



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

2nd Quarter Spring 2016

Weather & Climate Summary Bering Land Bridge National Preserve Spring 2016

Nome Spring Weather

Spring of 2016 was ushered in with a strong El Nino and very warm sea surface temperatures in the northern Pacific Ocean. What did that mean for Nome...?

March was warmer and much drier than normal in Nome. The average temperature for March was 11.6°F compared to a normal of 10.3°F. The low temperature for the month was -9°F recorded on both March 15 and 16. The total snowfall for March was a mere 0.5 inches; normal is 8.9 inches. The water equivalent of the 0.5 inches of snow was only 0.04 inches, which is only 6% of normal. March 2016 was the 6th driest on record.

April 2016 was the 2nd warmest April on record. The average temperature for the month was 34.3°F, which is 13.8°F above normal. There have been only three Aprils on record that have had monthly average temperatures above freezing since records began in 1907. Every day of the month was warmer than normal, with record highs on April 12, 18, 20, 21, 26, and 28. Monthly precipitation totaled 0.80 inches; normal is 0.76 inches. Most precipitation came during the first week of the month in the form of wet snow. A total of 6.1 inches of snow fell during that first week; normal for the month is 7.5 inches. The snow melt-out date for Nome was April 21st; this is two weeks earlier than the normal melt-out date of May 9.

May was warm and wet, with an average monthly temperature of 42.9°F, which is 6.1°F warmer than normal. It was the 4th warmest May on record, with record highs on May 29 and 31. Rainfall was recorded on 11 days in May and was 142% of normal at 1.22 inches; there was only a trace of snowfall (normal is 2.3 inches). The cumulative snowfall for the 2015-16 season (through May 31) was 48.9

inches; the long-term average is 75.4 inches.

The average spring temperature at Nome was 29.6°F which is 7.1°F warmer than the 1981-2010 normal. It was the 2nd warmest spring on record (1907-2016). The total spring precipitation was 2.06 inches, 91% of normal (Figures 1 and 2; Table 1, 2, and 3).

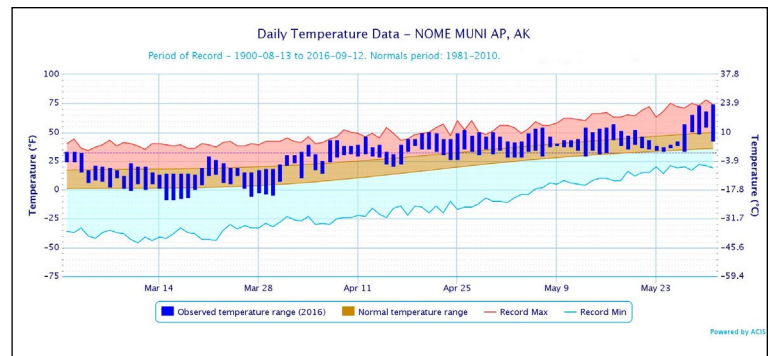


Figure 1. Spring 2016 daily temperatures at Nome showing **record maximum** (red), **record minimum** (blue), **normal** (brown) and **observed** range (blue bars).

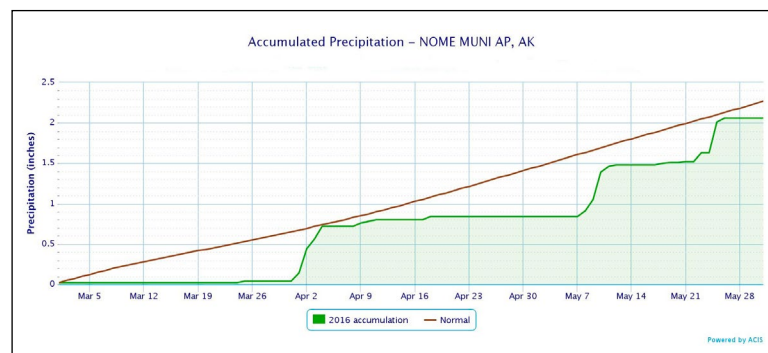


Figure 2. Spring **2016** accumulated precipitation at Nome (green) compared to **normal** (brown line).

Table 1. Temperature: Spring 2016 average monthly temperatures compared to the 1981-2010 normal.

Spring 2016	Average Monthly Temp °F	1981-2010 Normal °F	Departure from Normal °F	Monthly High °F / Date	Monthly Low °F / Date
March	11.6	10.3	+1.3	33 / March 1 & 2	-9 / March 15 & 16
April	34.3	20.5	+13.8	52* / April 26	10 / April 3
May	42.9	36.8	+6.1	74* / May 31	28 / May 2, 3, 4

*Daily Record High; Season Temperature Departure from Normal: +7.1°F

Table 2. Precipitation: Spring 2016 monthly precipitation totals compared to normal.

Spring 2016	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	0.04	0.65	-0.61	.02 / March 1 & 25	2
April	0.80	0.76	+0.04	0.30 / April 2	8
May	1.22	0.86	+0.36	0.38 / May 25	11

Spring Season Precipitation Departure from Normal: -0.21 inches (91% of normal)

Table 3. Snowfall: Spring 2016 monthly snowfall totals compared to normal.

Spring 2016	Total Monthly Snowfall in.	1981-2010 Normal in.	Departure from Normal in.	Greatest 24 -hr. snowfall total in. / Date	Cumulative snowfall since 1-July in.
March	0.5	8.9	-8.4	0.3 / March 25	42.8
April	6.1	7.5	-1.4	3.4 / April 2	48.9
May	Trace	2.3	-2.3	Trace/ May 25	48.9

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). Near real-time observations are available through the National Weather service at this [hyperlink](#).

Featured Station: Devil Mountain

The Devil Mountain site is located on the highest point in the central northern region of the preserve at an elevation of 798 feet. It is surrounded by a low-lying tundra expanse that is representative of the northern area of BELA (Figure 4). The vegetation consists of tussock tundra with Labrador Tea and saturated mosses. Caribou use the windy location to get a break from persistent mosquitoes in the warm months. The Devil Mountain site was installed in 2011. In 2014 the mean annual temperature was 25.9°F, which was > 5°F cooler than Nome and > 2°F cooler than Kotzebue. The highest temperature recorded thus far was 80.5°F on June

19, 2013 and the lowest was -41.3°F on February 2, 2012. The winds are persistent at this location, with peak gusts >40 mph.



Figure 4. Devil Mountain climate station.



Figure 3. NPS Climate stations in Bering Land Bridge National Preserve.

More Information

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[Current weather in BELA](#)