

Arctic Network

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Alaska Region
Inventory & Monitoring Program



Bering Land Bridge N Pres. • Cape Krusenstern NM
Gates of the Arctic NP & Pres. • Kobuk Valley NP • Noatak N Pres.

Spring 2017

Weather & Climate Summary Bering Land Bridge National Preserve Spring 2017

Nome Spring Weather

March was colder and much drier than normal in Nome. The average temperature for March was 0.6°F compared to a normal of 10.3°F. The low temperature for the month was -23°F recorded on March 1. The total snowfall for March was a mere 0.9 inches; normal is 8.9 inches. The water equivalent of the 0.9 inches of snow was only 0.01 inches, which is only 2% of normal. March 2017 was the 5th driest on record.

Things changed in April. Temperatures warmed up on April 1st and remained above normal for most of the month. April 2017 was the 4th warmest April on record. The average temperature for the month was 30.4°F, which is 9.9°F warmer than normal. There were two new daily record high temperatures in April: 48°F on April 24 and 51°F on April 30. Monthly precipitation totaled 0.15 inches; normal is 0.76 inches. Only 1.1 inches of snow fell during the month; normal for the month is 7.5 inches. The snow melt-out date for Nome was April 28th; this is almost two weeks earlier than the normal melt-out date of May 9.

May was just above normal in terms of temperature and precipitation. The average monthly temperature was 38.7°F, which is 1.9°F warmer than normal. The streak of exceptionally dry weather which started in March ended in late May. Between May 22 and 27 a total of 0.94 inches of precipitation was recorded, bringing the monthly total to 109% of normal. There was 0.4 inches of measurable snowfall in May (normal is 2.3 inches).

Overall, spring 2017 was slightly warmer than normal and much drier than normal. The average spring temperature

at Nome was 0.7°F warmer than normal at 23.2°F. The total spring precipitation was 1.10 inches, 48% of normal. The cumulative snowfall for the 2016-2017 season (through May 31) was 54.6 inches; the long-term average is 75.4 inches. (Figures 1 and 2; Table 1, 2, and 3).

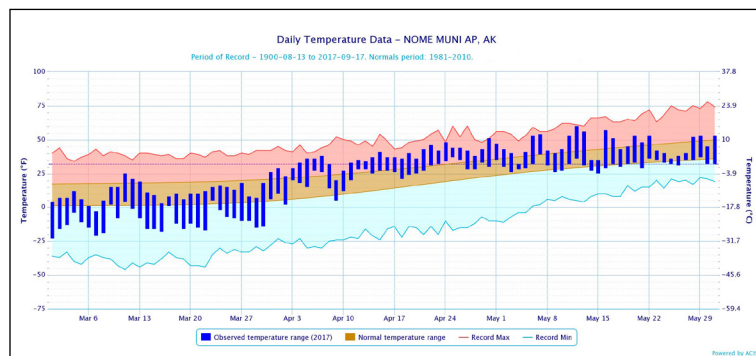


Figure 1. Spring 2017 daily temperatures at Nome showing record maximum (red), record minimum (blue), normal (brown) and observed range (blue bars).

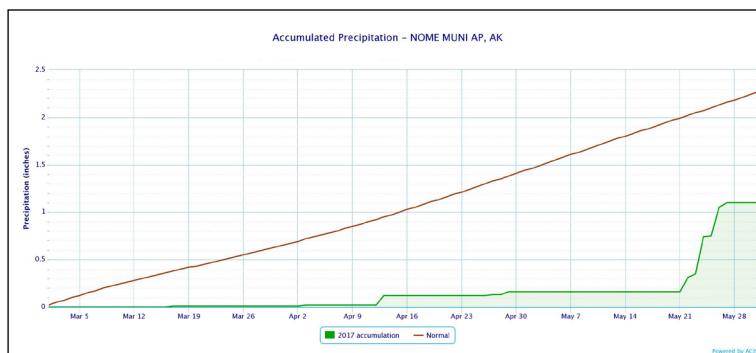


Figure 2. Spring 2017 accumulated precipitation at Nome (green) compared to normal (brown line).

Table 1. Temperature: Spring 2017 average monthly temperatures compared to the 1981-2010 normal.

Spring 2017	Average Monthly Temp °F	1981-2010 Normal °F	Departure from Normal °F	Monthly High °F / Date	Monthly Low °F / Date
March	0.6	10.3	-9.7	26 / Mar 31	-23 / Mar 1
April	30.4	20.5	+9.9	51* / Apr 30	2 / Apr 2
May	38.7	36.8	+1.9	60 / May 12	25 / May 15

Spring Season Temperature Departure from Normal: +0.7°F; *Record daily high

Table 2. Precipitation: Spring 2017 monthly precipitation totals compared to normal.

Spring 2017	Total Monthly Precip. in.	1981-2010 Normal in.	Departure from Normal in.	Greatest 24 -hr. total in. / Date	# Days with >=0.01 in. water
March	0.01	0.65	-0.64	0.01 / Mar 17	1
April	0.15	0.76	-0.61	0.10 / Apr 13	4
May	0.94	0.86	+0.08	0.39 / May 24	6

Spring Season Precipitation Departure from Normal: -1.17 inches (48% of normal)

Table 3. Snowfall: Spring 2017 monthly snowfall totals compared to normal.

Spring 2017	Total Monthly Snowfall in.	1981-2010 Normal in.	Departure from Normal in.	Greatest 24 -hr. snow-fall total in. / Date	Cumulative snowfall since 1-July in.
March	0.9	8.9	-8.0	0.4 / Mar 3	53.1
April	1.1	7.5	-6.4	1.0 / Apr 13	54.2
May	0.4	2.3	-1.9	0.4 / May 26	54.6

Climate Monitoring in Bering Land Bridge National Preserve

NPS climate stations in Bering Land Bridge complement the long-term record from the National Weather Service station in Nome. NPS stations are located at Serpentine Hot Springs, Midnight Mountain, Devil Mountain, and Ella Creek (Figure 3).

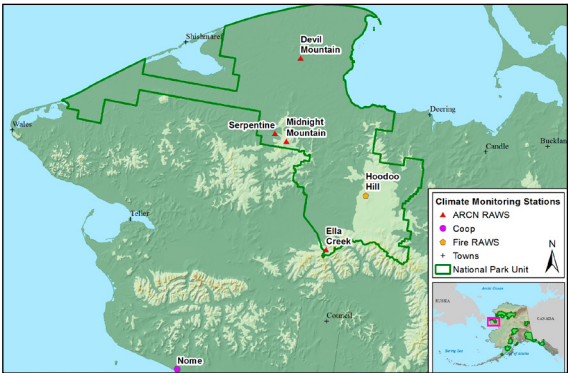


Figure 3. NPS Climate stations in Bering Land Bridge.

Spring Season Temperatures in Bering Land Bridge

Spring 2017 was warmer in Nome than at the NPS climate sites in Bering Land Bridge (Figure 4). Devil Mountain was the coldest overall. Ella Creek, in the center of the Seward Peninsula and up high in the Bendeleben Mountains was warmer in March and April while winter inversions were still present; but as the sun returned to the northern latitudes and the persistent inversion started to break down, temperatures at lower elevations, such as Serpentine were warmer than the higher elevations. Devil Mountain temperatures, which are influenced by the presence or absence of sea ice, remained cool through May. Figure 5 shows the sea ice extent as of May 22, 2017.

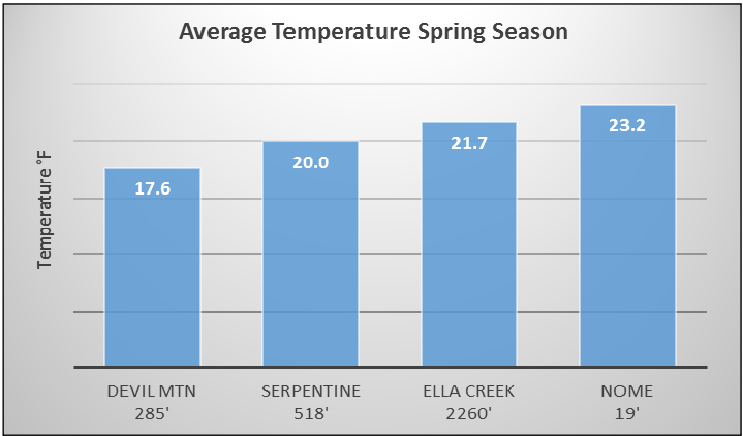


Figure 4 (above). 2017 average spring temperatures in BELA and Nome.



Figure 5. Sea ice extent May 22, 2017.

More Information

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[Current weather in BELA](#)