



Weather & Climate Summary Bering Land Bridge National Preserve Winter 2019

Winter solstice 2018 - Cape Nome. Note the open water. NPS photo, Nicole Braem.

Nome Winter Weather 2019

Summary: Although December was cool, a persistent southerly flow brought warm temperatures from the tropics to Alaska in mid-to-late winter, pushing sea ice north, warming up the ocean temperatures, and dumping lots of snow in late winter. Overall, the winter of 2018-2019 was warmer than normal with above normal snowfall.

December started out warmer than normal for the first week, but then the temperatures dropped and the rest of the month was much cooler than normal. It warmed up again for the last two days of 2018. The average temperature for the month was 4.8°F cooler than normal at 4.7°F. The total snowfall for December was 15.0 inches, normal is 14.5 inches. The water equivalent of 0.82 inches was 76% of normal.

January temperatures were a bit like a roller coaster, it was cold (record cold), then warm, then cool, then really warm. The month ended up 2.4°F warmer than normal with a monthly average of 7.6°F. On January 11th the minimum temperature was -32°F, the lowest on record for that day. January was snowier than December with several storms barreling through the region. A total of 17.6 inches of snow fell during the month, about 5 inches more than normal. The water content of the snow was 1.09 inches.

February was warm and snowy. It was the 3rd **warmest February** on record. The average temperature was 21.1°F. That's 13.7°F warmer than the 1981-2010 normal. It snowed 21 out of 28 days in February. The water content of the snow was 2.74 inches, 295% of normal and the 3rd highest on record since 1908.

The total precipitation (water equivalent) of 4.65 inches for the winter (December 1 - February 28) is 158% of normal and

the 8th wettest on record. The average winter temperature was 11.1°F, which ranks as 15th warmest for Nome (tied with 1978-1979). (Figures 1 and 2; Tables 1, 2, and 3).

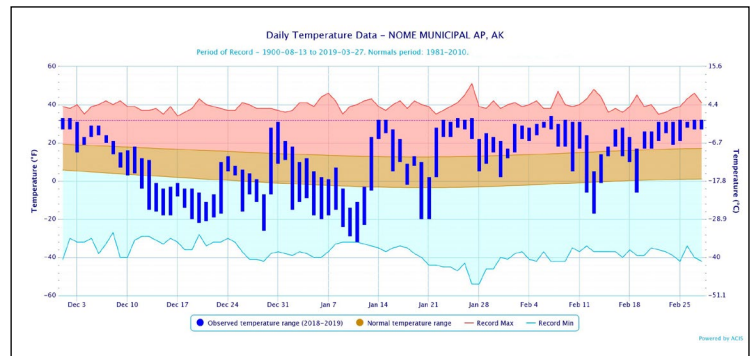


Figure 1. Winter 2019 daily temperatures at Nome showing record maximum (red), record minimum (blue), normal (brown) and observed range (blue bars). <http://xmacis.rcc-acis.org/>

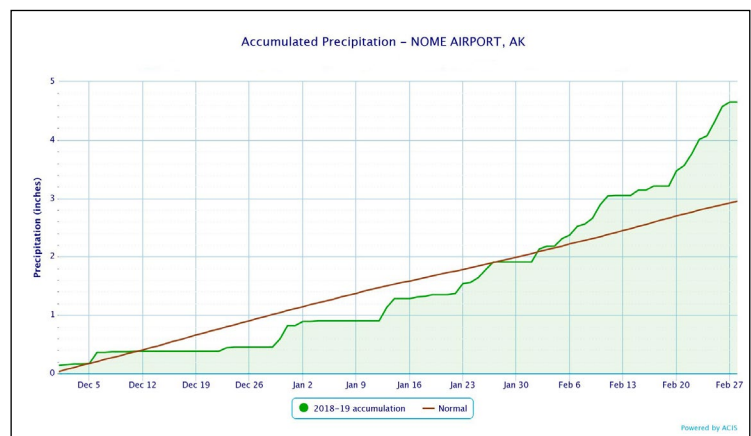


Figure 2. Winter 2019 accumulated precipitation (green) at Nome compared to normal (brown line). <http://xmacis.rcc-acis.org/>

Table 1. Temperature: Winter 2019 average monthly temperatures compared to the 1981-2010 normal.

Winter 2019	Average Monthly Temp (°F)	1981-2010 Normal (°F)	Departure from Normal (°F)	Monthly High (°F / Date)	Monthly Low (°F / Date)
December	4.7	9.5	-4.8	33 / Dec 1,2	-26 / Dec 29
January	7.6	5.2	+2.4	33 / Jan 25, 27	-32* / Jan 11
February	21.1	7.4	+13.7	34 / Feb 7	-17 / Feb 13

Winter Season Temperature Departure from Normal: +3.8°F; *Record low temperature

Table 2. Precipitation: Winter 2019 monthly precipitation totals compared to normal.

Winter 2019	Total Monthly Precip. (in.)	1981-2010 Normal (in.)	Departure from Normal (in.)	Greatest 24-hr. total (in. / Date)	# Days with >=0.01 in. water
December	0.82	1.08	-0.17	0.23 / Dec	11
January	1.09	0.94	+0.15	0.23 / Jan 13	13
February	2.74	0.93	+1.81	0.26 / Feb 20, 26	20

Winter Season Precipitation Departure from Normal: +1.70 inches (158% of normal)

Table 3. Snowfall: Winter 2019 monthly snowfall totals compared to normal.

Winter 2019	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.
December	15.0	14.5	+0.5	3.2 / Dec 6	29.7
January	14.4	12.7	+1.7	4.7 / Jan 13	44.1
February	M*	12.2	M	M	M

*Unfortunately, the daily snowfall measurements for February were removed from the NOAA record.

Serpentine Hot Springs Winter Warmth

The climate station is located in the scenic Serpentine Hot Springs valley above the airstrip on rolling tundra surrounded by granite tors. We have been recording data continuously at this site since 2012. The winter of 2019 was cooler than last year, however the trend clearly shows an increase in winter temperatures over the past eight years at this location (Figure 3).

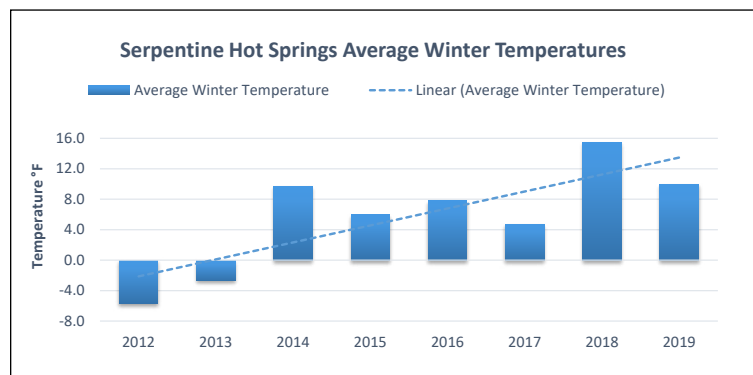


Figure 3. Winter temperatures at Serpentine Hot Springs climate station in Bering Land Bridge National Preserve 2012-2019.

Warm Winter for Most of Alaska

The warmth continued for another season for most of Alaska. Temperatures along Alaska's west and north coast continued to have the largest deviations from normal (Figure 4). The warm ocean temperatures in the North Pacific and the decline in sea ice over the past several years continues to be a major factor in the recent statewide warming trend.

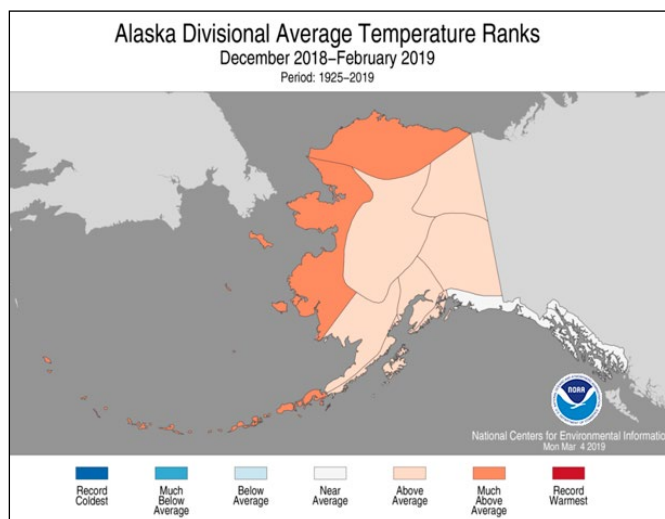


Figure 4. Winter temperatures above average along Alaska's north and west coast for 2019. Graph courtesy of NCEI (<https://www.ncdc.noaa.gov/cag>).

More Information

Pam.Sousanes@nps.gov
ph 907-455-0677

Kenneth.Hill@nps.gov
ph 907-455-0678

[Current Weather in Bering Land Bridge N Pres.](#)

<https://www.nps.gov/im/arcn/climate.htm>

