Water Availability and Drought Conditions Report

AUGUST 2025

Executive Summary

- This Water Availability and Drought Conditions Report provides an update on conditions throughout Manitoba for August 2025.
- Precipitation conditions over the past month, three-month, and twelve-month periods are as follows:
  - In August 2025, most of western and northwestern Manitoba received above-normal rainfall, while much of eastern to northeastern Manitoba experienced near-normal conditions. Some localized areas in southern, central, and northern Manitoba showed moderately dry precipitation levels.
  - Over the past three months (June, July, August), most of Manitoba was moderately to severely dry, with isolated pockets in the south, west, and north receiving normal to above-normal rainfall.
  - Over the past 12 months, Manitoba observed mostly moderately to severely dry precipitation conditions, with small areas of normal precipitation conditions in the north and near the US border in the south.
- As of August 31, 2025, water levels in rivers and lakes across Manitoba ranged from much below normal (<10 percentile) to normal (25th – 75th percentile) conditions. Several rainfall events in August helped reduce the severity of hydrological drought. Most areas in southern and western Manitoba have returned to normal, although most stations in the eastern and northern regions continue to report below normal (10-25 percentile) to much below normal (<10 percentile) records.
- As of July 31, 2025, the Canadian Drought Monitor classified all of Manitoba as experiencing conditions ranging from abnormally dry (D0) to extreme drought (D3). Areas of extreme drought were concentrated in the Interlake region, parts of western Manitoba between Swan River and Flin Flon, northern areas between Thompson and Gillam, areas near Island Lake in northeastern Manitoba, and portions of land west of Lake Manitoba. Rainfall events in August will likely improve drought severity in most areas for the next assessment at the end of August.
- There are currently no concerns over reservoir water supplies. Provincial water supply reservoirs are near full supply levels or at typical levels for the time of year.
- Some crops have benefited from recent precipitation, while others continue to show lack of moisture symptoms. Recent rains have helped replenish water sources, but water is still a concern for some areas where producers are moving cattle to different sites or hauling water due to low levels or quality.
- Manitoba Agriculture's soil moisture map for September 1, 2025, indicates mostly optimal to wet conditions across southern Manitoba at depths of 0 to 120 cm, with some pockets of dry or very dry soil. Areas near Selkirk, Lac Du Bonnet, and the Interlake region continue to show dryness, while the region between Dauphin and Swan River has returned to optimal moisture levels following August rains.
- Manitoba's wildfire situation showed significant improvement in August. The Manitoba government ended the provincial state of emergency on August 22. The Manitoba Wildfire Service reports low fire danger across most of the province, with several fires now held or under control. Refer to the fire and travel restriction maps found at: www.gov.mb.ca/conservation_fire/Restrictions/index.html. Several municipalities continue to implement burning restrictions. Visit www.manitoba.ca/wildfire/burn_conditions.html to view current burning restrictions.

Drought Indicators

Precipitation Indicator

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

Three precipitation indicators are calculated to represent short term (one month; Figure 1), medium term (three months; Figure 2) and long term (12 months; Figure 3) conditions. The indicators compare current monthly precipitation totals to historical data to calculate the per cent of median precipitation that occurred over the past one, three or twelve months. Historical medians are computed from 45 years of data (1971 – 2015).

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

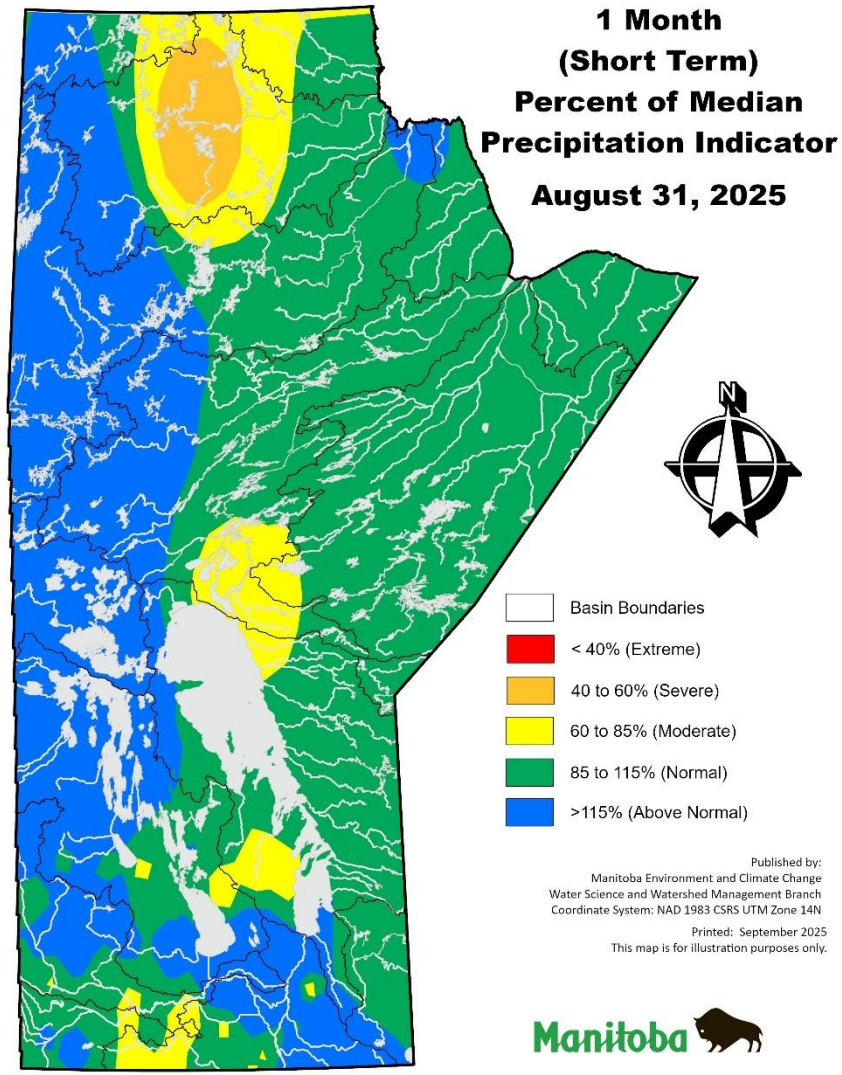

Figure 1: One month (short term) per cent of median precipitation indicator.

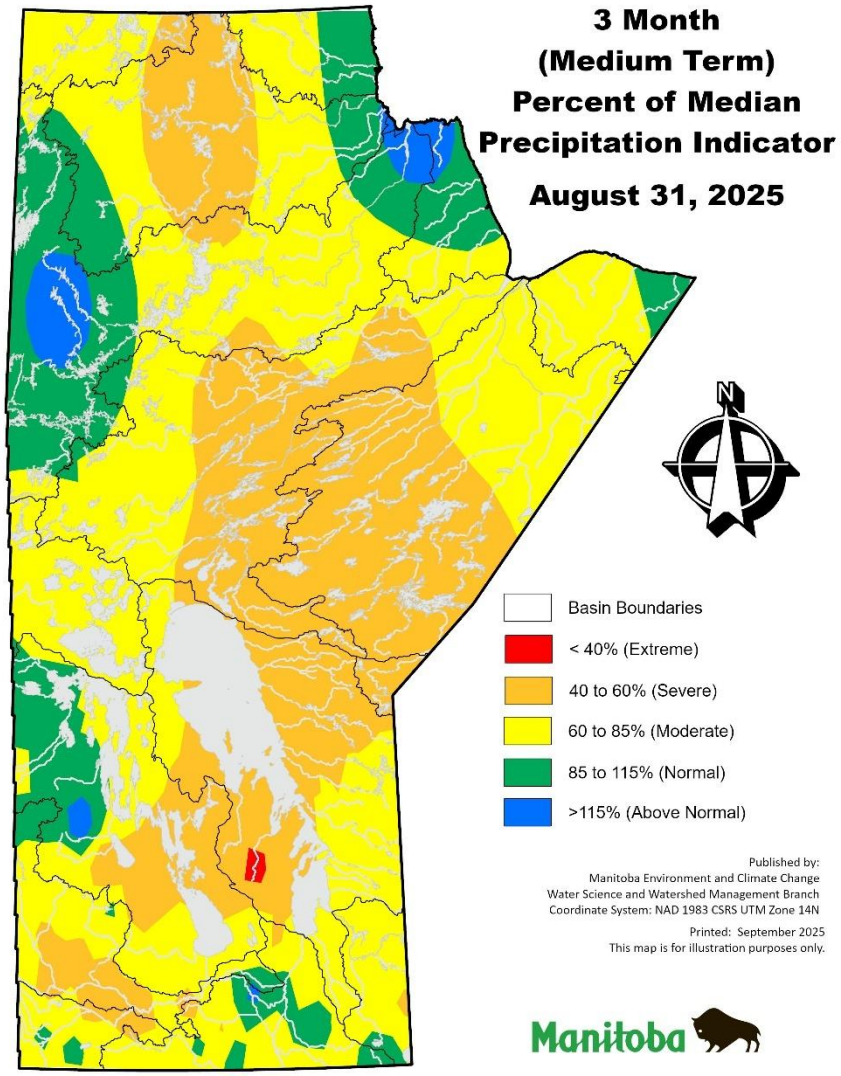

Figure 2: Three month (medium term) per cent of median precipitation indicator.

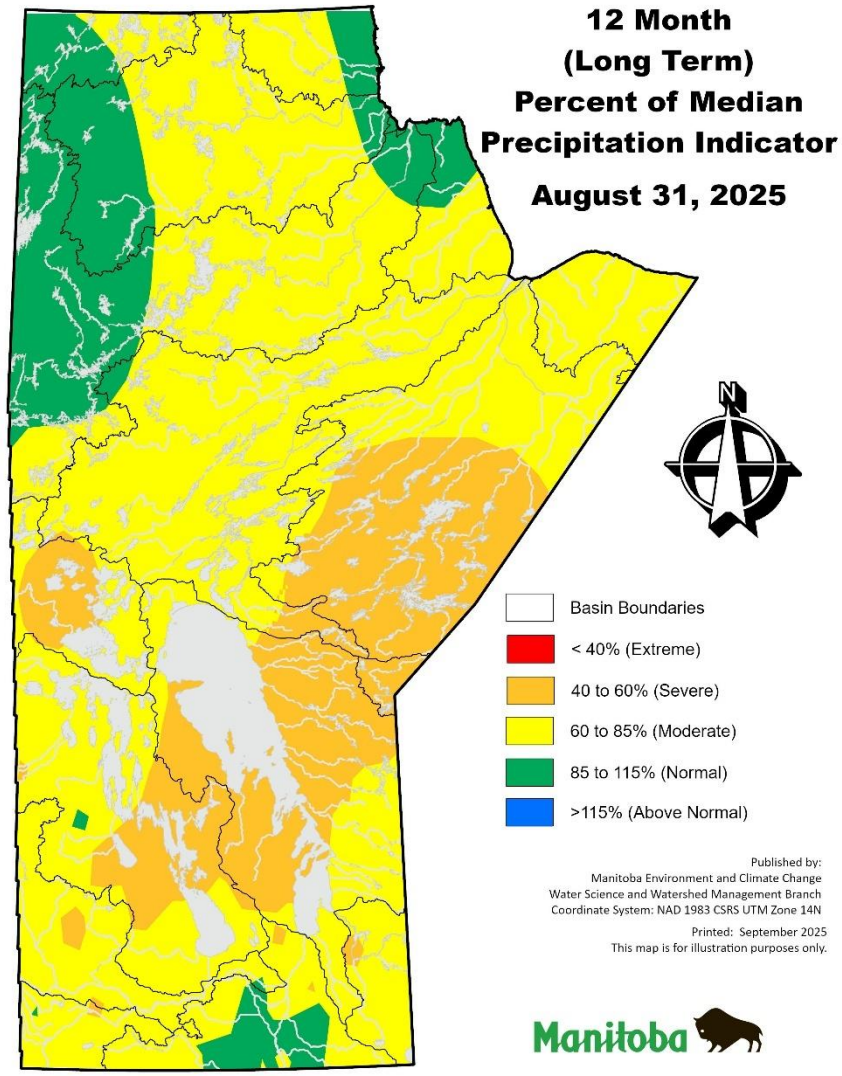

Figure 3: Twelve month (long term) per cent of median precipitation indicator.

Streamflow & Lake Level Indicator

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

This indicator is used to determine the severity of hydrological dryness in a watershed and is summarized on Figure 4, representing hydrological conditions for August 31, 2025.

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

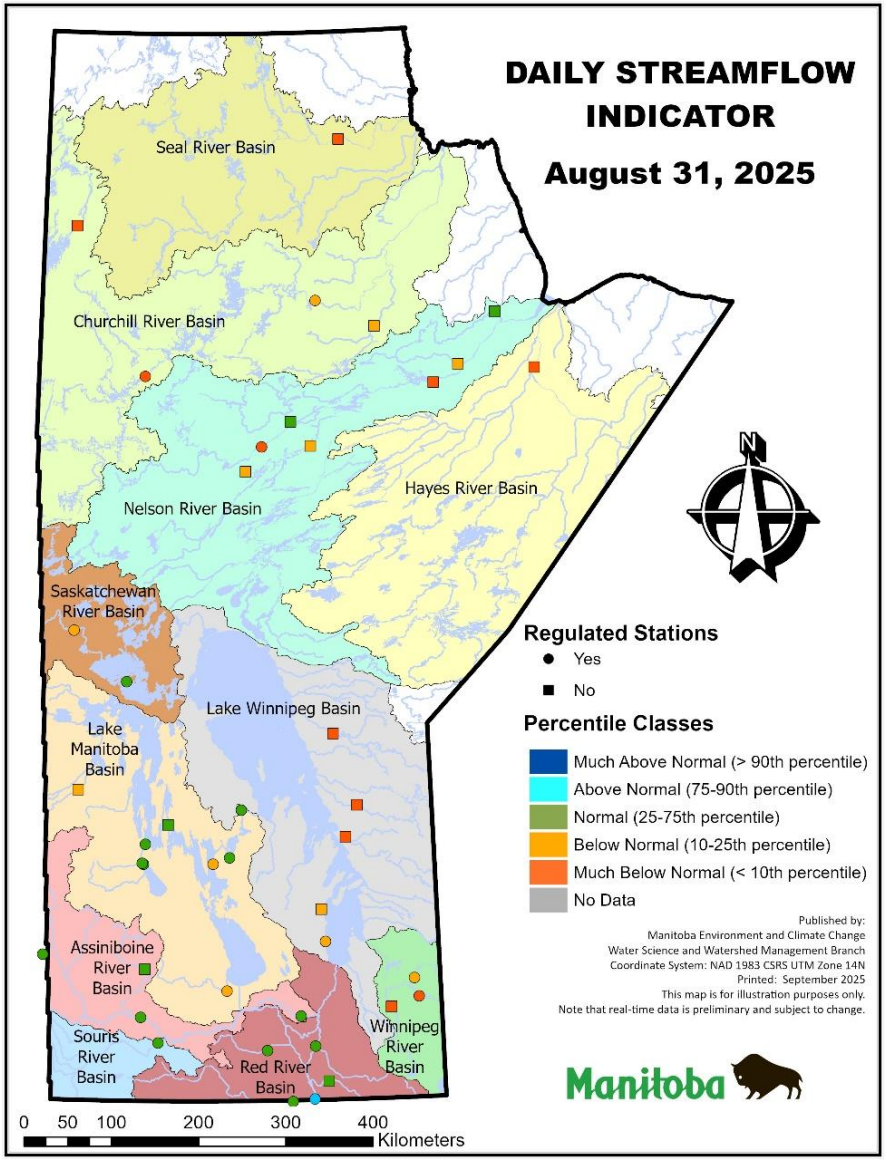

Figure 4: Daily streamflow and lake level indicator for August 31, 2025.

Canada and United States Drought Monitors

The Canadian Drought Monitor and the United States Drought Monitor map the extent and intensity of drought conditions across Canada and the continental U.S.A.

Drought Monitor assessments are based on a suite of drought indicators, impacts data and local reports as interpreted by federal, provincial/state and academic scientists.

The Canadian and United States Drought Monitor maps use the following classification system:

- D0 (Abnormally Dry) – represents an event that occurs every three to five years;
- D1 (Moderate Drought) – five to 10 year event;
- D2 (Severe Drought) – 10 to 20 year event;
- D3 (Extreme Drought) – 20 to 50 year event; and
- D4 (Exceptional Drought) – 50+ year event.

Additionally, the map indicates the duration of drought as either short-term (S; less than six months) or long-term (L; more than six months) (Figure 5).

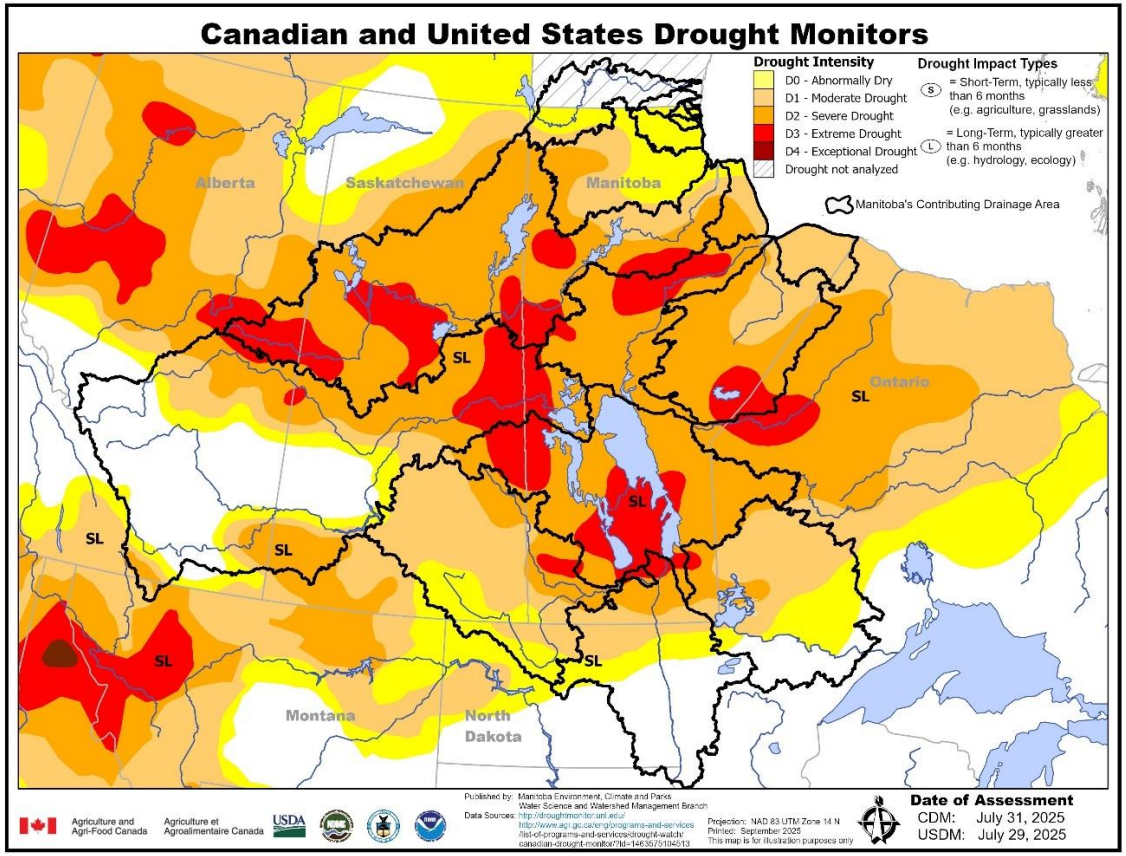

Figure 5: Canadian and United States Drought Monitors' classification of short-term (S) and long-term (L) drought conditions assessed as of July 31, 2025.

Water Availability

Reservoir Conditions

Table 1: Water Supply Reservoir Levels and Storages – August 31, 2025 (Southern and Western Manitoba).

Water Supply Reservoir Levels and Storages - August 31, 2025								
Lake or Reservoir	**Community Supplied**	**Target Level (feet)**	**Latest Observed Level (feet)**	**Observed date**	**Supply Status (Recent - Target) (feet)**	**Storage at Target Level (acre-feet)**	**Storage at Observed Level (acre-feet)**	**Supply Status (observed storage/target storage) (%)**
Lake of the Prairies (Shellmouth)*[1]	Brandon, Portage, Cartier Regional Water Co-op	1,402.5	1403.41	August 31, 2025	+0.91	300,000	312,079	104%
Lake Wahtopanah (Rivers)*	Rivers	1,536.0	1535.23	August 31, 2025	-0.77	24,500	23,658	97%
Minnewasta (Morden)*	Morden	1,082.0	1081.40	August 31, 2025	-0.60	3,150	3,050	97%
Stephenfield*	Carman, Pembina Valley Water Co-op	972.0	968.95	August 31, 2025	-3.05	3,810	2,621	69%
Vermilion*	Dauphin	1,274.0	1273.55	August 31, 2025	-0.45	2,600	2,483	95%
Goudney (Pilot Mound)*		1,482.0	1482.18	August 31, 2025	+0.18	450	459	102%
Jackson Lake*		1,174.0	1171.87	August 31, 2025	-2.13	2,990	2,461	82%
Manitou (Mary Jane)*		1,537.0	1536.35	August 31, 2025	-0.65	1,150	1,092	95%
Turtlehead (Deloraine)*	Deloraine	1,772.0	1770.46	August 31, 2025	-1.54	1,400	1,318	94%
Lake Irwin*		1,178.0	1177.70	September 1, 2025	-0.30	3,800	3,620	95%
Minnedosa*[1]		1,681.5	1682.15	August 31, 2025	+0.65	1,558	1,727	111%
Boissevain*	Boissevain	1,697.0	1698.18	August 31, 2025	+1.18	505	605	120%
Elgin*		1,532.0	1531.44	August 31, 2025	-0.56	520	480	92%
St. Malo*		840.0	840.10	August 31, 2025	+0.10	1,770	1,786	101%
Kenton Reservoir		1,448.0	1447.24	August 31, 2025	-0.76	600	543	91%
Killarney Lake		1,615.0	1614.84	August 31, 2025	-0.16	7,360	7,285	99%

[1] Summer target level and storage
* Real-time water level gauge

On-Farm Water Supply

On-farm water supply updates from Manitoba Agriculture's Crop Report Issue 18 (August 26, 2025) are as follows:

- Recent rains are helping replenish water sources, but water is still a concern for some areas where producers are moving cattle to different sites or hauling water due to low levels or quality.

Soil Moisture

A regional representation of soil moisture conditions for the top 120 cm relative to the field capacity is shown on Figure 6.

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

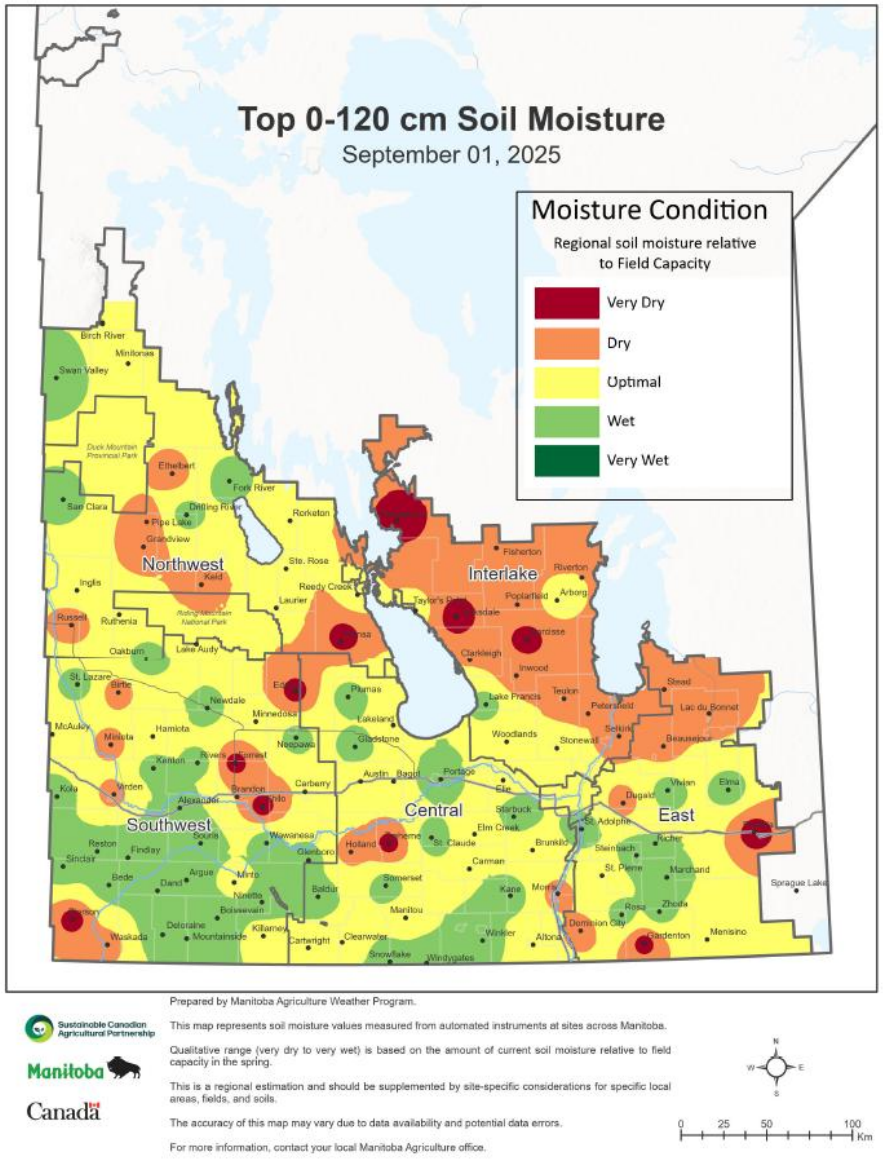

Figure 6: Manitoba Agriculture's September 1, 2025 mapping of soil moisture conditions in the top 0 – 120 cm.

Wildfires

Manitoba's wildfire situation showed improvement in August. The Manitoba government ended the provincial state of emergency on August 22.

The Manitoba Wildfire Service reports low fire danger across most of the province, with several fires now held or under control, and issuing burning permits was resumed from August 22.

As of August 31, 2025 the fire weather risk produced by Natural Resources Canada is mostly low to moderate across most of Manitoba (Figure 7). Manitobans and visitors are urged to exercise caution and comply with all posted restrictions to prevent wildfires.

Refer to the fire and travel restriction maps found at: www.gov.mb.ca/conservation_fire/Restrictions/index.html. Several municipalities continue to implement burning restrictions. Visit www.manitoba.ca/wildfire/burn_conditions.html to view current burning restrictions.

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

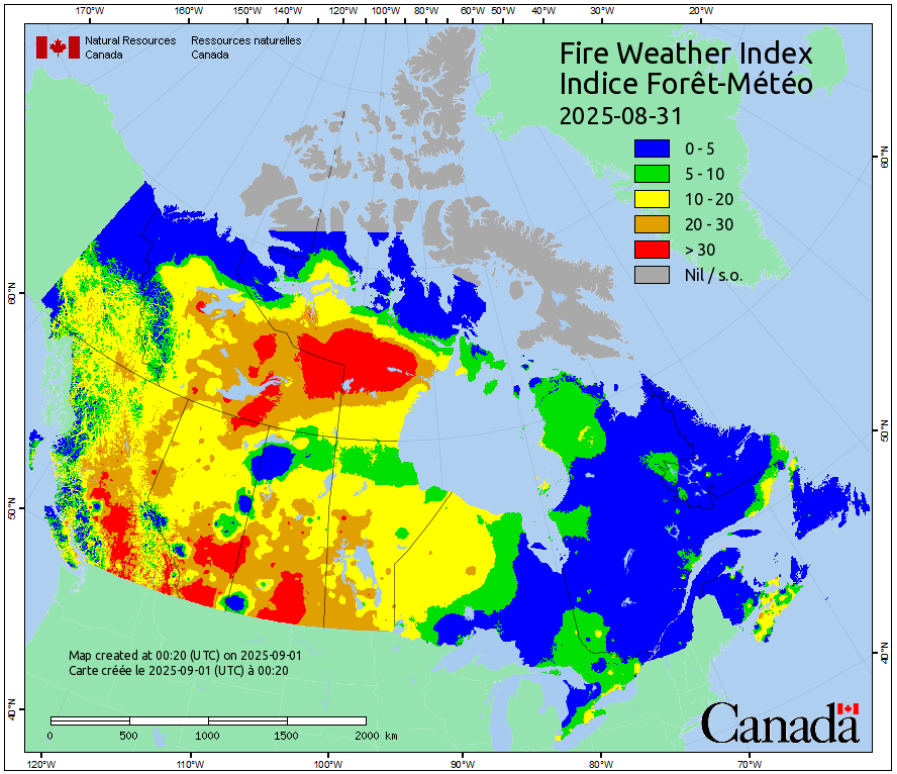

Figure 7: Fire Weather Index mapping by Natural Resources Canada.

Impacts due to Dry Conditions

The most significant impact due to meteorological drought conditions is severe wildfire risk and active fires across much of Manitoba. Wildfire risk is low due to August precipitation.

Hydrological drought is present in eastern and northern areas where rivers and lakes have fallen below their normal range for this time of year. August precipitation helped reduce the severity of drought, but more precipitation will still be needed to prevent hydrological drought from developing further.

Some crops have benefited from recent precipitation, while others continue to show lack of moisture symptoms. Harvest continues across Manitoba with areas that experienced low moisture reporting some reduction in yields. Yields are very good in areas that received adequate moisture. Recent rains have also helped replenish water on-farm sources, but water is still a concern for some areas where producers are moving cattle to different sites or hauling water due to low levels or quality. More precipitation is needed to maintain or improve on-farm water supplies and to prevent further agricultural drought impacts.

Past reports, drought mapping and other information and resources are available on the Manitoba Drought Monitor website.

For further information, please contact:

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Acknowledgements

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Manitoba Transportation and Infrastructure:
Reservoir level information:
https://www.gov.mb.ca/mit/floodinfo/index.html

Manitoba Wildfire Service:
https://www.gov.mb.ca/sd/fire/

Manitoba Agriculture:
Crop Reports:
http://www.gov.mb.ca/agriculture/crops/seasonal-reports/crop-report-archive/index.html

Topsoil moisture conditions:
https://www.gov.mb.ca/agriculture/weather/weather-conditions-and-reports.html

Environment and Climate Change Canada:
Flow and lake level information:
http://www.wateroffice.ec.gc.ca/index_e.html

Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada:
Canadian Drought Monitor:
https://agriculture.canada.ca/en/agriculture-and-environment/drought-watch-and-agroclimate/canadian-drought-monitor

United States Drought Monitor:
https://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/