
Water Sharing Agreement Meeting Report – July 4, 2024

This report summarizes the outcomes of the meetings that took place on July 4, 2024 in support of the Water Sharing Agreements. The meetings enable MOU signatories to discuss basin conditions in real time and make collaborative water sharing decisions. A workbook including stream flows, weather data and reservoir status that informed the MOU decision making process can be found at alberta.ca/drought.

Due to changing conditions in the respective basins, the Oldman South Saskatchewan River Basin and Southern Tributaries MOU meetings will be held separately going forward. There was no meeting held in the Red Deer River Basin and Southern Tributaries on July 4, 2024. The MOU next regular meeting for these sub-basins is scheduled for July 18, 2024.

Oldman South Saskatchewan River Basin

Water Sharing Agreement Activation Status

Based on conditions in the basins, operational needs and other considerations, the MOU Signatories in the Oldman South Saskatchewan River Basin have made the unanimous decision **to maintain the activation of the Water Sharing Agreements as decided on May 9th, 2024.**

Basin Conditions Summary

Streamflows in the basins are below normal but all instream objectives on mainstream rivers are being met. There has been significant snow melt in the past two weeks and snow pillows are largely depleted. Reservoir levels are stable and most key reservoirs are within normal range. The Oldman Reservoir storage level is just at the lower quartile (93% full), and the fill curve is beginning to flatten as supply declines and demand is gradually increasing.

Environment and Climate Change Canada's long-range forecast indicates temperatures above normal (province-wide) and precipitation below normal (Southern Alberta) from June-August. Signatories continue to monitor conditions, meet bi-weekly, and are prepared to adjust if conditions change.

Drought Management Metrics

1. Instream Objectives

- All mainstem instream objectives in the basins are being met.

2. Shortages¹

- There are no reported shortages in the basins.

3. Reservoir levels (as of July 3)

- Most reservoir levels in the Oldman South Saskatchewan River Basin are within or above normal levels. Levels have mostly increased or remained stable in the last two weeks.

¹ For the purposes of this report, shortages refer to impacts on MOU signatories beyond projected demand.

Type of managed reservoir	Reservoir name	Normal storage (%)	Current storage (%)	Comments
GoA	Oldman Reservoir	95-99	96	2% increase from last week
GoA	Keho Reservoir	90-98	93	3% decrease from last week
GoA	Chain Lakes	100	100	No change from last week
GoA	Pine Coulee	87-89	81	1% increase from last week
GoA	Waterton	84-94	95	1% increase from last week
GoA	St. Mary	87-95	88	3% increase from last week
GoA	Payne Lake	84-95	100	No change from last week
GoA	Milk River Ridge	82-97	100	No change from last week
Private	Chin Reservoir	57-84	69	12% increase from last week
Private	Murray	54-74	70	7% increase from last week
Private	40 Mile	80-98	57	6% increase from last week

Summary of Management actions by MOU signatories

Irrigation districts

The Lethbridge Northern Irrigation District (LNID), being the only irrigation district that is a signatory to this MOU, is reporting below average demand for this time of the season due to above average precipitation. Demand is expected to increase in coming weeks in line with crop demands and expected temperatures increases.

The LNID has increased their seasonal irrigation allocation from 8 inches per acre to 11 inches per acre, factoring basin conditions, local agricultural demand, and end of season reservoir storage levels.

Municipalities

Municipalities continue to implement voluntary restrictions, provide education and communication about wise use of water, and implement water conservation actions (e.g., rain barrel programs and xeriscaping). The City of Lethbridge and the County of Lethbridge are coordinating communication and outreach efforts. All MOU Signatory municipalities have reported lower demand as compared to previous year(s).

Communication with Water License Holders (Non-Signatory to the MOU)

Water users that operate under their own water license, outside of municipal or district conveyances, have previously been asked by the Minister of Environment and Protected Areas to match the water use reductions of the MOU signatories.

Private irrigators impacted by updated irrigation allocations will be notified via mail or email. Additional information may be obtained at alberta.ca/drought.

Bow River Basin

Water Sharing Agreement Activation Status

Based on conditions in the basin, operational needs and other observations, the MOU Signatories have made the unanimous decision not to activate the Water Sharing Agreement at this time.

Basin Conditions Summary

The basin continued to receive significant precipitation in the past week, which has contributed to lower demand for water. High temperatures are expected for the next few weeks. Key reservoirs are at or beyond normal levels for this time of year, with some TransAlta managed reservoirs below normal due to planned operational work and dam safety inspections. Streamflows are normal or above normal for this time of year and instream objectives are being met. Snow melt is complete at most stations.

Environment and Climate change Canada's long-range forecast indicates temperatures above normal (province-wide) and precipitation below normal (Southern Alberta) from June-August.

Drought Management Metrics

1. Instream Objectives

- All mainstem instream objectives in the basin are being met.

2. Shortages¹

- There are no reported shortages in the basin.

3. Reservoir levels (as of July 3)

- Most reservoirs in the Bow River Basin are within or above normal range for this time of year.

Type of managed reservoir	Reservoir name	Normal storage (%)	Current storage (%)	Comments
GoA	Lake McGregor	90-95	96	No change from last week
Private	Lake Newell	87-93	95	1% decrease from last week
TransAlta	Barrier Lake	51-57	13	2% decrease from last week. Reduced capacity due to dam safety investigations
TransAlta	Bearspaw	95-97	96	No change from last week
TransAlta	Cascade	54-72	59	9% increase from last week
TransAlta	Ghost	85-100	81	35% increase from last week
TransAlta	Lower Kananaskis Lake	49-67	44	2% increase from last week
TransAlta	Spray	45-75	56	15% increase from last week
TransAlta	Upper Kananaskis Lake	49-61	65	5% increase from last week
City of Calgary	Glenmore	37-66	65%	15% increase from last week

Maintenance is occurring on some TransAlta locations resulting in some minor shifts in storage. Volume normally stored in Barrier Reservoir is being held upstream in Lower Kananaskis Lake until repairs and maintenance have been completed.

Summary of Management Actions by MOU Signatories

- Irrigation districts reported that significant rain in the last few weeks has continued to result irrigation demand being lower than expected. It is expected that as temperatures rise, demand will start to increase. Given the delayed seeding earlier in the season, demand increases will likely be staggered – rather than the sharp peaks that are normally seen this time of year.
- The City of Calgary is continuing to focus on stabilizing its' water system after repairing the major water main break that occurred on June 5th. The City has temporarily paused drought-related communications and is prioritizing communications related to responding to this incident. The call to Calgarians for indoor water use reductions was lifted on Tuesday, July 2nd, but outdoor restrictions remain in place as the system continues to stabilize. Residents and

businesses in Calgary have generally been diligent in reducing their water use over the past several weeks, resulting in significant water conservation.

- Industrial MOU signatories have continued to implement water reductions where possible.