

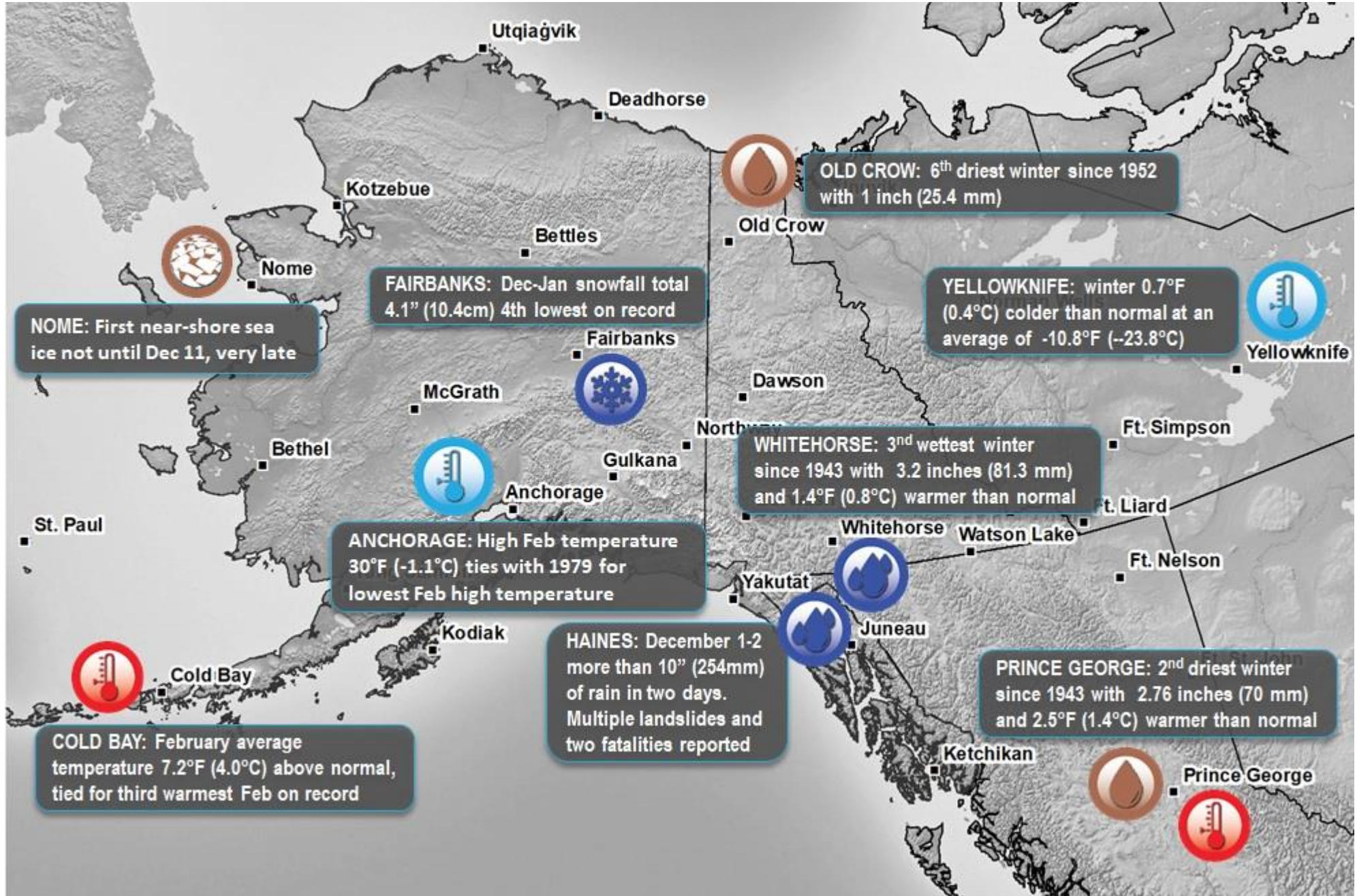
# ALASKA and NORTHWESTERN CANADA

Weather and Climate Highlights and Impacts, Dec 2020 - Feb 2021; Climate Outlook April - June 2021

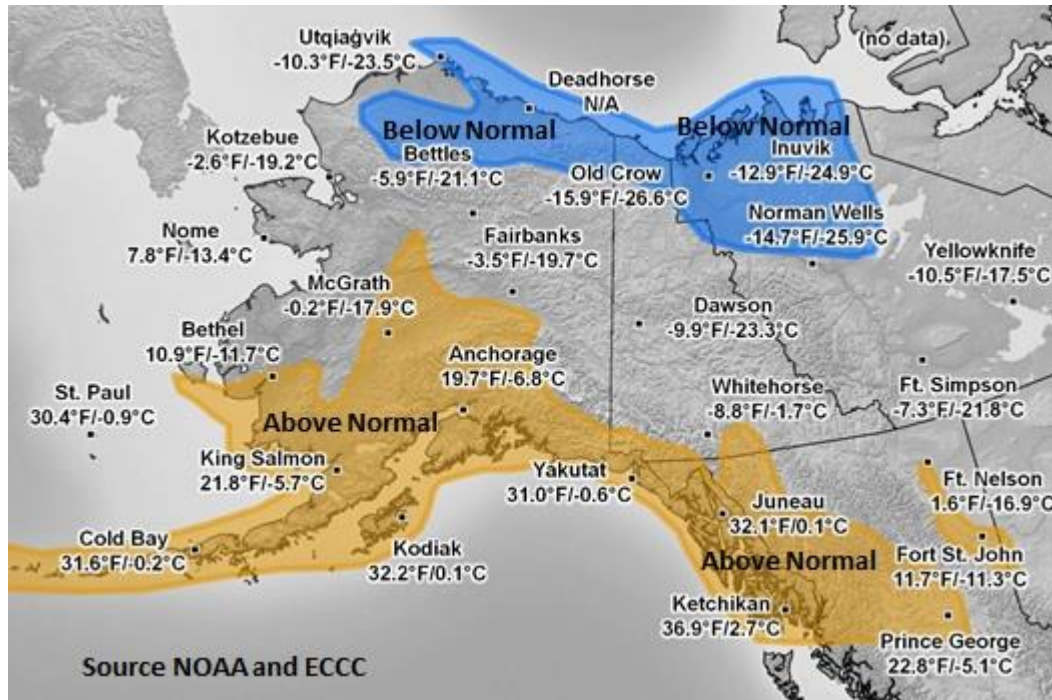


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Dec 2020-Feb 2021 Temperature Averages (°F/°C) & Anomalies- **Below** / **Above** / Normal.



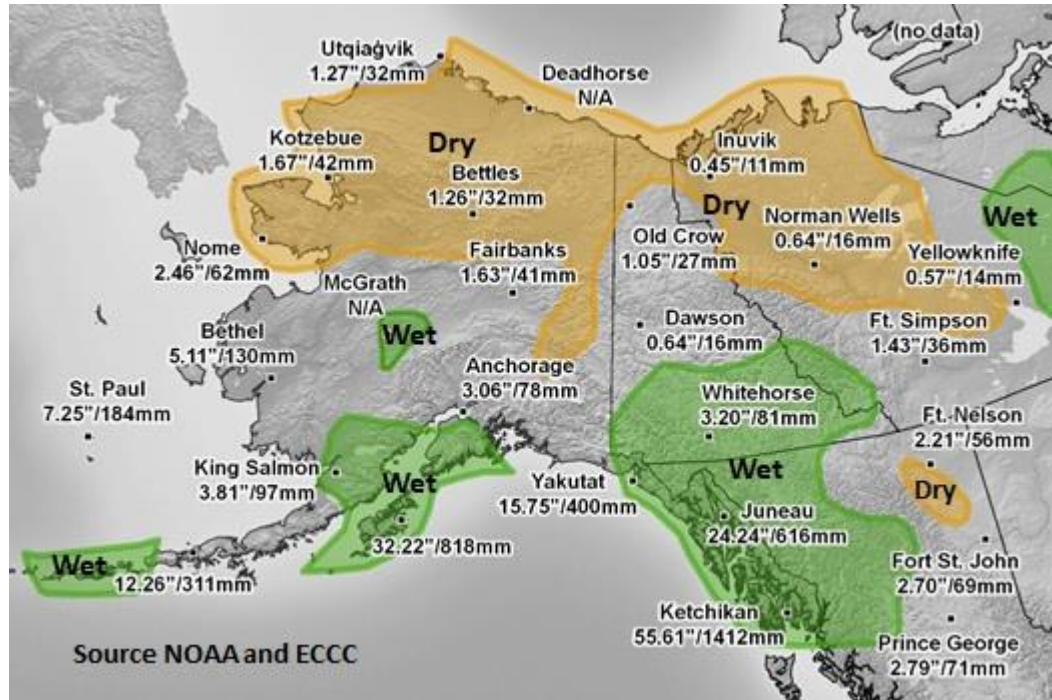
Thick Fog and Issues with COVID Vaccine Rollout

In Yukon, the COVID-19 vaccine rollout is well underway. The first doses were administered on January 4 to residents and employees of long-term care homes. Two mobile vaccination clinical teams – Team Balto and Team Togo – began vaccinating Yukoners in rural communities on January 18.

Now on their second round of community visits, both teams have shown dedication and have adapted to changing weather conditions along the way. Thick fog caused a significant flight delay for Team Balto’s trip to Old Crow in January. The team arrived six hours later than expected, but they were able to set up the clinic in record time and run a successful clinic with just a three-hour delay. In Dawson City, Team Togo faced the unique challenge of managing heavy traffic and potentially long wait times in -36 degree weather with ease, and received positive feedback from the community.

The mobile clinics have been met with enthusiasm in every Yukon community. Special mention goes to the community of Haines Junction, who lined the highway with hundreds of ice candles to celebrate Team Togo’s arrival. As of March 3, 2021, a total of 19,437 doses have been administered in the territory, including 12,344 first doses and 7,093 second doses. Vaccines are now available to the general public in Whitehorse. Text & Photos Credit: K.H., Yukon, Community Services.

Dec 2020-Feb 2021 Precipitation Totals (inches/mm) & Anomalies- **Dry** / **Wet** / Normal.



The community of Haines Junction welcomed Team Togo with hundreds of ice candles lining the Alaska Highway.

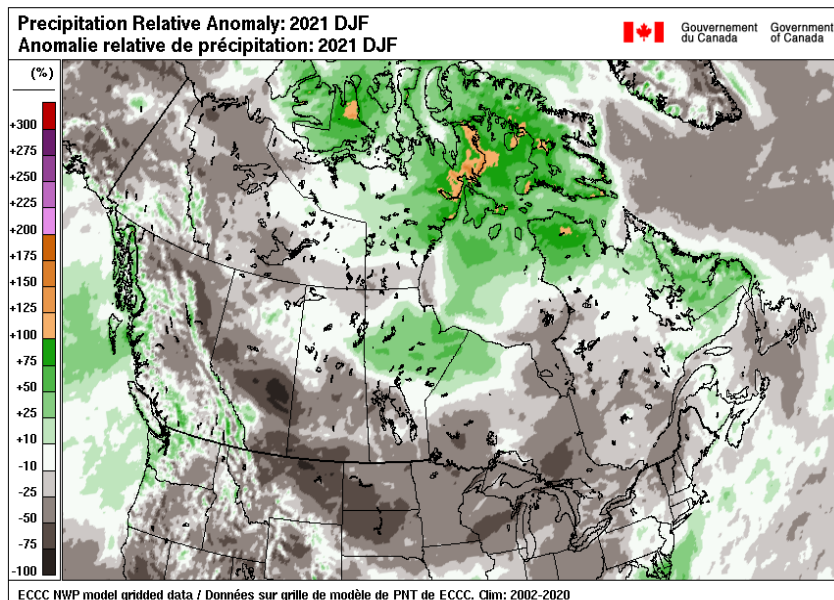
Nurse-in-Charge Ann Chapman and a local RCMP officer safely transport the Moderna vaccine to Chief Zzeh Gittlit School, the vaccination clinic venue in Old Crow.

## Whitehorse near-record snow accumulation Winter 2020-2021



Photo of Street in Whitehorse, Yukon February, 2021, Photo credit: CBC

Winter started at the beginning of November with the early arrival of a record setting 40cm snowfall. Conditions remained snowy resulting in 66cm depth of snow on the ground at the airport at the end of February. Northwest Canada & Alaska was mostly dryer than normal.



## Vaccination Team heading to Shungnak December 2020



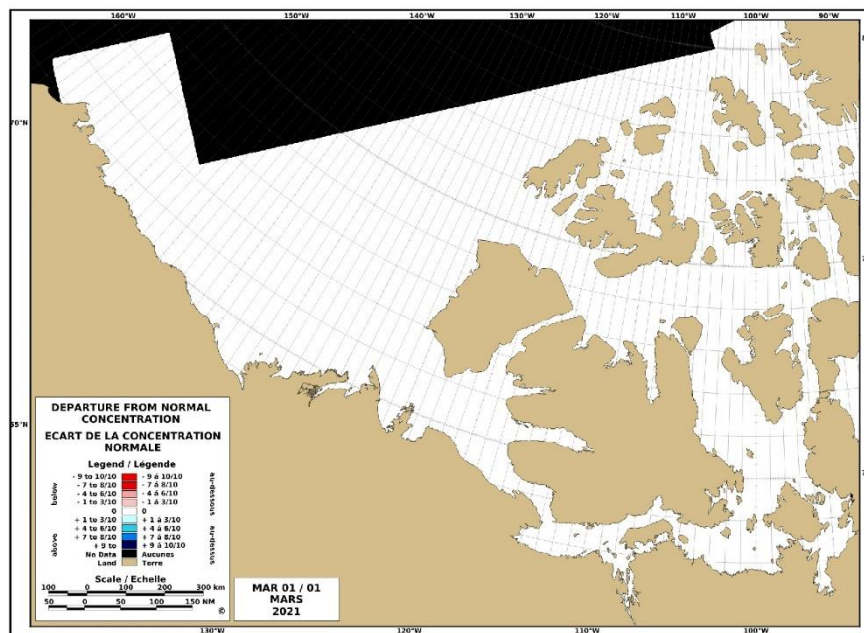
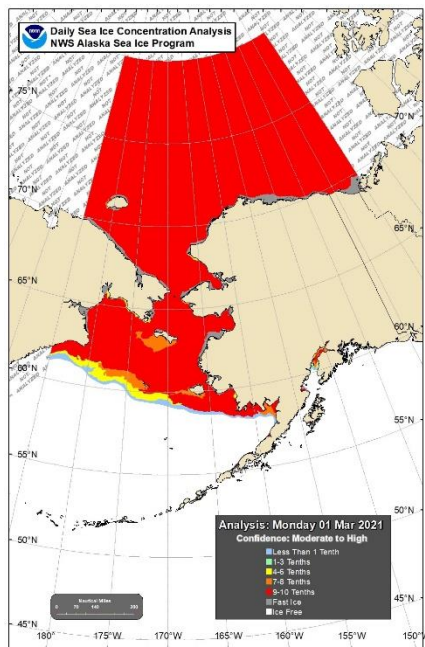
Photo by K. Bengard and used with permission

Medical professionals with Maniilaq Association, Northwest Alaska's tribal health care provider, ready to head into Shungnak (population 262 in 2010) to begin giving COVID vaccines, December 2020.

More than a century after the fact, stories of horrors of the 1918-19 influenza pandemic in rural Alaska remain powerful. In 2021, many communities have taken extra effort to protect people, and especially elders in the COVID-19 pandemic of 2020-21. When the first vaccines became available in December 2020, front line health care workers, working in consultation with tribes, brought vaccines directly to villages, rather than risking exposure by asking vulnerable peoples to come to regional health centers. Occurring in the darkest time of year, transporting vials of vaccine requires stringent environmental controls, not the least of which is to keep the vaccine from freezing. Mid-winter weather conditions in rural Alaska, even in a comparatively mild December (like 2020) are always challenging, but dedication and cooperation served Alaskans in the effort to start the return to normal life in 2021.

# Sea Ice Concentration Conditions & Departure from Normal Conditions 1 March 2021 in the Chukchi and Beaufort Seas

WESTERN ARCTIC / ARCTIQUE DE L'OUEST



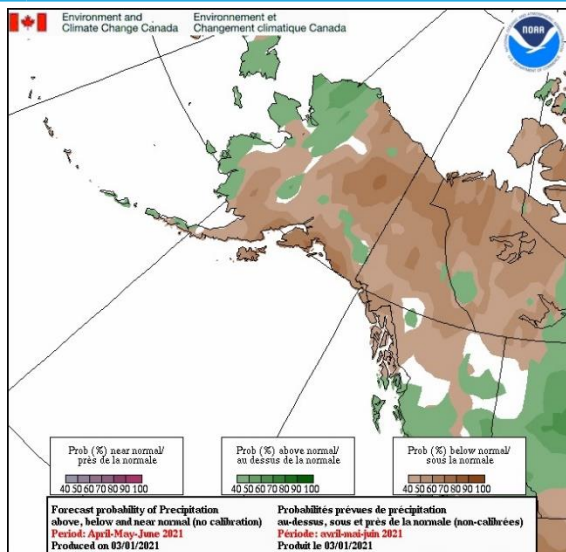
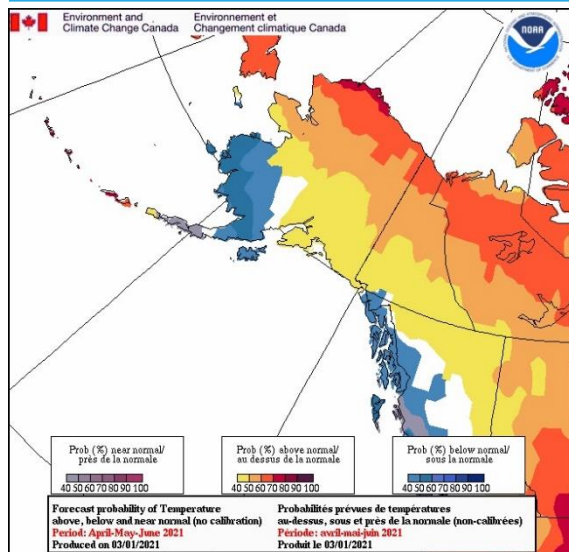
STATISTICS BASED UPON 1981-2010  
LES STATISTIQUES BASÉES SUR 1981-2010

Freeze-up in the Chukchi Sea did not occur until the second half of December, which is very late historically but typical for recent years. Occasional open water continued to appear near Utqiagvik into January. Ice was also very slow to form in the Bering Sea in early December but expanded in January into early February. At the end of February ice extended from south Nunivak Island to just south of St. Matthew Island and then northwestward to the Russian coast. This was farther north than the ice edge was last year at the same time but sea ice was much more extensive than in late February 2018 or 2019. North of the ice edge, satellite estimates indicated sea ice thickness was generally three feet (one meter) or less thick in the Bering Sea, though with thicker ice on the north side of St. Lawrence Island.

In the western Canadian Arctic the maximum ice extent was reached by early January. Overall, temperatures were colder than normal during the past three months. Hence ice thicknesses were slightly greater than normal at the end of February.

## Temperature Outlook: April - June 2021

## Precipitation Outlook: April - June 2021



A combined Canada - USA forecast model is used to provide a temperature and a precipitation outlook for April to June 2021.

The temperature outlook map shows that all of Alaska except the coastal southwest and coastal southeast and northwest Canada have a 40 to 80% chance of above average temperature (yellow to red colors), with the highest probabilities found in the northern coastal parts of Alaska including the western half of the Aleutian Islands and northern Canadian Arctic Islands. In southwestern and southeastern Alaska near normal or slightly below normal temperatures are probable. The precipitation outlook map shows that the majority of Alaska, BC and central NT & Yukon, along with most of the Arctic Islands, have a 40 to 80% chance of below normal precipitation (brown areas). Western coastal Alaska, the western Aleutians and most of central BC will likely have above normal precipitation (green areas) with central BC and central to northern Alberta having a 40-70% chance of above normal precipitation.

Content and graphics prepared in partnership with the Alaska Center for Climate Assessment and Policy and Environment and Climate Change Canada.

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