

PART FOUR

Climate



GENERAL

Even more than in other sections of the country, Alaska's climate results in departures from recreation norms.

Eighteen hours of summer daylight in these northern latitudes is bound to extend recreation useage during that season, just as the 5 hour winter daylight restricts outdoor activity at that time of year. The problem this presents to the planning is one largely of winter useage -- the summer takes care of itself. "Cabin fever" is a common complaint of Alaskans during "freezeup", which extends from mid October to April. An average of 60 inches of snow falls in the Motanuska-Susitna Borough in the winter. Planning for winter use requires no special provision except for winter sports, already mentioned above. If lakes

are made accessible for summer use, they will be available for ice fishing in the winter providing only that roads are maintained open. Sight-seeing for pleasure will be possible in winter also, albeit restricted to the short daylight hours, depending, again, on whether the roads are plowed out. Trails will be interchangeable between pedestrians and horses in the summer and snowmobiles in the winter. Skijoring will be possible on opened roads or lakes. Though not pertinent to this Plan per se, it will be most important to the success of winter operation to light all possible winter activity areas against the long hours of darkness. However, during the summer the weather is cool and clear, much like the North-Central States except that the rainy season arrives about two months earlier. An idea of general weather can be obtained from the table below.

GENERAL WEATHER TABLE

Average Temperature		Extreme Temperatures		Growing Season	Average Annual Precipitation	
Jan.	July	Min.	Max.	Days	Inches	Snow-Inches
11°	57°	-36°	92°	110	14*	60

*Includes melted snow

Figures above are from:

U.S. Dept. of Interior, National Park Service: Alaska Recreation Survey, 1953, Vol. 1, pg. 18

All figures following are Anchorage, Climatology of the U.S. #86-43, which can be considered roughly equivalent to the Nancy Lake locale.

Month	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Ann.
Precip. - Anchorage Normal					.52	.98	1.86	2.57	2.50				
Snowfall	10.9	17.0	8.6	5.4	0				†	7.6	12.7	16.4	78.6
Mean No. Days Precip. Greater than 0.10 but less than 0.50	3	4	2	1	1	3	8	6	6	4	4	3	
Greater than 0.50	+	+	0	+	+	+	1	2	1	1	+	+	
Normal Mean Temp.	12.4	18.0	23.3	35.7	45.9	54.5	57.1	55.6	47.8	35.0	22.2	14.3	35.2
Av. Daily Max.	21.1	25.2	31.4	42.7	55.0	63.0	64.9	63.3	54.4	41.2	29.0	20.0	42.6
Av. Daily Min.	5.7	7.6	12.8	26.2	38.1	46.6	49.7	48.3	39.7	27.5	16.3	6.1	27.1
Highest	47	43	47	61	72	83	81	77	73	60	50	43	83
Lowest	-23	-26	-22	2	26	37	39	34	20	-5	-21	-29	-29
Mean No. Days With Temp. Greater than 70 or Less than 32	0	0	0	0	1	5	7	3	+	0	0	0	
	31	28	31	26	3	0	0	0	+	21	28	31	

† indicates less than 1/2 day, but more than 0 days average per month.