ALASKA and NORTHWESTERN CANADA
Weather and Climate Highlights and Impacts, June - August 2017; Climate Outlook Oct. 2017 - Dec 2017

UQIAĠVIK: (Barrow) Average July temperature of 46.0°F (7.8°C), is the record highest for the month.

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KETCHIKAN: 46.99” (1194mm) of rain, making this the wettest summer of record.

BETTLES: Average July temperature 64.4°F (18.0°C), is the warmest for any month of record.

FAIRBANKS: 13 days with thunder was more than twice normal.

HAINES JCTN: June 17 snowstorm caused cancellation of Kluane Chilkat bike relay.

ANIAK: Very low water levels on Southwest Alaska rivers in June resulted in poor subsistence fishing and delayed barge traffic.

BERING SEA: Sea surface temperatures in the southern Bering Sea were above normal, but not to the extremes of 2016.

SKAGWAY: 93°F (34°C) August 5th is the highest temperature of record.

KETCHIKAN: 46.99” (1194mm) of rain, making this the wettest summer of record.

NORMAN WELLS: Set temperature records on July 7, Aug 10, and Aug 11. The Aug 10 record of 33.3°C(92°F) was 3.3°C(6°F) higher than the previous record.

NAHANNI BUTTE: Wildfires forced evacuations of some homes at end of Aug/beginning of Sept.

CNTRL/SRN BC: BC recorded worst wildfire season with over 1,200,000 hectares burned.
On June 17, 2017 the Kluane Chilkoot bicycle relay was cancelled due to an overnight snowstorm at the starting point in Haines Junction, Yukon. A team of 4 Unicyclists had already left earlier in the morning before the cancelation and were the only ones to ride to the finish. Photo credit – Abbie Collins/KHNS radio

Over a period of 30 hours on August 21-22, 2017, Ketchikan, Alaska received more than 8 inches (203 mm) of rain causing flooding in many areas and forcing the closure of the Signal Creek Campground. Water was so deep that Salmon were seen swimming across the road. Photo: U.S. Forest Service taken by Paul Robbins Jr.
It was an extraordinary fire season in Western Canada with the exception of Yukon (Alaska was relatively quiet too). The satellite image above (courtesy of NASA) shows fires in Northwest Territories and central British Columbia on August 12, 2017. Thick smoke from the fires (indicated by hotspots in red) was being pushed northward by the winds. It was a record breaking fire season for British Columbia (mostly the southern and central sections) with over one half billion dollars spent on fire response and over 1.2 million hectares (3.0 million acres) burned. That is about equivalent to a square of 110 km (70 miles) on each side. Many people in the West were impacted in some way. Some were forced to evacuate with some loss of property and as this image shows, many areas, even those remote from the fires, were affected by the thick smoke.
Sea ice cleared unusually early this summer in the Chukchi Sea, with open waters in the Chukchi Sea to Point Barrow by mid-July. By the end of the July the only ice that remained in Alaskan navigational waters was scattered to broken first year ice offshore of the Prudhoe Bay area, which melted out by mid-August.

Nearing the yearly minimum ice extent, a significant area of open water was observed in most of the Beaufort Sea with many large open areas that would normally have had ice (indicated in shades of red). These ice conditions reflect the lack of old ice extent that has existed since the spring. A more rapid melting of first-year ice occurred due to the lack of old ice in the area. Though the summer 2017 was another season of significant ice melt, this year will not establish a record minimum.

The seasonal forecast from the North American Multi-Model Ensemble (NMME) depicts the most likely of three possible categories (significantly above normal, near normal, and significantly below normal) for precipitation and temperature. The map on the far left shows that for the October through December 2017 period, most of Alaska and northern Canada have a 40-60% chance of above normal temperatures. There are two exceptions: the extreme northern Alaska has a 70-80% chance of above normal temperatures, while northern BC has a slight chance of neutral conditions.

The precipitation outlook (map to left) for October through December 2017 shows most of the region depicted in white, meaning there is no indication of above, below, or neutral conditions (i.e. an equal chance). The exception is for a 36-50% likelihood of above normal precipitation across western Alaska, and for a slight chance of below normal precipitation in the northern Yukon.