

# Water Availability and Drought Conditions Report

## MAY 2026

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### 1. Executive Summary

This Water Availability and Drought Conditions Report provides an update on conditions throughout Manitoba for May 2026.

- Precipitation conditions over the past month, three-month, and twelve-month periods are as follows:
  - In May, Manitoba generally received moderately to severely dry precipitation. Most parts of southern Manitoba and areas near The Pas experienced extremely dry conditions during this month.
  - Over the past three months, from March to May, some parts of southern Manitoba experienced severely to extremely dry conditions. Areas near Dauphin, Berens River, Island Lake, and north of Churchill experienced severely below-normal precipitation. Areas between Norway House and Lynn Lake received moderately above-normal precipitation since March. The Swan River region was in near-normal conditions over the past three months.
  - Over the past 12 months, Manitoba generally experienced moderately to extremely dry precipitation conditions. Small, isolated pockets of normal and moderately wet conditions were observed around Lynn Lake, The Pas, south of Thompson, and areas between Winnipeg and Emerson in southern Manitoba.
- As of May 31, water levels in rivers and lakes across Manitoba ranged from normal conditions, between the 25<sup>th</sup> and 75<sup>th</sup> percentiles, to much-above normal conditions, above the 90<sup>th</sup> percentile. Gauges at Lake Winnipeg, Lake Manitoba, and Whitemouth River recorded below-normal levels, between 10<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> percentiles.
- As of May 28, most groundwater levels in southern Manitoba and the Interlake region were in the normal range, except one aquifer east of Winnipeg near Anola and another located in southeast Manitoba near the U.S. border that had below-normal levels, between 10<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> historical percentiles.
- As of April 30, the Canadian Drought Monitor classified conditions in the Seal River Watershed in northern Manitoba as abnormally dry (D0) to severely dry (D2). No drought conditions were reported across Manitoba's agricultural regions.
- There are currently no concerns over reservoir water supplies. Provincial water supply reservoirs are either near or exceeding full supply level for the month of May due to snowmelt contributions.
- Manitoba Agriculture's soil moisture map for May 31 indicates mostly wet to optimal conditions across southern Manitoba at depths of 0 to 120 cm. Areas near Dauphin Lake and in the Interlake are showing wet conditions in May. Small pockets of dry conditions are beginning to emerge.

- The Manitoba Wildfire Service reports high to extreme fire danger across western and southern Manitoba. Small size wildfire activities near Lac du Bonnet and north of Lake Winnipeg have been reported so far. Refer to the fire and travel restriction maps found at: [www.gov.mb.ca/conservation\\_fire/Restrictions/index.html](http://www.gov.mb.ca/conservation_fire/Restrictions/index.html). Visit [www.manitoba.ca/wildfire/burn\\_conditions.html](http://www.manitoba.ca/wildfire/burn_conditions.html) to view current burning restrictions.
- Environment and Climate Change Canada's seasonal forecast for June-July-August predicts 70 to 100 percent likelihood of above-normal temperatures for Manitoba. The seasonal forecast indicates around 40 to 50 percent likelihood of below-normal precipitation for the next three months for some portions of the northern regions.

## 2. Drought Indicators

### 2-1. *Precipitation Indicator*

Precipitation is assessed to determine the severity of meteorological dryness and is an indirect measurement of agricultural dryness.

Three precipitation indicators are calculated for Nelson-Churchill River Basin, which contributes to Manitoba waters, to represent short-term (one month; Figure 1), medium-term (three months; Figure 2) and long-term (12 months; Figure 3) conditions. The indicators compare current monthly precipitation totals to historical data to calculate the historical percentile of precipitation that occurred over the past one, three or twelve months. Historical percentiles are derived from 46 years of data (1980–2025) obtained from Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. Any gaps in recent observed precipitation records are supplemented using High-Resolution Deterministic Precipitation Analysis (HRDPA) data.

Due to large distances between meteorological stations in northern Manitoba, the interpolated contours in this region are based on limited observations and should be interpreted with caution.

Manitoba Drought Monitor - Environment and Climate Change (ECC)  
 Historical Percentile of Precipitation from 2026-05-01 to 2026-05-31

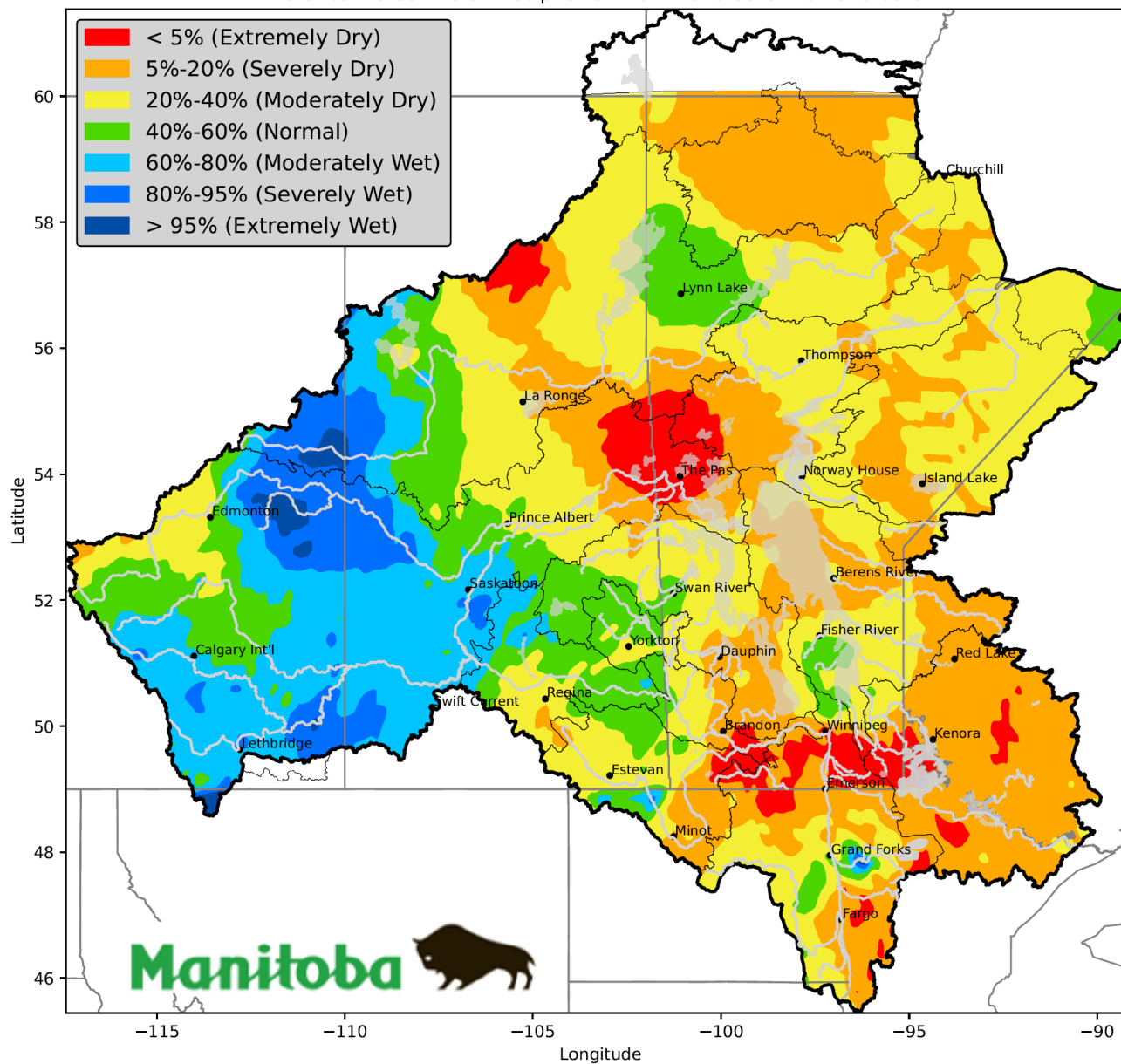


Figure 1: One month (short-term) historical percentile of precipitation indicator.

Manitoba Drought Monitor - Environment and Climate Change (ECC)  
Historical Percentile of Precipitation from 2026-03-01 to 2026-05-31

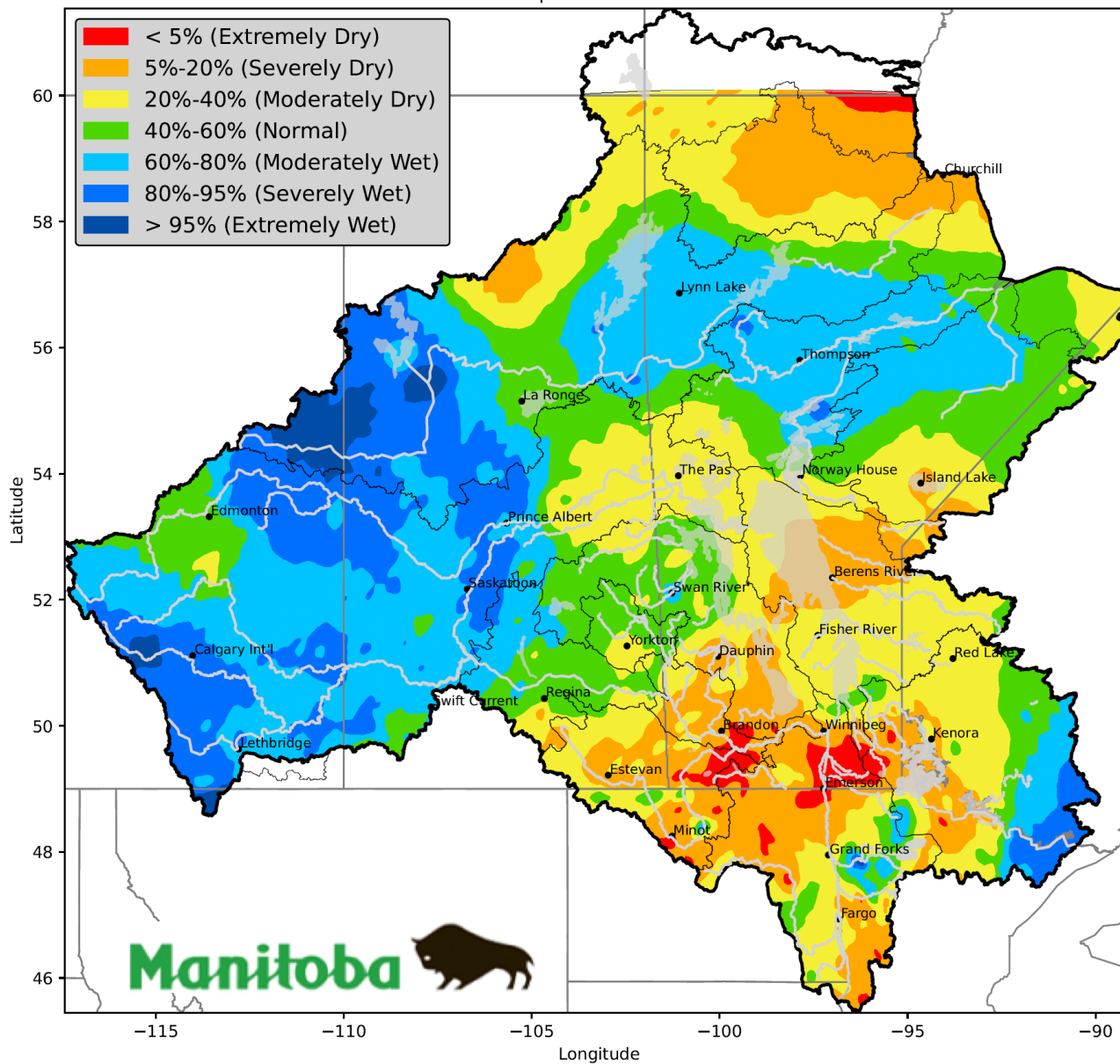


Figure 2: Three month (medium-term) historical percentile of precipitation indicator.

Manitoba Drought Monitor - Environment and Climate Change (ECC)  
Historical Percentile of Precipitation from 2025-06-01 to 2026-05-31

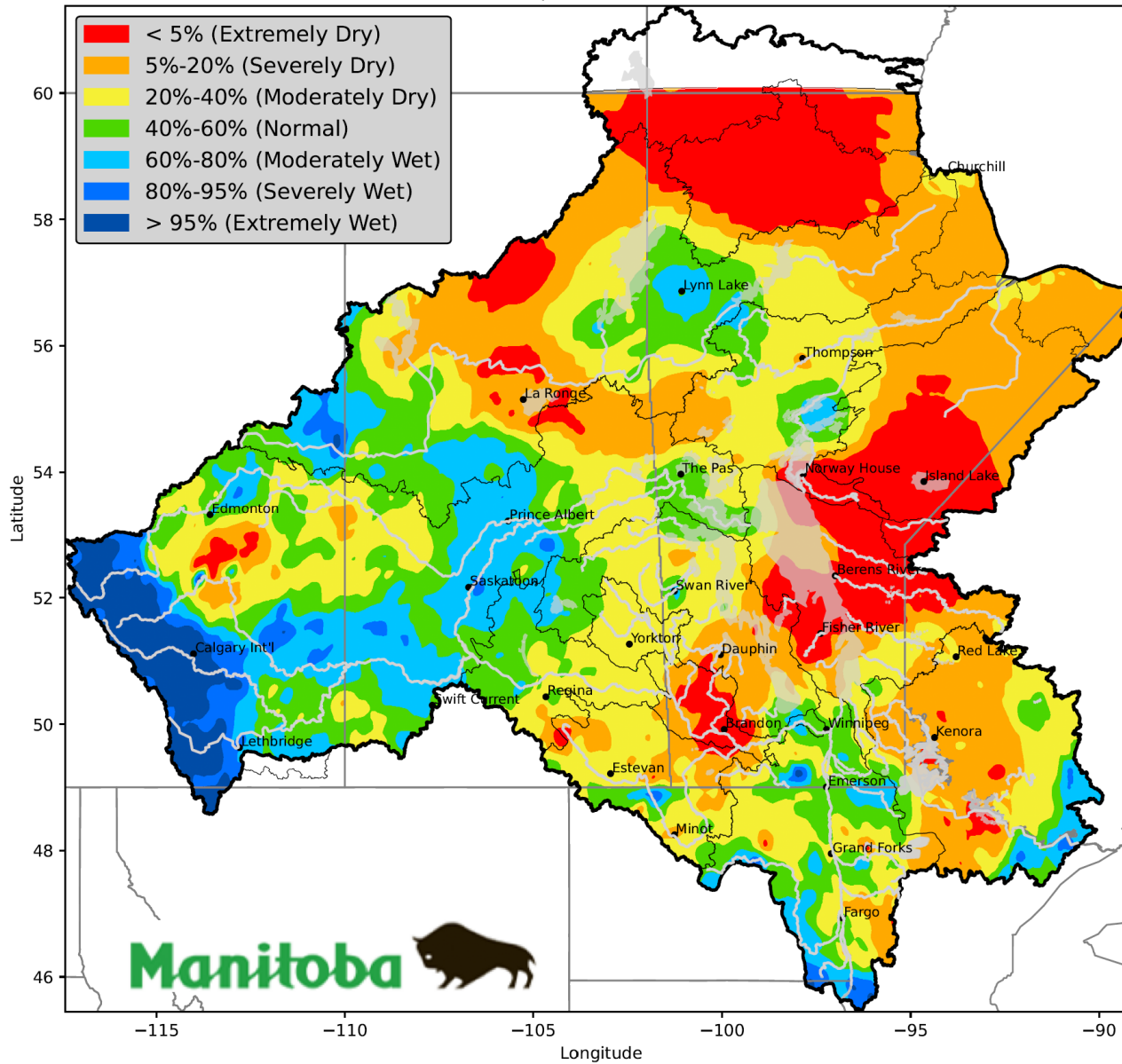


Figure 3: Twelve month (long-term) historical percentile of precipitation indicator.

## 2-2. Streamflow & Lake Level Indicator

The streamflow and lake level indicator is based on average daily flows and levels compared to historical values for that particular day.

This indicator is used to determine the severity of hydrological dryness in a watershed and is summarized on Figure 4, representing hydrological conditions for May 31. Except for Lake Winnipeg, Lake Manitoba, and the Whitemouth River, which are showing below-normal water level and flow conditions, all other locations shown in Figure 4 are experiencing normal to much-above-normal conditions.

Streamflow and lake level percentile plots for all of the rivers and lakes included on Figure 4 are available on the [Manitoba Drought Monitor website](#) under the *Drought Indicator Map* tab.

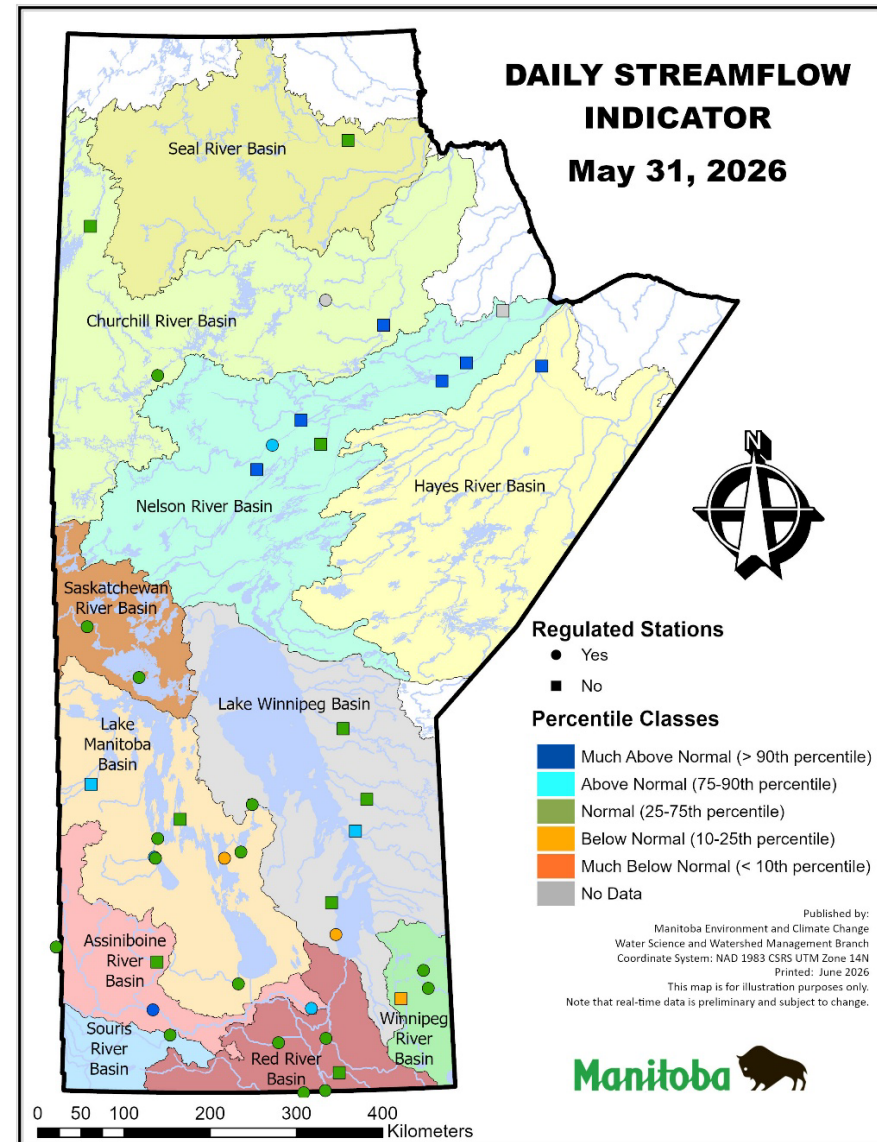


Figure 4: Daily streamflow and lake level indicator for May 31.

### 2-3. Groundwater Indicator

Groundwater level indicator is based on average daily levels compared to historical values for that day.

This indicator is used to monitor the impact of meteorological and hydrological dryness on the aquifers in the province and is summarized in Figure 5, representing the groundwater conditions for May 28. All aquifers in southern Manitoba and the Interlake region are showing near-normal groundwater levels, except for one aquifer east of Winnipeg near Anola and another in southeastern Manitoba near the U.S. border, where groundwater levels are below normal.

In general, groundwater level responses to precipitation fluctuations lag considerably behind surface water responses, so even prolonged periods of below-normal precipitation may not have a significant negative impact on groundwater levels.

Groundwater level percentile plots for all of the aquifers included on Figure 5 are available on the [Manitoba Drought Monitor website](#) under the [Drought Indicator Map](#) tab.

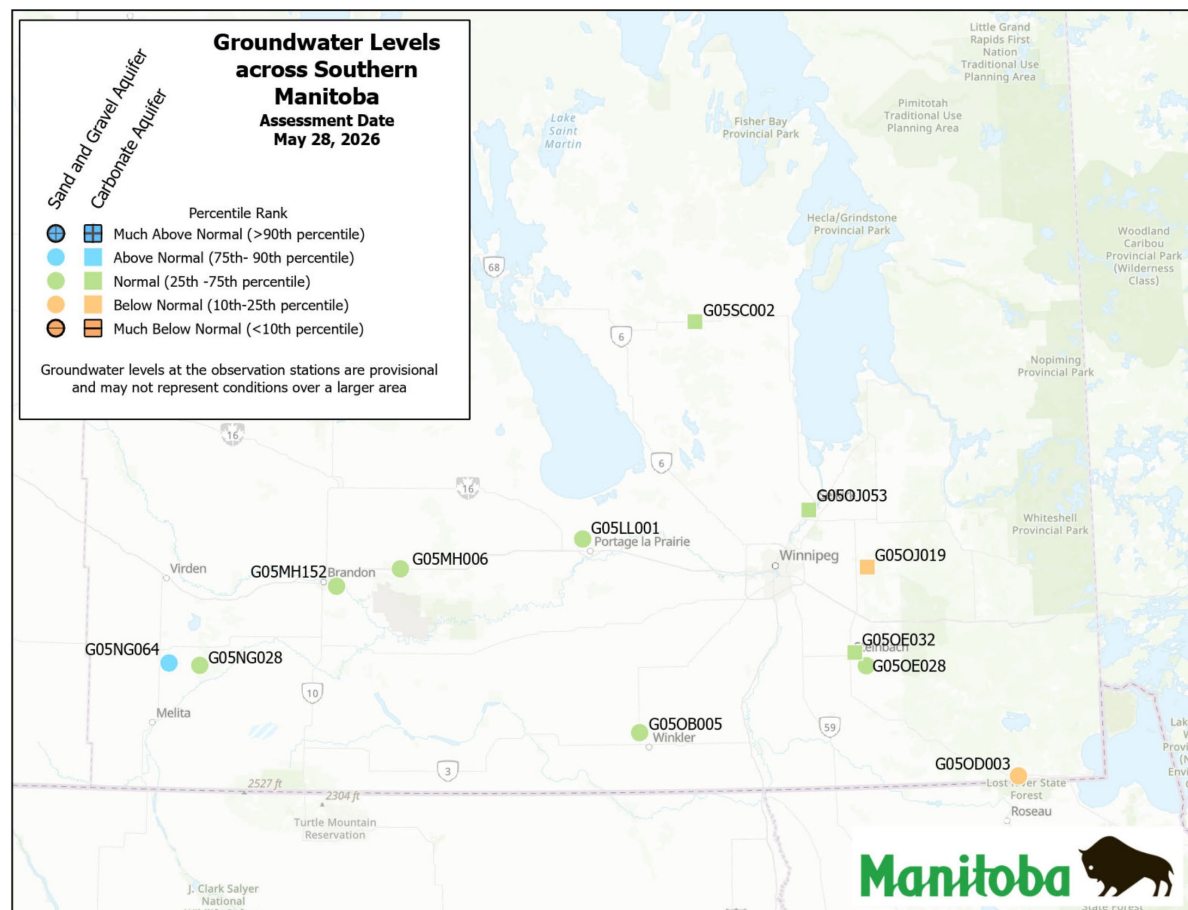


Figure 5: Groundwater indicator on May 28 for select groundwater monitoring sites.



### 3. Water Availability

#### 3-1. Reservoir Conditions

Table 1: Water Supply Reservoir Levels and Storages – May 31 (Southern and Western Manitoba).

Water Supply Reservoir Levels and Storages - May 31, 2026								
Lake or Reservoir	Community Supplied	Target Level (feet)	Latest Observed Level (feet)	Observed date	Supply Status (Recent - Target) (feet)	Storage at Target Level (acre-feet)	Storage at Observed Level (acre-feet)	Supply Status (observed storage/target storage) (%)
Lake of the Prairies (Shellmouth)* <sup>1</sup>	Brandon, Portage, Cartier Regional Water Co-op	1,402.5	1409.42	May 31, 2026	+6.92	300,000	402,466	134%
Lake Wahtopannah (Rivers)*	Rivers	1,536.0	1537.19	May 31, 2026	+1.19	24,500	27,186	111%
Minnewasta (Morden)*	Morden	1,082.0	1082.04	May 31, 2026	+0.04	3,150	3,154	100%
Stephenfield*	Carman, Pembina Valley Water Co-op	972.0	972.30	May 31, 2026	+0.30	3,810	3,950	104%
Vermilion*	Dauphin	1,274.0	1274.43	May 31, 2026	+0.43	2,600	2,700	104%
Goudney (Pilot Mound)*		1,482.0	1482.28	May 31, 2026	+0.28	450	464	103%
Jackson Lake*		1,174.0	1173.88	May 31, 2026	-0.12	2,990	2,959	99%
Manitou (Mary Jane)*		1,537.0	1537.06	May 31, 2026	+0.06	1,150	1,152	100%
Turtlehead (Deloraine)*	Deloraine	1,772.0	1771.97	May 31, 2026	-0.03	1,400	1,399	100%
Lake Irwin*		1,178.0	1178.00	May 31, 2026	-0.00	3,800	3,798	100%
Minnedosa* <sup>1</sup>		1,681.5	1682.19	May 31, 2026	+0.69	1,558	1,738	112%
Boissevain*	Boissevain	1,697.0	1698.44	May 31, 2026	+1.44	505	626	124%
Elgin*		1,532.0	1532.00	May 31, 2026	+0.00	520	520	100%
St. Malo*		840.0	840.57	May 31, 2026	+0.57	1,770	1,865	105%
Kenton Reservoir		1,448.0	1447.82	May 31, 2026	-0.18	600	586	98%
Killarney Lake		1,615.0	1615.53	May 31, 2026	+0.53	7,360	7,604	103%

<sup>1</sup> Summer target level and storage  
 \* Real-time water level gauge

### 3-2. On-Farm Water Supply

On-farm water supply updates from Manitoba Agriculture’s Crop Report (May 31) are as follows:

- Most agricultural regions are showing wet to optimal soil moisture conditions at 0-120 cm depths. Localized pockets of below-normal soil moisture are beginning to emerge.
- Areas of the Northwest and Interlake are showing wet conditions.

### 3-3. Soil Moisture

A regional representation of soil moisture conditions for the top 120 cm relative to the field capacity is shown on Figure 7.

The colours on the map represent measured soil moisture values from automated instruments at sites across Manitoba. Qualitative range (very dry to very wet) is based on the amount of current soil moisture relative to field capacity. Field Capacity is defined as the maximum amount of moisture the soil can hold when drainage due to gravity stops.

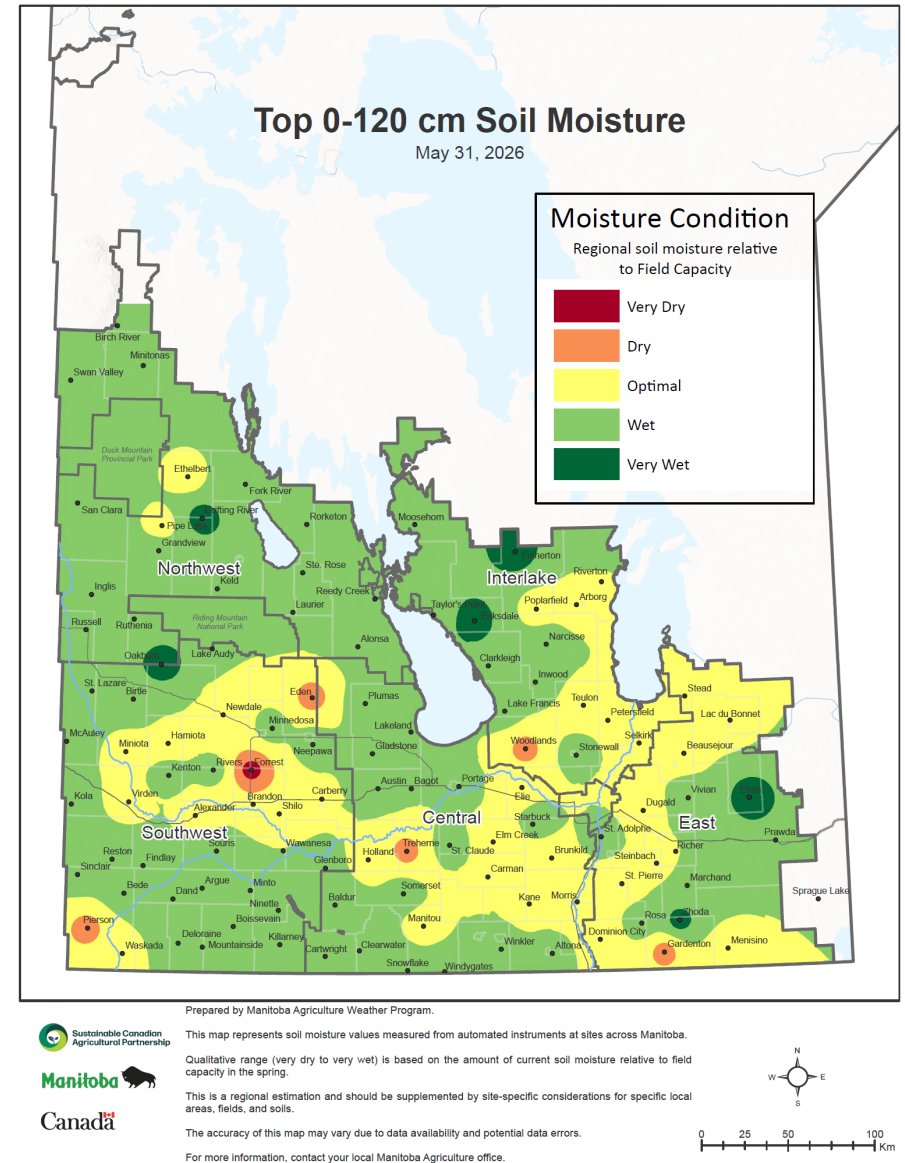


Figure 7: Manitoba Agriculture’s May 31 mapping of soil moisture conditions in the top 0 – 120 cm.

## 4. Wildfires

The Manitoba Wildfire Service reports high to extreme fire danger across western and southern Manitoba. Small size wildfire activities near Lac du Bonnet and north of Lake Winnipeg have been reported so far.

Figure 8 shows the map of Canada fire weather index. Fire weather index represents the expected intensity of a fire spreading through a coniferous forest, including the likely flame size. It is commonly used to assess how difficult a fire may be to control, with higher values indicating greater fire intensity and larger flames.

As of May 31 the fire weather risk produced by Natural Resources Canada is mostly high to extreme across most of southern and western Manitoba (Figure 8). Fire danger risk in northern region is low to moderate. The number of rural municipalities that have burning restrictions in effect has increased over the past month. Manitobans and visitors are urged to exercise caution and comply with all posted restrictions to prevent wildfires.

Refer to the fire and travel restriction maps found at: [www.gov.mb.ca/conservation\\_fire/Restrictions/index.html](http://www.gov.mb.ca/conservation_fire/Restrictions/index.html). Several municipalities continue to implement burning restrictions. Visit [www.manitoba.ca/wildfire/burn\\_conditions.html](http://www.manitoba.ca/wildfire/burn_conditions.html) to view current burning restrictions.

For further information on the Manitoba Wildfire Service, situation updates, restrictions and other important wildfire links, go to [www.gov.mb.ca/wildfire](http://www.gov.mb.ca/wildfire) or follow the Manitoba government on X (formerly Twitter) at <https://x.com/mbgov>.

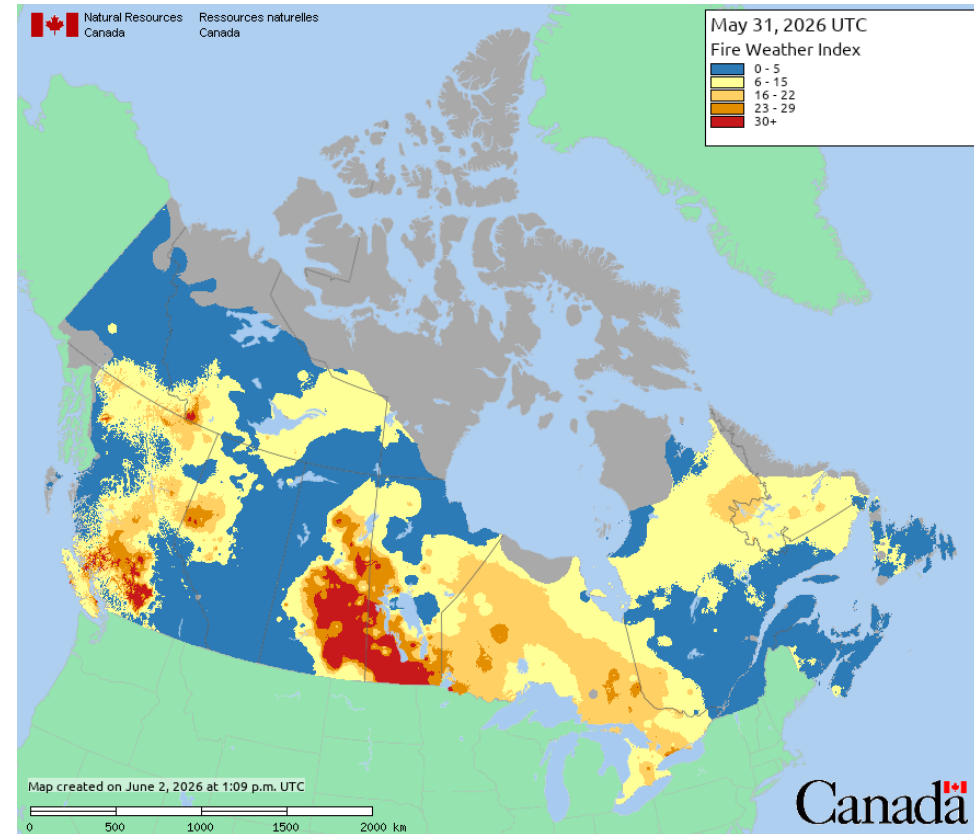


Figure 8: Fire Weather Index mapping by Natural Resources Canada.

## 5. Impacts due to Dry Conditions

To date, there have been no impacts due to dry conditions in May.

## 6. Future Weather

Environment and Climate Change Canada's seasonal forecast for the next three months, June to August, indicates 70 to 100 percent likelihood of above-normal temperatures across most of Manitoba, particularly in the northern portion of the province (Figure 9). Precipitation during the same period is forecast to slightly lean toward below normal in northern Manitoba, with a 40 to 50 percent probability. There is no clear and strong signal toward below-normal, normal, or above-normal precipitation in other parts of the province (Figure 10).

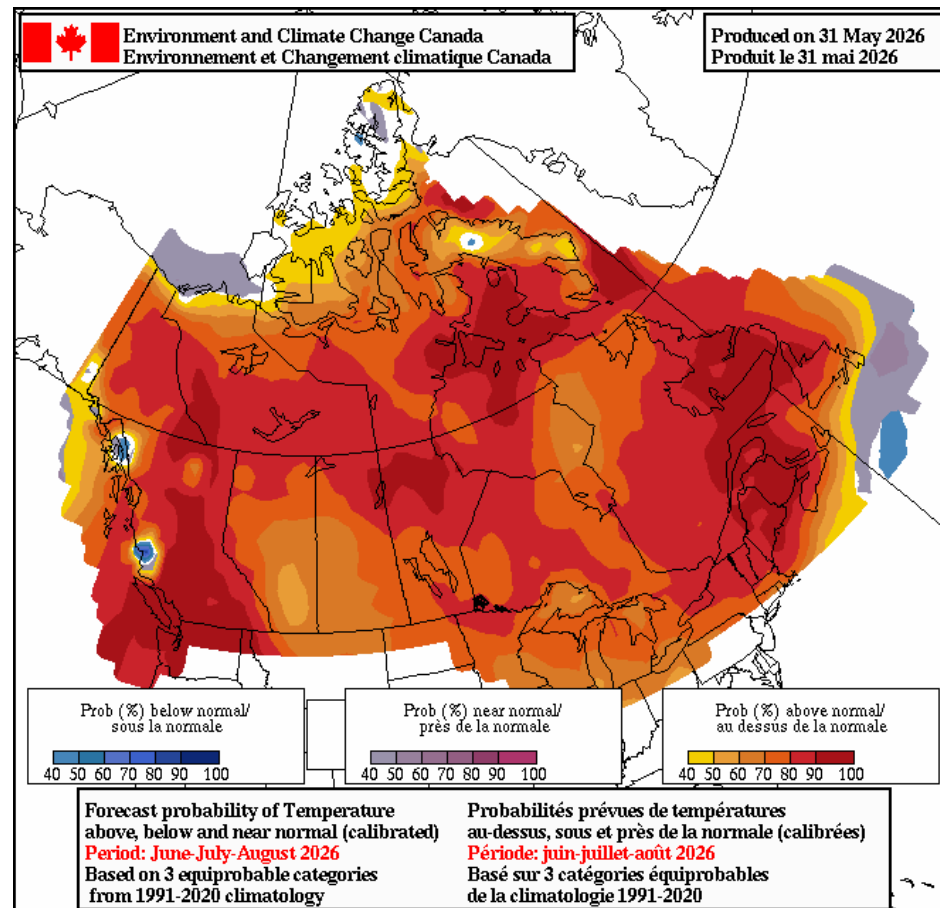


Figure 9: Environment and Climate Change Canada's forecast probability of temperature for next three months (June-July-August)

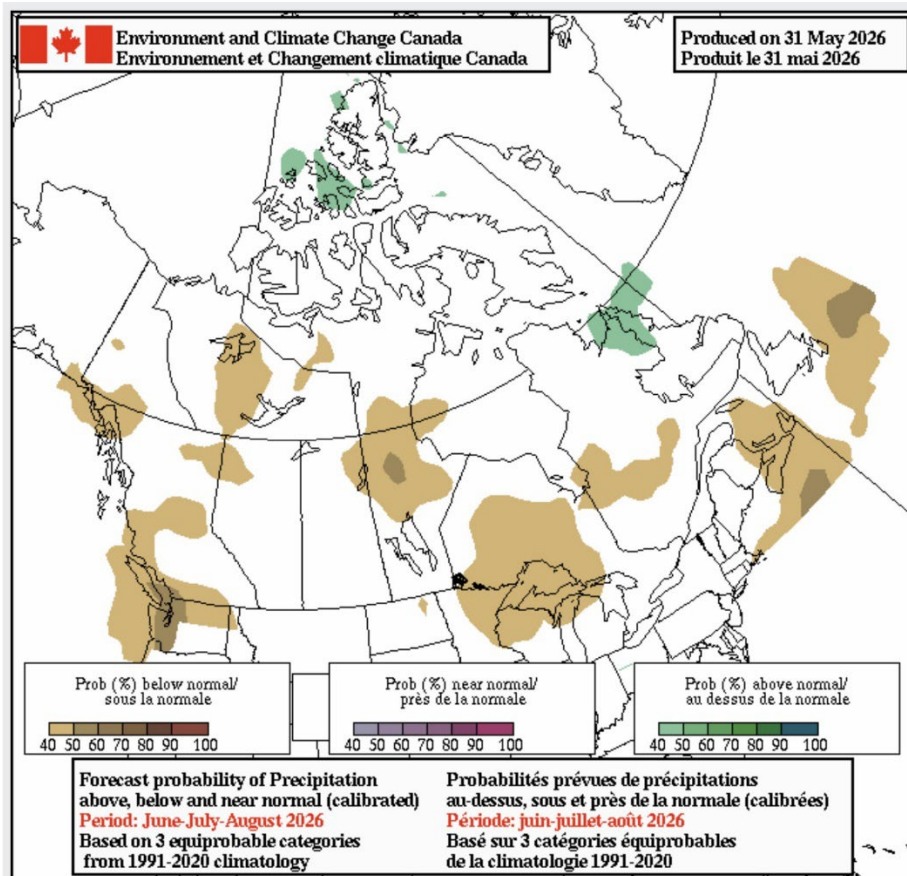


Figure 10: Environment and Climate Change Canada's forecast probability of precipitation for next three months (June-July-August)

Past reports, drought mapping and other information and resources are available on the [Manitoba Drought Monitor](#) website.

**For further information, or to request information in an accessible version, please contact:**

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## 7. Acknowledgements

This report was prepared with information from the following sources which are gratefully acknowledged:

### **Manitoba Transportation and Infrastructure:**

Hydrologic Forecast Centre:

<https://www.manitoba.ca/floodinfo/>

### **Manitoba Wildfire Service:**

<https://www.gov.mb.ca/sd/fire>

### **Manitoba Agriculture:**

Crop Reports:

<http://www.gov.mb.ca/agriculture/crops/seasonal-reports/crop-report-archive/index.html>

Topsoil moisture conditions:

<https://www.gov.mb.ca/agriculture/weather/weather-conditions-and-reports.html>

### **Environment and Climate Change Canada:**

Flow and lake level information:

[http://www.wateroffice.ec.gc.ca/index\\_e.html](http://www.wateroffice.ec.gc.ca/index_e.html)

Seasonal forecast probability of temperature and precipitation:

<https://climate-scenarios.canada.ca/?page=cansips-prob>

### **Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada:**

Canadian drought monitor:

<https://agriculture.canada.ca/en/agriculture-and-environment/drought-watch-and-agroclimate/canadian-drought-monitor>

### **National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration:**

United States drought monitor:

<https://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/>

El Niño and La Niña information:

<https://www.weather.gov/twc/enso>