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Spring Runoff Outlook

Based on conditions as of April 10, 2026

Prepared by: Flow Forecasting & Operations Planning - Water Security Agency

Executive Summary

- The Water Security Agency continuously monitors existing moisture conditions and expected weather patterns to prepare for spring runoff.
- The amount of spring runoff depends on several factors such as fall soil moisture, soil frozen state at the time of snowmelt, existing wetland storage and connectivity, snowpack water content, and timing and duration of the snowpack melts.
- In fall 2025, most of Saskatchewan experienced below-average precipitation, leading to dry conditions at freeze-up, especially in southern and northern Saskatchewan.
- Snowmelt runoff has already been completed or is nearing completion in areas south of Lloydminster, North Battleford, Saskatoon and Yorkton.
- Continued accumulation of snow since March 1 has resulted in the expectation of an above-normal runoff throughout much of Central Saskatchewan, with a well above normal runoff expected in East Central Saskatchewan around Hudson Bay and north of Yorkton and Wynyard.
- In the Quill Lakes Basin, above normal snowmelt inflows are expected later this month due to an above normal snowpack. Snowmelt has finished in southern portion of the Qu'Appelle River Basin, while snowmelt in the northern parts of the basin remains limited at this time. All lakes within the Qu'Appelle River Basin are expected to remain in the normal operating ranges.
- In the Churchill River Basin, runoff is expected to vary from below normal to above normal this spring.
- Most major water supply reservoirs in southern Saskatchewan are at or above normal levels for this time of the year. The exceptions are McDougald and Harris, which are below normal levels.
- The Water Security Agency is monitoring basin conditions and managing Lake Diefenbaker accordingly. Lake Diefenbaker is currently above the median for this time of year but remains within the normal operating range.
- In the Souris River Basin, reservoirs are projected to remain within normal operating ranges.
- Long-range forecasts predict normal precipitation and warmer than normal temperatures across the entire province from May to July.
- The Water Security Agency will continue to monitor and report on landscape conditions and water supply reservoirs to allow for timely response to conditions. The agency continues to work internally and across government to support residents in times of drought or flooding.

Cover Photo:
South Saskatchewan River near Moon Lake Pumphouse, April 6, 2026
(Jenna Coates, Water Security Agency)

Spring Runoff Potential and Current Conditions

Summary:

- Runoff in southern Saskatchewan has either already completed or is nearing completion in certain areas.
- Additional precipitation and temperatures remaining below freezing since March 1 has led to an increase in the snowpack in much of Central Saskatchewan.
- In the area around Hudson Bay and north of Wynyard and Yorkton, a well above normal runoff response is expected due to the current snowpack.
- Runoff is expected to be below normal throughout most of northern Saskatchewan.

As of April 10, snowmelt runoff throughout the southwest and southeast areas of the province has either already completed or is nearing completion, while snow has continued to accumulate in central areas stretching from Meadow Lake to Yorkton. Figure 1 shows the projected snowmelt runoff potential for the province, based on conditions as of April 10, 2026. Average climatic conditions between April 10 and the spring melt were assumed when developing the spring runoff potential map. The runoff potential and lake level forecasts (Tables 1 and 2) were determined considering conditions at freeze-up and the snow accumulation over the winter months. Table 3 details the peak daily flows observed previously this spring in areas that are now snow-free.

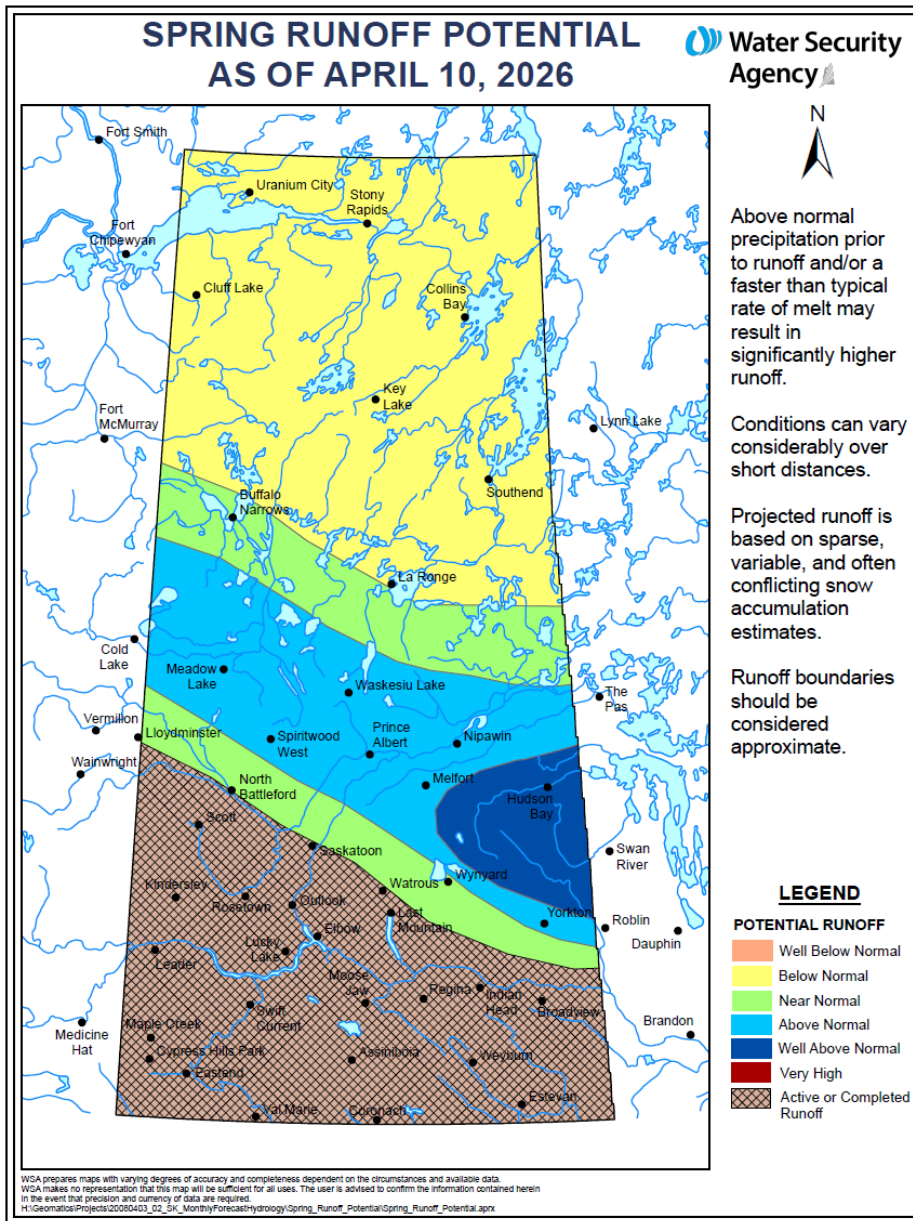
In central areas where a significant snowpack is remaining, the runoff potential has increased from near normal to above normal in areas including Meadow Lake, Waskesiu, Prince Albert and Nipawin. Areas around Hudson Bay and north of Wynyard and Yorkton are now identified as having well above normal snowmelt runoff potential due to much higher-than-normal snow accumulations being observed. Other central areas are still classified as having near normal snowmelt runoff potential. Much of the north remains in a below normal

snowmelt runoff classification as a result of receiving only minimal precipitation amounts since March 1.

With limited time remaining for snow to accumulate this spring, the rate of melt is expected to have a significant impact on the runoff amount that will eventually be observed in the areas that still have snow. A slow melt will result in most of the snowpack recharging the soil column. A rapid melt and additional precipitation may result in a higher-than-expected runoff yield.



Photo Credit: Eagle Creek Near Environ, April 6, 2026
(Jenna Coates, Water Security Agency)



| Category | Description | Approximate Frequency of Expected Flow |
|-------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| Well Below Normal | Little to no runoff is expected | << 1:2-year event |
| Below Normal | Some runoff is expected | < 1:2-year event |
| Normal | Flows are expected to be average and will generally not exceed channel capacity in most reaches | ≈ 1:2-year event |
| Above Normal | Flows from snowmelt runoff will exceed natural channel capacity in some areas | ≈ 1:5-year event |
| Well Above Normal | Significant out of channel flow and some flooding will likely occur | ≈ 1:10-year event |
| Very High | Significant flooding is likely to occur | ≈ 1:25-year event or greater |

- Above normal precipitation prior to runoff (especially if it occurs as rainfall), and/or a faster than normal melt, could result in significantly higher runoff than presently forecast.
- Below normal precipitation prior to runoff and/or a slow melt, can result in significantly lower runoff than presently forecast.
- Earlier than normal snow cover depletion, followed by significant rain events, can result in significantly higher spring runoff than the present forecast because of wet and partially frozen soils.
- Figure 1 is based on local prairie runoff, and it does not consider potential mountain runoff to large systems such as the Saskatchewan River Basin. This forecast is based on limited data and should be used as a general guide for large geographical areas. Local conditions may vary significantly from the regional conditions and boundaries. Figure 1 should be considered approximate.

Figure 1: Spring Runoff Potential as of April 10, 2026

Table 1: Provisional Forecast for Saskatchewan – April 2026

| Lake/Reservoir | 2026 April 10 Level (metres) | Forecast* 2026 Peak Spring Levels (metres) | Shoreline ¹ Level/FSL (metres) | Normal Summer Level (metres) | 2025 Peak (metres) | Recorded Historical Extreme | |
|---------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------|-----------------------------|------|
| | | | | | | Level (metres) | Year |
| Anglin | 515.32 | 515.5 | 515.40 | 515.40 | 515.46 | 516.05** | 2013 |
| Big Quill | 519.58 | 519.8 | 521.47 (spill) | 515.0 | 519.80 | 520.92 | 2017 |
| Boundary | 560.83 | 560.85 | 560.83 | 560.65 | 560.83 | 561.15 | 1979 |
| Buffalo Pound | 509.64 | *** | 509.47 | 509.32 | 509.68 | 511.45 | 1974 |
| Candle Lake | 494.18 | 494.3 | 494.50 | 494.40 | 494.31 | 495.25 | 1973 |
| Cookson | 751.69 | 751.8 | 753.00 | 752.20 | 752.00 | 753.35 | 1979 |
| Crooked | 451.25 | 451.5 | 452.30 | 451.56 | 451.81 | 454.40** | 2014 |
| Echo and Pasqua | 478.76 | 479.0 | 479.30 | 479.00 | 479.17 | 480.98 | 2011 |
| Fishing | 529.95 | 530.45 | 529.70 | 530.10 | 530.27 | 530.92 | 2011 |
| Good Spirit | 484.49 | 484.9 | 484.60 | 484.65 | 484.92 | 485.68** | 2010 |
| Grant Devine | 562.03 | *** | 562.00 | 561.60 | 561.65 | 566.58** | 2011 |
| Jackfish | 529.43 | 529.5 | 529.40 | 529.50 | 529.62 | 530.0 | 1985 |
| Katepwa and Mission | 478.43 | 478.5 | 478.70 | 478.23 | 478.55 | 479.58 | 2011 |
| La Ronge | 364.09 | 364.1 | 364.10 | 364.20 | 364.23 | 364.98** | 2020 |
| Last Mountain | 490.25 | 490.3 | 490.70 | 490.30 | 490.35 | 492.09 | 1955 |
| Moose Mountain | 620.55 | *** | 620.30 | 620.39 | 620.63 | 621.9 | 2011 |
| Nickle Lake | 563.20 | *** | 563.00 | 562.96 | 563.41 | 564.0 | 2011 |
| Rafferty | 549.80 | 549.9 | 550.50 | 549.60 | 550.05 | 554.05** | 2011 |
| Round | 442.09 | 442.3 | 443.28 | 442.27 | 442.43 | 445.70** | 2014 |
| Wascana | 570.77 | *** | 570.60 | 570.74 | 571.14 | 572.23 | 1974 |

* These forecast peaks are based on a typical spring precipitation and rate of melt. Above normal precipitation and/or rapid melt may result in significantly higher levels.

** Occurred after spring runoff during summer event(s).

*** Spring reservoir level peak has already been observed

Table 2: Spring Runoff Forecast

| Basin and Location | April 2026 Forecast* | | 2025 Spring Mean Daily Peak Flow (m ³ /s)** | Historical | | |
|----------------------------------|------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|------|
| | Mean Daily Peak Flow (m ³ /s) | Mean Daily Peak Flow Frequency | | Normal Year | Recorded Maximum Spring | |
| | | | Flow (m ³ /s) | Flow (m ³ /s) | Year | |
| ASSINIBOINE RIVER BASIN | | | | | | |
| Assiniboine River at Sturgis | 80 | 1:10 | 12 | 30 | 111 | 1995 |
| Whitesand River near Canora | 125 | 1:10 | | 36 | 247 | 1995 |
| Assiniboine River at Kamsack | 220 | 1:10 | 117 | 78 | 488 | 1995 |
| QU'APPELLE RIVER BASIN | | | | | | |
| Qu'Appelle River near Hyde | 35 | 1:2 | 56 | 35 | 254 | 2011 |
| Qu'Appelle River near Welby | 40 | 1:2 | 46 | 40 | 345 | 2011 |
| Lanigan Creek above Boulder Lake | 7.0 | 1:2 | 32 | 9.3 | 56 | 2006 |
| Pheasant Creek near Abernethy | 8 | 1:2 | 7 | 6.9 | 47 | 1976 |
| BEAVER RIVER BASIN | | | | | | |
| Beaver River near Dorintosh | 176 | 1:5 | 41 | 92 | 654 | 1962 |
| LAKE WINNIPEGOSIS BASIN | | | | | | |
| Red Deer River near Steen | 65 | 1:10 | 24 | 20 | 102 | 1972 |
| Red Deer River near Erwood | 386 | 1:10 | 113 | 150 | 878 | 2006 |

| Basin and Location | April 2026 Forecast* | | 2025 Spring Mean Daily Peak Flow (m ³ /s)** | Historical | | |
|-------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------|------|
| | Mean Daily Peak Flow (m ³ /s) | Mean Daily Peak Flow Frequency | | Normal Year | Recorded Maximum Spring | |
| | | | Flow (m ³ /s) | Flow (m ³ /s) | Year | |
| NORTH SASKATCHEWAN RIVER BASIN | | | | | | |
| North Saskatchewan River near Deer Creek | 765 | 1:2 | 643 | 900 | 1660 | 1974 |
| Eagle Creek near Environ | 22 | 1:2 | 35 | 12 | 136 | 1970 |
| North Saskatchewan River at Prince Albert | 1540 | 1:5 | 715 | 433 | 3880 | 1974 |
| SASKATCHEWAN RIVER BASIN | | | | | | |
| White Fox River near Garrick | 48 | 1:3 | 56 | 26 | 160 | 1974 |
| Torch River near Love | 82 | 1:3 | 100 | 43 | 170 | 1955 |
| Carrot River near Armley | 101 | 1:2 | N/A | 71 | 377 | 1974 |
| Carrot River near Smoky Burn | 298 | 1:3 | 368 | 200 | 816 | 1972 |

* These forecast values are based on typical spring precipitation and typical rate of melt. Above normal precipitation and/or rapid melt may result in significantly higher flows.

** Provisional data; subject to change.

Table 3: Observed 2026 Spring Peak for Snow Free Areas

| Basin and Location | April 2026 Observed* | | 2025 Spring Mean Daily Peak Flow (m ³ /s)** | Historical | | |
|--------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|------|
| | Mean Daily Peak Flow (m ³ /s) | Mean Daily Peak Flow Frequency | | Normal Year | Recorded Maximum Spring | |
| | | | | Flow (m ³ /s) | Flow (m ³ /s) | Year |
| SWIFT CURRENT CREEK BASIN | | | | | | |
| Swift Current Creek below Rock Creek | 8.4 | <1:2 | 29 | 18 | 85 | 1955 |
| Rushlake Creek above Highfield | 23 | 1:5 | 5 | 7 | 45 | 2023 |
| OLD WIVES LAKE BASIN | | | | | | |
| Notukeu Creek near Vanguard | 15 | <1:2 | 21 | 25 | 210 | 1952 |
| Wood River near Lafleche | 3.1 | <1:2 | 28 | 35 | 292 | 1952 |
| MISSOURI RIVER BASIN | | | | | | |
| Battle Creek at Alberta Boundary | 1.4 | <1:2 | 6.5 | 5 | 20 | 1985 |
| Battle Creek near Consul | 5.1 | 1:2 | 2.5 | 5 | 65 | 1967 |
| Lodge Creek near Alberta Boundary | 11 | 1:2 | 6.1 | 14 | 110 | 1952 |
| Frenchman River near Ravenscrag | 8.4 | <1:2 | 9.6 | 30 | 200 | 1952 |
| Denniel Creek near Val Marie | 0.3 | <1:2 | 11 | 9 | 43 | 2011 |
| East Poplar River above Cookson | 5.7 | 1:2 | 2.3 | 5 | 30 | 1982 |
| SOURIS RIVER BASIN | | | | | | |
| Long Creek near Noonan | 18 | 1:2 | 13 | 19 | 183 | 2011 |
| Yellow Grass Ditch near Yellow Grass | 8.4 | 1:2 | 8.3 | 7 | 79 | 2011 |
| Souris River at Ralph | 17 | <1:2 | 11 | 25 | 118 | 1979 |
| Jewel Creek near Goodwater | 0.1 | <1:2 | 5.9 | 4 | 44 | 2011 |
| Moose Mountain above Grant Devine | 21 | 1:2 | 5 | 18 | 99 | 2011 |
| Souris River near Sherwood | 17 | <1:2 | 16 | 32 | 388 | 1976 |

| Basin and Location | April 2026 Observed* | | 2025 Spring Mean Daily Peak Flow (m ³ /s)** | Historical Spring | | |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------|------|
| | Mean Daily Peak Flow (m ³ /s) | Mean Daily Peak Flow Frequency | | Normal Year | Peak Flow (m ³ /s) | |
| | | | Flow (m ³ /s) | Flow (m ³ /s) | Year | |
| QU'APPELLE RIVER BASIN | | | | | | |
| Qu'Appelle River near Lumsden | 38 | 1:2 | 40 | 31 | 436 | 1974 |
| Qu'Appelle River below Craven | 22 | 1:2 | 44 | 20 | 141 | 1974 |
| Qu'Appelle River below Loon Creek | 25 | 1:2 | 45 | 26 | 163 | 2011 |
| Moose Jaw River above Thunder Creek | 10 | <1:2 | 13 | 24 | 252 | 1974 |
| Wascana Creek at Regina | 8 | <1:2 | 27 | 20 | 102 | 1974 |
| Moose Jaw River at Burdick | 11 | <1:2 | 14 | 30 | 368 | 1974 |
| Cutarm Creek near Spy Hill | 4 | <1:2 | 20 | 5.6 | 35 | 1955 |

* These forecast values are based on observed peak flow to date. Above normal precipitation and/or additional snow followed by a rapid melt may result in significantly higher flows.

** Provisional data; subject to change

April Snow Surveys

Summary:

- The April 9 and 10, 2026 snow survey confirmed that melt was underway south of Yorkton and near the Quill lakes, while above-normal snow remained farther north.

The Water Security Agency conducted additional manual snow surveys at 12 selected sites across Saskatchewan on April 9 and 10, 2026, to confirm the amount of snow still present on the landscape. Figure 2 shows the measured Snow Water Equivalent (SWE) at each survey site. Survey results indicate that snowmelt and runoff were already underway, or in progress, in areas south of Yorkton and near the Quill lakes, where snow cover had largely diminished. In contrast, areas north of Yorkton, north of Melfort and near Meadow Lake and Prince Albert continued to have well-above-normal snow present due to continued cold weather. Overall, the survey confirms that snow cover persisted across central and northern Saskatchewan, while melt conditions had advanced further across southern areas.

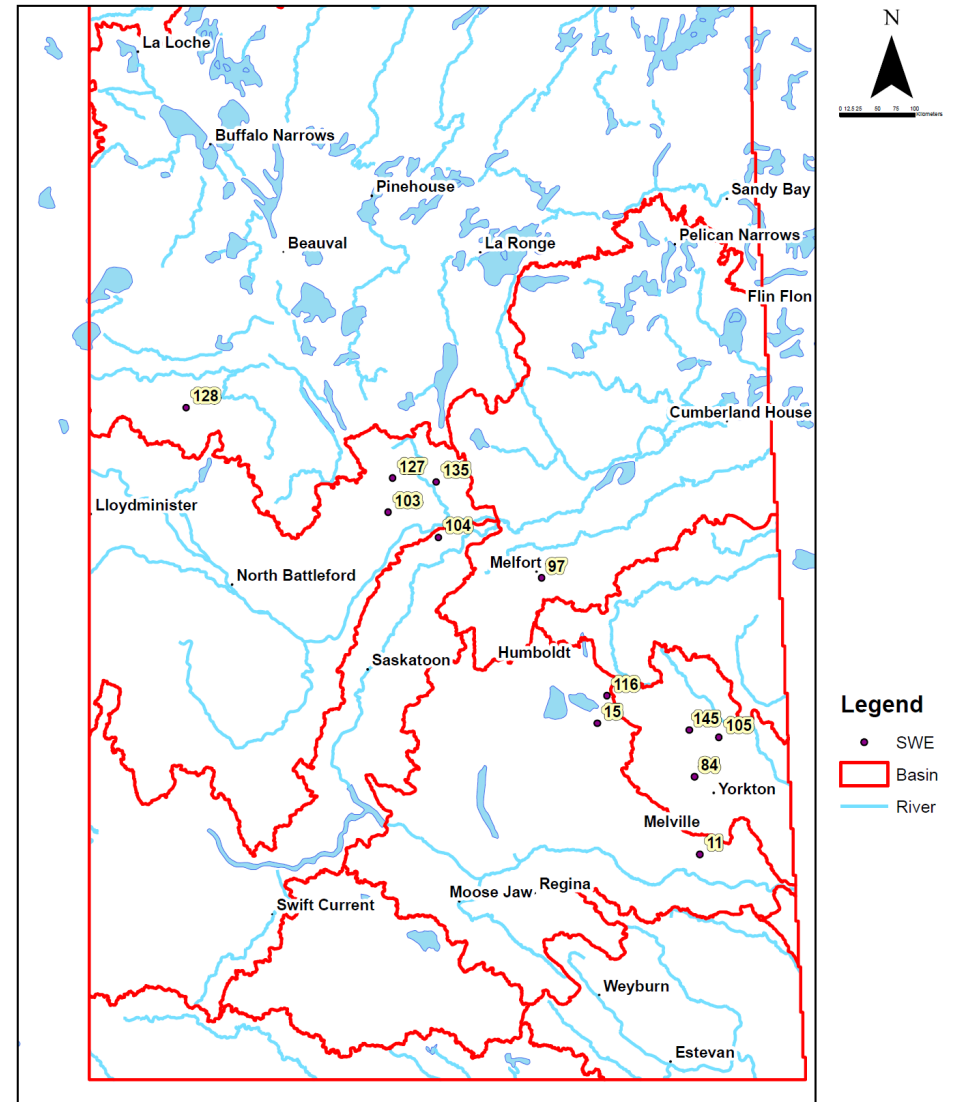


Figure 2: Total Water Equivalent (snow + ice) measured at selected snow survey sites across Saskatchewan April 9–10, 2026

Drought Risk

Summary:

- The driest conditions in southwestern Saskatchewan, where drought conditions are generally moderate dry to severe drought.
- Dry conditions continue to prevail in the north.

WSA uses two different products to help identify areas at risk for drought. The first is the Canadian Drought Map from Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (Figure 3). This product defines drought conditions based on several different data sources, including factors such as temperature and precipitation indicators. The categories in this product range from abnormally dry, which signifies conditions that historically occur about once every three years, to exceptional drought conditions, which historically only occur about once every 50 years.

The Canadian Drought Map for March 31 (Figure 3) shows that drought conditions remain more pronounced in northern Saskatchewan, with areas generally ranging from abnormally dry to moderate drought in a few small pockets. In southern Saskatchewan, conditions are generally more severe, with southwestern areas classified as moderate to severely dry.

The six-month Standardized Precipitation-Evapotranspiration Index (SPEI) map is shown in Figure 4. SPEI is a normalized drought index that uses climate data to identify areas where drought conditions exist. The SPEI values are a relative measure of surface water surplus (positive values) or deficit (negative values) in an area. The values take the current precipitation minus the potential evapotranspiration and compares it to the average value at a location. The result is normalized, so the higher the negative number, the drier the conditions are.

This map shows that over the past six months, conditions across much of Saskatchewan have generally ranged from near normal to moderately dry. The driest area is present in parts of southern, in particular southwestern, Saskatchewan, which include areas near the Alberta border, Maple Creek, Swift Current and the Cypress Hills region; moisture deficits remain evident in these areas. Central Saskatchewan, areas north of Saskatoon, show significantly wetter conditions.

These figures show that the main drought-related concerns in Saskatchewan remain in parts of northern and southwestern Saskatchewan based on the Canadian Drought Map, while recent six-month moisture deficits are more evident in southern Saskatchewan based on SPEI conditions. In these areas, favourable spring and early summer precipitation will be important to help improve moisture conditions.

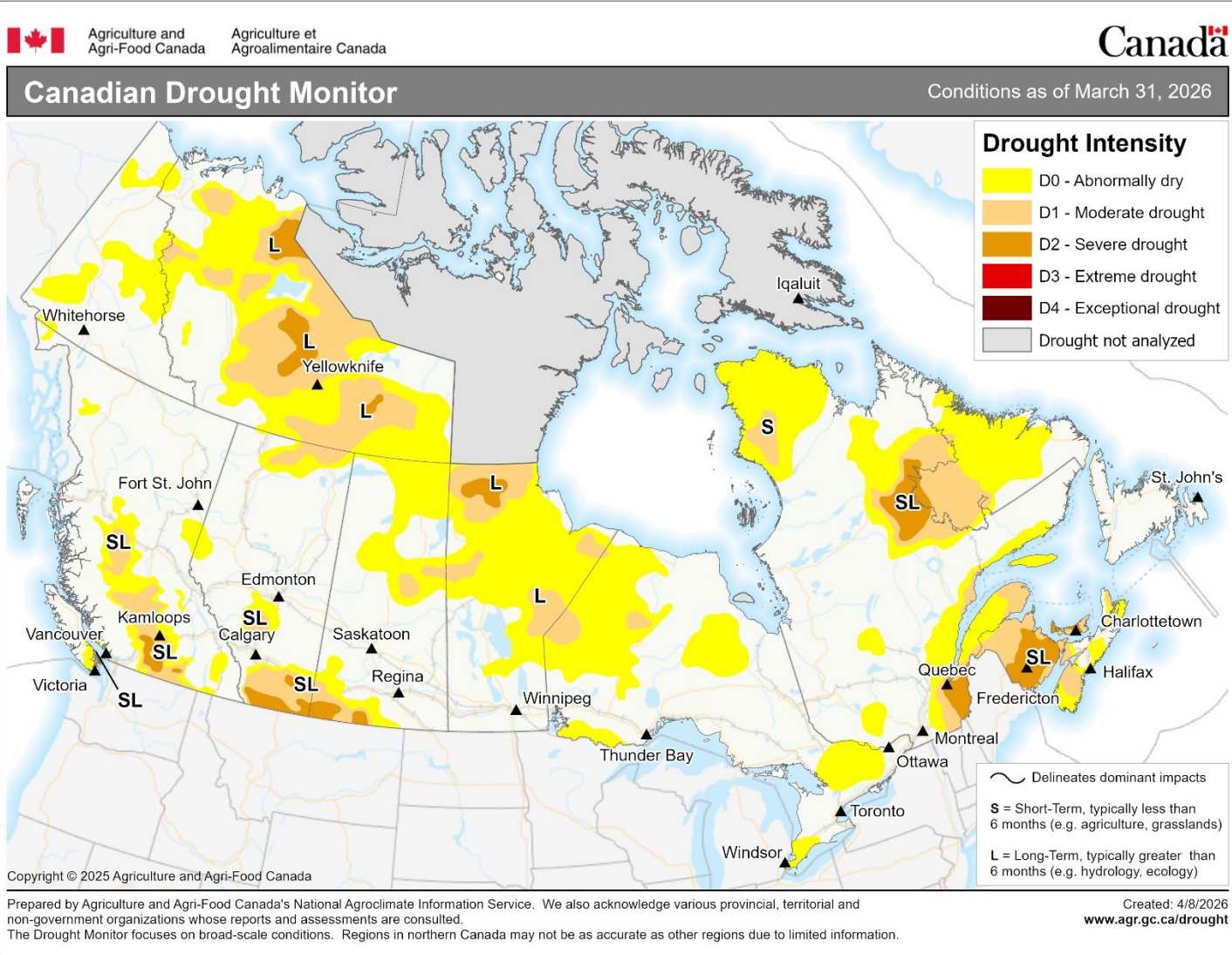


Figure 3: Canadian Drought Monitor – Mar. 31, 2026
(Map courtesy of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada)



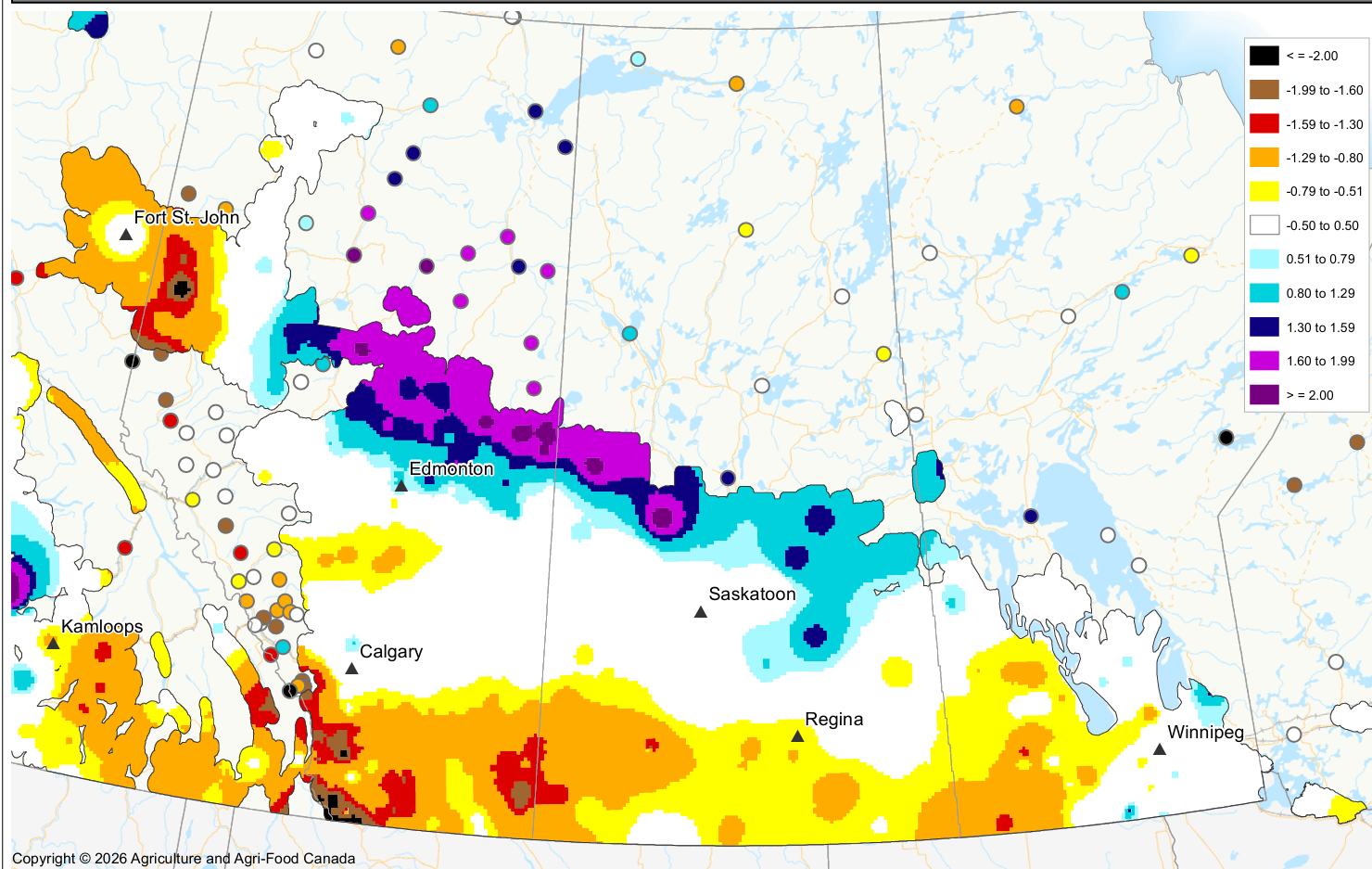
Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada

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Canada

6 - Month Standardized Precipitation Evapotranspiration Index (SPEI)

as of April 6, 2026



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Prepared by Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada's Science and Technology Branch. Data provided through partnership with Environment Canada, Natural Resources Canada, Provincial and private agencies. Produced using near real-time data that has undergone some quality control. The accuracy of this map varies due to data availability and potential data errors.

Created: 2026-04-07
www.agr.gc.ca/drought

Figure 4: 6-month Standardized Precipitation-Evapotranspiration Index (SPEI) for April 06, 2026
(Map courtesy of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada)

Water Supply Conditions

Summary:

- Most major reservoirs are within their normal operating ranges for this time of year.
- Some reservoirs in the south, like McDougald and Harris, are below normal levels.

Major water supply reservoirs in southern Saskatchewan are near their normal operating levels for this time of year, with the exception of McDougald and Harris reservoirs, which remain lower than normal. Figures 5 to 8 illustrate the status of various reservoirs in central and southern regions compared to their historical averages as of April 10. Snowmelt inflows are now nearing completion in much of the southwest, southeast and south-central regions. Reservoirs in those areas are not expected to rise much further in the coming weeks unless significant additional precipitation is received.

Lake Diefenbaker is currently at approximately 552.36 m, which is above the median for this time of year and within the normal operating range. Current operations are focused on capturing spring runoff and refilling the reservoir.



Photo Credit: Pike Lake Near Saskatoon, April 6, 2026
(Jenna Coates, Water Security Agency)

Central Saskatchewan Reservoir Levels

April 10, 2026

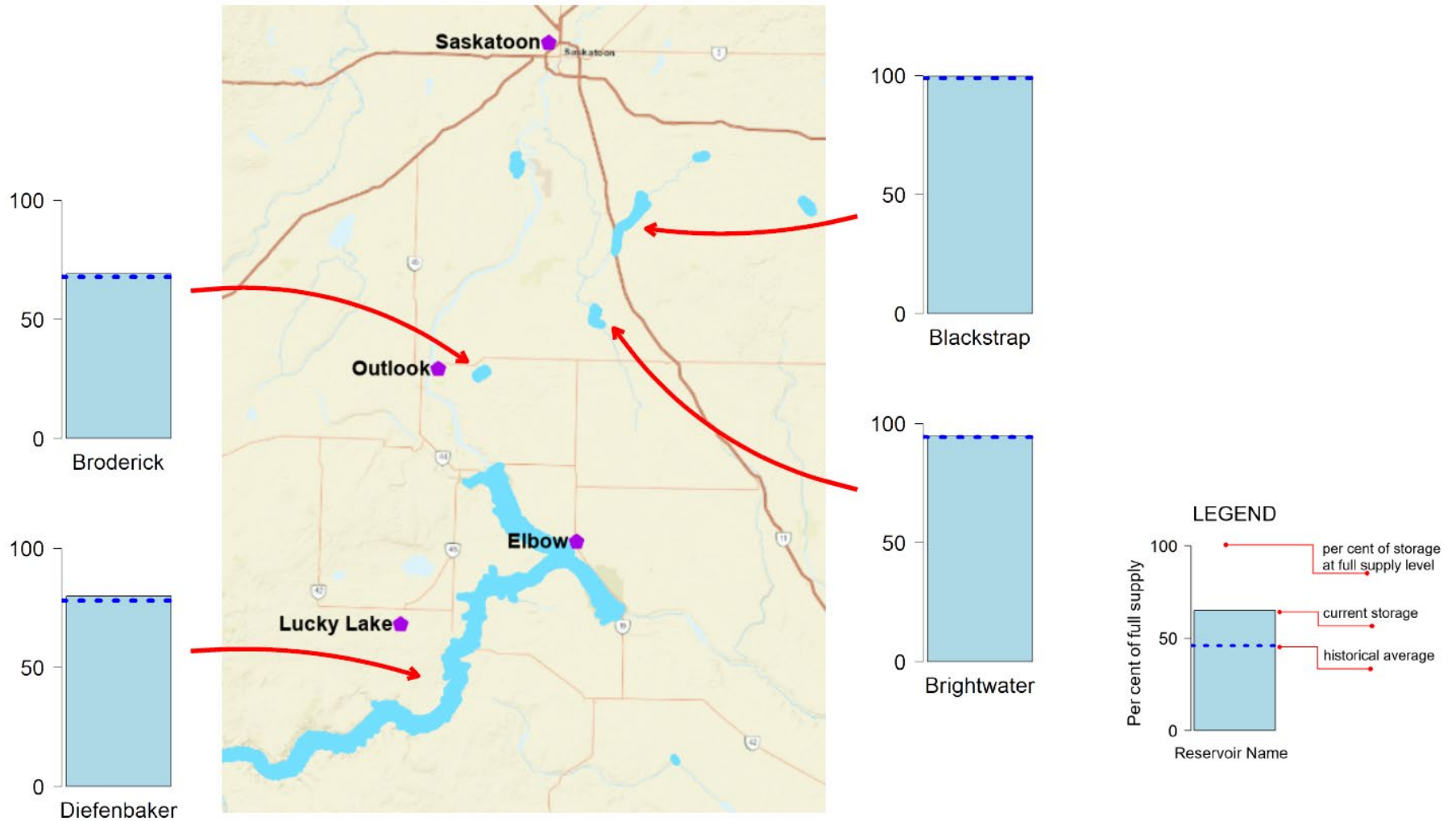


Figure 5: Reservoir Conditions in Central Saskatchewan as of April 10, 2026

Southeastern Saskatchewan Reservoir Levels

April 10, 2026

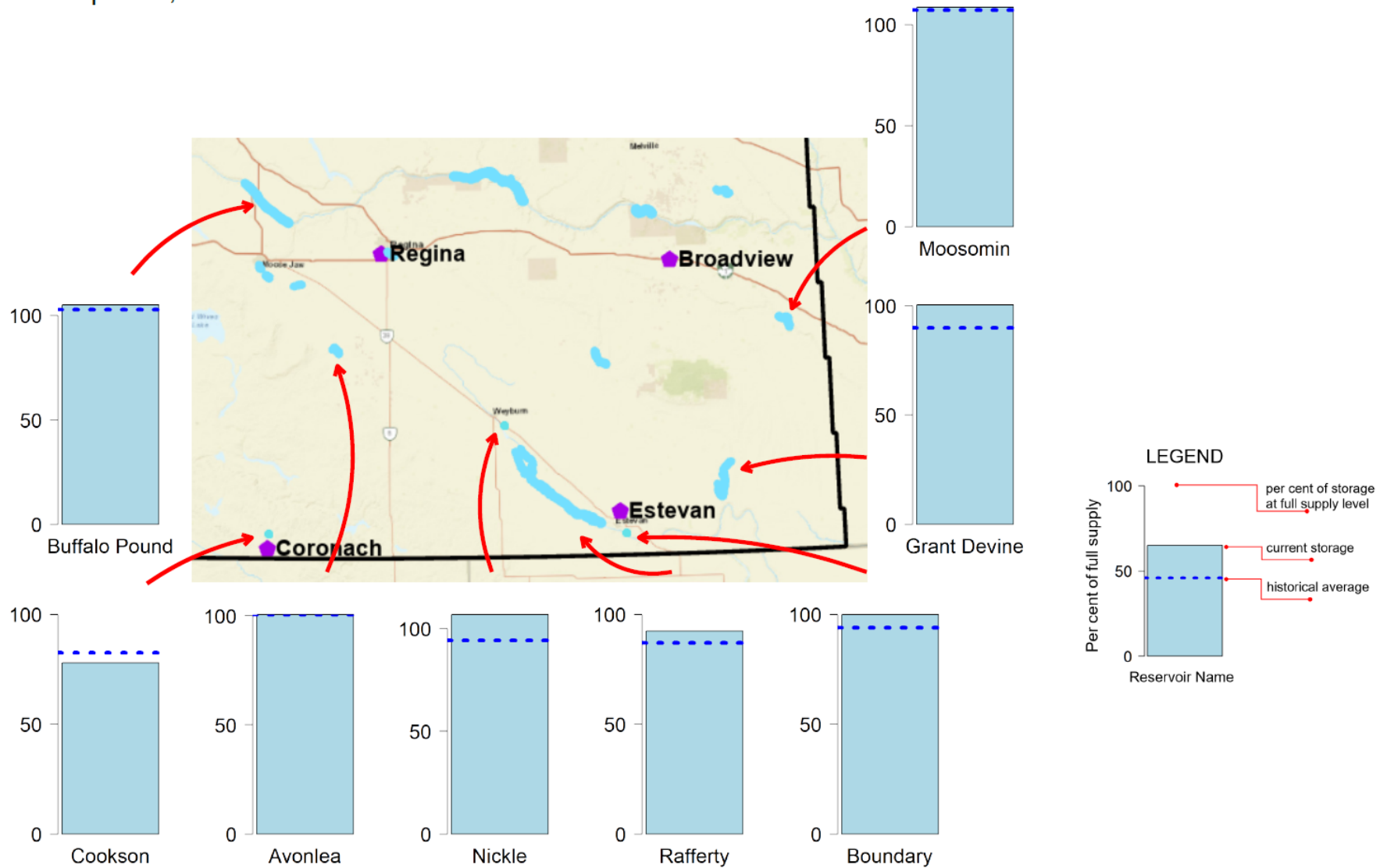


Figure 6: Reservoir Conditions in Southeastern Saskatchewan as of April 10, 2026

South Central Saskatchewan Reservoir Levels

April 10, 2026

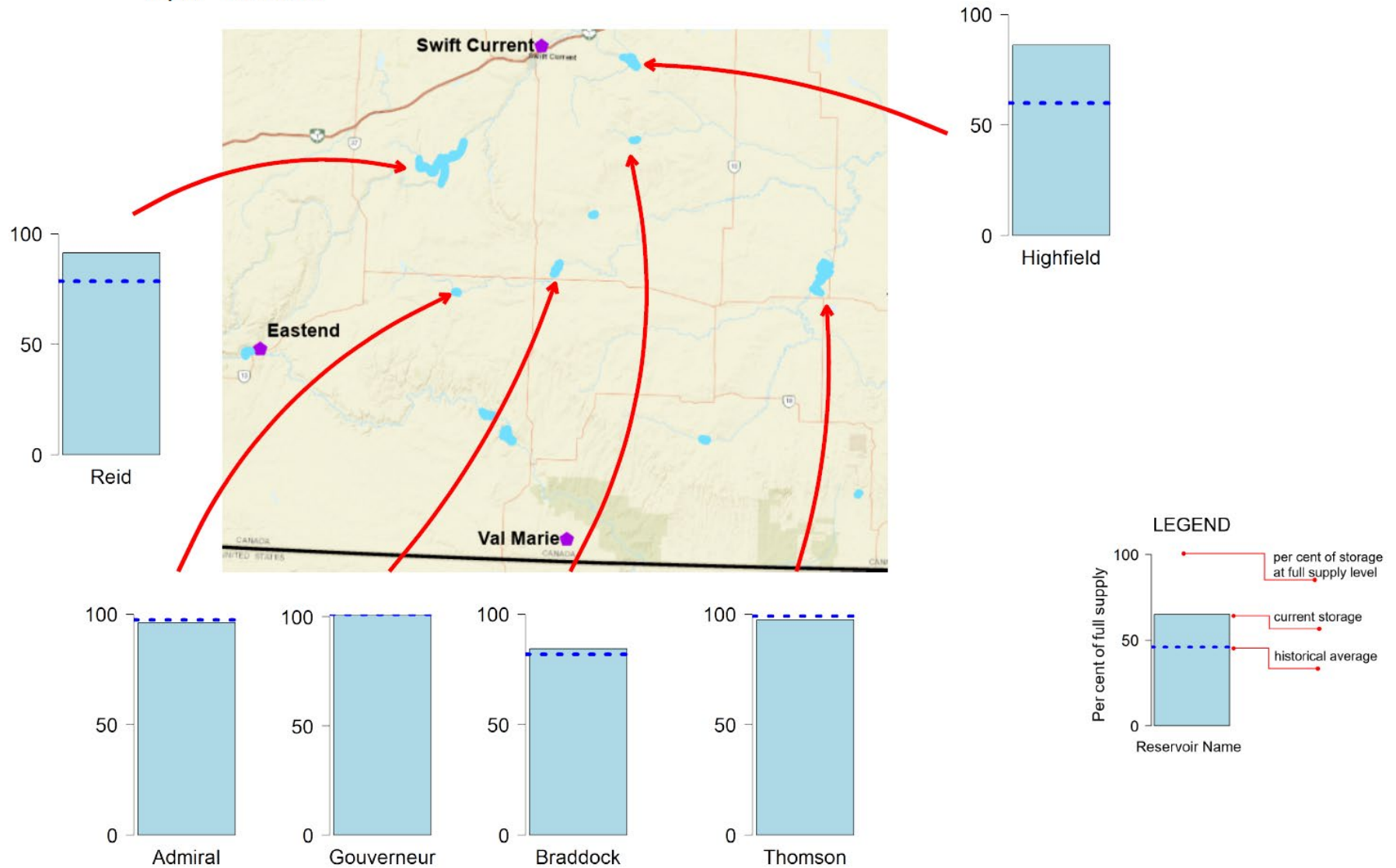


Figure 7: Reservoir Conditions in South Central Saskatchewan as of April 10, 2026

Southwestern Saskatchewan Reservoir Levels

April 10, 2026

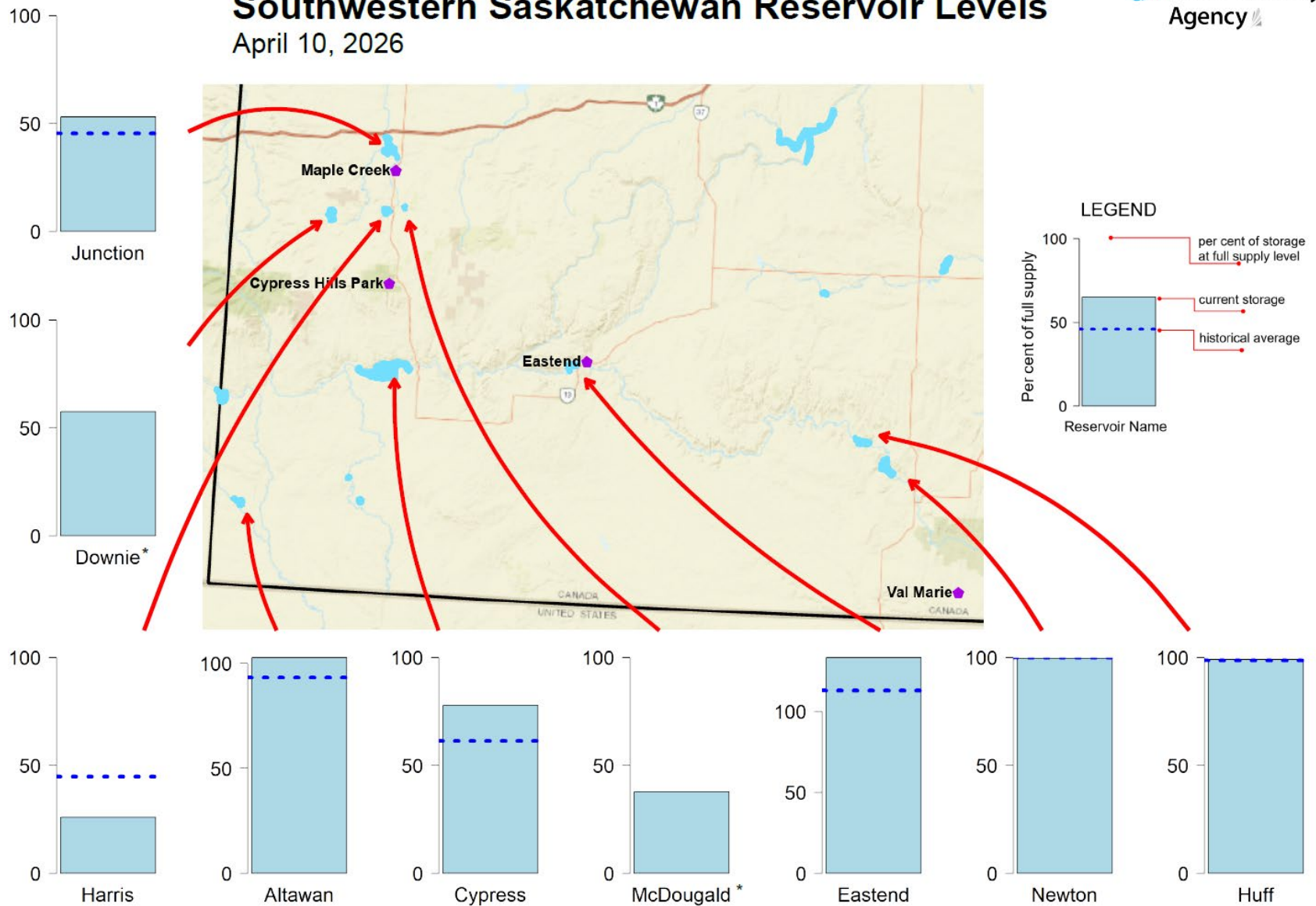


Figure 8: Reservoir Conditions in Southwestern Saskatchewan as of April 10, 2026

*Insufficient historical data to create an average for Downie and McDougald.

Major River Systems

Summary:

- The South Saskatchewan River Basin is expected to see above normal mountain runoff this spring.
- Runoff due to snowmelt is nearing completion in the Souris River Basin. Reservoirs are projected to remain within normal operating ranges.
- Snowmelt is completed in southern portion of the Qu'Appelle River Basin, while snowmelt in the northern parts of the basin remains limited at this time. The lakes in the basin are expected to be in normal summer operating zones following the spring melt.
- Snowmelt and runoff in the southwest region have been completed, with most observed runoff responses ranging from normal to well below normal. The exception is Rushlake Creek, which experienced above normal runoff.
- Runoff in the Churchill River Basin is expected to be below normal to above normal this spring, area dependent.
- The Quill lakes are expected to see an above normal runoff response this spring.

Saskatchewan River Basin

Inflows to Lake Diefenbaker were above normal in late March and early April due to warm weather and early prairie snowmelt but have since declined to below normal. The prairie runoff contribution was limited and lower than normal overall. Releases were maintained slightly below normal earlier in the winter because of ice constraints on the South Saskatchewan River near Moon Lake; however, releases have remained near normal since late January. Flows on the North Saskatchewan River are below normal for this time of year.

Warm weather beginning around mid-March resulted in rapid snowmelt across southern Saskatchewan and the Alberta prairie portion of the South Saskatchewan River Basin. Additional snowfall events, combined with continued warm weather, also contributed to increased flow. While snowmelt across the prairie portion is now largely complete, runoff remains active, with flows in some areas still near normal for this time of year.

Mountain snowpack remains variable across the Saskatchewan River Basin headwaters, ranging from below to near normal in the Oldman Basin and from above normal to well above normal in the Bow River and Red Deer River basins. Overall, mountain snowpack is expected to be the main driver of May and June flows in the Saskatchewan River Basin. If these conditions persist, late spring runoff into Lake Diefenbaker is expected to be above normal. The timing and magnitude of runoff will depend on spring temperatures, melt progression in the headwaters and late spring to early summer rainfall in southern Alberta.

The reservoir is currently at approximately 552.36 m, which is above the median for this time of year but still within the normal operating range. Current operations are focused on refilling the reservoir toward seasonal water level objectives while maintaining flexibility to respond to changing runoff conditions as spring progresses.

Souris River

The first snowmelt runoff response in the Souris River Basin began on February 5 and produced small runoff volumes throughout the basin. The more substantial melting event began on March 7 and snowmelt runoff has continued to date. Observed daily peak flows throughout the Souris Basin ranged from near normal to below normal. As of April 10, Boundary Reservoir and Grant Devine Lake are at full supply level (FSL) and Rafferty Reservoir (McDonald Lake) is 0.70 m below FSL. With little snow remaining on the landscape, runoff is nearing completion in the Souris River Basin.

Diversion of water from Boundary Reservoir to Rafferty Reservoir via the Boundary-Rafferty Diversion Canal has been ongoing since March 13 and will continue as needed while inflow to Boundary Reservoir continues. A release from Grant Devine Dam has been ongoing since April 1 and will continue as needed to maintain Grant Devine Lake at FSL and ensure that June 1 international apportionment obligations are met. Although inflow to Rafferty Reservoir (McDonald Lake) is continuing, Rafferty Reservoir is unlikely to reach its FSL in 2026. Boundary, Rafferty and Grant Devine reservoirs are projected to remain within normal operating ranges.

Qu'Appelle River

With spring snowmelt runoff underway, all lakes within the Qu'Appelle River Basin are currently within their normal operating ranges for this time of year.

Releases from the Qu'Appelle River Dam have been held near 1.8 m³/s throughout the winter. Snowmelt runoff began around March 23 in the southern portions of the basin, including the Moose Jaw River, Wascana Creek, Upper Qu'Appelle River and the lower portion of the Last Mountain Lake Watershed. Snowmelt in the northern parts of the basin remains limited at this time.

In areas where snowmelt has already completed, peak flows have generally been near normal or above normal, consistent with approximately a 1-in-2 to 1-in-5-year event.

Most lakes in the basin remain ice-covered. No operational changes have been made at Buffalo Pound Lake. At the Craven Dam, gates are partially closed; while in Echo Lake and Crooked Lake, structures are fully open and lake levels continue to rise, though more slowly than two weeks ago. Stoplogs are planned to be installed at Echo and Crooked Lakes in a timely manner to achieve normal summer levels.

Although substantial snowpack remains in the northern portion of the basin, flooding within the system is not currently anticipated. However, spring runoff conditions could change depending on the rate of snowmelt and any significant rainfall events.

Southwest

As of April 10, water levels for most lakes in the southwest region are near normal for this time of the year, except for McDougald and Harris reservoirs, which are below normal.

The snowpack began melting early in the second week of February following several abnormal warming spells. Snowmelt and runoff are now complete across the region, with no snow remaining on the landscape. Runoff was mostly normal to well below normal across the region, except Rushlake Creek, which experienced above normal runoff (1:5-year event).

Churchill River Basin

Snowpack remains present across the Churchill River Basin because of continued cold weather in northern Saskatchewan. Although fall conditions were dry, the runoff response ranging from below normal to above normal, depending on local conditions. Flows throughout the Churchill River Basin are currently below normal for this time of year. With a near normal to above normal runoff expected, flows are expected to be near normal levels into the summer months.

Reindeer Lake and Lac La Ronge are currently near the lower end of their operating ranges, at approximately 335.86 m and 364.1 m, respectively. Runoff response in these basins is expected to vary from below normal to above normal in certain areas. Additional precipitation may be required to return lake levels to the normal operating range.

Quill Lakes

The Quill lakes are currently at an elevation of 519.58 m, which is 4 cm higher than last year at this time of the year (519.54 m). The snowpack measured in the northern parts of the Quill Lakes Basin during the April snow surveys was well-above normal. Assuming normal melt conditions, above normal snowmelt inflows are expected in the basin.



Photo Credit: Sturgeon Weir River – Leaf Rapids, April 1, 2026
(Shawn Salm, Water Security Agency)

Long Range Forecasts

Summary:

- Near normal precipitation is forecast for the next three months.
- Warmer than normal temperatures are expected over the next three months.

The three-month spatial anomalies maps for precipitation (Figure 9) and temperature (Figure 10) covering the May 1 to July 31 forecast period show the expected long-range precipitation and temperature trends in relation to 30-year climate normals.

Most long-range precipitation forecasts are predicting normal precipitation accumulations across the province for May through July. All long-range models are predicting warmer than normal temperatures across the province

It is important to note that seasonal weather forecasts are statistically unreliable, and their skill is particularly poor for predicting precipitation. However, good agreement among various long-range products indicates a higher degree of confidence.

Final Update

This may be the final Spring Runoff Forecast for the season. With the completion of spring runoff, the monthly Water Supply Conditions and Outlook reports will be produced.

Subsequent reports will be released on wsask.ca.

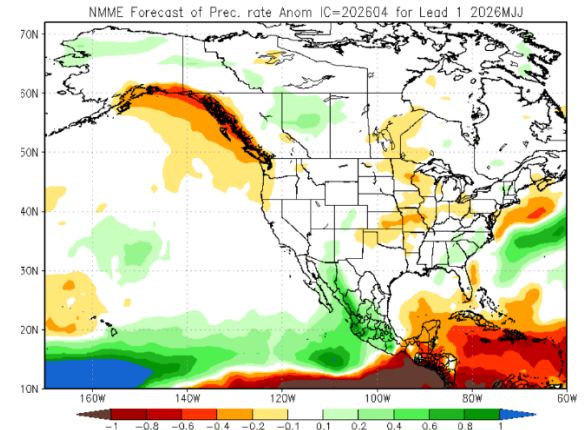


Figure 9: North American Multi-Model Ensemble Precipitation Anomaly Outlook for May 1 to July 31, 2026 (Map courtesy of the US National Weather Service)

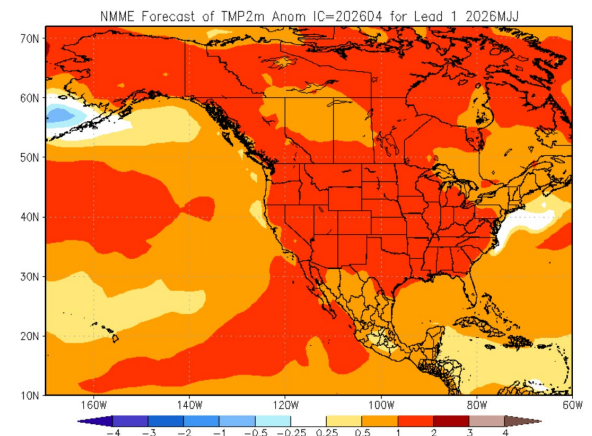


Figure 10: North American Multi-Model Ensemble Temperature Anomaly Outlook for May 1 to July 31, 2026 (Map Courtesy of the US National Weather Service)