



SMOKY LAKE COUNTY AGRICULTURAL SERVICE BOARD MEETING AGENDA

Tuesday, April 8 at 9:00 a.m. held

Virtually <https://video.businessconnect.telus.com/join/929697247> (Meeting ID # 929697247) and
Physically in Smoky Lake County Council Chambers, 4612 McDougall Drive, Smoky Lake

1. Call to Order
2. Adoption of Agenda
3. Adoption of Minutes
 - 3.1. Minutes of the Agricultural Service Board Meeting, Tuesday, February 11th, 2025. ©
4. Delegation(s)
 - 4.1. Alyssa Krawchuk, Executive Director, Lakeland Agricultural Research Association, to provide information on their year-to-date activities @ 9:15 a.m.
 - 4.2. Brett Matthiessen, Vice Chairman, Alberta Grazing Lease Holders Association, to provide an introduction of the organization and available resources @ 9:30 am. ©
 - 4.3. Ryan Kroeger and Ben Evans, Biologist and volunteer, Parkland Pintails Delta Waterfowl Chapter, to provide information on previous work and future work in Smoky Lake County @ 9:45 am.
5. Business – Requests for Decisions
 - 5.1. Lakeland Agricultural Research Association 2025 Contract. ©
 - 5.2. Firearms Authorization RFD. ©
 - 5.3. 2024 Leafy Spurge Biocontrol Update. ©
 - 5.4. Wild Boar Program Update.
 - 5.5. Smoky Creek Discussion.
 - 5.6. Additional Annual Funding to Agricultural Societies Discussion.
6. Issues for Information
 - 6.1. ASB Chairman's Report. ©
7. Correspondence
 - 7.1. Letters of Concern Regarding Bill C-293; received from the following municipalities: ©
Lacombe County, received February 13th, 2025
Parkland County, received March 19th, 2025
Recommendation: File for Information.
 - 7.2. Letter Regarding Provincial Conference Procedure, Conduct, and Preparation from Big Lakes County, received March 4th, 2025. ©

Recommendation: File for Information.

7.3. Letter Concern Regarding the ASB Provincial Conference from the MD of Spirit River No. 133, received February 25th, 2025. ©

Recommendation: File for Information.

7.4. Letter Regarding Farmer Pesticide Program and Updated Registration of Sodium Monofluoroacetate from the MD of Greenview, received March 17th, 2025. ©

Recommendation: File for Information.

7.5. Moisture situation update as of February 26, 2025, provided by Alberta Agriculture and Irrigation on March 5th, 2025. ©

Recommendation: File for Information.

7.6. Moisture situation update as of March 20, 2025, provided by Alberta Agriculture and Irrigation on March 24th, 2025. ©

Recommendation: File for Information.

8. Date and time of Next Meeting
Adjournment.



Minutes of Smoky Lake County's **Agricultural Service Board Regular Meeting** held on Tuesday, **February 11, 2025**, at 9:05 A.M. held in Smoky Lake County Council Chambers and virtually online through Electronic Communication Technology.

The meeting was called to Order by the Chairperson, Dan Gawalko, in the presence of the following persons:

		ATTENDANCE
		Tues. Feb. 11, 2025
Committee Member	Dan Gawalko	Present in Chambers
	Jered Serben	Absent
Alt. Committee Member	Dominique Cere	Present Virtually
Alt. Committee Member	Lorne Halisky	Absent
Producer-at-Large Member	Tori Ponich	Present in Chambers
Producer-at-Large Member	Curtis Boychuk	Absent
Producer-at-Large Member	Tamara Flondra	Present in Chambers
Alt. Producer-at-Large Member	Kurt Melnyk	Absent
Alt. Producer-at-Large Member	Brett Rurka	Absent
County CAO	Kevin Lucas	Present in Chambers
Acting Ag. Fieldman	Kierstin Dubitz	Present in Chambers
County Executive Services/R.S.	Patti Priest	Present in Chambers
Comm. Officer	Evonne Zukiwski	Present Virtually

No Members of the Media were Present.
No Members of the Public were Present.

Delegation: Alyssa Krawchuk, Executive Director, Lakeland Agricultural Research Association (LARA), was present in Chambers.

2. Agenda:

ASB096-25: Flondra

That Smoky Lake County's Agricultural Service Board Meeting Agenda for Tuesday, February 11, 2025, be adopted as presented.

Carried Unanimously.

3. Minutes:

ASB097-25: Ponich

That the Minutes of Smoky Lake County's Agricultural Service Board Meeting held on Tuesday, December 10, 2024, be adopted as presented.

Carried.

4. Delegation:

Lakeland Agricultural Research Association (LARA)

Virtually present before the Smoky Lake County's Agricultural Service Board from 9:06 a.m. to 9:18 a.m., was Alyssa Krawchuk, Executive Director, Lakeland Agricultural Research Association (LARA), who read from her following report:

Good morning and thank you for the invitation to attend the meeting today. I appreciate the opportunity to discuss LARA's tentative plans for the year in the areas of extension and research. As always, if you have a suggestions of a particular extension activity/topic or area you would like to see a research project, please let us know.

- Extension**
I met with Carleigh and Kierstin in December of 2024 to go over topics requested for extension efforts in 2025. This included:
- Soil health: cover crops, manure management, soil sampling & utilizing soil sample results.
 - Water: a lot of this focused around land-owner disputes regarding draining lands, managing flowing water, use of pond levelers.
 - Shelterbelt & tree management: long-term impacts of tree and shelterbelt removal on water and soil.
 - Weeds: management of weeds on pasture, grazing for weed management, poisonous plants.
 - Livestock Emergency Management planning and livestock health

Smoky Lake		
Grow Your Own Microgreens	09-Jan	Viina Seniors Hall
Securing Success: Programs, Services and Funding Opportunities for Your Farm or Ranch	30-Jan	Ukrainian National Hall
Poisonous Pasture Plants: Don't Panic	04-Feb	Online
Lakeland Agronomy Update	20-Feb	Viina Seniors Hall
Remote Drug Delivery in Cattle	03-Jun	Bellis
Ag Technology	Summer	TBD
Gardening Forum	April	TBD
Summer Field Day/Tour	Summer	TBD
The Power of Polycultures	April	TBD

Research

Soil sampled two fields in the fall of 2024 to help expedite finding a field that is free of clubroot for our research site in 2025.

Smoky Lake		
Project	Description	Funder
Eco-Tea Crop Fertility Trials	EcoTea™ is a biological product with biodiversity like no other, built on the vision of soil biodiversity enhancing professional success. EcoTea™ combines a wide array of plant-supporting microorganisms fortified with added bio stimulants to enhance soil quality and nutrient function.	Eco-Tea
Investigating the impact of low-growing clovers (white and subterranean clover) and nitrogen rates on silage crop yield, weed pressure, cereal leaf disease levels, and forage quality.	This project aims to (a) study different relay crop systems by sowing either the feed barley or oat into a living clover mulch of either subterranean or white clover and (b) the impact of clover cover and fertilizer into the production of silage from either feed barley or oat.	Project has been submitted to Results Driven Agriculture Research (ROAR) for potential funding. Would be 80% grant, 20% matching.
New and Alternative Crop Demonstrations	Camelina, Quinoa, Industrial Hemp, Lupins, Flax	In-kind seed, County funds
Cereal Crop Emergence Demonstrations	Various seed treatments, bio stimulants, Humalite and fertility products	In-kind seed, County funds
Regional Variety Trial - oats	Alberta Regional Variety Trial Committee (ARVAC) oat variety trial	Alberta Grains
Use of Unmanned Aerial Vehicle to Identify Management Zones for Clubroot Control.	This study aims to study the effectiveness of multi-spectral imaging (NDVI) in mapping infested areas and using those images to target lime rates in site where clubroot is more prevalent. In this way, liming input costs associated with clubroot control are reduced while maintaining effective product application.	Project has been submitted to Results Driven Agriculture Research (RDAR) for potential funding. Would be 80% grant, 20% matching.

Lakeland Agricultural Research Association (LARA) - Delegation

ASB098-25: Flondra That Smoky Lake County's Agricultural Service Board accept the report provided by the February 11, 2025, Delegation: Alyssa Krawchuk, Executive Director, Lakeland Agricultural Research Association (LARA), as information.

Carried.

5. Business - Requests for Decision:

5.1 Policy Statement No. 62-10-10: Agricultural Service Board Business Plan 2025

ASB099-25: Flondra That Smoky Lake County's Agricultural Service Board recommends Smoky Lake County's Policy Statement No. 62-10-10: Agricultural Service Board Business Plan 2025, be amended by Council to align with the changes made to Policy Statement No. 62-28-06 Mowing Program, 1080 Toxicant recall, Canola Flower Midge monitoring, and Animal Control Technician position, and align with the new Policy Statement No. 62-30-01 Animal Health & Emergency Preparedness.

Carried.

5.2 ASB Position Statement Farm-Saved Seed

ASB100-25: Ponich That Smoky Lake County's Agricultural Service Board file the information received from the Provincial ASB, dated January 2025, stating their position on Farm-Saved Seeds, standing firmly in support of Alberta farmers' rights to save, store, and replant seed.

Carried.

5.3 Informal Draft of Provincial 2025 ASB Conference Resolution Results

ASB101-25: Ponich That Smoky Lake County's Agricultural Service Board accept the following update to the Provincial Agricultural Service Board Committee's Year-2025 Resolutions results as follows:

#	Resolution	Unofficial Results
1-25	DROUGHT AND LIVESTOCK AGRISTABILITY	Carried
2-25	LANDOWNERS' RIGHTS FOR RENEWABLE ENERGY PROJECTS	Defeated
3-25	PROTECTION OF CLASS 3 SOILS IN ALBERTA FROM RENEWABLE DEVELOPMENT	Carried
4-25	WEED CONTROL IN DRAINAGE CANALS (REGISTERED DRAINAGE DITCHES)	Carried
5-25	CENTRAL CONTACT FOR THE WEED CONTROL AND AGRICULTURAL PEST ACTS	Carried
6-25	RURAL VETERINARY STUDENT SUPPORT	Carried
7-25	ROADKILL CARCASS DISPOSAL	Carried
8-25	COYOTES ELIGIBLE FOR COMPENSATION	Defeated
9-25	NON-MATCHING FUNDING FOR AGKNOW	Carried
10-25	FARM FAMILY AWARDS	Defeated
11-25	AGRICULTURE EDUCATION FUNDING	Carried
12-25	CHARITABLE GAMING POLICIES HANDBOOK	Carried
13-25	RESOLUTION LOBBYING INCLUSION	Defeated

Carried.

5.4 AgKnow Program Update

ASB102-25: Ponich That Smoky Lake County's Agricultural Service Board accept the information provided by the Acting Agricultural Fieldman, on February 11, 2025, in respect to the AgKnow – Alberta Farm Mental Health Network, including but not limited to the following points:

- the program has not received 2025 provincial funding to date and is currently operating under other limited grant funding; and
- the County will continue to promote the AgKnow on social media and within the local schools.

Carried.

5.5 Farmers and Ranchers Appreciation BBQ

ASB103-25: Flondra That Smoky Lake County's Agricultural Service Board accept the information provided by the Acting Agricultural Fieldman, on February 11, 2025, in respect to the 2025 Annual Farmers and Ranchers Appreciation BBQ, including but not limited to the following points:

- it is scheduled for June 13, 2025 from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.;
- there will be some trade show booths, AgKnow will be invited;
- this year the students will be required to pre-order their food to help minimize line ups.

Carried.

6. Issues for Information:

Agricultural Service Board Chairperson Report

Dan Gawalko ASB Chair Report
January 2025

- December 10, Smoky Lake County ASB meeting, Alyssa Krawchuk Executive director of LARA provided information on their year to date activities, the board recommended policy statement no. 62-30-01 Animal Health & Livestock Emergency Preparedness be adopted, that policy statement 62-08-01 Agricultural use of Municipal Right of Ways be adopted, that policy statement 62-17-02 License of Occupation of Road Allowance be rescinded, that policy 62-05-06 Grasshopper Bait Distributor be amended to update the name of the policy to Grasshopper Control Compensation & provide procedures for compensating landowners, the board also recommended appointing Kierstin Dubitz as acting Agricultural Fieldman for the duration of the positions vacancy, having a self-weigh scale in the county was discussed, several letters from other

- municipalities with concern over bill C-293 that is before the Senate were received, next ASB meeting February 11 @ 9am.
- December 16, attended LARA meeting RDAR base funding was discussed, the chair attended the Canadian Grazing conference along with all LARA staff, Alyssa gave the executive director report submitted for 5 Canada summer jobs & are advertising these positions, met with Smoky Lake County, Lakeland HR helped with the performance evaluations she also gave the finance review and 2025 draft budget, upcoming extension programs:
 - Seed starting workshop, Jan 21 Eastbourne community hall.
 - Securing success program, Jan, 28 Ashmont, Jan 30 Smoky Lake, Feb 5 Elk Point, Feb 10 Eastbourne Hall.
 - Poisonous pasture plants, online webinar Feb 4,
 - Farmer appreciation night, Feb 7 Glendon,
 - Working well workshop Feb 11 St. Paul,
 - LARA AGM, March 6 County St. Paul,
 - Composting workshop March 11 TBD,
 - Ranching for profit March 18 St. Paul.
 - Gardening forum, April 26 Ft. Kent Hall
 - January 20,21,22 attended the ASB Conference in Edmonton with board member Tori Ponich & Ag Fieldman Kierstin Dubitz, the first afternoon we went to the ASB chair and fieldman meeting with speaker John Conrad ADM he discussed the 5 year grant renewal program for ASB's for 2025 -2029, he gave an update on the weed review, wild boar, ground squirrel and the water review act, 1.7 million from the province to AgKnow and producer mental health, in the evening we were welcomed to the conference by Lacombe County, then Minister RJ Sigurdson gave a welcome address also, the next day we had an ASB update, they have been in Alberta for 80 years serving 41,000 farms, Dr. John Church gave a talk about precision ranching, drones with thermal imaging, virtual fencing, plants and animals together enabling a smart biome, Bill Kingston then gave an overview of the wetland policies the benefits of wetlands the wetland replacement program & funding available from different sources, Dave Johnson gave an update on ag waste recycling the EPR program for chemical jugs, grain bags & twine pilot projects & the option for large farms or groups of farmers to have 10 or more bags picked up on farm. Karen Wickerson gave an update on the Alberta rat program, no rats in Alberta which is great for trade, the province gave \$215,000 towards the rat program for 2025, the Alberta Sask. border is inspected twice yearly with 31 confirmed rats reported in 2024. Jane Tansey gave the Richardsons squirrel update on the reproduction cycle they have 1 litter per year with 5-8 in a litter, 60-80% of them can be removed by a single badger, also suggested making bird boxes for the barn owls and raptor stands and platforms as these also help to control this type of ground squirrel, Micheal Marlow gave an overview of the USDA national swine feral program how the swine are causing crop damage, infrastructure damage to grave yards golf courses & more, in excess of 6 million animals in the US in 30 of the 50 states he says to control before it gets out of hand using legislation also. Then we went in to the resolution session for the remainder of the day. The following morning started with Mikki Shatosky discussing the legal tools used to get easements for agricultural land into a Alberta Farmland trust or conservation formats used and the benefits of, Tanis Baker then gave a presentation of Ag tourism and the Alberta open farm days in August they partner with Travel Alberta & Ag society's, they anticipate 9.4 billion people in the world in the next 5 years, 84% of Alberta tourism are Albertans, John Knap they talked about the future of Ag in Alberta the fertility rates on the planet, the rising sea, taking out delta farmland in the world, we'll need 173 million more acres to produce 50% more food, John believes the ag industry will form a progressive larger part of Alberta's future economy, Megan Evans talked about the state of Alberta's native bee's, the threats to bee's, there are 375 bee species in Alberta, 40% of insect species at risk of extinction in Alberta from insecticides, pathogens & pests, these bees are important pollinators in our world. Dr. Alycia Chrenek then talked about connecting mental wellness to sustainable agriculture & the causes of veterinarian mental crisis & farmers needing help, talking is one of tools along with changing your prospective on things, AgKnow and in the Know are some of the groups available for Help.
 - January 27 attended the LARA board of Directors meeting, discussed capital funding, 12 associations submitted applications will know by end of January then sign contracts, Lara is working on a new logo, municipal funding was also discussed with St. Paul county providing 70,000 per year for 3 years & the MD. of Bonnyville giving 80,000 for 2025, on April 7th will be holding a strategic planning session with Lakeland Human Resources, Alyssa gave the financial report, OFCAF will schedule a meeting to give an update of what needs to be done & reported on for the grants, the AGM will be in Mallaig on March 6th with 2 positions on the board to be elected 1 in Smoky Lake County, 1 in MD of Bonnyville, Alyssa gave the Executive director report applied for 5 positions for Canada summer jobs, Making a plan for the garden & greenhouse, 98 feed samples in 2024 using ½ the sample budget, researchers are busy ordering seed, attended the soil conference & working on projects for RDAR check out the upcoming events on LARA website or Smoky Lake county website.
 - January 30 attended the Securing Success programs & funding opportunities for your farm or ranch in Smoky Lake with councillor Lorne Halisky & Ag Fieldman Kierstin Dubitz put on by LARA, Lance introduced the LARA staff in attendance & gave a presentation on what LARA has done in the last 33 years on unbiased research &

what they can do for producers feed tests, help with grant applications, Kierstin then gave an update on what the county is doing, ditch mowing, spraying ditches, 400 weed notices sent out in 2024, clubroot survey, EFP's, animal control for beaver & dogs, Sonia from the OFCAF program & CFGA gave an update on the program, online learning, events, workshops, fencing, pasture improvement, rotational grazing, need an EFP for these programs and Agri Invest for 2025, Chris from the RALP program talked about the program, inter cropping, pollinator strips, trees, wetland restoration, annual crops to forages, he also mentioned the Alberta Water Program for wells & dugouts, the RALP program opens February 3/25 closes November 30/25, call 1866-310 RALP for more info or Lance @ LARA or your ag fieldman. These are some good programs for our producers.

- February 7 attended the Farmer Appreciation Event in Glendon put on by LARA with the talents of Ben Crane entertaining the crowd.

ASB104-25: Céré That Smoky Lake County's Agricultural Service Board Chairperson's report prepared for February 11, 2025, 2025, be accepted for information.

Carried.

7. Correspondence:

7.1 Letters of Concern Regarding Bill C-293

AS105-25: Ponich That Smoky Lake County's Agricultural Service Board acknowledge and file the correspondence received in respect to concerns with Bill C-293, which will enact the Pandemic Prevention and Preparedness Act which includes clauses for providing measures to "promote commercial activities that can help reduce pandemic risk, including the production of alternative proteins" and "to regulate or phase out live animal markets", from:

- Foothills County, received December 9, 2024,
- Municipal District of Willow Creek, received December 9, 2024,
- County of Minburn No. 27, received December 10, 2024,
- Rocky View County, received December 10, 2024,
- Leduc County, received December 10, 2024,
- Flagstaff County, received December 16, 2024,
- Municipal District of Greenview, received December 16, 2024,
- Athabasca County, received December 18, 2024,
- County of Vermillion River, received December 19, 2024,
- Foothills County, received January 2, 2025,
- Wheatland County, received January 2, 2025,
- Lamont County, received January 2, 2025, and
- Starland County, received January 13, 2025.

Carried.

7.2 Letters of Support for Alberta Farm Mental Health Network AgKnow

ASB106-25: Flondra That Smoky Lake County's Agricultural Service Board acknowledge and file the correspondence received in respect to letter of support for the Alberta Farm Mental Health Network known as AgKnow, from:

- Flagstaff County, received December 16, 2024,
- Woodland County, received January 2, 2025, and
- MD of Peace No. 135, received January 9, 2025.

Carried.

7.3 Alberta Insect Pest Monitoring Network 2024 Insect Survey Results

ASB107-25: Ponich That Smoky Lake County's Agricultural Service Board accept the correspondence received, as information, from the Alberta Insect Pest Monitoring Network's email dated December 11, 2024, in respect the Insect Survey Results for 2024 in Smoky Lake County, including the following summary:

"There were three bertha armyworm sites in Smoky Lake in 2024, none even went over 25 moths. Bertha was not a concern in 2024. This monitoring system is very good at predicting when/if farmers need to be out scouting for bertha in their crops in the current growing season, but also, will indicate when the population is starting to build for a possible outbreak in the following growing season.

Pea leaf weevil has become established and is doing very well in the Edmonton north region, but in 2024, survey technicians didn't find much feeding damage. They might

have missed the fields with high feeding damage, due to the randomness of the survey, but it seems the weevil struggled to survive the winter of 23/24.

The after-harvest wheat midge survey found no midge in the samples. We know that the midge can spend years in the soil waiting for idea conditions to complete their lifecycle. So should we get rain in May and June, farmers will want to be ready to scout their fields for midge while wheat is from boot crack to the end of anthesis.

No cabbage seedpod weevil turned up in the survey."

Carried.

7.4 Northern Sunrise County Positive Collaboration with Alberta Transportation

ASB108-25: Cere That Smoky Lake County's Agricultural Service Board accept the correspondence received, as information, from Northern Sunrise County, dated January 9, 2025, acknowledging their positive collaboration efforts with Alberta Transportation, in respect to weed management.

Carried.

7.5 Support in Addressing Richardson Ground Squirrel Infestations Kneehill County

ASB109-25: Flondra That Smoky Lake County's Agricultural Service Board acknowledge receipt of the letter from Kneehill County, to the Minister of Agriculture and Irrigation and the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, dated January 15, 2025, calling for support in addressing the Richardson Ground Squirrel infestation in the agriculture industry; and promote ways of managing the Richardson Ground Squirrel through non-chemical controls as another option, on the County's social media.

Carried.

7.6 Farmer Pesticide Program Follow Up from Kneehill County

ASB110-25: Ponich That Smoky Lake County's Agricultural Service Board accept the correspondence received, as information, from Kneehill County, to the Minister of Environment and Protected Areas, dated January 14, 2025, requesting follow-up for support of the Farmer Pesticide Program.

Carried.

7.7 Moisture Situation Update from Alberta's Natural Resources Management Branch

ASB111-25: Flondra That Smoky Lake County's Agricultural Service Board acknowledge and file the correspondence received from Alberta Climate Information Service Manager at the Natural Resources Management Branch Government of Alberta, in respect to the moisture situation data, received as of January 15, 2025.

Carried.

7.8 Letter Recommending the Installation of a Self-Weigh Axle Scale along Hwy 28

ASB112-25: Ponich That Smoky Lake County's Agricultural Service Board acknowledge and file the letter to the Regional Director of Alberta Transportation and Economic Corridors from the County's ASB Chairperson, dated January 9, 2025, recommending the installation of a self-weigh axle scale along Highway 28 within Smoky Lake County.

Carried.

7.9 Minister of Alberta Transportation and Economic Corridors letter receipt

ASB113-25: Ponich That Smoky Lake County's Agricultural Service Board file the email dated January 24, 2025, from the Minister of Alberta Transportation and Economic Corridors acknowledging receipt of the County's ASB Chairperson, emailed letter recommending the installation of a self-weigh axle scale along Highway 28 within Smoky Lake County.

Carried.

7.10 Regional Director of Alberta Transportation & Ec. Corridors letter receipt

ASB114-25: Flondra That Smoky Lake County's Agricultural Service Board file the email dated January 24, 2025, from the Regional Director of Alberta Transportation and Economic Corridors acknowledging receipt of the County's ASB Chairperson, emailed letter recommending the installation of a self-weight axle scale along Highway 28 within Smoky Lake County.

Carried.

7.11 Northern Sunrise County Concern from the 2025 ASB Conference

ASB115-25: Ponich That Smoky Lake County's Agricultural Service Board file the information received from Northern Sunrise County, dated January 24, 2025, to the Agricultural Service Boards Provincial Committee, in respect to behavioral concerns with some attendees at the 2025 ASB Provincial Conference in Edmonton, and a request for them to follow the correct code of conduct.

Carried.

7.12 ASB Connector January 2025 Edition, received January 31st, 2025

ASB116-25: Flondra That Smoky Lake County's Agricultural Service Board file the 23-page electronic newsletter, dated January 2025, titled: ASB Connector, produced by the Alberta Agricultural and Irrigation.

Carried.

8. Executive Session:

No Executive Session.

9. Date and time of Next Meeting:

Next Agricultural Service Board Meeting

ASB117-25: Ponich That the next Smoky Lake County Agricultural Service Board Meeting be scheduled for **Tuesday, April 8, 2025, at 9:00 a.m.**, to be held to be held in County Council Chambers as well as virtually online.

Carried.

ADJOURNMENT:

ASB118-25: Gawalko That Smoky Lake County's Agricultural Service Board Meeting of February 11, 2025, be adjourned, time 9:45 a.m.

Carried.

CHAIRPERSON

S E A L

CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

Rangeland Grazing Framework

Fostering the health and sustainability
of Alberta's Crown rangelands





Contents

Intent of the Rangeland Grazing Framework	4
Mission	4
Vision	4
Overview	5
The Rangeland Resource	6
Rangeland Sustainability	7
Objective and Outcomes	8
Implementation	12
Conclusion	12



Intent of the Rangeland Grazing Framework

The Rangeland Grazing framework recognizes that sustainable management of Alberta's Crown rangelands relies on collaborative land management by the disposition holder and the province. The framework supports the [Crown Land Vision](#) by outlining the essential role of grazing and rangeland stewardship by disposition holders in achieving the environmental objective and long-lasting economic and social outcomes on Crown rangelands that benefit all Albertans. The framework contemporizes and centralizes existing commitments and strategies that are in either legislation, policy, or programs creating clear guidelines for rangeland management on Alberta's Crown land.

Mission

To conserve rangeland ecosystems through sustainable management practices by grazing disposition holders as proud stewards of Alberta's Crown rangelands.

Vision

Alberta's Crown land grazing dispositions are managed for the long-term health and sustainability of rangeland ecosystems.

Overview

Alberta's rangelands are some of the province's most diverse natural ecosystems, which include grasslands, forests, riparian areas, and wetlands that support both wild and domestic grazing animals. These valuable ecosystems support multiple uses and provide biodiversity, carbon sequestration, watershed functions, wildlife habitat, diverse plant communities, and aesthetic beauty. Well-managed rangelands foster economic prosperity that supports healthy and strong communities.

The sustainable management of Alberta's Crown rangelands is complex work, employing grazing as a natural way to conserve vast ecosystems. Crown rangelands are held under grazing dispositions¹, where a rancher manages livestock grazing to ensure the sustainable use of the rangeland. The grazing disposition holders accommodate other land uses on the lease such as forestry, wildlife habitat, recreation, and industrial activity.

The successful management of Crown rangelands relies on collaboration between grazing disposition holders and the Government of Alberta. Disposition holders maintain and enhance the ecological functions of rangelands through their stewardship and management. In order to be successful, they must be adaptive, sustainable, profitable, and competitive in a global market. To ensure these ecosystems remain sustainable, Alberta's Crown rangeland management system prioritizes the grazing disposition holders' role as the steward on the land. The Government of Alberta's recognition of the need for ongoing stewardship and economic viability will inform the future direction of Crown rangeland policy and priorities.

As society's demands for natural resources increases, so does the pressure on our province's natural resources. Alberta's Land Use Framework seeks to manage increased use and conservation efforts on Crown land. Long-term planning is vital to ensure the needs of current and future generations of Albertans are met. The Government is committed to ensuring the land and all the activities it supports is managed sustainably by developing and implementing a land-use system that balances competing economic, environmental and social demands. An integrated land-use system increases certainty for all industries by ensuring a coordinated

approach to provincial policy, planning and decision making. The Rangeland Grazing Framework guides the management of Alberta's Crown rangelands within integrated land use planning.

The Rangeland Grazing Framework:

1. Defines the direction for grazing dispositions on Crown lands to guide policy and procedures.
2. Recognizes the partnership between the Government of Alberta and disposition holders. The Government of Alberta sets the overarching goals for land management through legislation and planning. The disposition holder, as the steward of the land, is responsible for day-to-day management. Examples of this stewardship can be found in the [Stewardship for Rangeland Sustainability](#) document.
3. Outlines rangeland and grazing objectives and outcomes that are adaptive, sustainable, profitable and competitive in a global market.
4. Ensures grazing disposition holders' needs for success are considered on future Crown land initiatives.

The framework recognizes the partnership between grazing disposition holders and the Government of Alberta. This partnership is essential in achieving the environmental objective and long lasting economic and social outcomes on Crown rangelands that benefit all Albertans. In 2020, the Government introduced the [Alberta Crown Land Vision](#) to guide management of provincial Crown land and meet the needs of communities, Indigenous Peoples and job creators without compromising conservation values and recreation opportunities. The Rangeland Grazing Framework identifies that important economic, social and environmental benefits are derived from grazing on Crown land. In addition, the framework aligns with other government policy and legislation including Alberta's Crown Land Vision and the [Alberta Land Stewardship Act](#).

¹ The term grazing disposition or crown rangelands are used in the document to refer broadly about Crown land grazing dispositions issued under the *Public Lands Act*, *Forest Reserves Act*, *Public Lands Administration Regulation*, and *Forest Reserves Regulation*. These are legal instruments used by the government in the allocation and management of grazing and provide the administrative and management foundation between the Government of Alberta and the grazing disposition holder(s).

Grazing leases issued under the *Public Lands Act* are the most common grazing disposition type as they provide a greater bundle of rights than other grazing disposition types. The term grazing lease is used when a section of the framework applies specifically to grazing leases on public land pursuant to the *Public Lands Act*.



The Rangeland Resource

Alberta's rangelands have evolved over thousands of years. These ecosystems are disturbance dependent, benefiting from and adapting to natural changes to the landscape caused by ungulate grazing and migration, periodic wildfires, and changes in weather patterns. They continue to support self-sustaining mineral, water, and energy cycles.

On Alberta's Crown land grazing dispositions, stewardship refers to the active, adaptive management of the lands, supported by the appropriate approved infrastructure, grazing disturbance, and capacity of the land to ensure effective water, nutrient, and energy cycles driving a functioning rangeland ecosystem.

Sustainable use and stewardship of rangelands predates Alberta becoming a province. Climate, fire, longstanding Indigenous management practices, and grazing, particularly by bison, directly shaped diverse ecosystems, and helped establish robust rangeland ecosystems. Human influences have altered rangeland ecosystems over time. Today, livestock are often managed to mimic the traditional grazing and migration activities of wild bison and ungulate populations. Rangelands continue to provide important ecological benefits when they are properly managed for long-term health and sustainability.

The amount of native rangelands under grazing dispositions has remained relatively stable over the past 50 years. However, native rangelands are experiencing the same impacts of development pressure currently facing all provincial Crown land. A cumulative effects management approach is necessary to mitigate these pressures and to maintain the long-term viability of rangeland ecosystems.

Alberta's Crown rangeland management system must prioritize the stewardship role that grazing disposition holders have in maintaining ecosystem health and function. Rangeland stewardship is a shared responsibility resulting in an important partnership between the Government of Alberta and grazing disposition holders.

Agricultural Crown land

Alberta has approximately eight million acres (3.3 million hectares) of Crown rangelands used for livestock grazing, in addition to privately owned agricultural lands. Crown rangelands are held under grazing dispositions and support about 14 per cent of Alberta's beef herd.

Grazing dispositions are mutually beneficial agreements between the province and a rancher. The disposition holder benefits economically from using the Crown rangeland resource to graze their livestock, and the province benefits from the land stewardship provided by the disposition holder. Since rangeland stewardship requires the disposition holder to invest time and money into the land, the government provides 'security of tenure' to the disposition holder.

Security of tenure gives disposition holders the right to long-term grazing on Crown rangelands and encourages disposition holders to think long-term about rangeland management. Security of tenure also enables disposition holders to benefit from their investments into sustainable use of Crown rangelands over time. This mutually beneficial system was initially established to stimulate investment in Alberta's cattle industry as well as to promote the environmental stewardship of the rangelands.

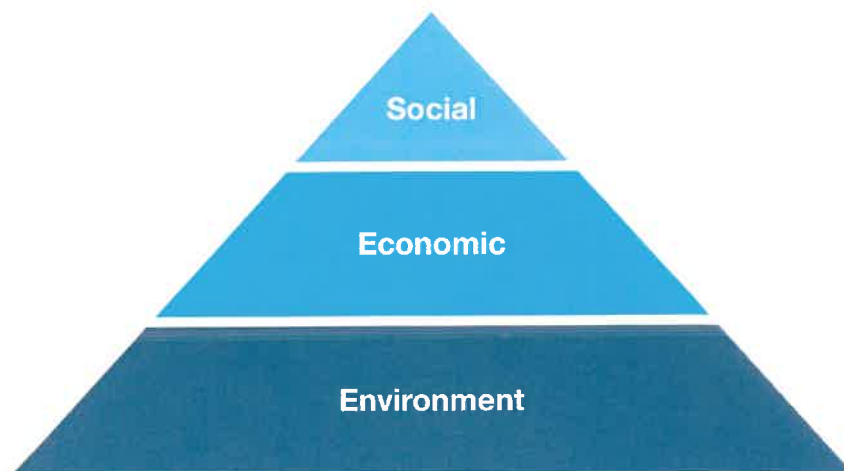
Private rangelands

The amount of private rangeland in Alberta is in decline, as land is sold or converted to support other land uses. Across Alberta, about 75 per cent of native grasslands have already been lost to land-use conversion, such as cropping and urban development. As a result, the future of Alberta's native grasslands has become more critical, and the long-term sustainability of Crown rangelands relies on stewardship through grazing of rangelands to maintain and enhance the health of these ecosystems.

Rangeland Sustainability

"Sustainability means meeting our own needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. In addition to natural resources, we also need social and economic resources."¹

The rangeland sustainability pyramid offers a model for rangeland management. In the rangeland sustainability pyramid, a strong environmental foundation supports long-term economic and social outcomes.



¹ <https://www.mcgill.ca/sustainability/files/sustainability/what-is-sustainability.pdf>



Disposition holders play an active role in building a strong environmental foundation for rangeland sustainability. They maintain healthy and productive ecosystems by applying four principles of range management to Crown rangelands:

- balancing livestock demands with the available forage supply; where forage is harvested to sustain livestock but adequate ungrazed residue is left to sustain rangeland ecosystem function
- promoting even livestock distribution with fencing, salt placement, water development and other livestock distribution tools
- avoiding grazing during vulnerable periods
- providing effective rest periods after grazing to allow range plants to recover

A solid environmental foundation enables the economic and social outcomes of rangelands.

Ecological Goods and Services: are the benefits to society arising from the ecological functions of functioning ecosystems. Examples include: Clean air, water, flood mitigation, biodiversity, wildlife habitat, renewable resources, carbon sequestration, nutrient cycling, and the aesthetics of natural landscapes.

Objective and Outcomes

Vision: Alberta's Crown land grazing dispositions are managed for the long-term health and sustainability of the rangeland ecosystem.

The Government of Alberta and disposition holders will work collaboratively to achieve this vision for Crown rangelands.

Grazing leases on Crown rangelands are issued under [Alberta's Public Lands Act](#) when grazing is determined to be the primary, but not exclusive, use for the rangeland.

Economic and social outcomes result from meeting the environmental objective of sustainable rangeland management. These outcomes are of significant interest and value to both industry and Albertans. Environmental, economic, and social outcomes all need to be pursued to ensure sustainable grazing management.

Environmental Objective:

Sustain or enhance the function and productivity of Crown rangeland ecosystems in a manner that promotes biodiversity and ecological goods and services.

This will be achieved by:

Tactic 1: Prioritizing the critical role grazing disposition holders play in maintaining integrity and function of rangeland ecosystems.

- The disposition holder is recognized as the designated steward of the land and is responsible for stewardship decisions.
- Improve understanding of the outcomes-based stewardship model employed by the Crown land grazing program, to effectively conserve and maintain native and non-native rangelands and the ecological goods and services they provide.

Tactic 2: Maintaining and improving the regulatory assurance system.

- Collaborative design of the regulatory assurance system by Government of Alberta and disposition holders to encourage stewardship practices.
- Implement the regulatory assurance framework to enable an approach that is outcome and results focused, ensuring and supporting effective stewardship of Crown rangelands.
- Streamline regulatory applications.
- Facilitate staff inspections/audits to ensure stewardship outcomes are being achieved on Crown rangelands.
- Reduce barriers and red tape that may unnecessarily hinder the stewardship ability of the disposition holder.



Tactic 3: Enabling stewardship practices to maintain or enhance the integrity and function of rangeland ecosystems.

- Industry and Government will work collaboratively to develop programming that enables and supports stewardship best practices.
- Encourage a stewardship ethic and adaptive management of Crown rangelands by the disposition holder. Adaptive management, supported by the appropriate approved infrastructure, the grazing of livestock, and the natural function of rangelands, will support water, nutrient, and energy cycles, plant and wildlife communities, and species at risk.

Tactic 4: Encouraging investment in the disposition to support stewardship goals.

- Ensure policy and procedures regarding the management and stewardship of Crown rangelands are clear and updated as required.
- Provide long-term, renewable dispositions to proven grazing stewards to support effective conservation and maintenance of native and non-native rangelands.
- Encourage the disposition holder to invest in long-term infrastructure that supports stewardship of the land.

Tactic 5: Establishing clear and consistent regulatory oversight.

- Develop a process to address situations where stewardship goals are not being achieved, or management is not aligned with provincial legislation, policies, and land use plans.
- Work collaboratively to achieve desired outcomes through education on best practices for rangeland stewardship, collaborative mitigation, and compliance measures.
- Implement measures that streamline and reduce red tape in the Government of Alberta's various systems and processes.

“As of 2021, Alberta’s beef industry is an important economic driver generating \$13.6 billion in sales, contributing more than \$4 billion to the province’s GDP; including \$2.7 billion in labour income. The beef sector is responsible for generating 55,125 full time jobs. Every job yields another 2.7 jobs elsewhere in the economy.”

Source: <https://www.beefresearch.ca/files/pdf/Multiplier-Summary-May-2021.pdf>

The economic viability and profitability of the disposition holder is central to the effective delivery of the stewardship model that has been created.

Economic Outcome:

Provide the agriculture industry with the continued opportunity to utilize the forage production of Crown rangeland ecosystems for grazing, which also supports rural communities.

This will be achieved by:

Tactic 1: Supporting a thriving beef industry through security of tenure and renewability of grazing dispositions, in order to support sustainable livestock production and succession planning to encourage young producers entering the livestock industry.

- Continue providing opportunities for local ranchers and the agricultural industry to utilize the forage production of Crown rangelands for grazing.
- Provide security of tenure to enable confidence in disposition holders in realizing a return on investment, and to facilitate stewardship and a sustainable rangeland resource that achieves the environmental objective.
- Enable long-term sustainable livestock production.
- Encourage young producers to enter the livestock industry.

Tactic 2: Reducing regulatory burden on disposition holders.

- Reduce duplicative regulatory and administrative rules, and their respective financial requirements for disposition holders.
- Remove outdated and unnecessary rules and restrictions that do not further the protection of rangeland ecosystems.

Tactic 3: Allowing producers and society to benefit from grazing dispositions by encouraging access to market-based initiatives.

- Facilitate the use of market-based instruments (e.g. carbon sequestration) to support and promote stewardship investment that ensures long-term sustainability and operational viability of Crown rangelands.

Tactic 4: Ensuring fair economic returns to Albertans.

- Enable rural communities, industry, and Albertans to see direct benefits of rangeland stewardship on grazing dispositions.
- Maintain fair rental rates for Crown land dispositions to allow Albertans to capture financial input for the use of Crown rangelands.





Social Outcomes

Contribute to Alberta's social and cultural values.

Rangeland ecosystems are foundational to Alberta's culture and continue to contribute the following social benefits to Albertans:

- vast and contiguous ecosystems that support diverse native plants and wildlife
- natural resource development and industrial use
- healthy watersheds
- carbon sequestration
- development in rural communities
- preservation of Alberta's ranching heritage

This will be achieved by:

Tactic 1: Recognizing the role of the livestock industry as a foundation of Alberta Culture.

- Celebrate the economic and social contributions of livestock producers in rural communities to the fabric of our province. These producers are employers and community members that contribute both economically and socially, ensuring that rural communities remain viable and vibrant.
- Acknowledge that Alberta's livestock industry provides a high quality, nutritious, safe and affordable product for consumers.

Tactic 2: Embracing adaptive stewardship of Crown rangelands.

- Support adaptive stewardship practices that enable an outcomes-based system. This approach will allow flexibility that is needed for succession planning, and will encourage young producers to enter the livestock industry.
- Foster a culture of enablement versus a culture of regulation.
- Use adaptive management practices to increase stewardship, health and biodiversity, ultimately increasing natural capital of grazing dispositions.

Tactic 3: Building collaborative relationships between various approved land uses and users on Crown rangelands.

- Coordination and management of overlapping activities to prevent conflict and harm.
- Prioritize responsible use of the land to protect and conserve rangeland ecosystems and the ecological benefits they produce.
- Identify grazing as a tool that benefits other types of land use (vegetation management, fire suppression, etc.).

Tactic 4: Recognizing the social benefits healthy Crown rangelands provide to local rural communities.

- As the social fabric of our rural communities is as important as the large contiguous land-bases surrounding them, ensure that provincial regional and sub-regional land use plans prioritize the local rural communities.

Implementation

The Rangeland Grazing Framework outlines the environmental objective, and economic and social outcomes for grazing dispositions for the lasting benefit of the disposition holder, industry, rural communities, and all Albertans.

The Government of Alberta will take the following actions to implement this framework:

1. **Consultation:** Ensure disposition holders are engaged and are given the opportunity to provide input and share their expertise to prevent unnecessary negative impacts to the disposition and its stewardship of the disposition.
2. **Policy Review and Development:** Review of policies that do not align with this Framework, and development of policy to fill gaps.
3. **Operational Assessments:** Evaluations to ensure workload prioritization aligns with this Framework.


The intent of the Framework is to provide a long-standing strategy and be a constant reference for government, the livestock industry, and grazing disposition holders to assess their actions towards achieving a vision wherein Alberta's Crown land grazing dispositions are managed for the long-term health and sustainability of rangeland ecosystems.

Conclusion

Adoption of the Rangeland Grazing Framework will help ensure a strategic and coordinated approach to the sustainable management of Alberta's Crown rangelands, now and into the future.

As we advance towards the environmental objective and the economical and social outcomes outlined in this framework, we expect Albertans will continue to support and participate in the development and implementation of initiatives undertaken by the Government of Alberta to support conservation and sustainable resource development in Alberta's rangelands.





Rangeland Grazing Framework Endorsement | March 2023

The framework was signed by the following March 2023.

Hon. Todd Loewen

Forestry Parks and Tourism

Hon. Sonya Savage

Environment and Protected Areas

Brodie Haugan - Chair

Alberta Beef Producers

Kyle Forbes - Chairman

Alberta Grazing Leaseholders Association

Art Wheat

Central Alberta Grazing Association

Bill Smith - President

Northern Alberta Grazing Association

Roxy Wideman - Chair

Rocky Mountain Forest Range Association

Graham Overguard - President

Western Stock Growers Association

Operating Standards for Alberta's Crown Land

Grazing Dispositions

Introduction

Crown land grazing dispositions are land management tools that involve collaboration between the Government of Alberta and disposition holders. Crown land management ensures that livestock grazing is managed in a manner that sustains environmental, economic, and social benefits for Albertans.

Grazing dispositions are legal instruments used in the management of Crown land and provide the administrative and management foundation between the Government of Alberta and grazing disposition holders. Grazing disposition requirements support sustainable grazing and other land management values such as forestry, wildlife habitat, recreation, and industrial activity.

Grazing dispositions in Alberta occur on more than 8 million acres of Crown land, and are issued under the [Public Lands Act](#), [Forest Reserves Act](#), [Provincial Parks Act](#), and their associated regulations. Grazing dispositions are administered and enforced by Government of Alberta rangeland agrologists.

The dispositions used to administer grazing on Crown lands include:

- Grazing Leases
- Grazing Licenses
- Grazing Permits
- Head Tax Permits
- Forest Reserve Grazing Permits
- Parks Grazing Permits
- Parks Grazing Leases

Grazing leases, grazing licenses, grazing permits, and head tax permits are issued throughout the province under the authority of the *Public Lands Act* and Public Lands Administration Regulation.

Forest Reserve Grazing Permits are issued under the authority of the *Forest Reserves Act* and Forest Reserves Regulation. These permits authorize specified livestock grazing within forest reserve range allotments in the Rocky Mountains Forest Reserve.

Parks grazing permits and parks grazing leases are issued under the authority of the *Provincial Parks Act* and the Provincial Parks (Dispositions) Regulation. These permits authorize specified livestock grazing within Provincial Parks.



Grazing permits in Natural Areas, Wildland Parks, Heritage Rangelands and Ecological Reserves (as designated by [Wilderness Areas Ecological Reserves Natural Areas and Heritage Rangelands Act](#)) are issued under the *Public Lands Act* and Public Land Administration Regulation or *Forest Reserves Act* and Forest Reserves Regulation.

Provincial Grazing Reserves are specified lands where the day to day administration is managed by an association. Grazing is authorized by a Head Tax Permit.

Grazing disposition holder rights and responsibilities differ depending on the type of disposition they hold. These differences may include length of tenure, transferability, recreational access conditions, and renewal. These differences are detailed in the 'Summary of Alberta's Crown Land Grazing Dispositions' section of this document. Grazing dispositions are subject to cancellation or non-renewal for non-compliance with the requirements and conditions of the grazing disposition.

Farm Development Leases and Cultivation Permits are additional agricultural dispositions that in some cases are grazed, but the primary purpose of each is cultivation.

Legislative Requirements of Grazing Disposition Holders

Grazing disposition holders have certain legal obligations that must be adhered to for the duration of the term of the disposition.

Stock Return Form

The holder of a grazing disposition is required to **complete and submit a stock return form** annually to report livestock use of the grazing disposition (Public Lands Administration Regulation 54(1), Forest Reserves Regulation 15(1)). The submission of this form is required regardless of whether the disposition was grazed. The information collected is used to monitor and manage Crown land under grazing disposition. Generally, utilization is a requirement of holding the disposition, see the **Grazing Livestock** section for more information.

If any portion of the grazing disposition has been used for haying, the amount of hay removed from the disposition must be reported on the stock return form and included in the total **Animal Unit Months (AUMs)** used on the disposition. Grazing disposition holders must obtain written approval from the Department prior to haying. See the **Harvesting Hay on Grazing Dispositions** section for more information.

Rent and Taxes

The grazing disposition holder must pay all rents or fees applicable to the disposition (Public Lands Administration Regulation 21(1)(2), Forest Reserves Regulation 20), Provincial Parks (Dispositions) Regulation 8. Grazing disposition rent is calculated on the billable AUMs of the disposition.

Stewardship and Range Management Requirements

Grazing disposition holders are responsible for understanding and applying the four principles of range management to maintain healthy functional rangeland and riparian ecosystems on Crown land. The Public Lands Administration Regulation section 53(1) section 15(1)(b) of the Forest Reserves Regulation and section 38(a) of the Provincial Parks



What is considered livestock on Alberta's Crown lands?

- Cattle
- Horses
- Domestic sheep
- Bison (with special permission)

Under the *Provincial Parks Act*, livestock refers to cattle and horses only

An Animal Unit Month (AUM) is the amount of forage required by one mature 1,000-pound cow and her suckling calf (an 'animal unit') for one month.

AUMs need to be adjusted for different sizes and types of livestock. See 'Grazing Adjustments for Healthy Rangelands' available online, or talk with a rangeland agrologist for more details.

Billable AUMs are the stocking rate for a specific area of land that reflects the maximum number of Animal Unit Months that can be supported given optimal livestock distribution.

(Dispositions) Regulation supports this requirement. This requires the disposition holder to exercise due diligence in following the principles of range management to steward the range resource in collaboration with the rangeland agrologist.

Rangeland agrologists can offer advice on the many range management tools available to conserve and protect the range resource. It is ultimately the responsibility of the grazing disposition holder to choose and implement the tools necessary to achieve stewardship of the range resource.

Grazing Livestock

Grazing disposition holders **must utilize the disposition** to be eligible for renewal (Public Lands Administration Regulation 17 and Forest Reserves Regulation 15(1)).

There are circumstances when a disposition, or portion of, should not be grazed. These could include when events such as drought or fire occur, or under a management regime of a rest-rotational grazing systems. Rangeland agrologist engagement and approval is required for non-use.

Parks grazing dispositions are issued where grazing supports the overall management objectives of the park. Parks grazing permits are typically issued for one year; parks leases are issued for up to 10 years.



Livestock Ownership

The regulations (Public Lands Administration Regulation 55(1), Forest Reserves Regulation 16(1), Provincial Parks (Dispositions) Regulation 38(b)) outline that grazing disposition holders **must be the owner of all livestock** grazing on the disposition.

There are special circumstances where livestock owned by the Crown land disposition holder's next of kin or a co-management agreement is acceptable, but a written request and written approval from the Department must be obtained **PRIOR to any livestock other than the disposition holder's entry on to the disposition**. Assignment is the main tool available to allow other livestock on a disposition.

Fencing

The grazing disposition holder must **adequately fence the disposition** to confine livestock (Public Lands Administration Regulation 53(3); *Stray Animals Act* 37(1), Forest Reserves Regulation 15(1), Provincial Parks (Dispositions) Regulation 38(e)(f)). Fences must be maintained in a good and serviceable state of repair for the disposition to qualify for renewal. Non-compliance with fencing requirements may result in non-renewal or cancellation of the disposition agreement.

Stocking Rates

The grazing disposition holder must stock the disposition within the grazing capacity and shall not exceed it (Public Lands Administration Regulation 53(1)(b), Forest Reserves Regulation 5, Provincial Parks (Dispositions) Regulation 40(1)(a)). Rangeland agrologists determine grazing capacity as the number of AUMs the disposition can support.

Principles of Range Management

- Balance forage supply and demand
- Avoid grazing during vulnerable periods
- Distribute livestock evenly
- Provide effective rest

Grazing Capacity

The stocking rate the disposition can support under current management. In cases of severe conditions, such as drought or fire, the department may adjust grazing capacity to protect the range resource.

Supplemental Feeding¹

Supplemental feeding is **not permitted unless it is approved** by a rangeland agrologist (*Public Lands Act* 102, Public Lands Administration Regulation 53(1)). There are risks and concerns associated with supplemental feeding (such as noxious weeds, introduction of invasive agronomic species, impacts on wildlife/species at risk, etc.) that must be addressed prior to approval.

Range Developments

Any grazing disposition **range development requires written approval** from the rangeland agrologist (Public Lands Administration Regulation 77, Forest Reserves Regulation 17, Provincial Parks (Dispositions) Regulation 40(1)). Developments that would be considered undertakings that support the management of the range resource including but not limited to:

- Clearing
- Fenceline Clearing
- Control of woody re-growth and encroachment
- Creating dugouts or water developments
 - Note that this may require approval under the *Water Act* and Wetland Policy
- Cross fences
- Tame pasture rejuvenation
- Trail Development
- Facility Development (Corrals/Holding Areas)

¹ Supplemental feeding in the Rocky Mountains Forest Reserve is generally not enabled by Forest Reserve range management plans, for more information contact a forest reserve agrologist.

Invasive Species

Grazing disposition holders must **control any noxious weeds and destroy any prohibited noxious weeds** found on their dispositions as listed in the *Weed Control Act (Public Lands Act 63(b), Forest Reserves Regulation 19, Weed Control Act 2 and 3)*. Invasive species problems and control options should be discussed with the rangeland agrologist.

Control: inhibit growth or spread, or destroy

Destroy: kill all growing parts or make reproductive plant parts non-functional

Recreational Access

Grazing lease holders under the *Public Lands Act* have the ability to set conditions for recreational access. Grazing lease holders must **allow reasonable access** to the land for recreation (*Public Lands Act 62.1*).

What constitutes reasonable access and requirements of the recreational user are outlined in the Recreational Access Regulations.

Under Section 6(1) of the Recreational Access Regulations grazing lease holders have the duty to allow access unless one or more of the following circumstances exist:

- access would be anything other than foot access (i.e., motorized access, horseback riding, bicycling).
- livestock are present or a crop has not been harvested;
- a fire ban is in effect;
- access is for hunting unreasonably close to livestock;
- the proposed use is camping;
- a recreational management plan is in effect; or,
- the requested access would breach other disposition specific conditions that have been approved by the Local Settlement Officer.

Recreational users must contact grazing lease holders prior to accessing the grazing lease. The Government of Alberta provides a [Recreational Access Internet Mapping tool](https://www.alberta.ca/recreational-access-internet-mapping-tool) to facilitate contact between recreational users and lease holders. This tool provides contact information, approved general access conditions, and disposition specific access conditions.

Grazing lease holders must provide contact information through the Rangeland Stewardship Audit Program (Recreational Access Regulation 4(1)). There is an option for lease holders to opt out of the contact requirement and provide unlimited access.



Harvesting Hay on Grazing Dispositions

A grazing disposition holder may cut a limited amount of hay for their livestock on the grazing disposition **pending application and approval** (Public Land Administration Regulation 57). The harvested amount of hay is limited based on the grazing capacity of the disposition and must not exceed three tonnes per animal unit per year. The holder of a Parks grazing permit must have a valid hay disposition prior to cutting hay on park land (Provincial Parks (Dispositions) Regulation 33, 38). No cutting of hay is allowed in the Forest Reserve.

Grazing Timber Integration

Where grazing and timber dispositions overlap the holder of a timber disposition may, subject to the terms of the timber disposition, enter and occupy the forested land for the purposes of cutting and removing timber from it (Public Lands Administration Regulation 60(1), Forest Reserves Regulation 1(h)). New planned activity by either disposition holder requires communication if the activity has potential to impact the other's interests. Grazing and timber disposition holders should work together to jointly develop a Grazing Timber Agreement to integrate grazing and timber activities on the land base.

Exploration Access

Exploration approval holders are entitled to access *Public Lands Act* grazing dispositions if they meet the requirements of the Exploration Dispute Resolution Regulation. Those requirements include advance notice, an opportunity for the grazing disposition holder to identify operational or land-use concerns, and a requirement for consent. If consent isn't granted, the exploration approval holder may apply to the Land and Property Right Tribunal for a right of entry order.



Summary of Agricultural Crown Land Grazing Dispositions

Grazing Leases are the most common Crown land grazing disposition. The historical standard tenure term is 10 years with the possibility for extended tenure for exemplary stewardship of up to 20 years for leases administered under the *Public Lands Act* and 30 years for leases within designated Heritage Rangelands, respectively.

A grazing lease can be assigned or transferred as a whole or partially. To protect the interests of the leaseholder and provide reasonable access to recreational users, grazing leases are subject to the Recreational Access Regulation.

Grazing Licenses are usually found in the Green (Forested) Area where forestry is the primary land use. Grazing licenses can also be located in the White (Settled) Area in areas of high multiple use and where there are other important resource values.

Grazing licenses are issued for a standard 10-year term. They are renewable and assignable to eligible parties.

Grazing Permits are issued on an annual basis for the exclusive use of livestock grazing on vacant Crown land. Grazing permits are generally located in areas with prominent resource concerns that may require changes in future land use.

The permit holder has no rights of assignment, and the grazing permit expires on December 31 following the date of its issue (Provincial Parks (Dispositions) Regulation 8(a)). Where a decision to renew is made, grazing permits are renewed at the beginning of each year. Parks grazing permit holders must apply to renew their permit every year.

Head Tax Permits are authorizations issued on an annual basis for the non-exclusive right to graze livestock. They are normally issued on a first-come, first-served basis for livestock grazing when short term grazing, within a calendar year, is considered. Head Tax Permits are also issued annually to the grazing association responsible for grazing management on Provincial Grazing Reserves.

Forest Reserves Preference Quota defines the amount of forage that has been allocated within a geographic area (the range allotment) to a specific individual (person, company or combination). These allocations can be transferred or allocated in whole or in part (to a minimum of 100 AUMs). Forest Reserves Grazing Permits are issued in terms of 1 to 10 years to enable the use of these Preference Quotas. *Forest Reserves Act* grazing may overlap Provincial Parks, Wildland Parks, Ecological Reserves and Natural Areas.

1. Table refers to grazing dispositions on Crown land administered under the *Public Lands Act*, *Forest Reserves Act* and *Provincial Parks Act*.

	Grazing Lease (Public Lands Administration Regulation)	Grazing License (Public Lands Administration Regulation)	Grazing Permit (Public Lands Administration Regulation)	Head Tax Permits (Public Lands Administration Regulation)	Forest Reserve Grazing Permits (Forest Reserves Regulation)	Provincial Grazing Reserves (Public Lands Administration Regulation)	Parks Grazing Permits (Provincial Parks (Dispositions) Regulation)	Parks Grazing Lease (Provincial Parks (Dispositions) Regulation)
Party responsible for livestock management	Lease Holder	License Holder	Permit Holder	Permit Holder	Permit Holder	Private association handles/ manages the livestock	Permit Holder	Lease Holder
Party responsible for fencing and range developments	Lease Holder	License Holder	Permit Holder	Permit Holder	Permit Holder (rental credit may be available for certain cases)	Cost share basis Association is responsible for maintaining government assets	Permit Holder	Lease Holder
Tenure length	Maximum 20 years (30 in Heritage Rangelands) 10 years is standard Renewable	Maximum 10 years with Renewable	1 year permit Renewable	Specified Period of Time (not to exceed 12 months) Renewable	Permits ranging from 1-10 years in term are issued to enable use of the Preference Quota Renewable	Management agreement for up to 10 years Renewable	1 year (can be issued up to 3) Renewable	10 years Renewable
Can the disposition holder apply conditions to recreational access?	Yes, within regulatory parameters (Dispute resolution through Local Settlement Officer)	No	No	No	No	No (Conditions are outlined by a Local Settlement Officer on these areas)	No	No
Is disposition holder engagement required for industrial exploration access?	Yes (Refusal of access may be subject to a right of entry order application)	No	No	No	Yes	No		
Is disposition holder consent required for exploration access?	Yes (Refusal of access may be subject to a right of entry order application)	No	No	No	No	No		

The Reasons Still Stand – Grazing Leases and Property Rights

It's hard to imagine that the reasons for how and why something was created in 1881 are still valid and relevant today – but here we are, living that truth.

The *Dominion Lands Act* (1876) and Dominion Order in Council No. 803 vested strong tenure rights in the holders of Crown grazing leases in an effort to stimulate investment in the cattle industry and promote environmental stewardship of the grass resources. Historical records show that 'security of tenure' was a core objective of this new system.

It needs to be understood that our grazing lease system was developed in the context of the 'range wars' and the environmental degradation that was occurring on the Great Plains of the USA from 1866 to 1885. The effect of their first come, first served open range policy was intense competition for the grass resource and a decimation of the rangeland health, leading to what is known as the dust bowl era.

It is well documented that Canada's elected officials of this era were acutely aware of the problems on the Great Plains and wanted to implement a better system here in Canada. They wanted to create a system to avoid the environmental degradation of the range while at the same time creating sufficient security of tenure to attract the investment needed for a viable cattle industry. The Canadian grazing lease system was deliberately designed to create a lease of real property at common law based on the Australian model. As a result, the tragedy of the commons was avoided and the grazing lease system in Alberta stands as a time-tested mechanism to conserve rangeland landscapes and their ecological goods and services.

Security of tenure, part of which is the lease being recognized in common law, builds a level of confidence for leaseholders whereby a return of investment in the land will be realized. This builds true incentive for good stewardship into the system with very little capital investment on the part of government. Security of tenure fosters a commitment to sustainable working landscapes that is lost if leaseholders are concerned their grazing lease will be rescinded or not renewed. While in 1881, tenure rights were used to stimulate investment in the cattle industry, today they are used to meet sustainability goals of the cattle industry.

Grazing leaseholders are subject to legislated requirements and responsibilities but are also awarded a bundle of rights with their lease contract. Statutory consents, including grazing dispositions, have value. They can be bought, sold and borrowed against. Grazing leaseholders pay the property taxes on their leases as well as annual rent. These facts stand as evidence that grazing dispositions are property. Many cattle operations rely on the grazing lease instrument to ensure the viability of their operations. They are a vital part of and a contributor to the sustainability of the beef industry in Alberta and also the sustainability of large contiguous ranges of grassland.

As much as in any country of the free world, Alberta property owners are at the mercy of uncontrolled greed, jealousy, envy, injustice, moral decay, and big government want. Private property rights are a fundamental and necessary condition if people are to be prosperous and free. Continued stewardship (i.e. sustainability) of Crown land in Alberta is reliant on the recognition of property rights in grazing leases and legislation supporting it. Over the 142-year history of grazing leases in Alberta, leaseholder rights have been eroded but the reasons for the design of the system hold true and the system itself stands as an example of success. So this begs the question, how far can leaseholder property rights be eroded before the system stops being successful?

QUICK FACTS: The Beef Industry and Grazing Leases

A healthy beef industry supports rural communities across the province.

- ❑ Alberta's beef industry is an important economic driver generating \$13.6 billion in sales and contributing over \$4 billion to the province's GDP; including \$2.7 billion in labour income.
- ❑ The sector is responsible for generating 55,125 full-time jobs. Additionally, every job in the sector yields another 2.7 jobs elsewhere in the economy.
- ❑ Beef producers steward 48 million acres of rangeland, 28 million acres of that is native Alberta grasslands and pastures, providing habitat for a wide range of wildlife species including multiple species at risk.
- ❑ Alberta's grazing lease system has been in place since 1881 making it the only proven system for conservation of grasslands and rangelands that exists in Alberta.
- ❑ Today, there are approximately 5,700 grazing leases in Alberta covering approximately 5.2 million acres. This is roughly 5% of the Crown land in Alberta. Other Crown land grazing dispositions include grazing permits, grazing licenses, head tax permits and provincial grazing reserves.
- ❑ 20% of the Alberta cattle herd relies on Crown land grazing, thus responsible for generating billions to the Alberta economy.
- ❑ Alberta's grazing leaseholders sink significant investment into managing their leases. This includes initial procurement costs, annual rent, municipal property taxes and all costs related to improvements on the lease such as fencing, tree and brush clearing and water development to meet their legislated requirements. Grazing rental fees contribute approximately \$3 million annually to the province. Grazing leaseholders pay the property taxes of the land, representing important income to municipalities and counties.
- ❑ Annually, leaseholders provide upwards of \$70 million in value to the province of Alberta for their role overseeing Crown land under grazing disposition. Overseeing Crown land for the purpose of grazing cattle requires leaseholders to manage multiple uses (including recreation and industrial access), maintain fences, improve rangeland, develop watering systems and absorb various other cost factors to continue using the land in the manner that adheres to legislation and also stewards the land.
- ❑ Without engaged land managers, the government would need to administer the weed management, fire control, ecosystem maintenance (which entails management of a grazing animal), industrial and recreational management required to maintain these native grasslands in a manner that provides optimal wildlife habitat, carbon sequestration, and biodiversity. In this way, the beef industry turns a financial liability for the province into financial gain.

Our mission: "To protect Alberta's grazing leaseholders from erosion of rights and property and to preserve the assets and income of grazing lease owners."

Our mission has never been more important as over the last four years. It seems like we have spent all our time and resources being defensive against those who want to diminish our rights. We have had no time to address improvements and modernizations that are needed within the system.

Alberta's grazing lease system is a 143-year-old model of how Crown land can be used responsibly and sustainably to benefit both the environment and the economy. Without engaged leaseholders as the land manager, the government would have to do it all themselves. This includes the weed management, fire control, ecosystem maintenance (which entails management of a grazing animal), industrial activity and recreational management. These things are required to maintain these grasslands in a manner that provides optimal wildlife habitat, carbon sequestration, and biodiversity. In this way, the beef industry turns a financial liability for the province into financial gain. And this is not a role to be taken lightly by government.

The advocacy work that AGLA does is critical because the value of the leaseholder is far too often diminished and dismissed. This needs to be a continual conversation with policy and decision makers or our value will be lost in the shuffle. Most of the work done for leaseholders is done by the volunteers that sit on the board of directors. To keep costs down, AGLA directors do not take an honorarium nor do they claim expenses. The administration and other management duties is filled with a part-time contract position. AGLA is run solely on memberships and donations so the support of the membership is everything. It keeps the organization accountable and closely tied to the producers we represent.

The support of our membership is our scaffolding. It's the members that keep us up and running; that keep us fighting the good fight.

In This Issue

- Chairman's Report
- 2025 Rental Rate News
- RAR Review Completed
- Cracking down on stock return forms
- Agriculture Tour England and Wales
- Results 2024 Inspections
- AGLA Board and Office contact information

We have three things we ask of our membership:

- 1) If you are already a member, **please renew your membership for 2025.** If you have not purchased a membership, please consider doing so to sustain the important work AGLA does for leaseholders. At \$100 per year, it is the best deal out there for representation and advocacy. AGLA also accepts donations to help with operational costs.
- 2) **Keep in touch.** We are a voluntary membership organization which means we are accountable only to our membership. This model relies on feedback and input from the membership. There are a few ways to give your input. Contact your AGLA director, contact Lindsye at the office, join us at one of our regional meetings. We want to see you at our AGM. Please feel free to get in touch if you have an issue.
- 3) **Spread the word.** The commitment and dedication of the directors at AGLA is impressive and highly commendable. The fight to protect the rights of leaseholders is very real. We need all the support we can get so please help us increase our membership.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Over the last number of years it has been my privilege to represent the leaseholders and beef producers of this province. There have been no shortage of challenges since 2018 and some of these issues seem to never be completely solved. They tend to resurface, reworked but still carrying the same negative impacts for our business. Now more than ever we need to remain committed to maintaining our bundle of rights for there are those who actively seek to have them taken from us.

2024, as per usual in the grazing lease advocacy world, did not lack in its share of challenges. Early in the spring, Minister Loewen announced that he would be forming a minister's advisory committee to provide recommendations on the review of the Recreational Access Regulation as well as changes, where appropriate, to the Public Lands Act.

These meetings took up a good portion of our year, however it was an extremely important piece of consultation for our association to be involved in. When the initial list of committee members was released, there were immediate concerns from our industry. The make up leaned heavily to hunting groups and lacked knowledgeable representation from leaseholders. Other industry groups such as Western Stock Growers' and Alberta Beef Producers were left on the sidelines. Leaving out large portions of our industry gave a feeling of a predetermined outcome that didn't subside throughout the meetings.

During the consultations, many tough conversations were had and differences of opinion heard. Department staff did a commendable job of providing context and background on the grazing lease instrument but it was frustrating to see the lack of understanding of the stewardship model from the other groups chosen to be around the table. Hopefully, through some of the discussions, we helped to open some eyes. Time will tell. For now, the report is in the hands of Minister Loewen for his review and direction forward. I would like to thank Bill Newton, Bill Smith and Jim Peel for their representation of leaseholders on the committee. These individuals went above and beyond to advocate for your rights and we are all better off for having them there. Thank you.

In the fall, Minister Loewen implemented a grazing lease inspection blitz. This blitz was meant to target all leases in the province but, due to time and man power, it was scaled back. Those that failed to complete a stock return form or had a history of non-use were prioritized for inspection. Large leases in southern Alberta were also targeted due to complaints of overgrazing. Of these leases inspected, close to 80% were found to be compliant and required no action. This speaks to the success of the stewardship model and further attests to the fact that leaseholders are doing an excellent job maintaining these landscapes. Minister Loewen is within his power to move non-compliant leases straight to cancellation. However it is the hope of industry that proper compliance action can be taken and these leases can make their way into the hands of those who wish to stock them. Cattle producers should be given the opportunity to turn these leases into viable businesses to support their families and communities.

The RAR review this year and the inspection blitz have kept us very busy and the government distracted so we haven't made much progress on the things we would like to address. This includes assignment fees, the Grazing Timber Manual update, tree encroachment management and subletting for succession. Hopefully there will be time in 2025.

Coming up there will be two opportunities for members to provide input and hear more in depth about the issues we are currently working on. Please take the time to attend either the zoom meeting on February 6 or our AGM in Lethbridge on February 26. It's through these meetings we get insight on what issues are urgently plaguing leaseholders and if there is somewhere more pressing our attention needs to be. If you are unable to attend, feel free to reach out to one of the directors in your area or to the AGLA office.

Over the last year we have added a few new faces around the board table. These folk have provided great new insights to our conversations and we look forward to having them more involved moving forward. We also bid goodbye and good luck to Zone E Director Lee Fryberger who is not letting his name stand for re-election. Lee added a quiet thoughtfulness that was needed in many tough conversations and his presence will certainly be missed. Lee, on behalf of the rest of the board, thank you for your time and commitment to AGLA.

To our members, thank you for continuing to support this humble little association. We are few but over the years we've shown time and time again we are able to punch above our weight class. None of that is possible without you the members, our board and, probably most of all, our general manger Lindsye.

Thank you for having faith in us

Kyle Forbes, AGLA Chairman



2025 Rental Rate News

*The government has not released the rental rates for 2025 at the time of writing this but indications point to another increase. Ugh. ****sigh*****

This isn't good news and is actually not what was expected after the steep increase in 2024 rental rates. The rental rate formula is a Weighted Average Capital Cost calculation — meaning that it is based on profitability. After last year—there was no way the difference between 2024 spring and fall prices could be as large as they were in 2023. Rental rates were surely going to fall. Wrong!

There are three dynamic inputs that are updated each year for the calculation of rental rate: the April steer price for 650 lb animals, the September steer price for 850 lb animals (both taken from Canfax data) and the Consumer Price Index (CPI) for the first 8 months of the year to adjust for inflation. We recognize most people are not grazing steers on their lease, however, when developing the calculation, industry and government agreed that this price index would be an appropriate trend indicator to use.

In 2018, many beef industry grazing groups including AGLA and government representatives worked with MNP for nearly a year to build a new rental rate calculation. The main driver to this was to avoid a successful countervail challenge by the US Department of Commerce. Previously, a countervail challenge was issued and it was incredibly expensive to our industry to defend. At that time *we were found to be de minimus—meaning the level of subsidy was under the allowable levels. We don't need something in our industry, like arbitrary and subjective Crown rental rates, to be leveraged for another countervail challenge.*

prior to 2018, the rental rate was frozen for 20 years. Each year the minister would review the rental rate and then keep the same rate as the year before. The new calculation is based on the cost of production and the potential of the leaseholder to be profitable. In years where cost margins are poor, leaseholders will pay much less in

lems with the new calculation are being spotlighted. The fall calf prices again are making the cost margins in the calculation really strong. So if you are making an extra profit in the fall, you can expect to pay a bit more for your grazing lease rental rate.

At the time of the development of the rental rate calculation, there hadn't been significant volatility in the fall calf prices for nearly 30 years. That is no longer true. The difference in how the averages are calculated for spring and fall prices are proving to be problematic. We have flagged this as something that needs to be changed.

What we are also finding is that the calculation does not reflect the true cost. The costs numbers are acquired through a Lease Cost Survey that is sent out to leaseholders. The last survey was done in 2022 so we are working on fairly recent cost analysis. We rely on leaseholders to fill out the survey to get accurate cost data. Unfortunately, the results of that survey showed that the cost increases to run a lease are quite similar to the consumer price index. But we know this not to be true. Ranching inputs (fencing, vet costs, property taxes etc) have outpaced the standardized CPI by almost double. The next lease cost survey is scheduled for 2032.

Hindsight is indeed 20-20 and we should have built in a review of the performance of the calculation from the outset. The good news in this crappy scenario that we have found ourselves, besides high cattle prices, is that we have had positive indications that the government is willing to revisit the calculation to make tweaks to account for these problems that have shown to skew the rental rate in times of unprecedented cattle prices. It is expected this will be priority number one for AGLA in the workplan this upcoming year.

We are hoping the government will recognize how problematic the rental rate calculation result for 2025 is and provide some relief through Ministerial Order adjusting the rate to be more reflective of the actual on the ground situation.

Once we get the rate, we will send it out to the membership.

a couple of years of exceptionally high fall prices that were impossible to predict, the prob-

Recreational Access Regulations — Upcoming amendments

It is expected amendments to the Recreational Access Regulations will be tabled in spring session—we wait to see if they follow the recommendations of the Minister's Advisory Committee.

The Recreational Access Regulations (RAR) is the regulation that pertains to the recreation access on Crown land under grazing lease. This regulation is up for review in March 2025.

This year, Minister Loewen instituted a comprehensive review of the regulations. A committee was struck consisting of representatives from AGLA, Northern Alberta Grazing Association, Alberta Wilderness Association, Alberta Off-Highway Vehicle Association, Alberta Conservation Association, Alberta Professional Outfitters Society (even though RAR does not pertain to outfitting, since it is a commercial activity), Alberta Wildlife Federation (formerly known as Alberta Fish and Game Association), a southern Alberta grazing leaseholder at large, a northern Alberta leaseholder at large, a southern Alberta representative at large, a northern Alberta representative at large.

Since May 2024, this committee has met five times to review parts of the recreational access system, with homework in between for the committee members. The review included roles and responsibilities, access requests determination and dispute resolution, enforcement and education and awareness.

The recommendations report from the committee consultation has been submitted to Minister Loewen. It contained 22 individual pieces of advice, organized into three categories: advice specific to RAR, advice associated with RAR and other ad-

vice. Advice Specific to RAR is advice on changes to RAR. Advice Associated with RAR is advice on changes to associated policies or guidelines with implications to broader legislation that supports the implementation of RAR. These are within the scope of the Ministry of Forestry and Parks. Other Advice is advice on changes to support the RAR that would require external collaboration and cooperation with one of more other government ministries. These changes are outside the scope of the Ministry of Forestry and Parks. Within each of these categories, the advice has been refined into three sub-categories to identify the level of support within the committee: Majority Support, Majority Support with an Objection, Split Advice.

It is up to the minister's discretion how to implement the recommendations into amendments that will be tabled at cabinet. This is expected to happen at spring session and we wait with bated breath to see what the minister will propose to change. At our last AGM, Minister Loewen addressed the membership and committed to tweaks of the regulation to modernize it, no sweeping changes.

As we have more information, we will share it with the membership. Make sure you are signed up to our e-newsletter to get timely updates. You can sign up through our website albertagrazinglease.ca

AGLA CALL FOR RESOLUTIONS

Our Annual General Meeting is where resolutions from the membership are tabled to guide our efforts year to year. This is where we get our marching orders.

Do you have an issue AGLA should be working on?
Submit it in the form of a resolution.

Send in your resolution to albertagrazinglease@gmail.com
or 587-435-4072 or contact the director for your area

AGLA AGM—Wednesday, February 26, 2025 at 1:00 pm Lethbridge

Resolutions submitted and tabled at the regional meetings will be voted on by the membership at the AGM.

The government means business with stock return forms

In 2023, the department began undertaking compliance action on leaseholders who chronically had not submitted stock return forms. It seems they are making plans to up their game in this crusade.

The department has communicated to us that failure to submit a stock return form by the deadline may result in further compliance action by the department. By compliance action, they mean monetary penalty, suspension or cancellation of your disposition. Failure to submit a form may place the status of your disposition in jeopardy which may affect renewal or any assignment applications.

Submission of stock return forms is a legislated requirement that is also reaffirmed in your grazing lease contract. Enforcement orders for contravening the conditions of a disposition are covered under section 59.1 of the Public Lands Act. Administrative penalties are covered under section 59.3 of the Public Lands Act. There is no specified amount for mone-

tary penalty it just says 'in an amount determined by the director.'

The deadline for stock return forms is January 31, 2025.

We advise leaseholders not to test whether the department will issue a penalty or not. It's safe to assume they will charge leaseholders upon failure to submit stock return forms.

The Alberta Government further submits that it has moved to Regulatory Assurance Model for all disposition management. This model focuses on addressing issues as they arise which is a shift from the renewal based approach the department previously applied. It is under this guise that the government is justifying the recent crackdowns on non-compliant leaseholders (fall inspection blitz and zero tolerance on late stock return forms).

CONTACT THE MINISTER

The grazing disposition portfolio is currently in the Department of Forestry and Parks, Lands Operations Division.

If you have comments or questions for Todd Loewen, Minister of Forestry and Parks, his email is fp.minister@gov.ab.ca

AGLA UPCOMING MEETINGS

FEBRUARY 6, 2025 1:00 PM

Virtual meeting via ZOOM
Province-wide invitation

AGLA AGM

February 26, 2025 1:00 PM

Coast Lethbridge Hotel and Conference Centre
Lethbridge, AB



Request for Decision (RFD)

Meeting Date: Tuesday, April 8, 2025

Agenda Item: # 5.1

Topic: Lakeland Agricultural Research Association Partnership

Presented By: Agricultural Department

Recommendation:

That the Smoky Lake County's Agricultural Service Board recommends that Smoky Lake County provides a municipal contribution in the amount of \$55,000.00 towards the Lakeland Agricultural Research Association (LARA) Year-2025 Operating Budget, and enters into an agreement to allow Smoky Lake County producers access to LARA's Year-2025 environmental and extension programming.

Background:

For the last 10 years Smoky Lake County Agricultural Service Board has partnered with the Lakeland Agricultural Research Association (LARA) to provide unbiased environmental and extension programming to Smoky Lake County's agricultural community. Smoky Lake County has contributed \$55,000.00 of ASB operational funds to LARA annually, since 2015.

November 6, 2014, Smoky Lake County first entered into a contract with LARA.

- That the Smoky Lake County Agricultural Service Board partner with Lakeland Applied Research Association to provide environmental and extension programming for Smoky Lake County residents and increase the 2015 ASB budget by \$55,000; and the Environmental Streamline Program grant funding of \$25,000.00 remain in-house. **Motion #112-14**

Budget amount has remained the same for LARA since the initial contract.

- December 16, 2019 That Smoky Lake County not enter into a contract with the Lakeland Agricultural Research Association (LARA) for the Year-2020 Extension Programming, as Smoky Lake County has provided a municipal contribution in the amount of \$55,000.00 each year from Year-2015 to Year-2019, and LARA is not willing to accept Smoky Lake County's reduced Year-2020 municipal contribution offer as per the November 6, 2019 Council Motion #1221-19 in the amount of \$25,000.00 towards the LARA program. **Motion # 294-19**

Following the December 16, 2019 meeting LARA had sent out a newsletter to producers in Smoky Lake County notifying them that Smoky Lake County would no longer be contributing to LARA.

February 24, 2020, 20 Members of the Public entered Council Chambers to attend the meeting and express their concerns about LARA no longer being funded by Smoky Lake County.



Request for Decision (RFD)

February 24, 2020

- That Smoky Lake County Council's December 16, 2019 Motion # 294-19: "That Smoky Lake County not enter into a contract with the Lakeland Agricultural Research Association (LARA) for the Year-2020 Extension Programming, as Smoky Lake County has provided a municipal contribution in the amount of \$55,000.00 each year from Year-2015 to Year-2019, and LARA is not willing to accept Smoky Lake County's reduced Year-2020 municipal contribution offer as per the November 6, 2019 Council Motion #1221-19 in the amount of \$25,000.00 towards the LARA program.", BE RESCINDED; and, approve to provide Lakeland Agricultural Research Association (LARA) funds for Year-2020 in the amount of \$55,000.00, and proceed to execute a contract with the LARA for the Year-2020 Agricultural Extension Programming. **Motion # 576-20**

Smoky Lake County Agricultural Service Board requested a decrease in funding

- December 14, 2021 That Smoky Lake County's Agricultural Service Board Chairperson attend the next Lakeland Agricultural Research Association (LARA) board meeting in February 2022, for the purpose of requesting a 25% reduction to the Year-2022 County funding contribution in the amount of \$55,000.00 to the amount of \$41,250.00 towards LARA's extension programming services and research with emphasis on cattle production. **Motion #109-21**
- December 14, 2022 Council Meeting **Motion # 202-22** That Smoky Lake County Council **defer** consideration of executing the agreement with the Lakeland Agricultural Research Association for the 2023 year for continued extension programming at a cost of \$55,000, to the January 26, 2023 County Council Meeting.

Agricultural Fieldman was directed to reach out to LARA to inquire about different levels of funding for Smoky Lake County.

- January 26th, 2023 That Smoky Lake County Council **defer** the Operational Funding Agreement with Lakeland Agricultural Research Association (LARA), effective January 1, 2023 and expiring on December 31, 2023, with an Extension Programming funding contribution in the amount of \$55,000.00 to LARA for Year-2023 for the continuation of receiving unbiased environmental and extension programming for the Smoky Lake County Agricultural Community. **Motion #315-23**

Council wanted to see the results of the LARA Programming Survey that was conducted by LARA during this timeframe before deciding. This survey was not Smoky Lake County specific; it had been put out to the Public, so the results were not entirely relevant.

- February 14th, 2023 That Smoky Lake County execute an agreement with Lakeland Agricultural Research Association (LARA) for Year-2023 and provide funds in the amount



Request for Decision (RFD)

of \$55,000.00 to LARA, for the provision of enhanced extension programming to Smoky Lake County producers to meet the County's obligations under the Resource Management Stream of the Provincial Agricultural Service Board (ASB) Grant. **Motion #381-23**

- Smoky Lake County partnered with LARA for the 2022 year with the following outcomes:
 - 44 research trials that composed 1914 research plots – 5 research trials at the Smoky Lake Plot consisting of 247 plots and 1 hemp demonstration.
 - 210 producers attended 28 extension events.
 - 6 Environmental Farm Plans
 - 18 Producers assisted with CAP grant projects.
- In 2023 LARA was amenable to provide an extension-based program for \$30,000. This extension-based program would have no trials within the County but would continue to offer mail-outs of newsletters and other information materials. They would offer at minimum one in person event within the county and continue to support producers one-on-one through phone calls, emails etc. Smoky Lake County would no longer have board representation. Council chose to fund the full amount of \$55,000 for the 2023 year. **Motion #380-23**

- That Smoky Lake County's Agricultural Service Board provide a recommendation to Smoky Lake County, based on survey results, and information collected by Board Member speaking to local producers, in respect to either: fund, not fund, increase, or decrease, the municipal contribution towards the Lakeland Agricultural Research Association (LARA) Year-2024 operating budget, to: fund individual memberships in the amount of \$200.00 per producer Premise ID Number and/or Farm Fuel Benefit Number, in Year-2024, up to a total County wide maximum funding in the amount of \$30,000.00 to Lakeland Agricultural Research Association (LARA), in lieu of any municipal contribution towards the LARA Year-2024 operating budget; and have the Smoky Lake County ASB provide in-house extension event(s). **Motion 05-23**
- That Smoky Lake County's Agricultural Service Board **recommends:** that Smoky Lake County provides a municipal contribution in the amount of \$55,000.00 towards the Lakeland Agricultural Research Association (LARA) Year-2024 Operating Budget, and enters into an agreement to allow Smoky Lake County producers access to LARA's Year-2024 environmental and extension programming; **and** request all relevant detailed historical information from LARA in respect to the number of LARA events held in Smoky Lake County and the number of Smoky Lake County producers who were in attendance; **and** have the Smoky Lake County Agricultural Fieldman bring forward options for providing environmental and extension programming specific to Smoky Lake County Producers in Year-2025, for consideration in October 2024. **Motion # 24-24**

February 22, 2024:



Request for Decision (RFD)

- That Smoky Lake County acknowledge the Lakeland Agricultural Research Association (LARA) Board removed the option to purchase individual memberships to LARA at their meeting held on February 5th, 2024, and therefore the recommendation made by the Agricultural Service Board (ASB) on December 12, 2023, to fund individual memberships in the amount of \$200.00 per producer Premise ID Number and/or Farm Fuel Benefit Number, in Year-2024, up to a total County wide maximum funding in the amount of \$30,000.00 to Lakeland Agricultural Research Association (LARA) and have the Smoky Lake County ASB provide in-house extension event(s), is no longer an option. **Motion # 354-24**
- That Smoky Lake County provide a municipal contribution in the amount of \$55,000.00 towards the Lakeland Agricultural Research Association (LARA) Year-2024 Operating Budget and enter into an agreement to allow Smoky Lake County producers access to LARA's Year-2024 environmental and extension programming. **Motion # 355-24**
- That Smoky Lake County request detailed historical information from Lakeland Agricultural Research Association (LARA) in respect to the number of LARA events held in Smoky Lake County and the number of Smoky Lake County producers who attended any LARA event, as well as all relevant information which validates Smoky Lake County providing municipal funds to LARA. **Motion # 356-24**

PROPOSAL:

- Factors to consider if Smoky Lake County Agricultural Service Board doesn't enter into an agreement with LARA.
 - How will we provide extension to our producers? Due to our ASB Grant Agreement with the Province extension still needs to be provided.
 - LARA gives us a bale probe for producers to pick up and use for free.
 - LARA provides unbiased research and advice to producers.
 - With the loss of many Alberta Agriculture experts there are limited free resources to refer producers with questions to. The expertise provided by LARA is valuable to our residents.

Benefits:

Smoky Lake County will still meet our obligations under the Resource Management Stream of the ASB Provincial Grant.

Our producers will still have access to unbiased research and advice.

Disadvantages:

High cost

Unknown how many producers use LARA and therefore we don't know if all our producers benefit from this partnership.

Alternatives:



Request for Decision (RFD)

Host events in-house.

No events

Quarterly newsletter

Host events on an as needed/ as 'hot topics' arise.

Financial Implications:

If Smoky Lake County continues to partner with LARA there are no budget implications. If Smoky Lake County decided to switch their level of service being provided to them by LARA there will be budget implications. If Smoky Lake County decides to terminate their partnership with LARA there will be budget implications.

Legislation:

Smoky Lake County has an obligation under the Resource Management Stream on the ASB Provincial Grant to provide producers with a form of extension.

Intergovernmental:

Collaborate regionally with the MD of Bonnyville, and the County of St. Paul through LARA

Strategic Alignment:

Enclosure(s):

LARA 2025 Contract

Signature of the CAO:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "K. E.", written over a horizontal line.



Operational Funding Agreement

Between

Lakeland Agricultural Research Association
(LARA)

and

Smoky Lake County
(the Municipality)

1.0 Term

This agreement will commence January 1, 2025, and subject to termination, according to the terms of the agreement, continue through December 31, 2025. This agreement will be renewed on an annual basis.

2.0 Conditions

2.1 During the term of this agreement, LARA agrees to:

- a) Allow representation from Smoky Lake County on the LARA Board of Directors according to the bylaws of LARA.
- b) Make public results from LARA research and demonstration programs via newsletters, annual report, meetings, articles, etc. as may be decided by the LARA Board of Directors.
- c) Conduct extension programs and related research and demonstration trials that maybe requested by municipal representatives, residents and the LARA Board of Directors in conjunction with Smoky Lake County.
- d) Have the research trials in Smoky Lake County planted and harvested in a reasonable timeline and maintained weed free. In case of severe weather conditions such as drought, excess moisture, storms and animal damage these conditions will be eased.
- e) Continued partnership with Smoky Lake's County through their Agricultural Service Boards, Lakeland Forage Association, AAFRD and private Ag-Industries.
- f) LARA manager to liaise with the Smoky Lake's County's Agricultural Fieldman or Assistant Agricultural Fieldman on a monthly basis.

2.2 During the term of this agreement the Municipality agrees to:

- a) provide operational funding to LARA in the amount of \$55,000.00 upon signing of agreement
- b) appoint representatives to the LARA Board of Directors according to the bylaws of LARA.
- c) allow LARA to use Agricultural Demonstration Equipment owned by the County at no cost.
- d) provide project ideas to the LARA Board of Directors, via the Agricultural Service Board.
- e) LARA participation at the Agricultural Service Board meetings bi-annually to review project status.

2.3 Smoky Lake County and LARA agree to have a combined responsibility to conduct Environmental Farm Plans for Smoky Lake County producers.

2.4 LARA will provide Smoky Lake County with an outline of the research trails and extension programs LARA wishes to put on for that calendar year.

2.5 In the case where Smoky Lake County finds that LARA is not providing sufficient services, Smoky Lake County holds the right to withhold funds until services are being completed or termination of contract may occur.



Infrastructure

- 3.0** To ensure optimal regional coverage by LARA the Municipality will provide:
- a) Access to telephone and/or fax
 - b) In Kind contributions

4.0 Hold Harmless

4.1 LARA agrees to indemnify and hold harmless Smoky Lake County, its employees and agents from any claims, demands, actions and costs whatsoever that may arise directly or indirectly, out of any act or omission of their employees or agents, in performance of this agreement.
This hold harmless shall survive the term of this agreement.

5.0 Termination

5.1 Smoky Lake County may terminate their involvement in this agreement with 30 days' notice should Lakeland Agricultural Research Association fail to meet Smoky Lake County's conditions in (2.1) listed above.

6.0 Addresses for Notices

- 6.1 Any notice made under the Agreement shall be deemed given to the other parties in writing and personally delivered, sent by registered mail or equivalent, addressed as follows:

Lakeland Agricultural Research Association
P.O. Box 7068
Bonnyville, Alberta
T9N 2H4
Fax: (780) 826-7099

Smoky Lake County
P.O. Box 310
Smoky Lake, AB
T0A 3C0
Fax: (780) 656-3730

- 7.0** Signed and sealed by the proper officers this _____ day of _____, 2025

Lakeland Agricultural Research Association

Alyssa Krawchuk, Executive Director

Wanda Austin, LARA Chairman

Smoky Lake County

Kierstin Dubitz, Interim Agricultural Fieldman

Dan Gawalko, Agricultural Service Board Chairman



Request for Decision (RFD)

Meeting Date: Tuesday, April 8, 2025

Agenda Item: # 5.2

Topic: Agricultural Service Board Firearm Authorization Form

Presented By: Agricultural Department

Recommendation:

That Smoky Lake County's Agricultural Service Board recommend that Smoky Lake County Council approve Schedule "A" Firearms Authorization for Trevor Cameron, Animal Control Technician for the purpose of problem wildlife and pest control until their firearms expiration date of November 25th, 2030.

Background:

Policy Statement No. 62-18: Firearms Authorization for Agricultural Service Board Section 2.1: 'The issuance of authorization to permit employees of the Smoky Lake County Agricultural Service Board to carry and use firearms for the control of problem wildlife while conducting field work in County locations in the performance of their official duties will be granted by the Chief Administrative Officer for the permission for possession, discharge or storage of firearms on property owned or managed by County and approved by motion of Council.

April 12, 2022:

Fenerty That Smoky Lake County execute Schedule "A" of Policy Statement No. 62-18-01: Firearms Authorization for Agricultural Service Board, with the County's Animal Control Technician: Trevor Cameron, for the purpose of pest control and abating problem-wildlife, effective November 26, 2021 to November 25, 2027, in synchronicity with the expiration of Trevor Cameron's Possession and Acquisition Licence (PAL). **Motion 566-22**

Benefits:

Effective control option to have available to work in conjunction with multiple other control techniques.

Disadvantages:

N/A

Alternatives:

Any alternative to the recommendation is at the discretion of Council.

Financial Implications:

There are no financial budget implications to this recommendation.

Legislation:

Alberta Agricultural Pest Act

Intergovernmental:

N/A

Strategic Alignment:

N/A



Request for Decision (RFD)

Enclosure(s):

Policy No. 62-18-01 Schedule "A" Firearms Authorization

Signature of the CAO:

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of several loops and a long horizontal stroke, positioned over a thin horizontal line.

SCHEDULE "A"


 AGRICULTURAL SERVICE BOARD
 FIREARM AUTHORIZATION FORM

EMPLOYEE:	Name: <u>Trevor Cameron</u>
	Address: _____
	Job Position: <u>Animal Control Technician</u>
	Firearm License Number: _____
	Expiry Date: <u>2030/11/25</u>

DESCRIPTION DETAILS:	FIREARM INFORMATION:
	Ownership: <u>Trevor Cameron</u>
	Manufacturer: <u>Savage Arms</u>
	Caliber: <u>.22 WMR</u>
	Model No.: <u>Model 93A</u>
	Serial No.: _____

AUTHORIZATION	Reason	Type of Use	Firearm
Problem Wildlife and Pest Control	Business Use: Animal / Predator Control	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Beavers <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Muskrats <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Coyotes <input type="checkbox"/> Skunks	Form 7 Permit Holder <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
SIGNATURE OF EMPLOYEE: <u>Trevor Cameron</u>		DATE: <u>March 31, 2025</u>	
SIGNATURE OF CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER: <u>[Signature]</u>		DATE: <u>March 31, 2025</u>	
SMOKY LAKE COUNTY APPROVAL: Motion: _____		DATE: _____	

Smoky Lake County's Agricultural Service Board 2024 Biocontrol Update

In 2024 we saw our leafy spurge beetle biocontrol project near Spedden continue to thrive. In conjunction with the Alberta Invasive Species Council, leafy spurge beetles (*Aphthona lacertosa*) were released on a patch of noxious leafy spurge in 2022 (Fig. 1).

Biocontrol is the suppression of pest populations using living organisms. This pest control option was implemented when other mechanical or chemical controls weren't effective or feasible. Leafy spurge is an extremely aggressive invader spreading both by extensive creeping roots that can extend 4.5m laterally and 9m deep as well as a high seed producer with a single large plant producing up to 130,000 seeds. All parts of this plant contain a milky colored latex that can poison livestock and cause skin irritation on humans.

As there are very few locations of leafy spurge in Smoky Lake County, we wanted to attempt a biocontrol project to contain it in this single location. Adult leafy spurge beetles feed on spurge leaves and flowers limiting the plant's ability to photosynthesize. Females deposit eggs in the soil, once the eggs hatch the larvae will burrow into the soil to overwinter. In early spring the larvae will feed on spurge roots, limiting stem development and root function.

This year marked the beetles' second complete summer in the environment since their release. Evidence of plant damage was discovered during the 2024 yearly survey (Fig. 2). The conclusion was formed that root feeding produced plant stress, which resulted in discoloration on some of the individual plants. Leafy Spurge suppression will be seen in a few years as beetles feed and their population grows. This is why the spurge population has not been affected, and population numbers are not changing yet. However, this can be explained due to the random sampling method used, i.e. quadrant 4 in 2024 was in a denser patch this year as compared to previous years (Fig. 3). Overall the average plant count per quadrant (0.59m²) was 13.6 in 2022, 12.4 in 2023, and 12 in 2024.



Figure 1. Leafy Spurge Beetles on a flowering Leafy Spurge plant at time of release in 2022.



Figure 2. Leafy Spurge plant discolouration found during annual sampling on July 16th, 2024.

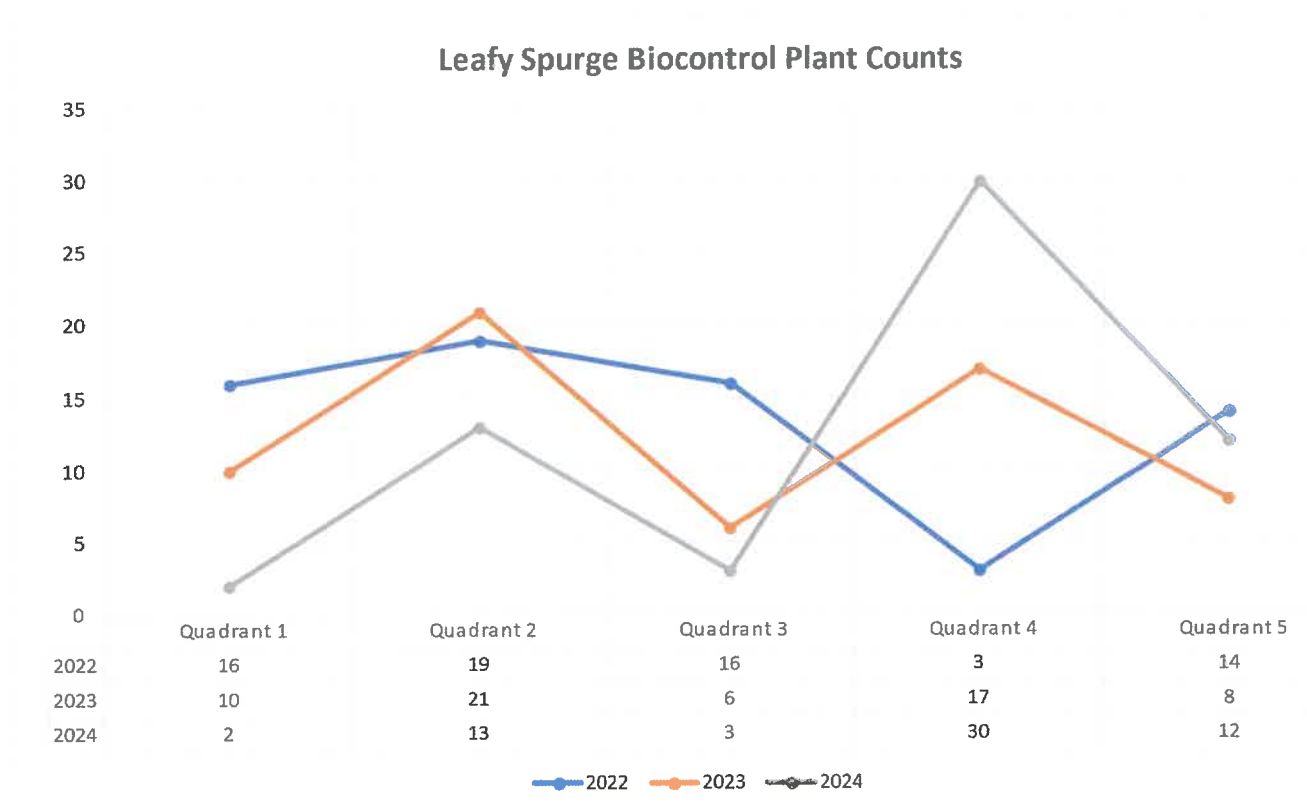


Figure 3. Leafy Spurge plant population observed per year.

Dan Gawalko ASB chair report April 2025

- February 11/25, Smoky Lake county Ag Service board meeting with vice chair Jared Serben and several board members in attendance, Alyssa Krawchuk gave an update on LARA, updated policy statement 62-10-09 ASB business plan for 2025, drafts of the 2025 ASB resolution results, 1.7 million from the province to AgKnow & producer mental health program, discussed the June 13 Farmer & Rancher appreciation BBQ, next meeting April 8, 9am.
- February 24/25, attended the LARA meeting, discussed LARA logo redesign, weather stations, and capital funding from RDAR, Alyssa gave her executive directors report, working on the audit, hired 4 summer students, extension and upcoming events, on the research side they are writing their annual reports, helping producers with grants, financials were presented.
- March 6/25 attended the LARA AGM in Mallaig with councilor Lorne Halisky & producer reps Amanda Fischer & Charlie Leskiw, a new producer rep for Smoky Lake county was elected Landon Hominiuk and Teegan Miller for the MD. Of Bonnyville for 3 year terms, Barb McCarthy gave a presentation on the audited financials, the staff at LARA gave presentations of the work that was done in 2024 including the trials the chair & executive director gave their reports which can be viewed in the 2024 annual report, next came the organizational meeting Jay Cory was elected as chair, Amanda Fischer was elected as vice chair & Nick Kunec was elected as secretary/treasurer, March 31, strategic planning and directors meeting in Ashmont @ 10:00 am.



February 13, 2025

Honourable Senator Daryl Fridhandler
Senate of Canada
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0A4

RE: Bill C-293 An Act Respecting Pandemic Prevention and Preparedness

Dear Senator Fridhandler,

On behalf of Lacombe County Council, I am writing you to express Council's concerns regarding *Bill C-293 An Act Respecting Pandemic Prevention and Preparedness*.

Recognizing the COVID-19 pandemic as a significant event that all Canadians had to endure, we can agree that governments need to plan more effectively for future pandemics and mitigate risks. However, we believe certain provisions within Bill C-293 require further examination and scrutiny, particularly regarding agricultural production.

The language provided in Section 3(2)(l) of Bill C-293 is of deep concern. Specifically, the Bill provides measures to "regulate commercial activities that can contribute to pandemic risk, including industrial animal agriculture", "promote commercial activities that can help reduce pandemic risk, including the production of alternative proteins", and "phase out commercial activities that disproportionately contribute to pandemic risk, including activities that involve high-risk species". Upon review, the verbiage of the Bill lacks the necessary detail required to fully understand the implications this Bill may have on livestock producers and Canada's food production system.

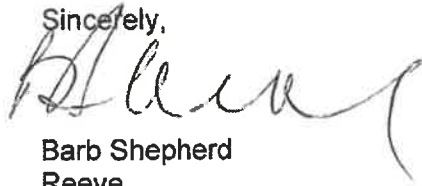
In addition, Bill C-293 also seems to overlook the existing biosecurity and food safety protocols required by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) and provincial regulators. These existing checks and balances ensure that Canadian agricultural products are of the highest quality and among the safest in the world. This oversight in Bill C-293 raises concerns about additional and redundant regulation to Canada's agriculture sector should Bill C-293 proceed unchanged.

As currently written, Bill C-293 stands to severely impact Canada's agriculture industry, rural communities, and Canada's food security. Further, without clear definitions and guidelines, Bill C-293 is vague and open to interpretation which may result in unnecessary additional regulation

of Canada's agriculture industry and unintended consequences to Canada's economy and food security. Considering these concerns, we urge you and your fellow Senators to reconsider Bill C-293 in its current form.

Thank you for your time and consideration. We trust that you and your fellow Senators will approach this Bill with a balanced perspective ensuring that pandemic preparedness and agricultural sustainability are addressed in a fair and equitable manner.

Sincerely,



Barb Shepherd
Reeve
Lacombe County

Cc: The Honourable Lawrence MacAulay, Minister of Agriculture and Agrifood Canada
The Honourable R.J. Sigurdson, Alberta Minister of Agriculture and Irrigation
The Honourable Jason Nixon, Alberta Minister of Seniors, Community and Social Services
Blaine Calkins, MP, Red Deer-Lacombe
Jennifer Johnson, MLA, Lacombe-Ponoka
Agricultural Service Board Provincial Committee
Alberta Agricultural Service Boards



February 13, 2025

Honourable Senator Patti LaBoucane-Benson
Senate of Canada
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0A4

RE: Bill C-293 An Act Respecting Pandemic Prevention and Preparedness

Dear Senator LaBoucane-Benson,

On behalf of Lacombe County Council, I am writing you to express Council's concerns regarding *Bill C-293 An Act Respecting Pandemic Prevention and Preparedness*.

Recognizing the COVID-19 pandemic as a significant event that all Canadians had to endure, we can agree that governments need to plan more effectively for future pandemics and mitigate risks. However, we believe certain provisions within Bill C-293 require further examination and scrutiny, particularly regarding agricultural production.

The language provided in Section 3(2)(l) of Bill C-293 is of deep concern. Specifically, the Bill provides measures to "regulate commercial activities that can contribute to pandemic risk, including industrial animal agriculture", "promote commercial activities that can help reduce pandemic risk, including the production of alternative proteins", and "phase out commercial activities that disproportionately contribute to pandemic risk, including activities that involve high-risk species". Upon review, the verbiage of the Bill lacks the necessary detail required to fully understand the implications this Bill may have on livestock producers and Canada's food production system.

In addition, Bill C-293 also seems to overlook the existing biosecurity and food safety protocols required by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) and provincial regulators. These existing checks and balances ensure that Canadian agricultural products are of the highest quality and among the safest in the world. This oversight in Bill C-293 raises concerns about additional and redundant regulation to Canada's agriculture sector should Bill C-293 proceed unchanged.

As currently written, Bill C-293 stands to severely impact Canada's agriculture industry, rural communities, and Canada's food security. Further, without clear definitions and guidelines, Bill C-293 is vague and open to interpretation which may result in unnecessary additional regulation

of Canada's agriculture industry and unintended consequences to Canada's economy and food security. Considering these concerns, we urge you and your fellow Senators to reconsider Bill C-293 in its current form.

Thank you for your time and consideration. We trust that you and your fellow Senators will approach this Bill with a balanced perspective ensuring that pandemic preparedness and agricultural sustainability are addressed in a fair and equitable manner.

Sincerely,



Barb Shepherd
Reeve
Lacombe County

Cc: The Honourable Lawrence MacAulay, Minister of Agriculture and Agrifood Canada
The Honourable R.J. Sigurdson, Alberta Minister of Agriculture and Irrigation
The Honourable Jason Nixon, Alberta Minister of Seniors, Community and Social Services
Blaine Calkins, MP, Red Deer-Lacombe
Jennifer Johnson, MLA, Lacombe-Ponoka
Agricultural Service Board Provincial Committee
Alberta Agricultural Service Boards



February 13, 2025

Honourable Senator Paula Simons
Senate of Canada
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0A4

RE: Bill C-293 An Act Respecting Pandemic Prevention and Preparedness

Dear Senator Simons,

On behalf of Lacombe County Council, I am writing you to express Council's concerns regarding *Bill C-293 An Act Respecting Pandemic Prevention and Preparedness*.

Recognizing the COVID-19 pandemic as a significant event that all Canadians had to endure, we can agree that governments need to plan more effectively for future pandemics and mitigate risks. However, we believe certain provisions within Bill C-293 require further examination and scrutiny, particularly regarding agricultural production.

The language provided in Section 3(2)(l) of Bill C-293 is of deep concern. Specifically, the Bill provides measures to "regulate commercial activities that can contribute to pandemic risk, including industrial animal agriculture", "promote commercial activities that can help reduce pandemic risk, including the production of alternative proteins", and "phase out commercial activities that disproportionately contribute to pandemic risk, including activities that involve high-risk species". Upon review, the verbiage of the Bill lacks the necessary detail required to fully understand the implications this Bill may have on livestock producers and Canada's food production system.

In addition, Bill C-293 also seems to overlook the existing biosecurity and food safety protocols required by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) and provincial regulators. These existing checks and balances ensure that Canadian agricultural products are of the highest quality and among the safest in the world. This oversight in Bill C-293 raises concerns about additional and redundant regulation to Canada's agriculture sector should Bill C-293 proceed unchanged.

As currently written, Bill C-293 stands to severely impact Canada's agriculture industry, rural communities, and Canada's food security. Further, without clear definitions and guidelines, Bill C-293 is vague and open to interpretation which may result in unnecessary additional regulation

of Canada's agriculture industry and unintended consequences to Canada's economy and food security. Considering these concerns, we urge you and your fellow Senators to reconsider Bill C-293 in its current form.

Thank you for your time and consideration. We trust that you and your fellow Senators will approach this Bill with a balanced perspective ensuring that pandemic preparedness and agricultural sustainability are addressed in a fair and equitable manner.

Sincerely,



Barb Shepherd
Reeve
Lacombe County

Cc: The Honourable Lawrence MacAulay, Minister of Agriculture and Agrifood Canada
The Honourable R.J. Sigurdson, Alberta Minister of Agriculture and Irrigation
The Honourable Jason Nixon, Alberta Minister of Seniors, Community and Social Services
Blaine Calkins, MP, Red Deer-Lacombe
Jennifer Johnson, MLA, Lacombe-Ponoka
Agricultural Service Board Provincial Committee
Alberta Agricultural Service Boards



February 13, 2025

Honourable Senator Karen Sorensen
Senate of Canada
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0A4

RE: Bill C-293 An Act Respecting Pandemic Prevention and Preparedness

Dear Senator Sorensen,

On behalf of Lacombe County Council, I am writing you to express Council's concerns regarding Bill C-293 *An Act Respecting Pandemic Prevention and Preparedness*.

Recognizing the COVID-19 pandemic as a significant event that all Canadians had to endure, we can agree that governments need to plan more effectively for future pandemics and mitigate risks. However, we believe certain provisions within Bill C-293 require further examination and scrutiny, particularly regarding agricultural production.

The language provided in Section 3(2)(l) of Bill C-293 is of deep concern. Specifically, the Bill provides measures to "regulate commercial activities that can contribute to pandemic risk, including industrial animal agriculture", "promote commercial activities that can help reduce pandemic risk, including the production of alternative proteins", and "phase out commercial activities that disproportionately contribute to pandemic risk, including activities that involve high-risk species". Upon review, the verbiage of the Bill lacks the necessary detail required to fully understand the implications this Bill may have on livestock producers and Canada's food production system.

In addition, Bill C-293 also seems to overlook the existing biosecurity and food safety protocols required by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) and provincial regulators. These existing checks and balances ensure that Canadian agricultural products are of the highest quality and among the safest in the world. This oversight in Bill C-293 raises concerns about additional and redundant regulation to Canada's agriculture sector should Bill C-293 proceed unchanged.

As currently written, Bill C-293 stands to severely impact Canada's agriculture industry, rural communities, and Canada's food security. Further, without clear definitions and guidelines, Bill C-293 is vague and open to interpretation which may result in unnecessary additional regulation

of Canada's agriculture industry and unintended consequences to Canada's economy and food security. Considering these concerns, we urge you and your fellow Senators to reconsider Bill C-293 in its current form.

Thank you for your time and consideration. We trust that you and your fellow Senators will approach this Bill with a balanced perspective ensuring that pandemic preparedness and agricultural sustainability are addressed in a fair and equitable manner.

Sincerely,



Barb Shepherd
Reeve
Lacombe County

Cc: The Honourable Lawrence MacAulay, Minister of Agriculture and Agrifood Canada
The Honourable R.J. Sigurdson, Alberta Minister of Agriculture and Irrigation
The Honourable Jason Nixon, Alberta Minister of Seniors, Community and Social Services
Blaine Calkins, MP, Red Deer-Lacombe
Jennifer Johnson, MLA, Lacombe-Ponoka
Agricultural Service Board Provincial Committee
Alberta Agricultural Service Boards



February 13, 2025

Honourable Senator Scott Tannas
Senate of Canada
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0A4

RE: Bill C-293 An Act Respecting Pandemic Prevention and Preparedness

Dear Senator Tannas,

On behalf of Lacombe County Council, I am writing you to express Council's concerns regarding *Bill C-293 An Act Respecting Pandemic Prevention and Preparedness*.

Recognizing the COVID-19 pandemic as a significant event that all Canadians had to endure, we can agree that governments need to plan more effectively for future pandemics and mitigate risks. However, we believe certain provisions within Bill C-293 require further examination and scrutiny, particularly regarding agricultural production.

The language provided in Section 3(2)(l) of Bill C-293 is of deep concern. Specifically, the Bill provides measures to "regulate commercial activities that can contribute to pandemic risk, including industrial animal agriculture", "promote commercial activities that can help reduce pandemic risk, including the production of alternative proteins", and "phase out commercial activities that disproportionately contribute to pandemic risk, including activities that involve high-risk species". Upon review, the verbiage of the Bill lacks the necessary detail required to fully understand the implications this Bill may have on livestock producers and Canada's food production system.

In addition, Bill C-293 also seems to overlook the existing biosecurity and food safety protocols required by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) and provincial regulators. These existing checks and balances ensure that Canadian agricultural products are of the highest quality and among the safest in the world. This oversight in Bill C-293 raises concerns about additional and redundant regulation to Canada's agriculture sector should Bill C-293 proceed unchanged.

As currently written, Bill C-293 stands to severely impact Canada's agriculture industry, rural communities, and Canada's food security. Further, without clear definitions and guidelines, Bill C-293 is vague and open to interpretation which may result in unnecessary additional regulation

of Canada's agriculture industry and unintended consequences to Canada's economy and food security. Considering these concerns, we urge you and your fellow Senators to reconsider Bill C-293 in its current form.

Thank you for your time and consideration. We trust that you and your fellow Senators will approach this Bill with a balanced perspective ensuring that pandemic preparedness and agricultural sustainability are addressed in a fair and equitable manner.

Sincerely,



Barb Shepherd
Reeve
Lacombe County

Cc: The Honourable Lawrence MacAulay, Minister of Agriculture and Agrifood Canada
The Honourable R.J. Sigurdson, Alberta Minister of Agriculture and Irrigation
The Honourable Jason Nixon, Alberta Minister of Seniors, Community and Social Services
Blaine Calkins, MP, Red Deer-Lacombe
Jennifer Johnson, MLA, Lacombe-Ponoka
Agricultural Service Board Provincial Committee
Alberta Agricultural Service Boards



February 13, 2025

Honourable Senator Kristopher Wells
Senate of Canada
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0A4

RE: Bill C-293 An Act Respecting Pandemic Prevention and Preparedness

Dear Senator Wells,

On behalf of Lacombe County Council, I am writing you to express Council's concerns regarding Bill C-293 *An Act Respecting Pandemic Prevention and Preparedness*.

Recognizing the COVID-19 pandemic as a significant event that all Canadians had to endure, we can agree that governments need to plan more effectively for future pandemics and mitigate risks. However, we believe certain provisions within Bill C-293 require further examination and scrutiny, particularly regarding agricultural production.

The language provided in Section 3(2)(l) of Bill C-293 is of deep concern. Specifically, the Bill provides measures to "regulate commercial activities that can contribute to pandemic risk, including industrial animal agriculture", "promote commercial activities that can help reduce pandemic risk, including the production of alternative proteins", and "phase out commercial activities that disproportionately contribute to pandemic risk, including activities that involve high-risk species". Upon review, the verbiage of the Bill lacks the necessary detail required to fully understand the implications this Bill may have on livestock producers and Canada's food production system.

In addition, Bill C-293 also seems to overlook the existing biosecurity and food safety protocols required by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) and provincial regulators. These existing checks and balances ensure that Canadian agricultural products are of the highest quality and among the safest in the world. This oversight in Bill C-293 raises concerns about additional and redundant regulation to Canada's agriculture sector should Bill C-293 proceed unchanged.

As currently written, Bill C-293 stands to severely impact Canada's agriculture industry, rural communities, and Canada's food security. Further, without clear definitions and guidelines, Bill C-293 is vague and open to interpretation which may result in unnecessary additional regulation

of Canada's agriculture industry and unintended consequences to Canada's economy and food security. Considering these concerns, we urge you and your fellow Senators to reconsider Bill C-293 in its current form.

Thank you for your time and consideration. We trust that you and your fellow Senators will approach this Bill with a balanced perspective ensuring that pandemic preparedness and agricultural sustainability are addressed in a fair and equitable manner.

Sincerely,



Barb Shepherd
Reeve
Lacombe County

Cc: The Honourable Lawrence MacAulay, Minister of Agriculture and Agrifood Canada
The Honourable R.J. Sigurdson, Alberta Minister of Agriculture and Irrigation
The Honourable Jason Nixon, Alberta Minister of Seniors, Community and Social Services
Blaine Calkins, MP, Red Deer-Lacombe
Jennifer Johnson, MLA, Lacombe-Ponoka
Agricultural Service Board Provincial Committee
Alberta Agricultural Service Boards



January 9, 2025

The Honourable Senators of Canada
The Senate of Canada
Senate of Canada
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0A4

RE: Parkland County ASB concerns regarding Bill C-293

Dear Honourable Senators,

The Agricultural Service Board of Parkland County wishes to express its concerns and opposition to Bill C-293, an Act respecting pandemic prevention and preparedness. While we broadly support the objective of the bill, we have concerns regarding the potential negative impact on the agricultural industry.

About 40% of Alberta's farm cash receipts are from livestock production contributing over \$10 Billion in Alberta in 2023. This represents the livelihood of a significant number of farm families, a significant contribution to local food supply and an important economic contributor to our rural and remote communities. In Alberta, Agriculture Service Boards are empowered to protect the ability of farmers to farm through advocacy, policy and regulation enforcement which includes our *Animal Health Act*.

Clause 2, Section L (ii) of the Bill C-293 addresses the regulation of commercial activities, specifically mentioning industrial animal agriculture. Subsections (iii) and (iv) raise particular concerns by promoting the production of alternative proteins to reduce pandemic risks and suggesting the phase-out of commercial activities involving high-risk species. We believe that the language used in these provisions is vague and lacks the clarity necessary for a full understanding of its implications.

Our concerns center around the potential for overreach by the federal government into areas traditionally managed by provincial and municipal authorities. The agricultural sector, particularly in Alberta, is highly regulated, with world-class animal disease surveillance programs, food safety protocols, and biosecurity measures already in place. We believe that these existing frameworks should be recognized and considered within the scope of the bill, rather than introducing additional and potentially duplicative federal regulations.



In light of these concerns, we respectfully ask that the Senate revisit Bill C-293 to ensure that it is clear, concise, and respectful of the jurisdictional responsibilities of provincial and municipal authorities. We also request that the bill be revised to ensure fairness and equity for all industries, particularly agriculture, which plays a crucial role in both our provincial and national economies.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. We trust that the Senate will give careful consideration to our concerns and work toward an outcome that strengthens pandemic preparedness without unintended negative impacts on the agricultural sector.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ben Jespersen", written over a faint, larger signature.

Ben Jespersen
Parkland County Agricultural Service Board
Vice Chair

Cc: The Honourable Danielle Smith, Premier of the Province of Alberta
The Honourable R. J. Sigurdson, Alberta Minister of Agricultural and Irrigation
The Honourable Lawrence MacAulay, Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada
The Honourable Mark Holland, Minister of Health Canada
Mr. Dane Lloyd, MP Sturgeon River-Parkland
Mr. Gerald Soroka, MP Yellowhead
Alberta Agricultural Service Boards
Agricultural Service Board Provincial Committee

February 6th, 2025

Provincial Agricultural Service Board Committee

RE: Provincial Conference procedure, conduct, and preparation

Dear committee members,

Our ASB left this year's Provincial ASB conference with three concerns regarding our resolution sessions: parliamentary procedure, conduct, and preparation.

We felt that the handling of debate and amendments could have been handled with greater leadership and procedural adherence. This did hamper the effective handling of some resolutions (like 3-25) and left many members on the floor frustrated. As such, we ask that the Provincial ASB Committee take measures to ensure effective proceedings are utilized and enforced to facilitate discussion and changes to resolutions more productively.

This leads us to our second concern: appropriate and constructive conduct by participants. The County of Northern Lights and Northern Sunrise County both have written letters to address the specifics of the poor decorum exhibited around resolution 13-25. We would like to add another layer to the consequences of poor decorum.

Our resolution process asks for humility and trust in each other to have meaningful and respectful discussions on topics prioritized by each region. Our geographic differences naturally lend to differences of opinion and priority across a province as vast as ours. But these differences should be treated with respect and with trust for the regional process to avoid the potential for regional rifts. The events of the resolution session fully violated said trust and increased the risk of regional divides within the province which risks jeopardizing our voice as a unified provincial organization. One of the critiques around resolution 13-25 was the suggestion that too many resolutions came from one municipality. Such criticism undermines our regional process, a process that requires regions to debate and vote on local resolutions put forward so to act as regional filters before resolutions come to the provincial level. If there is concern about the quantity or quality of resolutions coming from a region, it is better addressed through the Provincial Committee. These critiques are not suited to the provincial conference floor, or to be used as tools to shame or denigrate another municipality. Discussion must be meaningful and respectful, and this can only be achieved when individuals can trust that the debate has originated from positions of good faith. This leads to our final concern: preparation.

We are often asked to support regionally specific challenges in the context of a wider provincial lens. This often requires actions to be taken to further our knowledge, understanding, or sense of priority associated with a resolution. This year provided plenty of time between the release of the resolution package and the conference itself to undertake thorough pre-briefing and discussion regarding the



February 6, 2025

Page 2

resolutions. Some revisions and amendments will always bubble up from the energy and creativity of quality discussion on the floor, but many revisions and amendments can be carefully considered, crafted, and pre-communicated to enhance the quality of debate and to ease the process of forwarding amendments (friendly or otherwise). Open communication between municipalities ahead of resolution sessions benefits all parties involved, whether it be to challenge, clarify, or sponsor a resolution.

A role common to all of us ASBs is the legislated responsibility to advise the Minister responsible for agriculture. As much as this is a legislated responsibility, we should not take this role for granted. By ensuring we achieve quality procedural dynamics, adhere to high standards of conduct, and do our best to be as prepared as possible, we help gain and maintain a reputation for both the quality of resolutions forwarded and the quality of discussions and deliberation that go into refining and passing them. This would make attendance at our conference a meaningful and desired space for Ministers to allocate their scarce time.

Sincerely,



Tyler Airth
Big Lakes County Reeve and ASB Chair

CC: all provincial municipal Agricultural Service Boards





Municipal District of Spirit River No. 133

Box 389 Spirit River, Alberta T0H 3G0
E-mail: mdsr133@mdspiritrivier.ab.ca

Telephone (780) 864-3500
Fax: (780) 864-4303

The Agricultural Service Boards
Provincial Committee
C/O Quinton Beaumont
Box 1270
Stettler, AB
T0C 2L0

February 14, 2025

The Chair, two members and the Agricultural Fieldman of the Municipal District of Spirit River's Agricultural Service Board recently attended the 2025 ASB Provincial Conference in Edmonton. The MD of Spirit River's ASB can appreciate the time, effort, and care that goes into preparing important resolutions to be presented at the conference year after year. These resolutions help bring regional and provincial agricultural matters forward, and offer innovative solutions that contribute to the viability, sustainability, and prosperity of agriculture in rural Alberta.

The County of Northern Lights brought forward two resolutions, 8-25, and 13-25, to be heard at the conference, giving ASB members the ability to vote in favour of or against. This process enables ASB's to have an active role in important agricultural decision-making, and has long been a respected process.

Unfortunately, an ASB member from Vulcan County displayed inappropriate behaviour by verbally attacking the proposed resolutions, citing them as a waste of time. The comments and behaviour produced by this particular member were disrespectful and a far cry from the code of conduct expectations of all members. Although resolution processes spark important conversations and debates, it is expected that these are conducted in a respectful manner and are productive for the purpose of agricultural progression and development.

Therefore, the Municipal District of Spirit River's Agricultural Service Board is in support of the County of Northern Lights and their belief that the code of conduct be upheld for all ASB's and their members, to ensure respect is maintained and so the conference itself can have continued success leading to effective decision making and the generation of valuable agricultural solutions.

Sincerely,

Tony Van Rootselaar
Reeve, MD of Spirit River No.133

Cc: AAAF and ASB's of Alberta



Municipal District of **GREENVIEW**

March 17, 2025

Minister of Environment and Protected Areas
204 Legislature Building
108000 - 97 Avenue
Edmonton, AB TSK 286

Minister of Agriculture and Irrigation
131 Legislature Building
10800 - 97 Avenue
Edmonton, AB TSK 2B6

Attention: Honourable Minister Rebecca Schultz and Honourable Minister RJ Sigurdson
Subject: Farmer Pesticide Program and Updated Registration of Sodium Monofluoroacetate

On January 14th, Kneehill County wrote a commendable letter requesting an update to the Farmer Pesticide Program that detailed required amendments to the certification. The letter specified the programs reliance on municipal facilitators for delivery, as opposed to provincial representatives or inclusion in the Lakeland College's suite of pesticide certification programs. The Farmers Pesticide Certification is the only pesticide certification program in Alberta outside of the Colleges purview.

With the changes announced to the Pest Management Regulatory Agency's registration for sodium monofluoroacetate (1080), released on March 7th, 2024 in RVD2024-04, specific actions the registrant must take for the continued registration of 1080 as regards product stewardship were listed. One of the four points within these requirements is as follows:

- Develop and implement a training program on how to properly use sodium monofluoroacetate and dispose of poisoned baits and carcasses. This includes making sure people know that they can only use the product after all other predator management methods have failed.

Training exists for municipal staff dispensing 1080, so we can only surmise that this training requirement is for producers accessing the product when all other manner of control of coyote predation have been exhausted.

We echo and agree with the concerns expressed by Kneehill County. We would like to add that in light of the changed registration of 1080, an important tool we feel needs to remain in livestock producers' toolboxes, that the required modernization and alignment with current standards for the Farmers Pesticide Certification be prioritized by both ministries. In addition, we would like to emphasize the importance of producers being able to access this training readily through Lakeland College in an online format as opposed to only being delivered by municipal facilitators.

Dave Gibbard, Chair
Greenview Agricultural Service Board

cc: Provincial Agricultural Service Boards
Alberta Association of Agricultural Fieldman

Synopsis (Maps 1, 2, and 3)

Since the January 15, 2025 report, the agricultural areas of the province have generally received anywhere between 5 to 25 mm of precipitation (**Map 1**). Accumulations were greatest through the North East and Peace Regions of the province, with some areas receiving more than 25 mm of moisture. The northeast, central and the north half of the South Region received 5 to 10 mm of moisture.

Bear in mind late January and February are usually the driest times of the year in Alberta (**Map 2**). Relative to normal, the 30-day precipitation accumulations (**Map 3**) show dryer than normal trends occurring in a triangle that runs along the foothills from north of Claresholm to north of Rocky Mountain House and east to Bonnyville affecting a large portion of Central and North West Regions of Alberta. Across the dry areas, accumulations relative to normal range from once in 3 to 6-year lows to once in 6 to 12-year lows. The area north of Drayton Valley to the County of Northern Lights and east to the Saskatchewan border as well as southern Alberta are reporting 30-day precipitation accumulations near normal.

Below normal level of precipitation seen last month through the west half of the Central Region continues this month. The below normal accumulations reported through the North West and Peace Regions, with the exception of the very north Peace, have helped the region to improve to near normal conditions.

Winter Precipitation Trends (Maps 4 and 5)

Winter (cold season) precipitation accumulation (**Map 4**) and snowpacks (**Map 5**), to date, are near normal across much of the east half of the province, north and east of Edmonton and north into the Peace.

The area including the mountains and the western portions of the North West, Central and South Regions continue to report moderately low (once in 3 to 6-year lows), low (once in 6 to 12-year lows) and very low (once in 12 to 25-year lows) accumulations relative to normal. Some mountain and foothill areas report extremely low accumulations relative to normal (once in 25 to 50-year lows). The area reporting lower than normal conditions has pushed further east since the January report.

365-day Precipitation Trends (Maps 6 and 7)

Looking back over the past 365 days, precipitation accumulations (**Map 6**) continue to remain below normal across a large area from Mountain View County, north to Yellowhead County and then extending east to the Saskatchewan border. Similar below normal conditions are being recorded through much of the Peace Region as well. Once in 25-year lows continue to persist in areas in and around Red Deer with once in 6 to 12-year lows extending east to the mountains, north of Edmonton, around and west of Grande Prairie, as well as north in the Peace Region to the border with the Northwest Territories. This area is reporting, relative to average, year-over-

year precipitation accumulations 70 to 90% of normal (average) with some areas only receiving 50 to 70% of annual average precipitation (**Map 7**).

Conversely, land south and east of a line between Calgary and Lloydminster, extending all the way down to the US border and east to the Saskatchewan border, are reporting moderately higher than normal precipitation accumulations. Here, some areas are reporting accumulations of 110 to 130% of normal (average) along with some relatively small pockets reporting accumulations of 130 to 150% of normal, which is positive news for those farming in these areas.

Perspective (Map 8)

It is important to emphasize that this last 30-day period, on average, is the driest time of the year. The normal precipitation for the agricultural area running east of the highway 2 corridor from Bonnyville south to the Saskatchewan border over this time frame, averages 10 to 15 mm. Normal precipitation levels increase as you move north and east of this region to 15 to 20 mm and continues to increase to 20 to 25 mm across the Peace Region. Being the relative dry season, even above average moisture at this time of year is typically not enough to make a significant impact on “year-to-date” moisture deficits, nor would they usually be sufficient to create excess moisture conditions. For example, across the Central Region 15% to 17.5% of the average annual moisture falls during the November to March time period (**Map 8**). However, across the Peace Region, winter moisture tends to be very important for the annual water cycle with at least 25% of their annual moisture falling during this time frame.

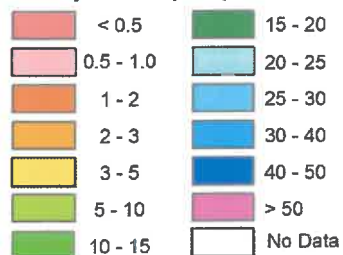
Current precipitation trends across some parts of the province, such as the below normal snowpacks in the foothills and throughout much of the Peace Region, are trending on the dry side and these areas have been experiencing dryer conditions for several months now.

The areas of the province reporting higher than normal snowpacks have declined compared to the last report. An increase in below normal snowpack conditions at this time is not abnormal in itself, as February is the driest month of the year, as mentioned earlier. For agriculture, May, June and July remain the most important months for receiving precipitation. The 2025 cropping season is only a few months away. We are beginning to move into what has traditionally been Alberta’s wetter period; there is ample time to receive adequate moisture.

Precipitation Received During the Past 30-days

January 28, 2025 to
February 26, 2025

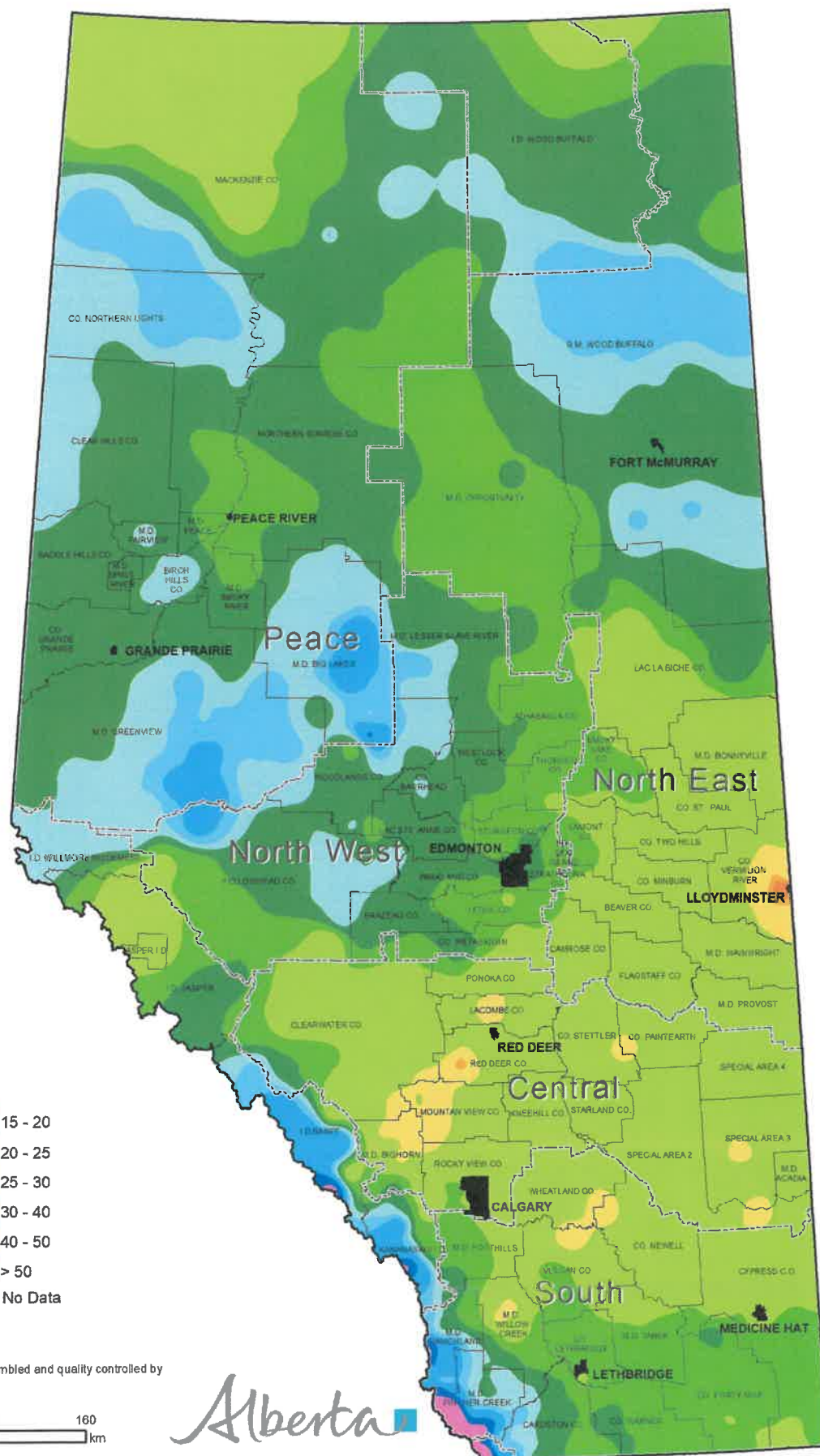
Precipitation (mm)



Near-real-time weather data was assembled and quality controlled by
Agriculture and Irrigation.

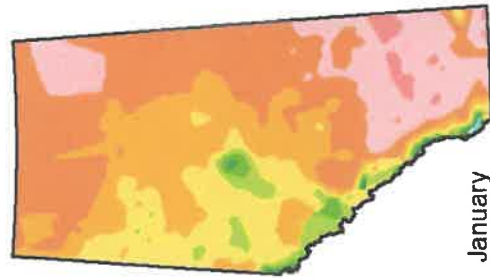


Compiled by Alberta Agriculture and Irrigation, Natural Resource Management Branch
Created on February 27, 2025

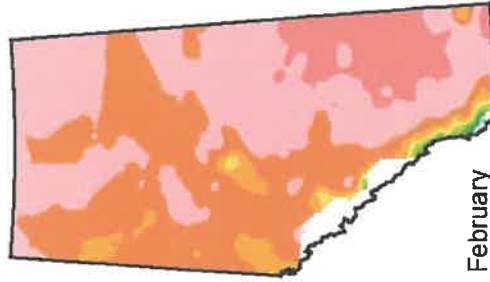


Alberta

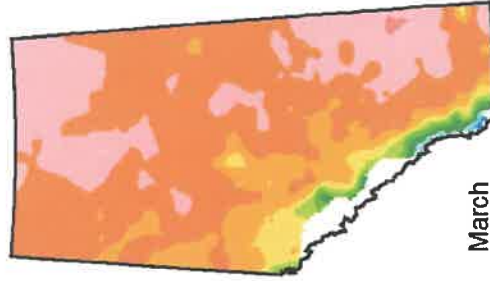
Visit weatherdata.ca for additional maps and meteorological data



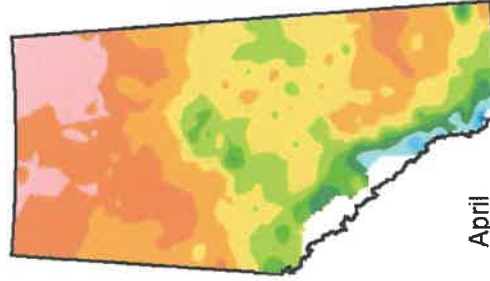
January



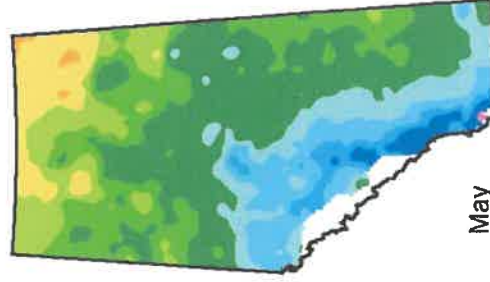
February



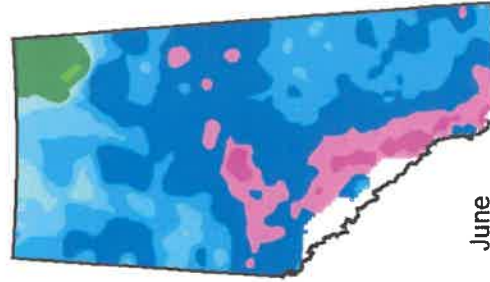
March



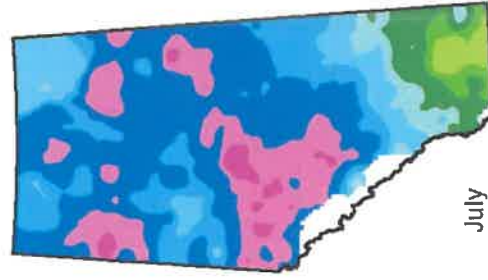
April



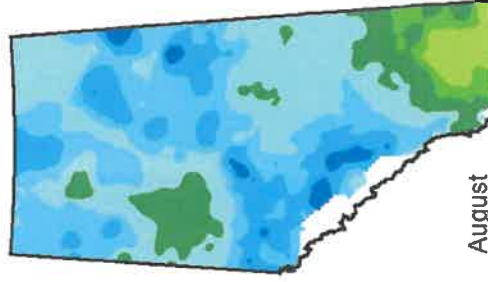
May



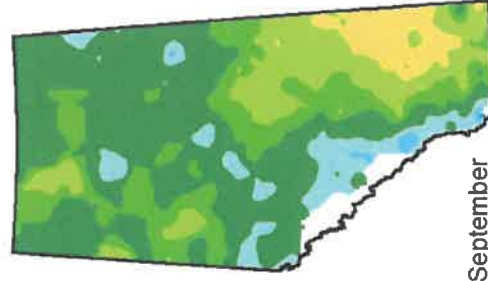
June



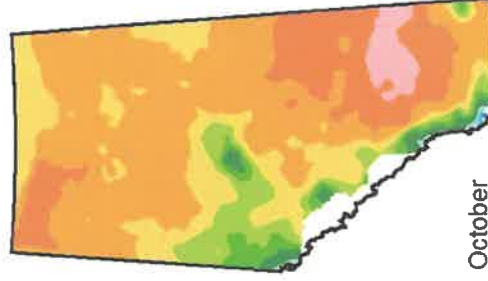
July



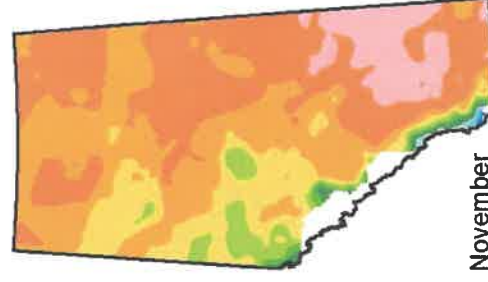
August



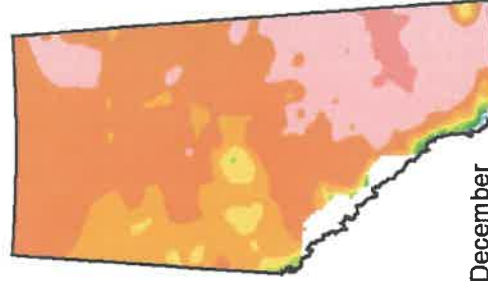
September



October



November



December

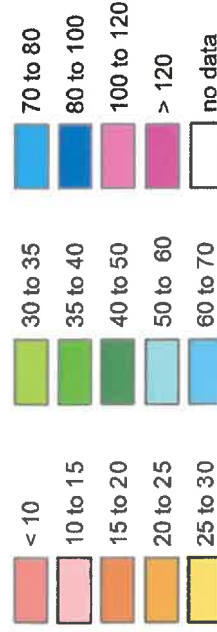
Normal Monthly Precipitation Accumulations

1991-2020

Weather data was assembled and quality controlled by Agriculture Forestry and Rural Economic Development then interpolated to township centres using AbClimate-3.6

Compiled by Agriculture, Forestry and Rural Economic Development, Natural Resource Management Branch
Created on March 29, 2022













Precipitation (mm)



Alberta

30-Day Precipitation Accumulations Relative to Long Term Normal

January 28, 2025 to
February 26, 2025

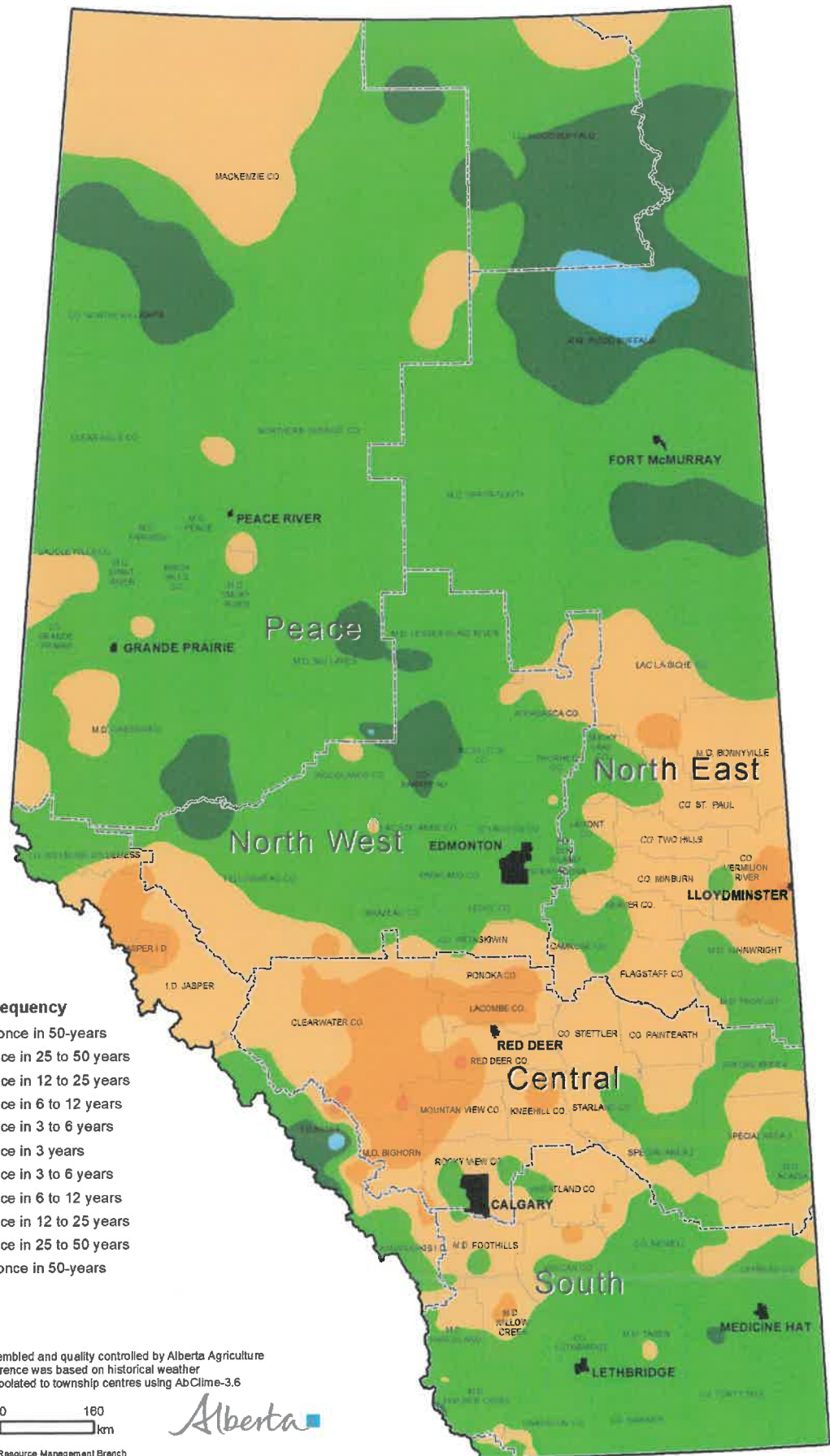
Condition	Frequency
 driest	< once in 50-years
 extremely low	once in 25 to 50 years
 very low	once in 12 to 25 years
 low	once in 6 to 12 years
 moderately low	once in 3 to 6 years
 near normal	once in 3 years
 moderately high	once in 3 to 6 years
 high	once in 6 to 12 years
 very high	once in 12 to 25 years
 extremely high	once in 25 to 50 years
 wettest	< once in 50-years
 no data	

Near-real-time weather data was assembled and quality controlled by Alberta Agriculture and Irrigation. The frequency of occurrence was based on historical weather data from the 1961-2024 period, interpolated to township centres using AbClima-3.6

80 40 0 80 160
km

Compiled by Agriculture and Irrigation, Natural Resource Management Branch
Created on February 27, 2025

Alberta



Visit weatherdata.ca for additional maps and meteorological data

Cold Season Precipitation Accumulations Relative to Long Term Normal

November 01, 2024 to
February 26, 2025

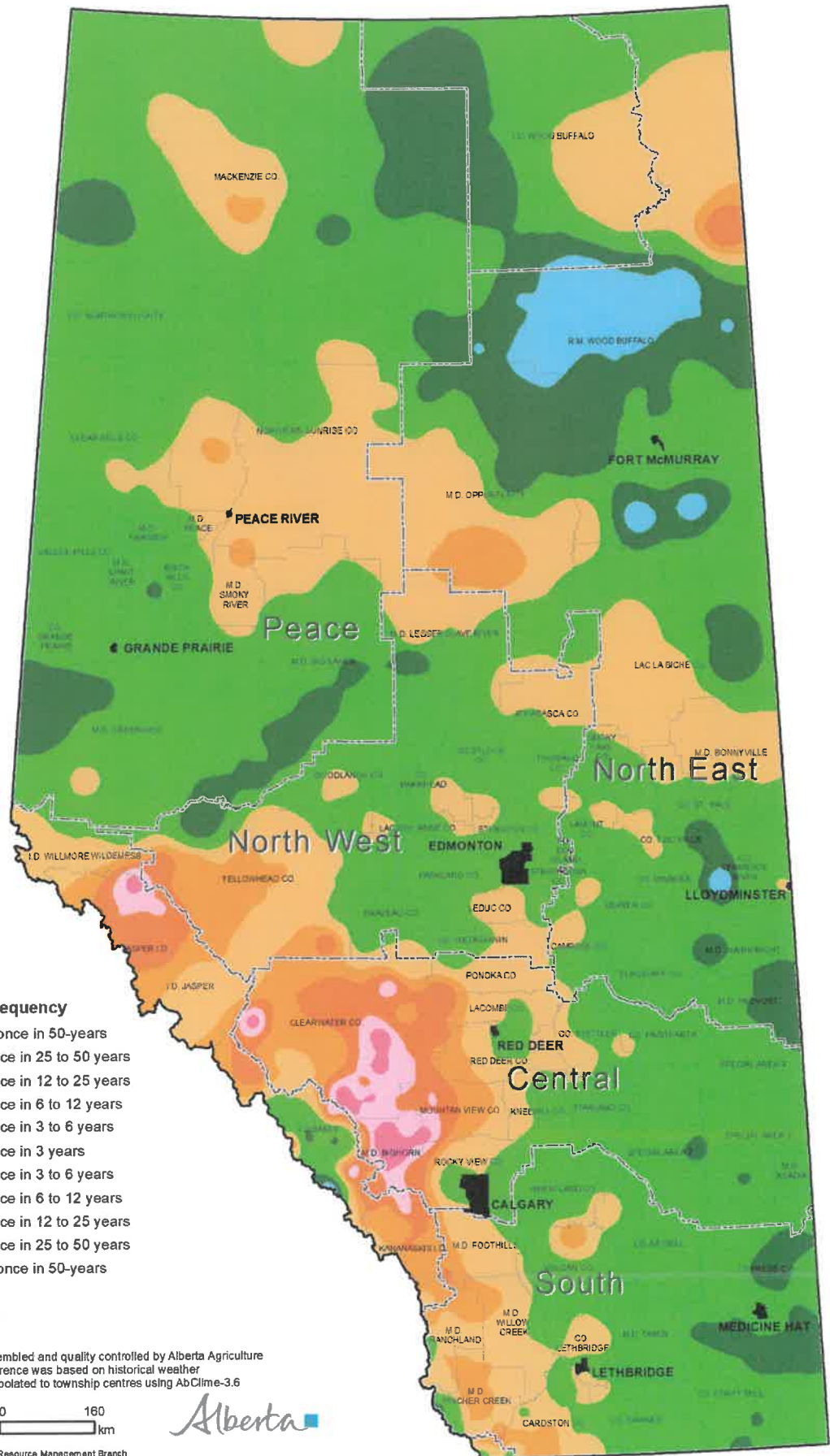
Condition	Frequency
driest	< once in 50-years
extremely low	once in 25 to 50 years
very low	once in 12 to 25 years
low	once in 6 to 12 years
moderately low	once in 3 to 6 years
near normal	once in 3 years
moderately high	once in 3 to 6 years
high	once in 6 to 12 years
very high	once in 12 to 25 years
extremely high	once in 25 to 50 years
wettest	< once in 50-years
no data	

Near-real-time weather data was assembled and quality controlled by Alberta Agriculture and Irrigation. The frequency of occurrence was based on historical weather data from the 1961-2024 period, interpolated to township centres using AbClima-3.6

80 40 0 80 160
km

Compiled by Agriculture and Irrigation, Natural Resource Management Branch
Created on February 27, 2025

Alberta



Visit weatherdata.ca for additional maps and meteorological data

Snow Pack Accumulations on Stubble Fields Relative to Long Term Normal

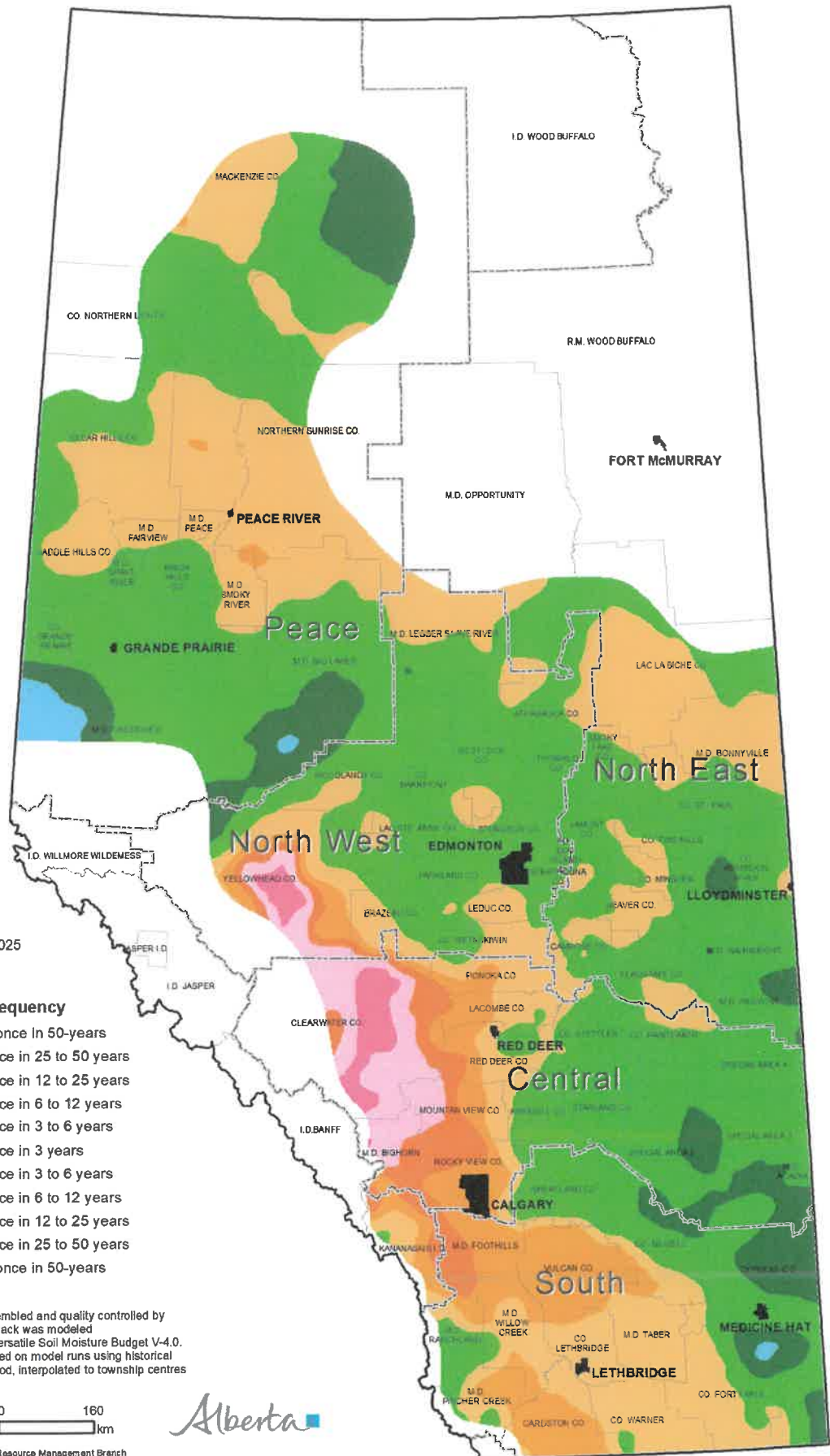
Estimated as of February 26, 2025

Condition	Frequency
driest	< once in 50-years
extremely low	once in 25 to 50 years
very low	once in 12 to 25 years
low	once in 6 to 12 years
moderately low	once in 3 to 6 years
near normal	once in 3 years
moderately high	once in 3 to 6 years
high	once in 6 to 12 years
very high	once in 12 to 25 years
extremely high	once in 25 to 50 years
wettest	< once in 50-years
no data	

Near-real-time weather data was assembled and quality controlled by Agriculture and Irrigation. The snow pack was modeled for stubble fields using the Modified Versatile Soil Moisture Budget V-4.0. The frequency of occurrence was based on model runs using historical weather data from the 1961-2024 period, interpolated to township centres using AbClima-3.6















Compiled by Agriculture and Irrigation, Natural Resource Management Branch
Created on February 27, 2025



Visit weatherdata.ca for additional maps and meteorological data

365-Day Precipitation Accumulations Relative to Long Term Normal

February 28, 2024 to
February 26, 2025

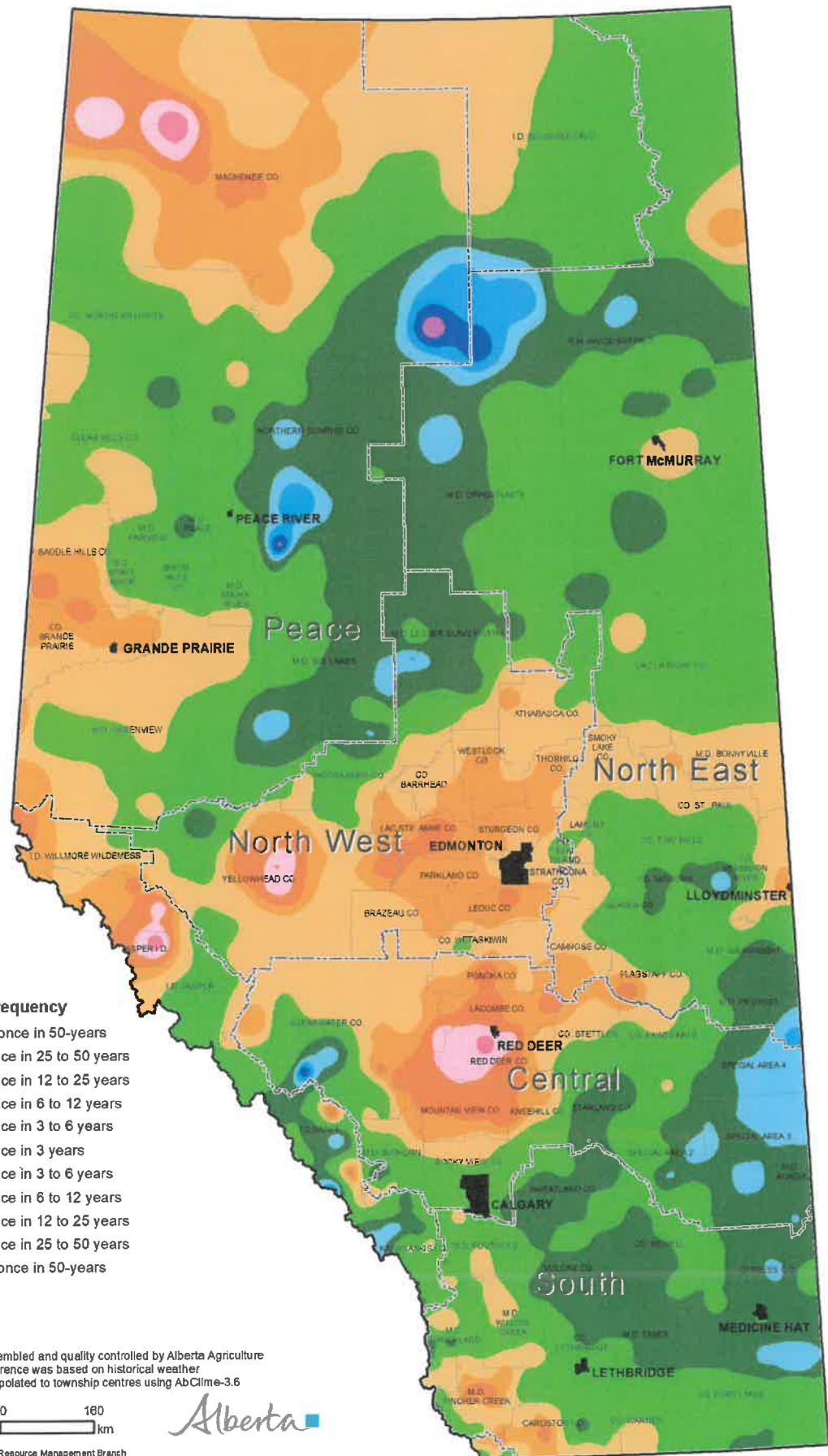
Condition	Frequency
 driest	< once in 50-years
 extremely low	once in 25 to 50 years
 very low	once in 12 to 25 years
 low	once in 6 to 12 years
 moderately low	once in 3 to 6 years
 near normal	once in 3 years
 moderately high	once in 3 to 6 years
 high	once in 6 to 12 years
 very high	once in 12 to 25 years
 extremely high	once in 25 to 50 years
 wettest	< once in 50-years
 no data	

Near-real-time weather data was assembled and quality controlled by Alberta Agriculture and Irrigation. The frequency of occurrence was based on historical weather data from the 1961-2024 period, interpolated to township centres using AbClima-3.6

80 40 0 80 160
km

Compiled by Agriculture and Irrigation, Natural Resource Management Branch
Created on February 27, 2025

Alberta

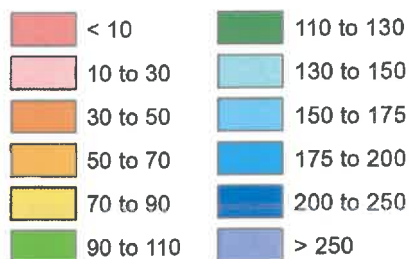


Visit weatherdata.ca for additional maps and meteorological data

365-Day Precipitation Accumulations Percent of Average

February 28, 2024 to
February 26, 2025

Precipitation (% of Average)

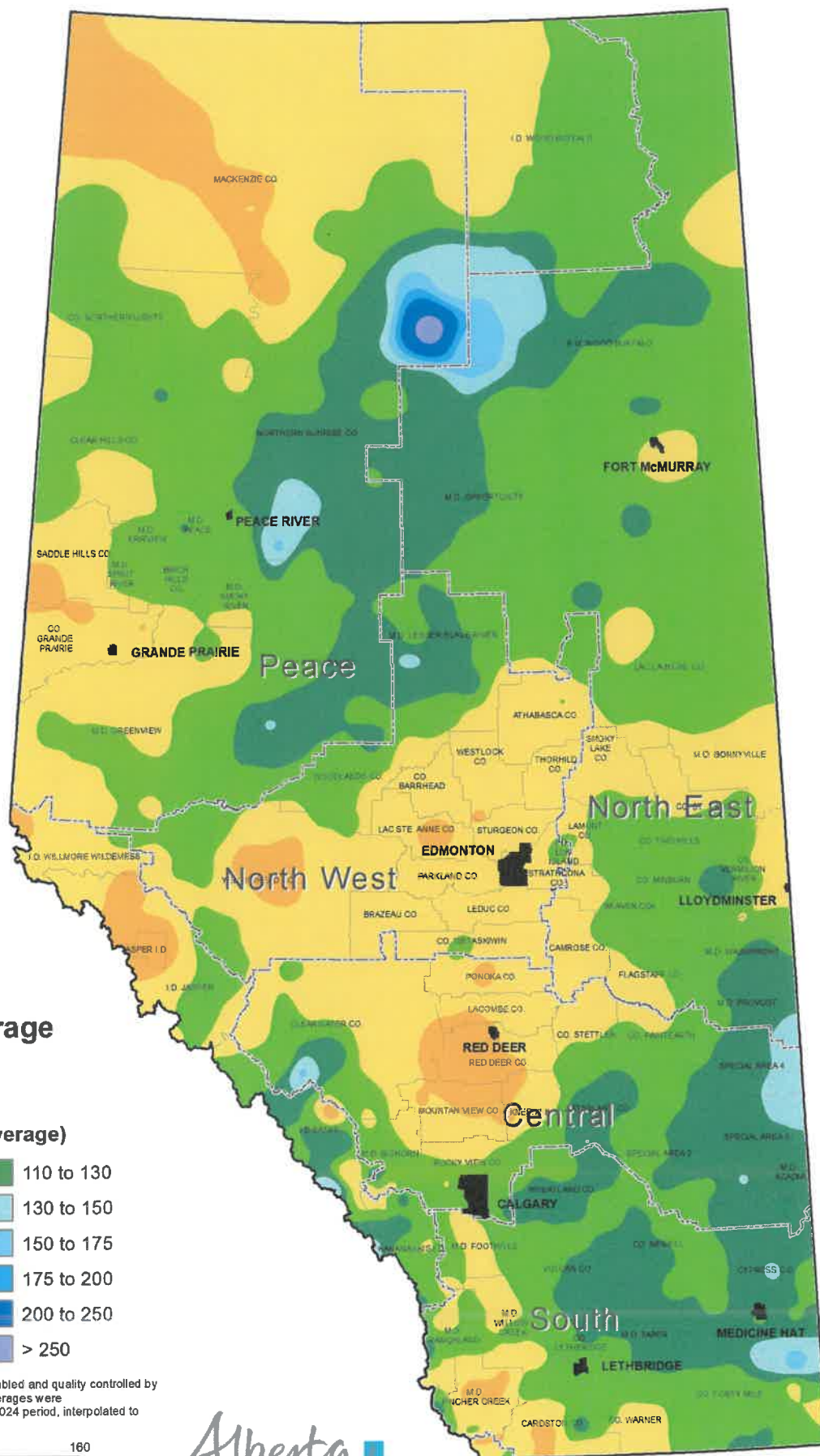


Near-real-time weather data was assembled and quality controlled by Agriculture and Irrigation. Historical averages were based on weather data from the 1961-2024 period, interpolated to township centres using AbClima-3.6



Compiled by Alberta Agriculture and Irrigation, Natural Resource Management Branch
Created on February 27, 2025

Alberta

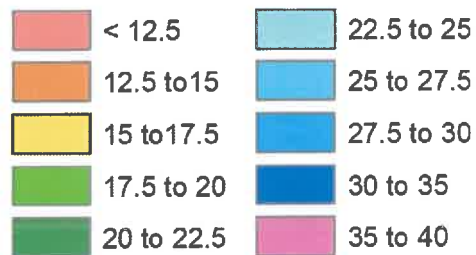


Visit weatherdata.ca for additional maps and meteorological data

Percentage of Average Annual Precipitation November to March

1991-2020

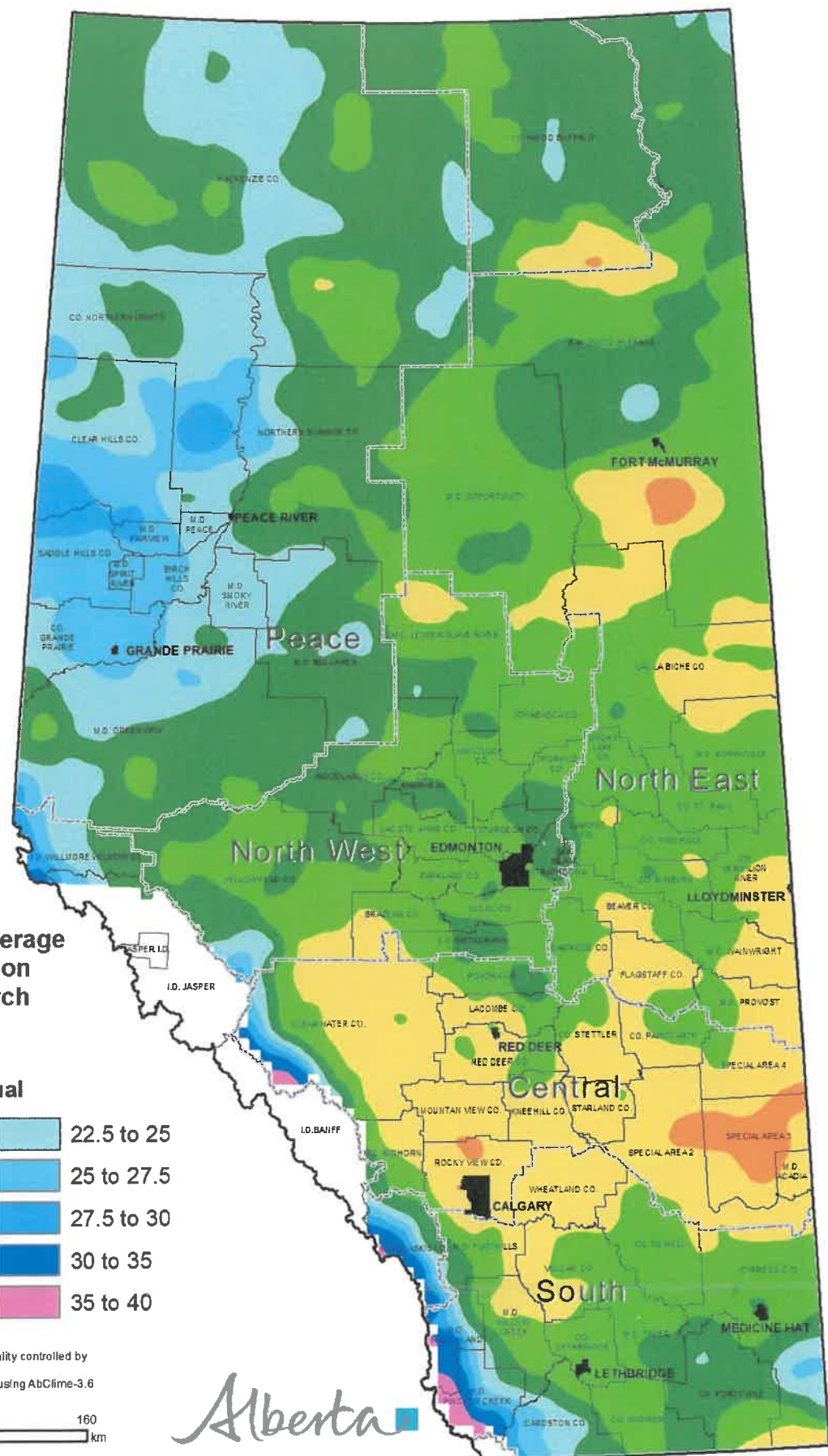
% of Average Annual



Weather data was assembled and quality controlled by Agriculture and Irrigation then interpolated to township centres using AbClim-3.6



Compiled by Alberta Agriculture and Irrigation, Natural Resource Management Branch
Created on November 27, 2024



Alberta

Visit weatherdata.ca for additional maps and meteorological data

Synopsis (Maps 1 and 2)

The area from Lloydminster, southwest toward Calgary and southeast toward Medicine Hat has received less than 5 mm of precipitation since February 18th (Map 1). Accumulations of between 5 and 15 mm of precipitation were reported across the rest of the agricultural regions in the province.

February is typically the driest month of the year. Relative to normal, the last 30-day precipitation accumulations trended dryer through much of the agricultural areas (Map 2). This area reported at least moderately low (once in 3 to 6-year lows) or low (once in 6 to 12-year lows) precipitation accumulations. An area stretching from Wheatland County, through Special Areas 2 and 4, the M.D. of Provost and to the M.D. of Vermillion River reported very low (once in 12 to 25-year) precipitation accumulation. Only the North West Region and a few small areas across the Peace Region reported near normal (once in 3-year) precipitation accumulation.

Winter Precipitation Trends (Maps 3 and 4)

The winter or cold season, from November through March, precipitation accumulation, is near normal across much of the eastern-half of the province, north and west of Edmonton and north into the Peace Region. A large area (Map 3) running through the eastern half of the South and Central Region, south of Edmonton as well as an area around Peace River and High Level continue to report moderately low (once in 3 to 6-year lows), and low (once in 6 to 12-year lows) cold season moisture accumulations relative to normal.

The snowpack (Map 4), to date, for much of the agricultural region is moderately low (one in 3 to 6-year). Only the Southern Region, the eastern half of the Central Region and South Peace Region are reporting near normal (one in 3-year) snowpack conditions.

365-day Precipitation Trends (Maps 5 and 6)

Looking back over the past 365 days, precipitation accumulation relative to normal, (Map 5) has not changed since the last report. A large portion of the agricultural area continues to report moderately low (once in 3 to 6 year) to low (once in 6 to 12-year) precipitation accumulation relative to normal. This includes areas through Cardston County and the M.D. of Pincher Creek in the South Region, the west half of the Central Region, the North West Region, parts of the North East Region and the southwest and northern parts of the Peace region. These areas are reporting a 365-day precipitation accumulation of 70 to 90% relative to average (Map 6).

Once in 12 to 25-year lows continue to persist in and around Red Deer and Mountain View Counties. An area southwest of Red Deer is reporting a once in 25 to 50-year low in precipitation accumulation relative to the long term normal. This area is reporting 365-day precipitation accumulations of 50 to 70% relative to average.

Conversely, the North East Region, the eastern-half of the Central Region and most of the Southern Region are reporting near normal (once in 3-year) to moderately higher than normal (once in 3 to 6-year) precipitation accumulations relative to long term normal. Here, areas are reporting precipitation accumulations of 90 to 130% of normal (average), which is positive news for those farming in these areas.

Perspective

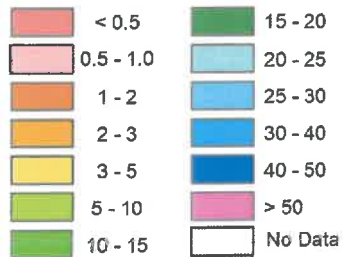
It is important to emphasize that the cold season, on average, is the driest time of the year. Being the relative dry season, even above average moisture at this time of year is typically not enough to make a significant impact on “year-to-date” moisture deficits, nor are they usually sufficient to create excess moisture conditions.

For agriculture, May, June and July remain the most important months for receiving precipitation. The 2025 cropping season is only a few months away. We are beginning to move into what has traditionally been Alberta’s wetter period; there is ample time to receive adequate moisture.

Precipitation Received During the Past 30-days

February 18, 2025 to
March 19, 2025

Precipitation (mm)

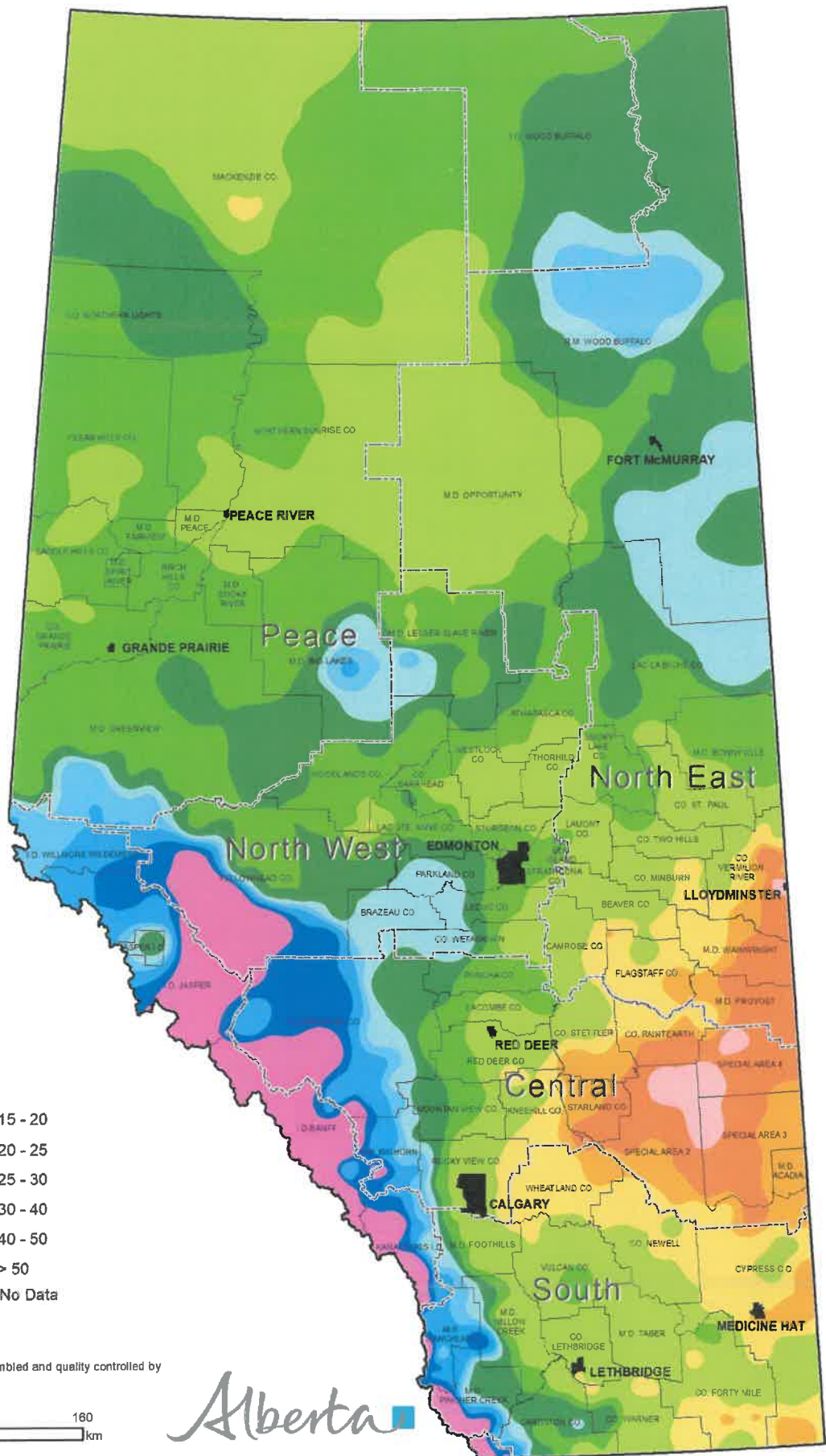


Near-real-time weather data was assembled and quality controlled by
Agriculture and Irrigation.



Compiled by Alberta Agriculture and Irrigation, Natural Resource Management Branch
Created on March 20, 2025

Alberta



Visit weatherdata.ca for additional maps and meteorological data

30-Day Precipitation Accumulations Relative to Long Term Normal

February 18, 2025 to
March 19, 2025

Condition



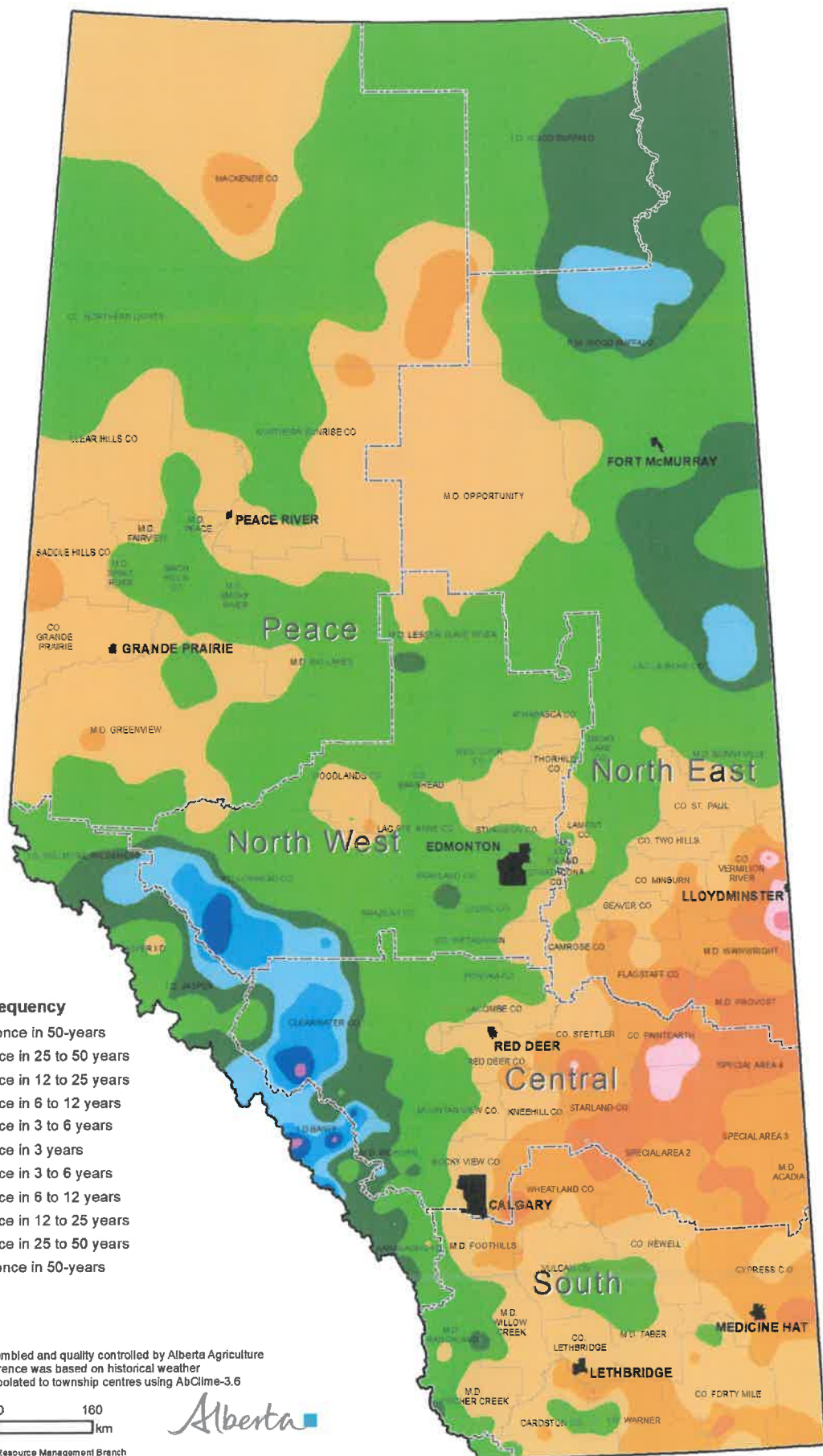
Frequency

< once in 50-years
once in 25 to 50 years
once in 12 to 25 years
once in 6 to 12 years
once in 3 to 6 years
once in 3 years
once in 3 to 6 years
once in 6 to 12 years
once in 12 to 25 years
once in 25 to 50 years
< once in 50-years

Near-real-time weather data was assembled and quality controlled by Alberta Agriculture and Irrigation. The frequency of occurrence was based on historical weather data from the 1961-2024 period, interpolated to township centres using AbClima-3.6



Compiled by Agriculture and Irrigation, Natural Resource Management Branch
Created on March 20, 2025



Visit weatherdata.ca for additional maps and meteorological data

Cold Season Precipitation Accumulations Relative to Long Term Normal

November 01, 2024 to
March 19, 2025

Condition



Frequency

< once in 50-years
once in 25 to 50 years
once in 12 to 25 years
once in 6 to 12 years
once in 3 to 6 years
once in 3 years
once in 3 to 6 years
once in 6 to 12 years
once in 12 to 25 years
once in 25 to 50 years
< once in 50-years

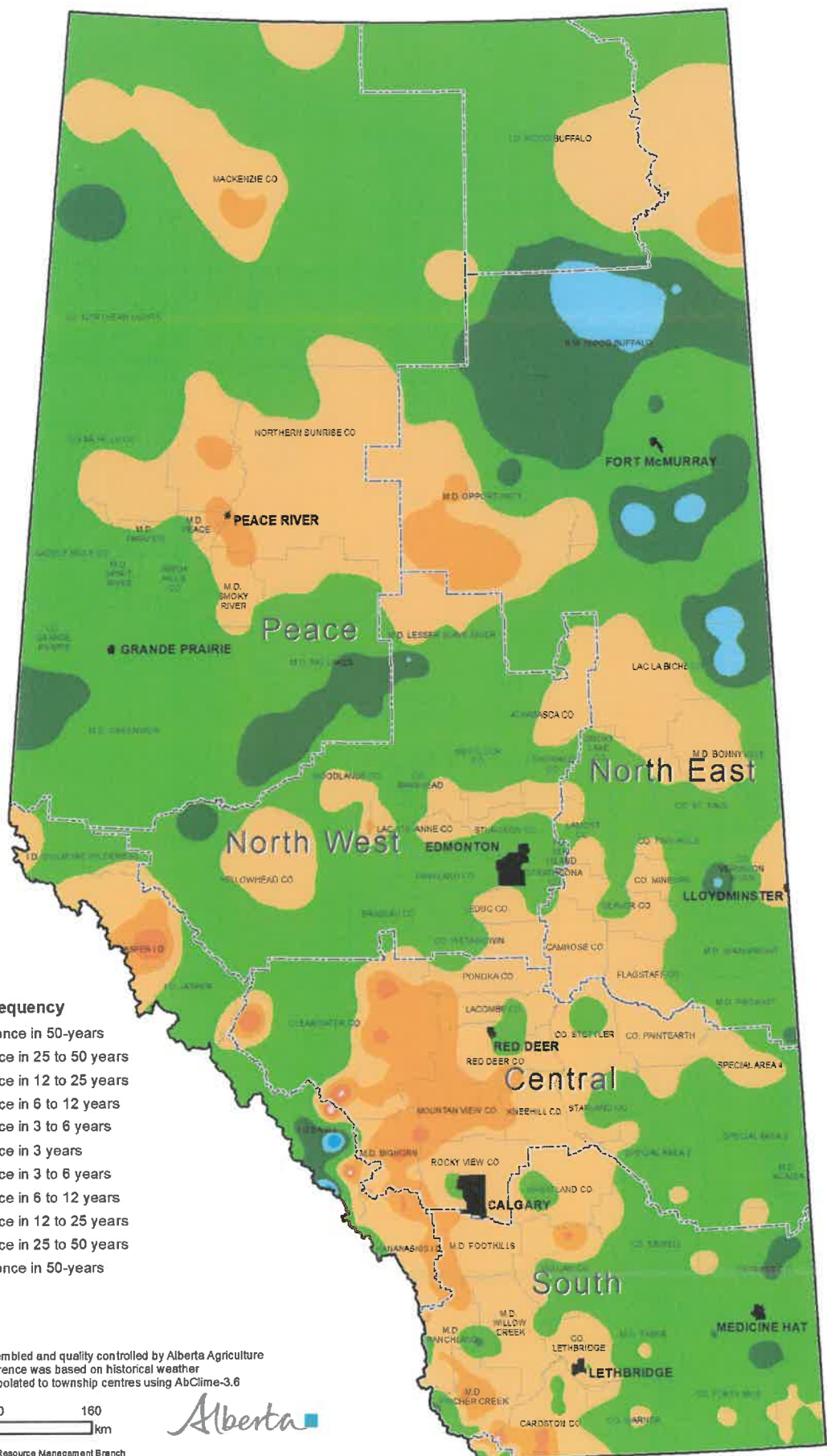
Near-real-time weather data was assembled and quality controlled by Alberta Agriculture and Irrigation. The frequency of occurrence was based on historical weather data from the 1961-2024 period, interpolated to township centres using AbClim-3.6



Compiled by Agriculture and Irrigation, Natural Resource Management Branch
Created on March 20, 2025

Alberta

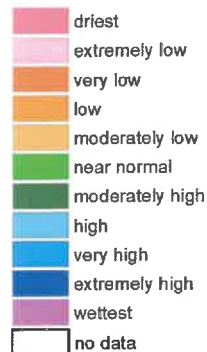
Visit weatherdata.ca for additional maps and meteorological data



Snow Pack Accumulations on Stubble Fields Relative to Long Term Normal

Estimated as of March 19, 2025

Condition



Frequency

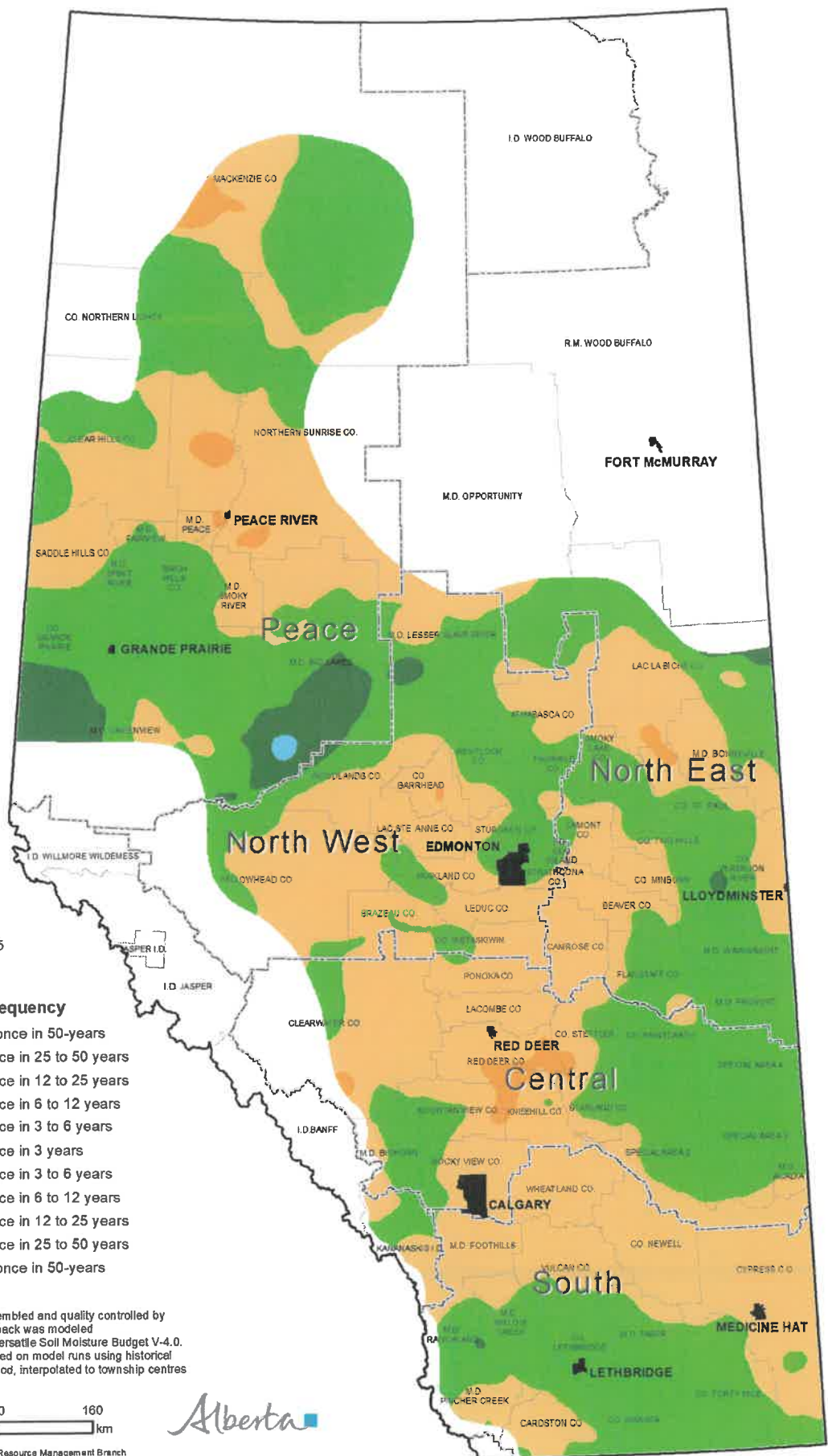
< once in 50-years
once in 25 to 50 years
once in 12 to 25 years
once in 6 to 12 years
once in 3 to 6 years
once in 3 years
once in 3 to 6 years
once in 6 to 12 years
once in 12 to 25 years
once in 25 to 50 years
< once in 50-years

Near-real-time weather data was assembled and quality controlled by Agriculture and Irrigation. The snow pack was modeled for stubble fields using the Modified Versatile Soil Moisture Budget V-4.0. The frequency of occurrence was based on model runs using historical weather data from the 1961-2024 period, interpolated to township centres using AbClimate-3.6



Compiled by Agriculture and Irrigation, Natural Resource Management Branch
Created on March 20, 2025

Alberta



Visit weatherdata.ca for additional maps and meteorological data

365-Day Precipitation Accumulations Relative to Long Term Normal

March 20, 2024 to
March 19, 2025

Condition

	driest
	extremely low
	very low
	low
	moderately low
	near normal
	moderately high
	high
	very high
	extremely high
	wettest
	no data

Frequency

< once in 50-years
once in 25 to 50 years
once in 12 to 25 years
once in 6 to 12 years
once in 3 to 6 years
once in 3 years
once in 3 to 6 years
once in 6 to 12 years
once in 12 to 25 years
once in 25 to 50 years
< once in 50-years

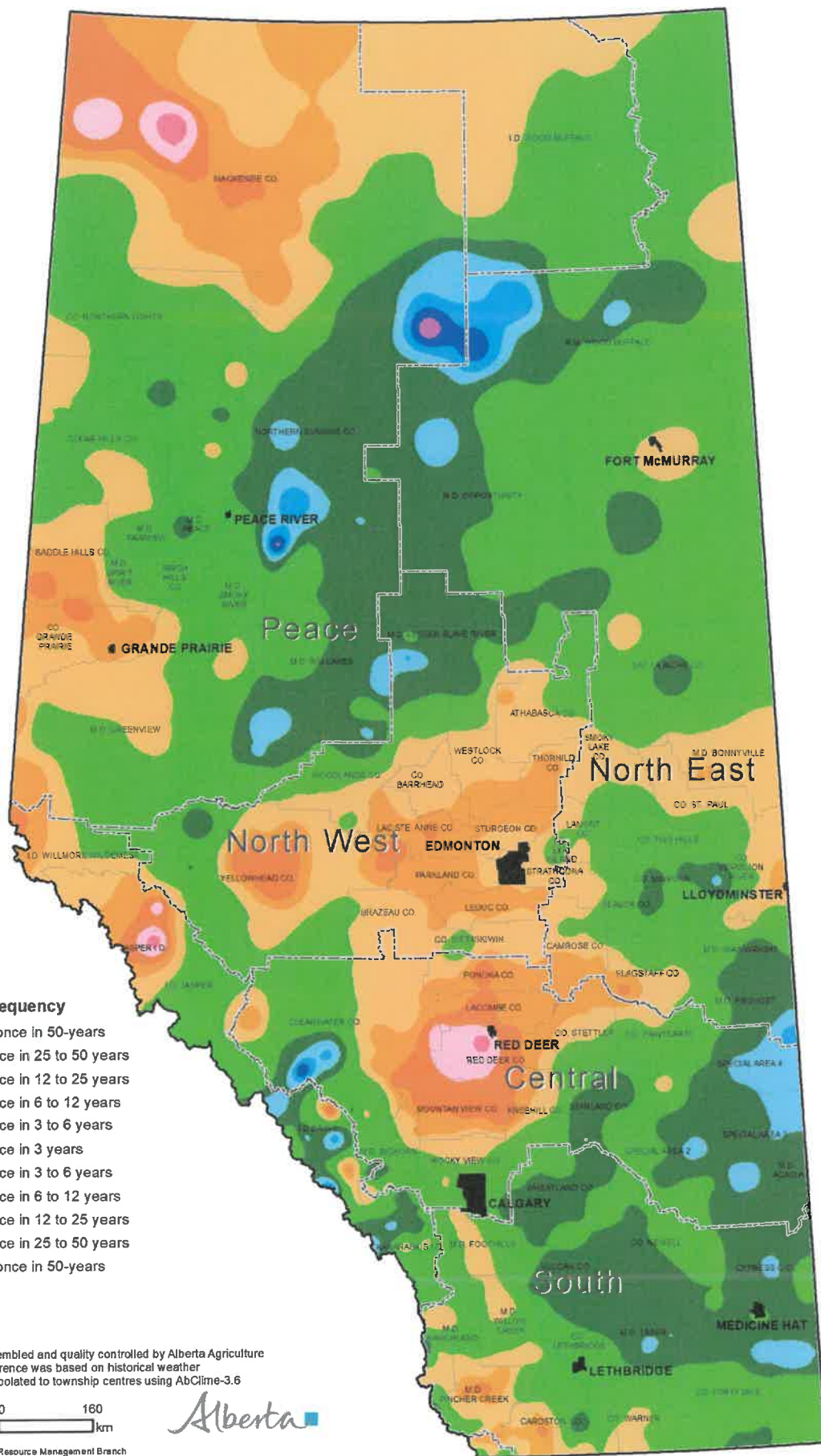
Near-real-time weather data was assembled and quality controlled by Alberta Agriculture and Irrigation. The frequency of occurrence was based on historical weather data from the 1961-2024 period, interpolated to township centres using AbClim-3.6

80 40 0 80 160
km

Compiled by Agriculture and Irrigation, Natural Resource Management Branch
Created on March 20, 2025

Alberta

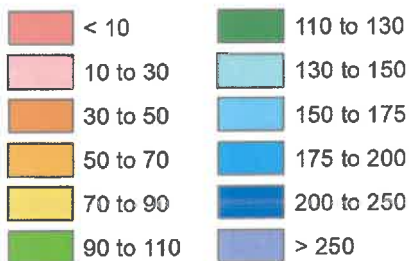
Visit weatherdata.ca for additional maps and meteorological data



365-Day Precipitation Accumulations Percent of Average

March 20, 2024 to
March 19, 2025

Precipitation (% of Average)

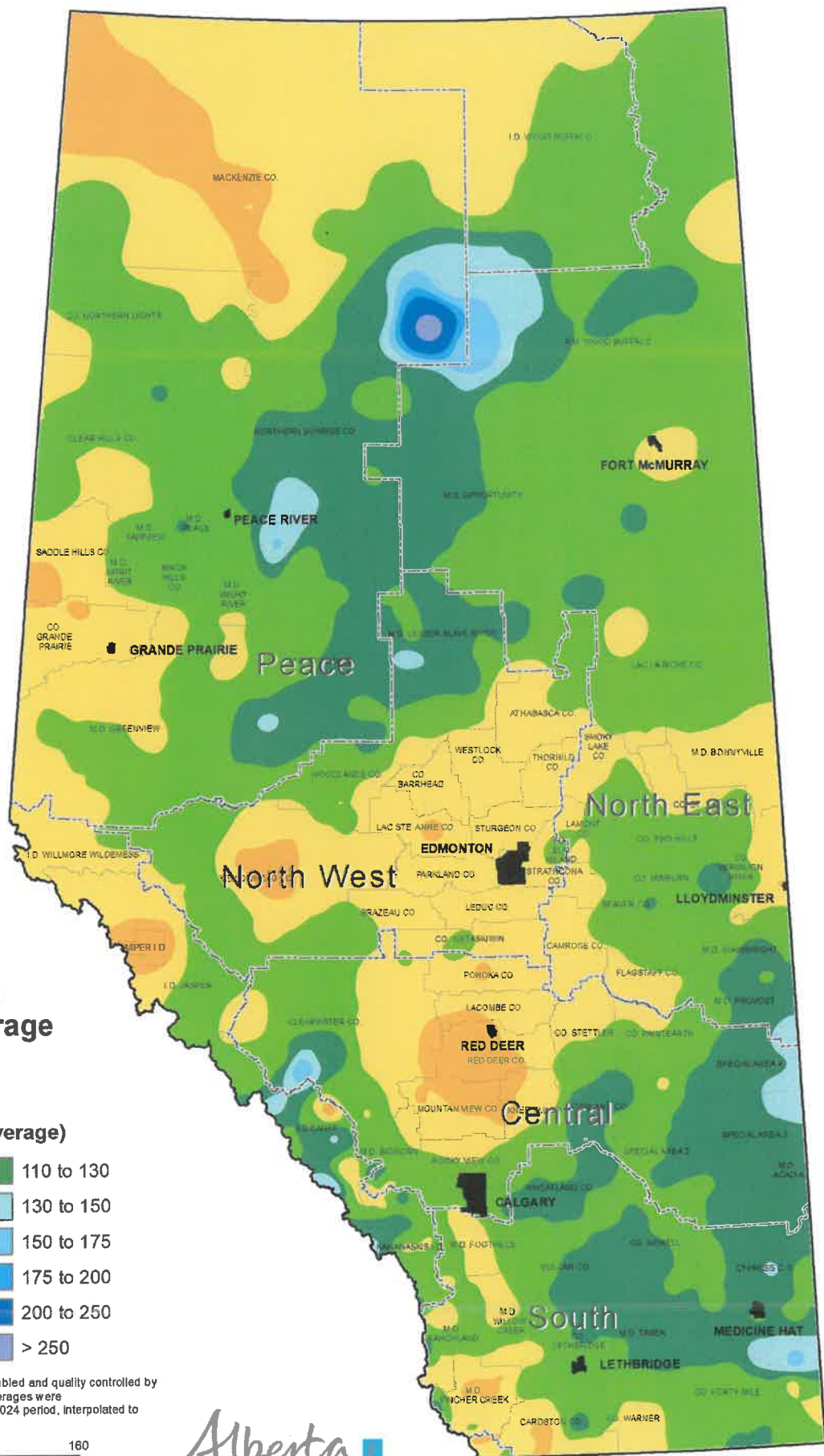


Near-real-time weather data was assembled and quality controlled by Agriculture and Irrigation. Historical averages were based on weather data from the 1961-2024 period, interpolated to township centres using AbClima-3.6



Compiled by Alberta Agriculture and Irrigation, Natural Resource Management Branch
Created on March 20, 2025

Alberta



Visit weatherdata.ca for additional maps and meteorological data