



Weather & Climate Summary Yukon-Charley Rivers National Preserve Winter 2026

Upper Charley River in late January light. NPS Photo

Eagle Winter Season 2026

The winter season was much colder than normal with near normal precipitation. A deep, prolonged cold spell started in early December and did not let up until January. Although there was a brief spell of warmth in the middle of winter, both January and February largely continued the trend of colder-than-normal temperatures. Total precipitation (melted snow) for the winter was 1.67 inches just a few hundredths shy of normal. The winter (Dec-Feb) snowfall total at Eagle was 31 inches, just above the 1991-2020 normal of 27.8 inches. February was the snowiest month of the winter season, while December snow total was half of normal (Table 1 and 2, Figures 1 and 2). The total snowfall accumulation from October 1 through the end of the winter season was 64.3 inches, normal is 49.2 inches, with higher-than-normal snowfall totals for October, November, January and February.

December

December was much colder and drier than normal. The first three days of the month were warmer than normal, but after December 4th temperatures plunged. The average monthly temperature was -25.7°F, about 22°F colder than normal. It was the 7th coldest December on record (back to 1906) and the coldest December since 1980. There were 16 days in December with low temps below -40°F. Snowfall was light during the month. A total of 5.2 inches was recorded, less than half the normal 11.2 inches. The water equivalent was 0.37 inches, 55% of normal.

January

January was colder than normal with near-normal precipitation. The first half of January was colder than normal, continuing the trend from December. On January 16th, the pattern shifted and temperatures warmed dramatically. On the 17th the high temperature climbed above freezing.

Temperatures moderated after that to near normal. The average monthly temperature was 1.3°F colder than normal. Total snowfall for January was 12.3 inches, 131% of normal. The water equivalent of the snow was 0.65 inches.

February

February was colder and snowier than normal. The month started out warm with above average temperatures the first week but then dropped the following week, bottoming out at -49°F on the 10th and 11th. Temperatures stayed below normal for the remainder of the month, ending with a low of -45°F on the last day of the month. Snowfall totaled 13.5 inches, with a water content of 0.65 inches. Normal snowfall is 7.2 inches for February.

Table 1. Eagle average monthly temperatures compared to 1991-2020 normal.

Winter 2025-2026	Average Monthly Temp (°F)	1991-2020 Normal (°F)	Departure from Normal (°F)
December	-25.7	-4.1	-21.6
January	-10.4	-9.1	-1.3
February	-16.4	-12.1	-4.3

Winter temperature departure from normal: -9.1°F

Table 2. Eagle monthly snowfall totals compared to normal.

Winter 2025-2026	Total Monthly Snowfall in.	1991-2020 Normal (in.)	Departure from Normal (in.)
December	5.2	11.2	-6.0
January	12.3	9.4	+2.9
February	13.5	7.2	+6.3

Winter snowfall departure from normal: +3.2 in. (112% of normal).

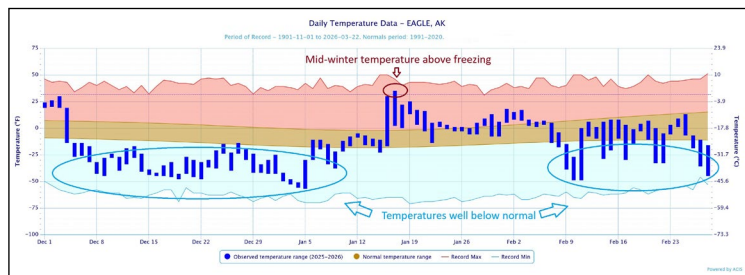


Figure 1. Winter 2025-2026 daily temperatures at Eagle showing record maximum (red), record minimum (blue), normal (brown) and observed range (blue bars). <http://xmacis.rcc-acis.org/>

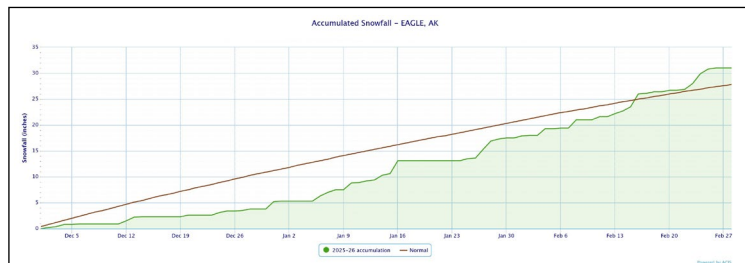


Figure 2. Winter 2025-2026 accumulated snowfall at Eagle (green) compared normal (brown line). <http://xmacis.rcc-acis.org/>

Cold Winter in Interior Alaska

Most of the state was colder than normal this winter with the Interior having the coldest departures from normal (pink shading on Figure 3). A low-pressure system (spinning counterclockwise) parked over northwest Canada and a high-pressure system (spinning clockwise) set up over the Bering Sea, which funneled cold air from the Arctic straight down through central Alaska for most of the winter season.

Cold Winter at Coal Creek

It was the coldest winter on record at the Coal Creek site in Yukon-Charley Rivers (with records back to 2005). The average temperature for the winter season was -18.8°F, which was 10°F colder than average (Figure 4). The month of December was 30°F colder than average. It was the coldest December to date, 5°F colder than 2011, the second coldest December on record.

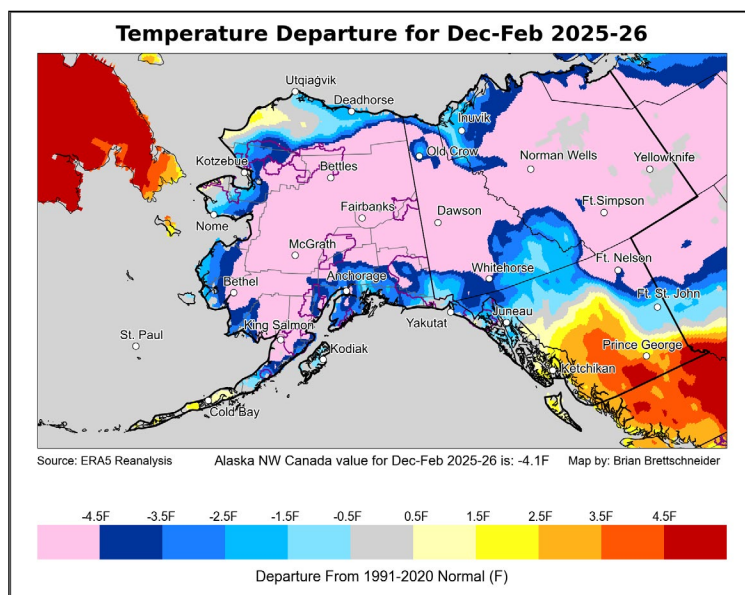


Figure 3. Winter temperature departure from normal for Alaska. Map courtesy of Brian Brettschneider using ERA5 reanalysis data.

This cold winter follows the winter of 2025, the 2nd warmest winter to date, highlighting the variability in cold season temperatures from year to year.

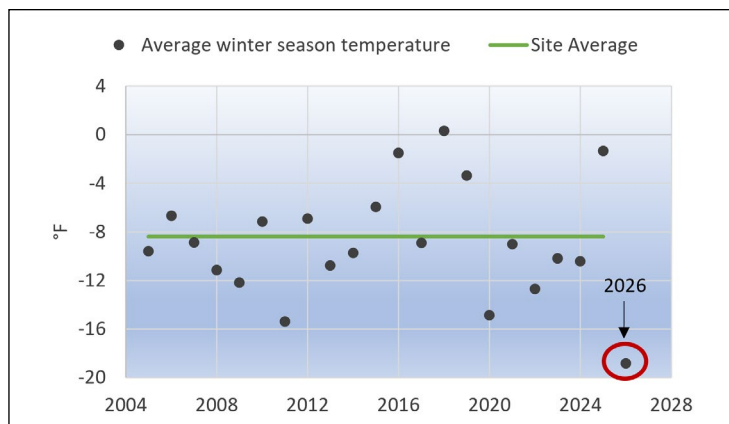


Figure 4. Average winter season temperatures at the Coal Creek climate station in Yukon-Charley Rivers 2005-2026.

The peak winter snow depth at Coal Creek was 36 inches. This is the second deepest snowpack on record behind 2022. The first day of persistent snow was October 17th, with most of the snow accumulating in November and February.

Despite a cold winter, the soil temperature at 50 cm (20 in.) below the surface did not drop to the 32°F freezing threshold until mid-February, nearly a month later than the average over the past decade. A combination of a warm October, a deep snowpack (that acts like a blanket), and ongoing permafrost degradation are likely contributing factors.

[Click here](#) to view the current weather from the climate stations in Yukon-Charley Rivers National Preserve

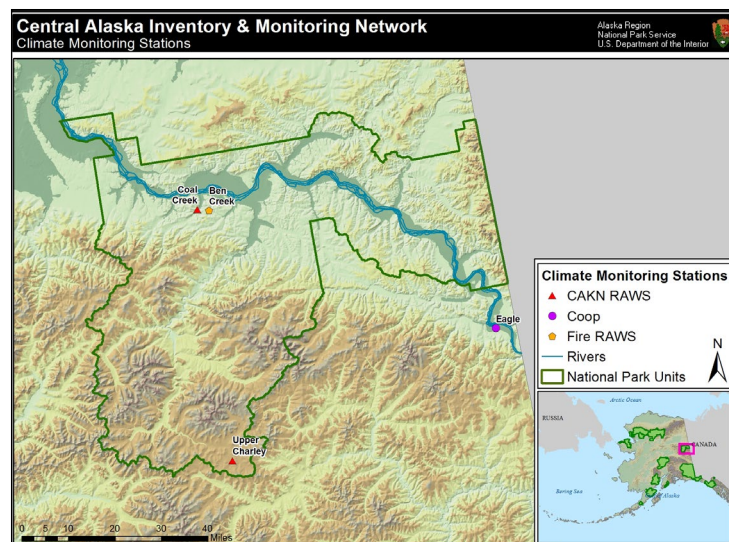


Figure 5. Central Alaska Inventory and Monitoring Network climate stations in Yukon-Charley Rivers National Preserve.

More Information

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

Data disclaimer: Please note that the near-real time data used to generate these reports is subject to change. QA/QC data from the NPS CAKN/ARC climate stations are available at [nps data store](https://www.nps.gov/im/cakn/climate.htm)