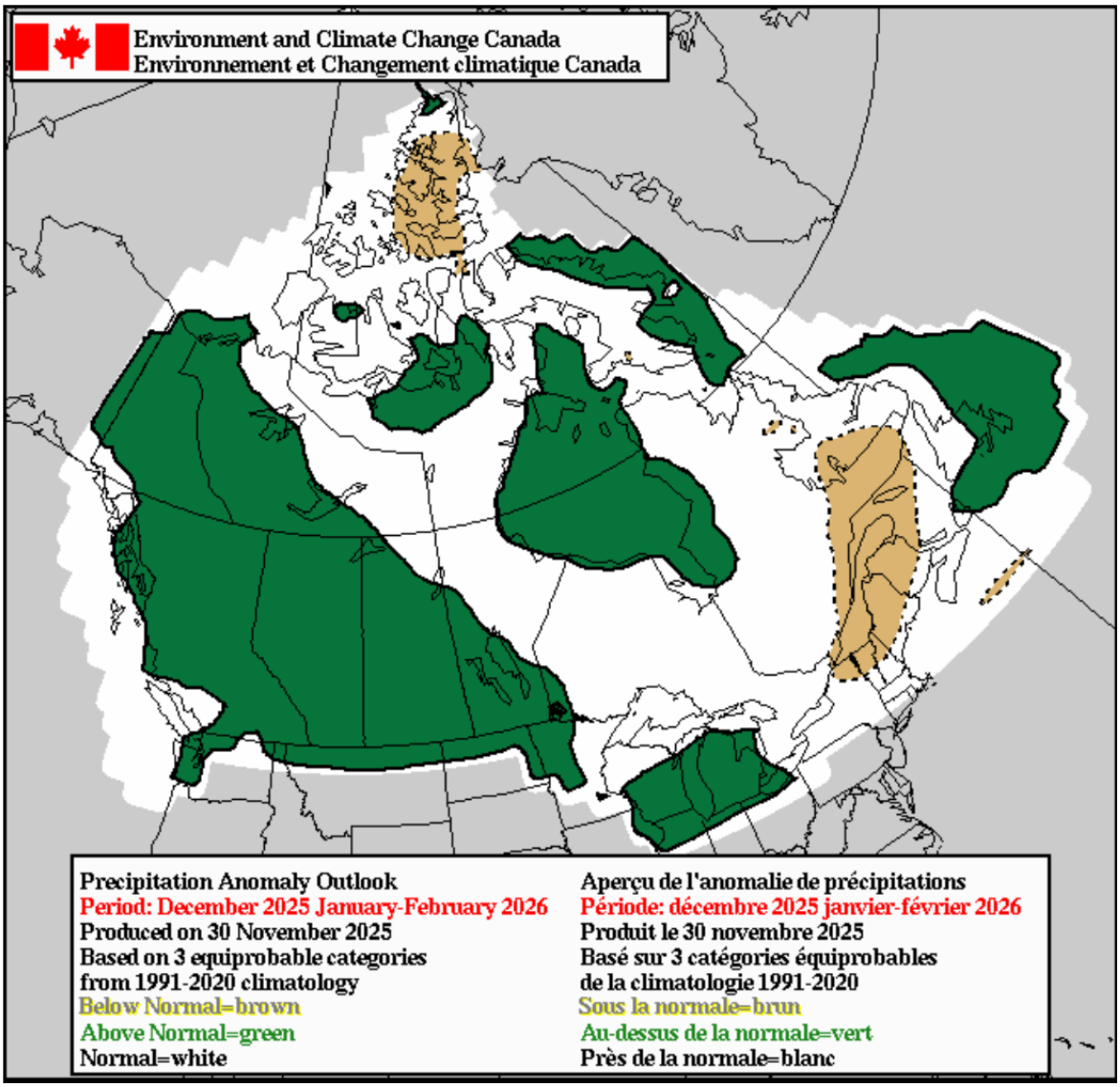

Figure 29. Environment and Climate Change Canada's Deterministic Precipitation Outlook (December to February).

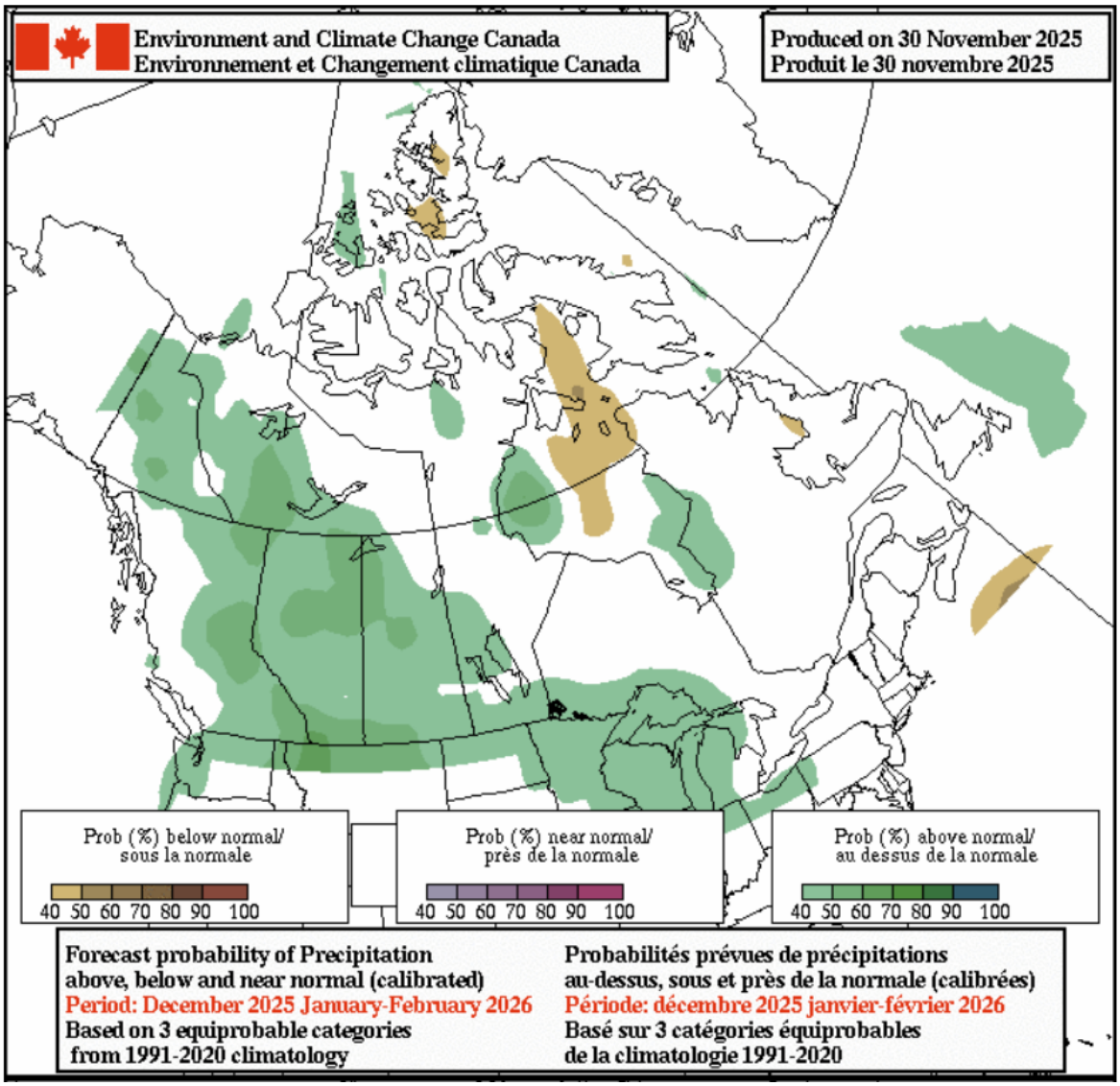

Figure 30. Environment and Climate Change Canada's Probabilistic Precipitation Outlook (December to February).

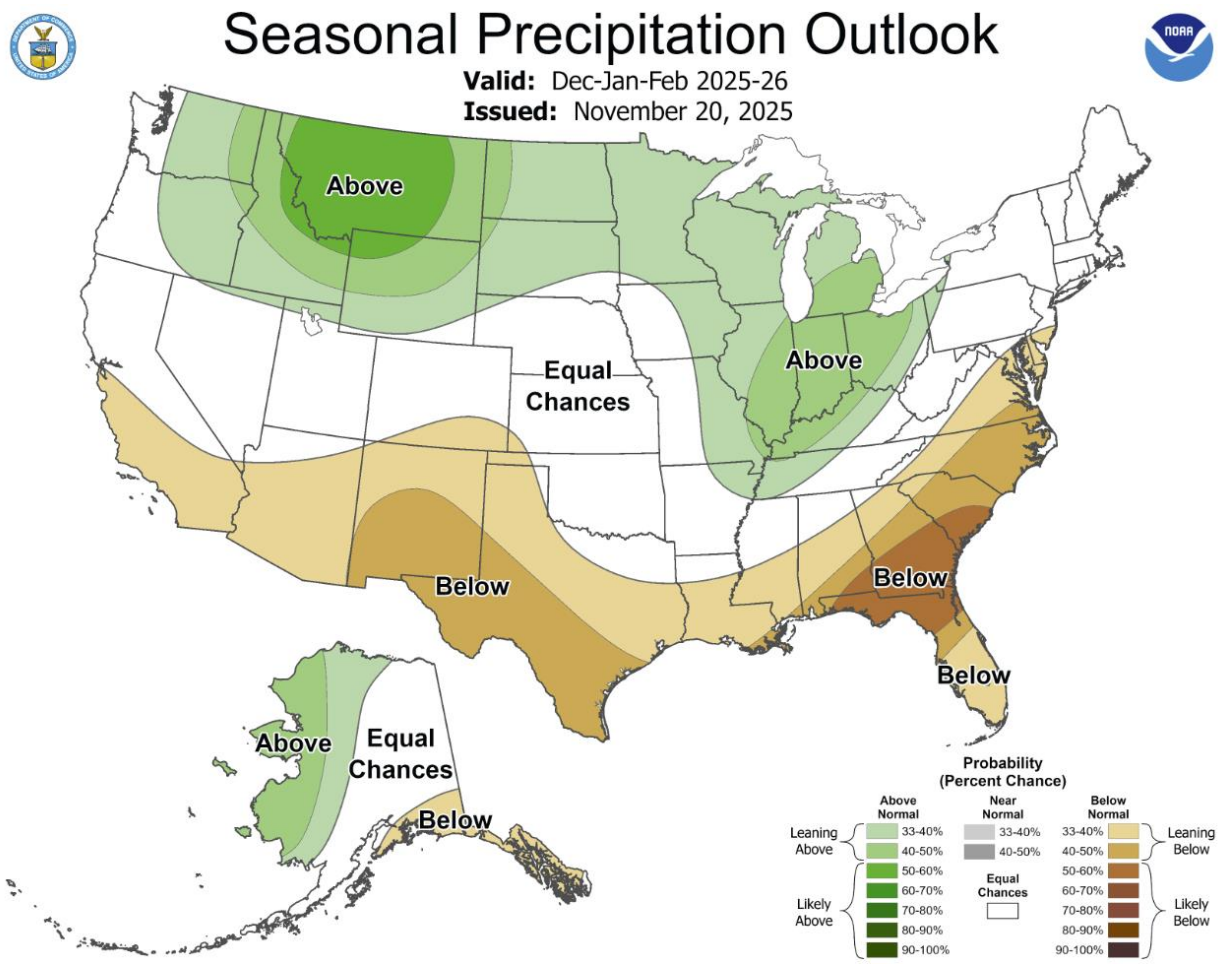

Figure 31. National Weather Services' precipitation outlook (December to February).

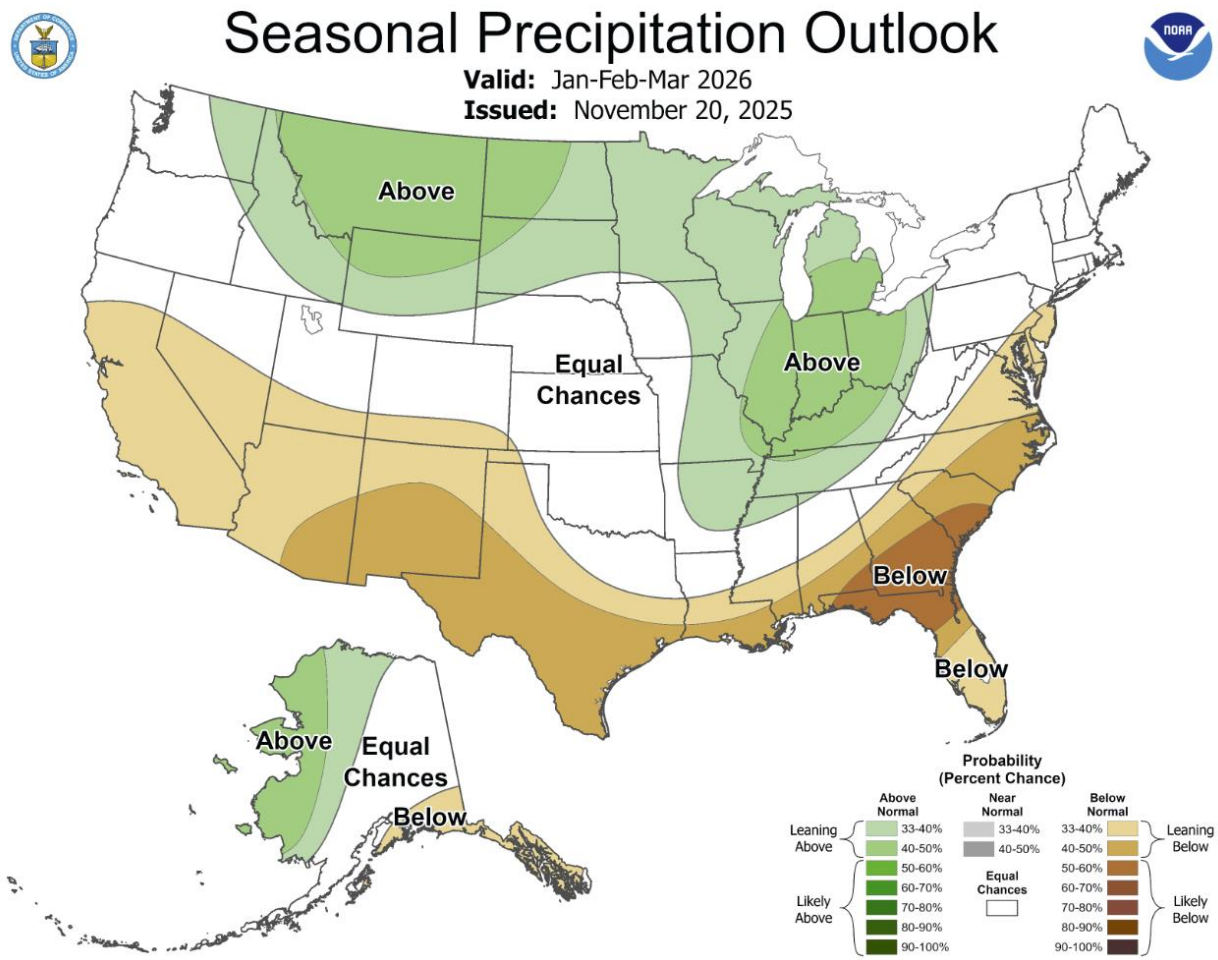

Figure 32. National Weather Services' precipitation outlook (January to March).

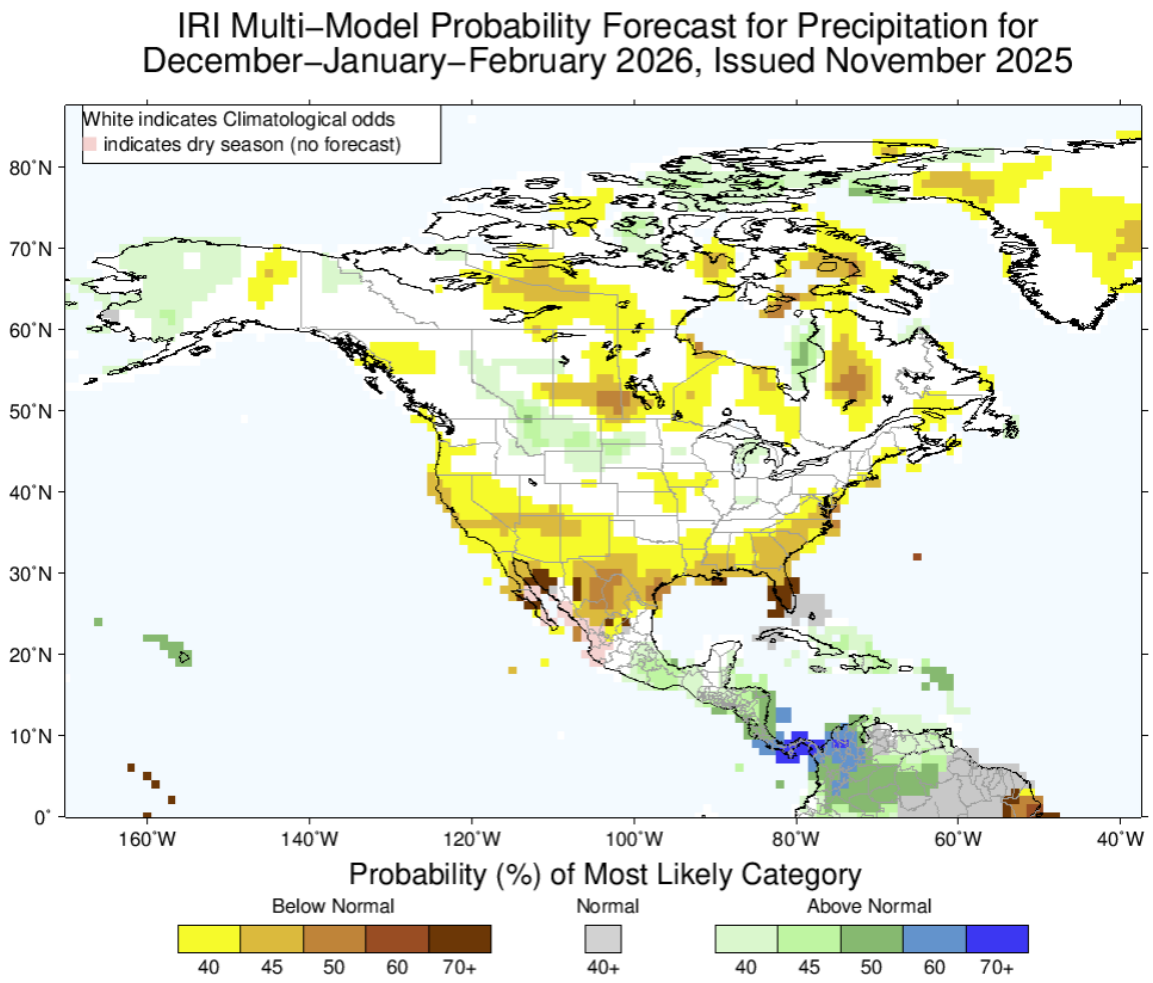

Figure 33. Columbia Climate School International Research Institute's Multi-Model Probabilistic Precipitation Outlook (December to February).

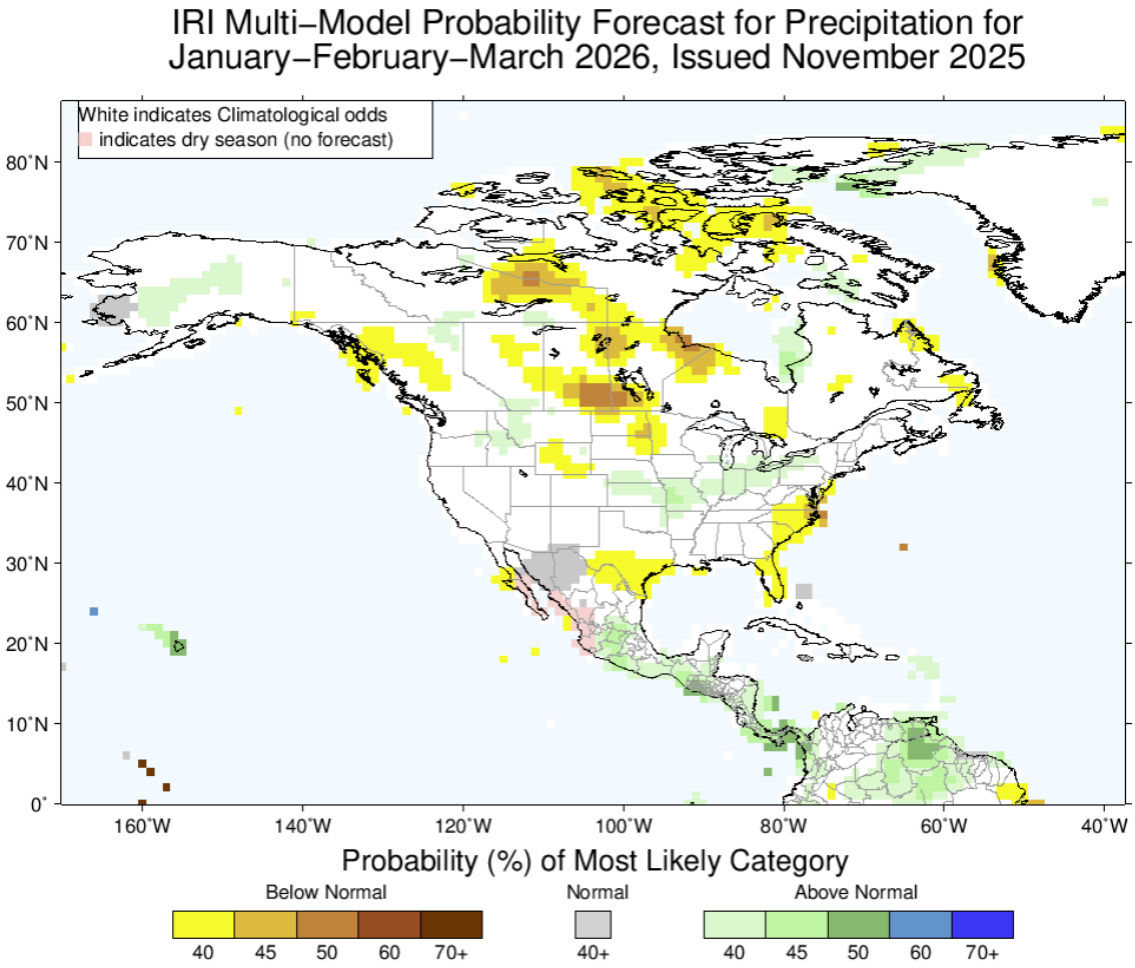

Figure 34. Columbia Climate School International Research Institute's Multi-Model Probabilistic Precipitation Outlook (January to March).

FORECASTED LAKE LEVELS AND RIVER FLOWS OVER THE WINTER PERIOD

Providing reliable winter flow forecasts is challenging due to frozen ground conditions and the significant influence of river and lake ice on both water levels and discharge measurements. Nevertheless, flows and water levels on most major Manitoba rivers, including the Assiniboine, Red, Waterhen, Fairford, and Dauphin rivers, are projected to remain near normal through the winter period and until spring runoff begins. On the Assiniboine River, flows continue to be influenced by controlled releases of water from the Shellmouth Reservoir, which are being maintained to lower reservoir levels in advance of the spring melt.

Most major lakes in Manitoba are expected to remain close to their current early-winter levels through the remainder of the season. Under near normal winter conditions, no significant changes in the levels of these lakes are anticipated by the end of March. Lake Manitoba is expected to remain near 810.9 ft throughout the winter. Lake Winnipeg is expected to remain near 712.3 ft throughout the winter to the end of March. Lake Winnipegosis will remain near the current level of 830.2 ft and Lake St. Martin is expected to be near 798.0 ft before the spring runoff. Current lake levels are provided in Table 2 above.

SUMMARY

The Hydrologic Forecast Centre will continue working collaboratively with Environment and Climate Change Canada, the National Weather Service, and flood forecasters in neighbouring jurisdictions to monitor watershed conditions and winter precipitation for spring runoff forecasting.

At this point in time, it is not practical to provide a reliable long-term flood forecast for Spring 2026 as conditions could change significantly during the coming months. Basins with below normal to normal soil moisture conditions, base flow, and lake level conditions indicate a higher chance for below normal to near normal flows and levels in spring runoff. However, there is a possibility of receiving above normal spring runoff if heavy winter or spring precipitation and a fast snowmelt occur. Conversely, the risk of spring flooding could decrease if less winter precipitation occurs, or if a gradual snowmelt rate or less precipitation were to occur in early spring. Major lakes, such as Lake Winnipeg, Lake Manitoba, and Lake Winnipegosis, respond slowly to hydrologic inputs.

Even with near-normal spring runoff, several months of sustained inflows would be needed for these lakes to gradually move back toward their long-term normal levels.

Looking back at some of the most significant historic flood or drought events, each flood or drought event is caused by a combination of unique circumstances. There is an inherent risk of over-estimating or under-estimating the extent of spring runoff if one considers the conditions and available precipitation four months in advance of the spring runoff. The Hydrologic Forecast Centre will continue to monitor watershed conditions closely and will release future outlooks in the winter and prior to spring runoff.

A detailed spring flood outlook will be released toward the end of February, once more information on precipitation and other factors is available.