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2018 Weather in Review: Allegheny Portage Railroad National Historic Site

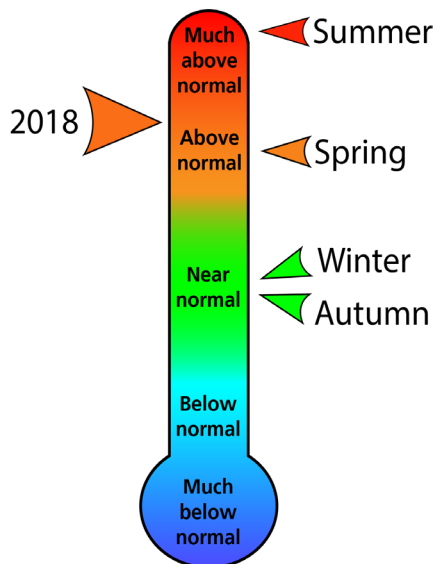
In all, 2018 was warm and extremely wet. In fact, it was a record-setting year for precipitation, with higher totals than ever recorded. Weather data collected in surrounding counties since 1895 shows increasing trends in annual average temperature (+0.08 °F per decade) and annual total precipitation (+0.46 inches per decade).

Information in this brief represents weather data averaged from all of the counties surrounding the park. These counties include Blair and Cambria counties, Pennsylvania. More local weather data may vary slightly from what is reported here.

Temperature

In total, 2018 was the 25th warmest year at the park since 1895. In particular, summer was much warmer than normal (Figure 1). Eight months had higher than normal temperatures, with February, May, and September all being more than 4 °F above normal (Table 1).

Table 1. Average monthly, average annual, and departures from long-term average temperatures. Departures from average are based on a comparison of 2018 average temperatures to relevant averages from 1895-2017. Data are available at <https://www.ncdc.noaa.gov/cag/county/time-series>.



Month/ Year	Average temperature (°F)	Departure from average (°F)
January	22.6	-2.6
February	34.2	+7.7
March	30.8	-4.8
April	42.2	-4.5
May	64.7	+7.2
June	65.8	+0.2
July	70.2	+0.5
August	70.8	+3.0
September	65.9	+4.7
October	51.6	+1.4
November	34.9	-4.3
December	32.0	+2.8
2018	48.8	+0.9

Figure 1. Seasonal and annual temperature rankings. An arrow at the top of the figure would represent the warmest year/season on record (since 1895); at the bottom, the coldest year/season on record. Data are available at <https://www.ncdc.noaa.gov/cag/county/rankings>.

Precipitation

In total, 2018 was a record-setting year at the park — it was the wettest year since 1895 (Figure 2). All seasons had well-above normal precipitation. By the end of the year, the area received 66.9 inches of precipitation, almost 26 inches more than the long-term average (Table 2).

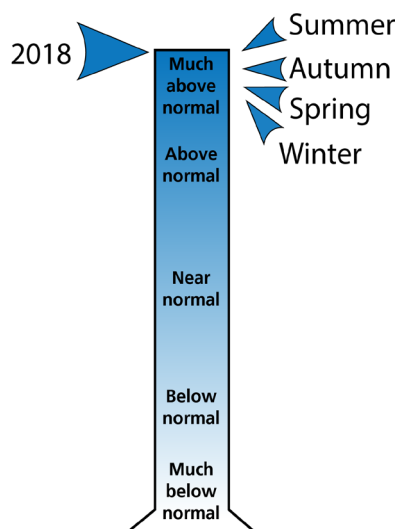


Figure 2. Seasonal and annual precipitation rankings. An arrow at the top of the figure would represent the wettest year/season on record (since 1895); at the bottom, the driest year/season on record. Data are available at <https://www.ncdc.noaa.gov/cag/county/rankings>.

Table 2. Monthly and annual total precipitation and departure from long-term averages. Departures from average are based on a comparison of 2018 precipitation to relevant averages from 1895–2017. Data are available at <https://www.ncdc.noaa.gov/cag/county/time-series>.

Month/ Year	Total precipitation (in.)	Departure from average (in.)
January	2.4	-0.7
February	7.0	+4.4
March	3.0	-0.6
April	4.0	+0.4
May	5.5	+1.4
June	6.8	+2.5
July	8.4	+4.3
August	4.8	+1.2
September	11.0	+7.6
October	4.4	+1.4
November	5.0	+2.0
December	4.6	+1.6
2018	66.9	+25.5

Temperature and Precipitation Trends (1895–2018)

Data collected in Blair and Cambria counties, Pennsylvania since the late 1800s shows increasing trends in annual average temperature (+0.08 °F per decade) and annual total precipitation (+0.46 inches per decade).

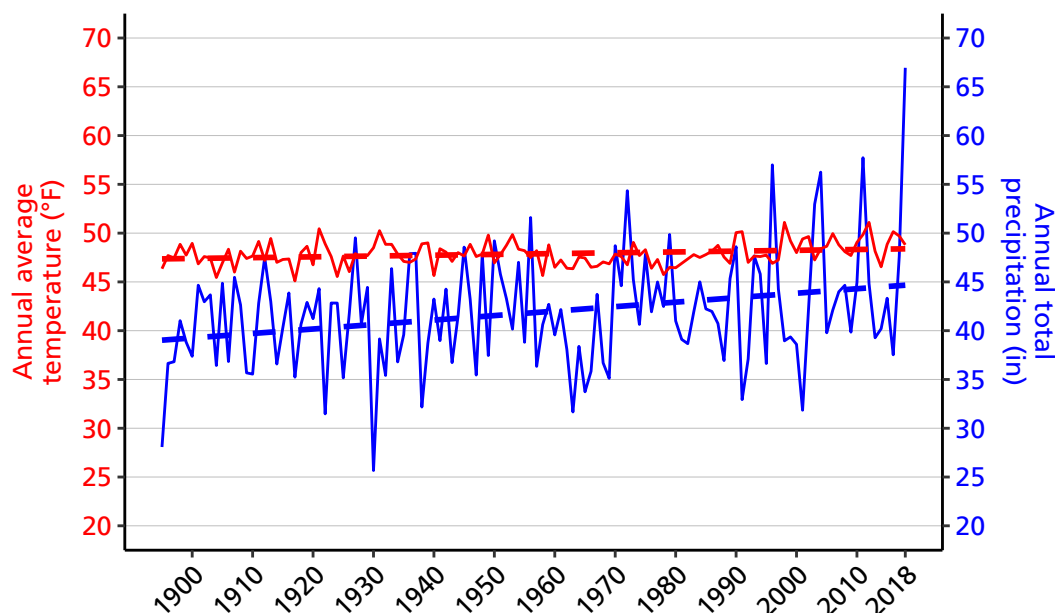


Figure 3. Annual average temperature (°F) and annual total precipitation (in.) for Blair and Cambria counties, PA from 1895–2018. Dashed lines show linear trends. Data are available at <https://www.ncdc.noaa.gov/cag/county/time-series>.

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Parks monitored:

Allegheny Portage Railroad NHS • Bluestone NSR • Delaware Water Gap NRA • Flight 93 NMem • Fort Necessity NB • Friendship Hill NHS • Gauley River NRA • Johnstown Flood NMem • New River Gorge NR • Upper Delaware SRR