

ALASKA and NORTHWESTERN CANADA

Weather and Climate Highlights and Impacts, June 2026 to August 2026

Climate Outlook, October 2026 to December 2026

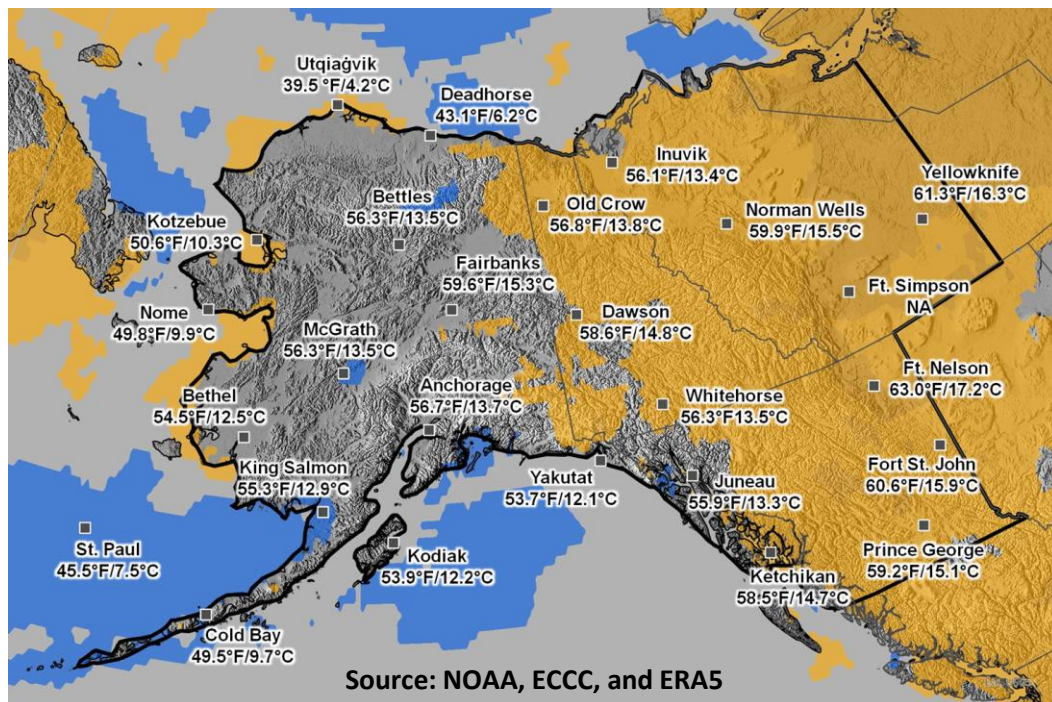


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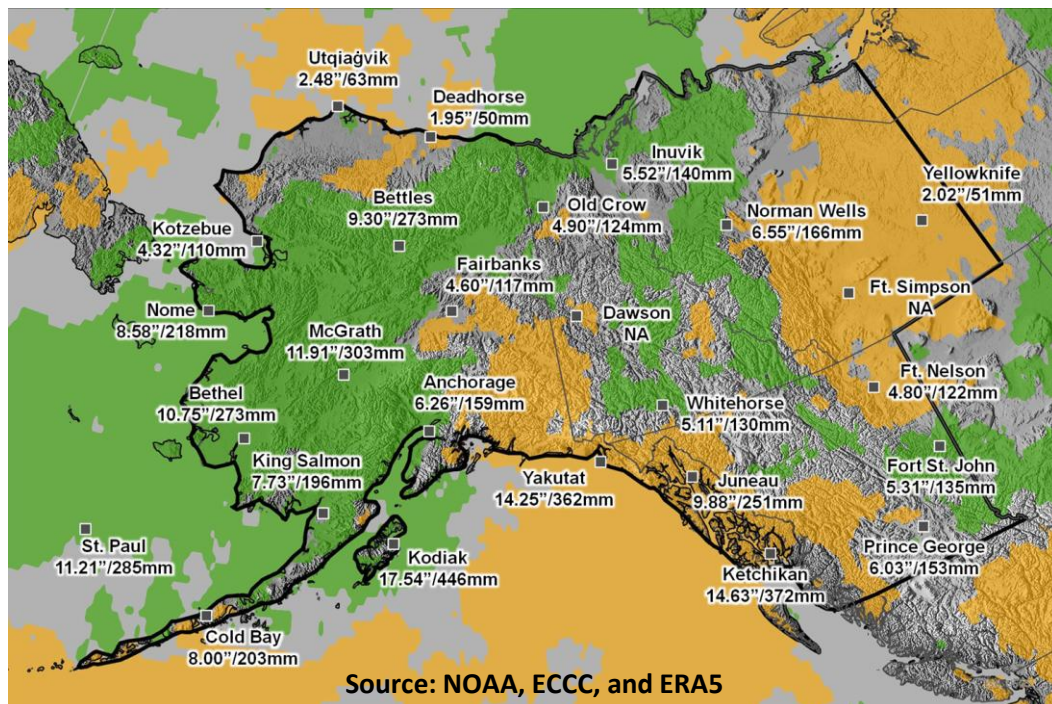
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June to August 2026 Temp Averages (°F/°C) & Anomalies **Below** / **Above** / Normal



June to August 2026 Precipitation Totals (inches/mm) & Anomalies - **Dry** / **Wet** / Normal



Susitna River Flooding: Significant Erosion Destroyed Multiple Houses



Photo showing severe riverbank erosion and damaged structures.
Photo credit: Katie Writer (<https://cubflights.com/>)

While precipitation in Alaska during the summer months was unremarkable in most locations, the portion of the state south and west of the Alaska Range experienced significant rainfall. In Talkeetna, Alaska, the June through August period was the third wettest on record, with more than 100 years of observations, totalling 18.38" (467 mm) of precipitation. The heavy rainfall caused the Susitna River to reach flood stage during the third week in July, which led to significant erosion along its western bank. Erosion impacted eight river-front properties, a landing strip, roads, and the Alaska Railroad Bridge crossing the Susitna River. The Matanuska-Susitna Borough Assembly formally declared a local emergency in response to the flooding in Talkeetna.

Beyond its impact on infrastructure and property, the flooding affected the community's tourism dependent economy. Talkeetna is an important recreation destination for hundreds of thousands of tourists each year who visit while riding the Alaska Railroad or driving from Anchorage to Denali National Park. The local economy relies heavily on a short summer tourism season, and the flooding significantly affected annual earnings.

Fort Simpson Wildfire Evacuates Community for Three Weeks



Smoke from the FS016 fire near the village of Fort Simpson on June 27, 2026.
Photo credit: NWT Fire

In 2026, Fort Simpson, Northwest Territories, recorded its third warmest June on record, with mean temperatures nearly 2.5°C (4.5°F) above normal. During the final week of the month, daily temperatures in the region were generally 4 – 6°C (7 – 11°F) above normal, with anomalies reaching 8 – 10°C (14 – 18°F) above normal on June 28. At the same time, Fort Simpson received only about 15% of its normal June precipitation, with just 3.8 mm (0.15 in) of rainfall recorded during the final week. The combination of persistent warmth and limited precipitation resulted in unusually dry conditions, highly favourable for wildfire ignition and rapid growth.

The rapid development of a wildfire near Fort Simpson in late June prompted an evacuation order for the community on June 28. The wildfire rapidly grew to more than 66,000 hectares (163,000 acres) over the following few weeks and burned to within a few hundred metres (a few hundred yards) of the village. Residents remained under full evacuation until July 18, when the order was downgraded to an evacuation alert, allowing residents to start returning home; the final alert was lifted on July 24. In addition to the threat the wildfire posed, smoke from this fire and others in the area caused air quality and visibility issues, both locally and across much of the Northwest Territories. Throughout the summer, smoke remained a recurring concern across northwestern Canada, reducing air quality and visibility in many communities.

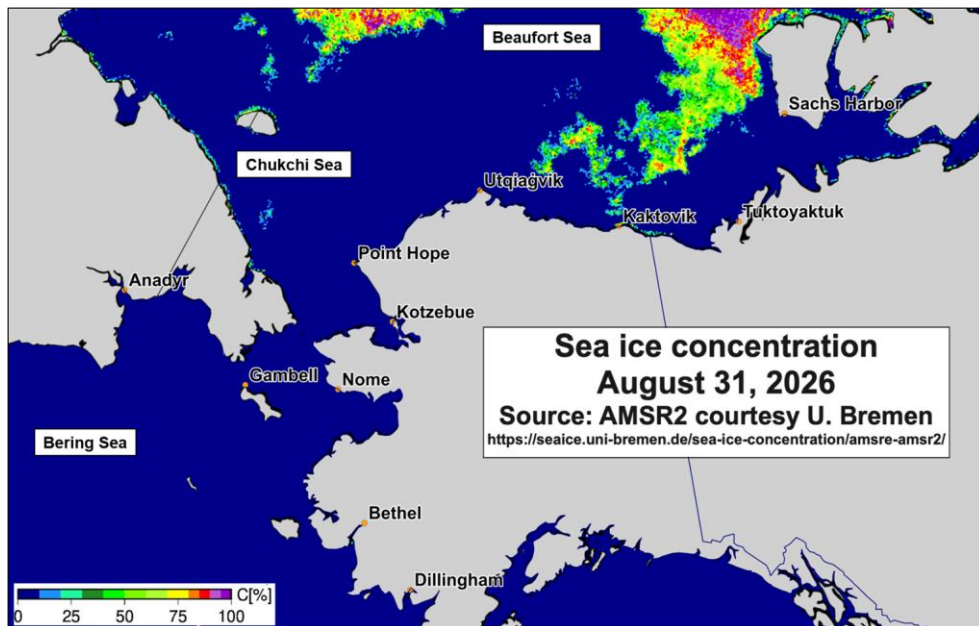
Mukluk Fire in Tok One of the Most Damaging in Alaska History



Smoke column from the Mukluk Fire is visible north of the Tok School on August 18, 2026. Photo credit: Division of Forestry & Fire Protection/E. Hjortstorp

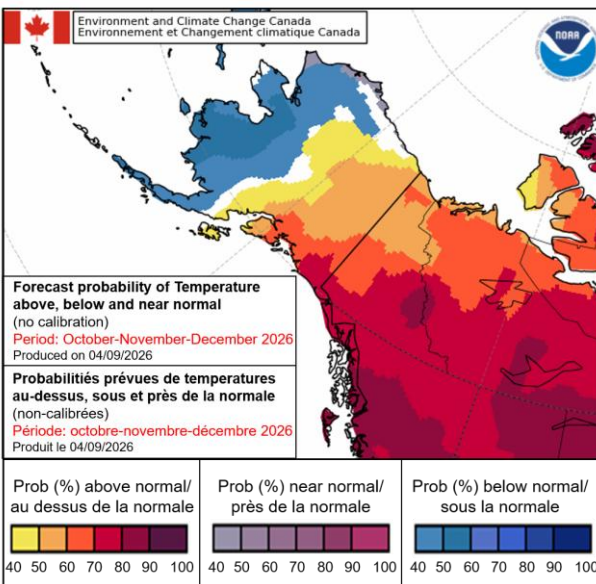
The Alaska wildfire season in 2026 was the least active in more than 30 years in terms of total area burned. However, the Mukluk wildfire in Tok proved to be one of the most destructive in Alaska history by number of homes lost. The wildfire started on August 17 when a downed powerline in the Midnight Sun subdivision ignited vegetation near the ground that was flammable following well below normal summer rainfall and sustained warm weather during the weeks leading up to the wildfire. Once ignited, strong westerly winds rapidly spread the wildfire through several neighborhoods and then toward the Tanana River to the north. Firefighters responded rapidly, and within a few days more than 350 individuals, including crews from Canada, were working to contain the wildfire. In total, nearly 50 homes were damaged or destroyed in the blaze as well as more than 100 outbuildings. A State of Alaska Disaster Declaration was issued by the Governor on August 19, making financial resources available to the community. With a population of nearly 1,600 residents, Tok is experiencing significant recovery challenges as freeze-up and winter snowfall approach only weeks after many residents lost their homes. The community is working rapidly to overcome the major logistical challenge of providing a warm place for residents to live during the upcoming winter.

Sea Ice Concentration Conditions on August 31, 2026 in the Bering, Chukchi, and Beaufort Seas

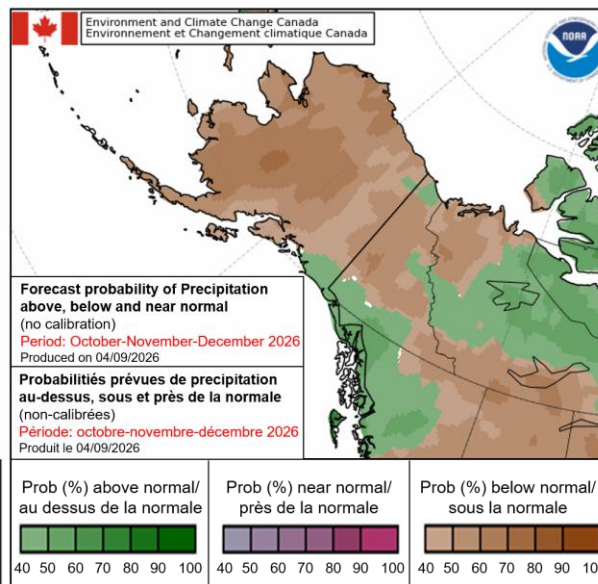


The last ice in the Bering Sea melted out in June, consistent with typical timing from recent seasons, however, it was the only one of the three seas to exhibit normal melting patterns this year. North of the Bering Strait, across the Chukchi Sea, ice melt was much slower than in recent seasons: Kotzebue Sound was not ice free until early July, there was minimal open water north of Wainwright through the end of July, and barges were delayed by ice at Utqiagvik into early August. Similarly, the Beaufort Sea began the season with more extensive than normal consolidated first-year ice along the southern coast, and the extent of old ice in the southwestern part of the sea was sitting farther south than normal. These starting conditions, along with cooler temperatures brought by persistent northwesterly winds, inhibited ice melt and offshore ice movement, resulting in delayed ice break-up and loss through the summer. By mid-August, a shift to strong southerly winds accelerated ice melt, with open water increasing rapidly in the Chukchi, although some moderate concentrations of ice persisted off the northeast Alaskan coast through to the end of the month. In the Beaufort, the change in winds allowed ice across the region to melt as well; however, the old ice in the south persisted longer than the thinner young ice in the northwest. By the end of August, the northwest of the Beaufort had below normal concentrations, while the southwest and extreme eastern portions of the sea persisted with above normal ice concentrations.

Temperature Outlook: Oct to Dec 2026



Precipitation Outlook: Oct to Dec 2026



From October to December 2026, the Alaskan Panhandle, northern British Columbia, southern Yukon and southern Northwest Territories have a high probability of above normal temperatures at 70 – 80%. Much of northern Yukon, and the eastern half of Alaska are also showing signals for above normal temperatures, however with slightly lower probabilities. In contrast, much of western Alaska has a 40 – 60% chance of below normal temperatures in the coming months.

The precipitation outlook is dominated by widespread probabilities of below normal precipitation across nearly all of Alaska and through much of northwest Canada, with the strongest probabilities, reaching 80%, seen in the west-central interior of Alaska. Above normal precipitation areas have only a 40 – 60% probability and occur over the Alaskan Panhandle, northwestern British Columbia, south-central and southwestern Yukon, and west-central Northwest Territories.

Content and graphics prepared by NOAA's National Weather Service and National Center for Environmental Information; the Alaska Center for Climate Assessment and Policy at the University of Alaska; and Environment and Climate Change Canada, as well as our regional partners: Alaska Climate Research Center, Alaska Climate Science Center, National Snow and Ice Data Center, and Scenarios Network for Alaska + Arctic Planning.

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