



Spring Breakup Outlook for Alaska

Valid May 29, 2026

[Alaska-Pacific River Forecast Center](#)

Next Product Issuance: NA

www.weather.gov/aprfc

2026 Spring Breakup Outlook for Alaska

****This will be the last ESF for the year****

Spring Breakup Outlook Update and Current Breakup Status

This breakup outlook contains updates on the current breakup status, snowpack analysis, short and long term temperature predictions, and revised flood threat and breakup timing for individual communities.

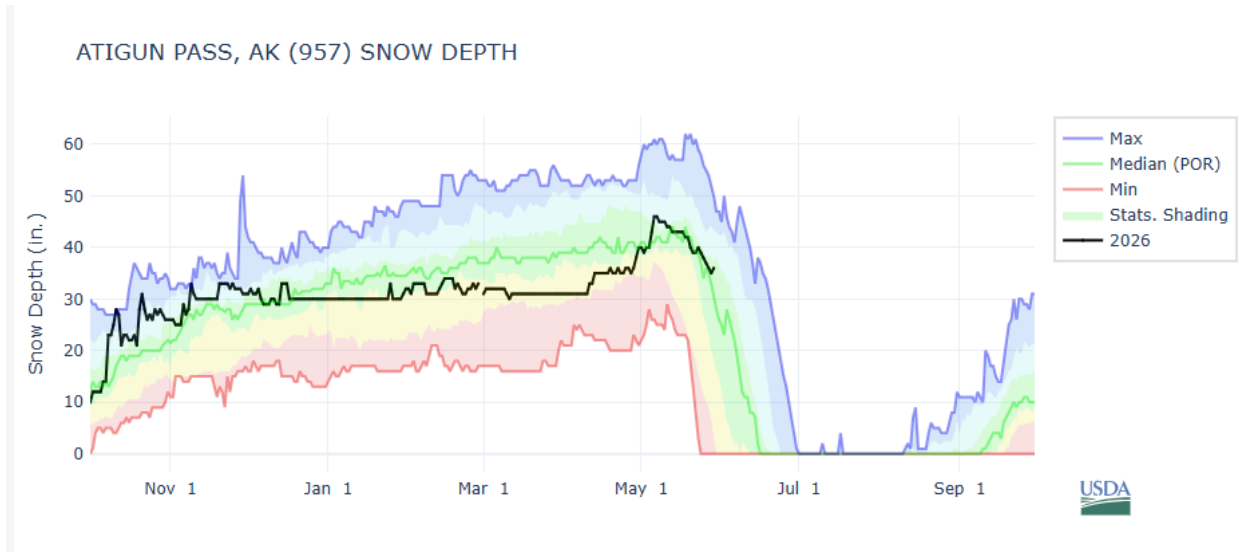
A very busy breakup has come to an end south of the Brooks Range. Attention now shifts to the North Slope, where an above average snowpack has been slow to melt out due to a colder than normal spring.

North Slope

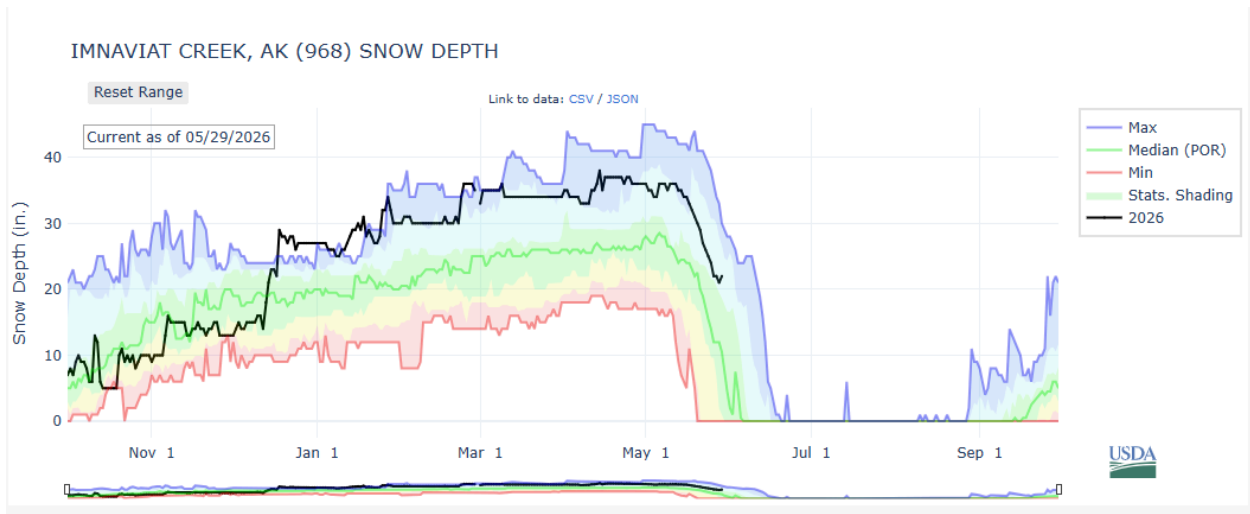
Snowpack remains widespread across the North Slope, with snow depths varying between one to three feet reported, which is average to above average for this time of year. Snow depth gauges across the region indicate a slow start of spring melt as temperatures have remained below freezing. The graphs below illustrate a delayed onset of snowmelt on the North Slope. Starting next week, temperatures are expected to moderate some and sun angle will continue to rise, initiating ice decay and snowmelt at lower elevations. However, as June progresses, temperatures are generally expected to remain cooler than normal. Breakup is expected to initiate over the next week or two.

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Atigun Pass (4800 ft) current snow depth plot (black) compared to median (green)
The graphic below captures the cold temperatures the North Slope has seen this spring. Thawing degree days are well below average for late May. These cold temperatures allow ice to maintain integrity and inhibit snow melt.



Imnaviat Creek (3060 ft) current snow depth plot (black) compared to median (green).

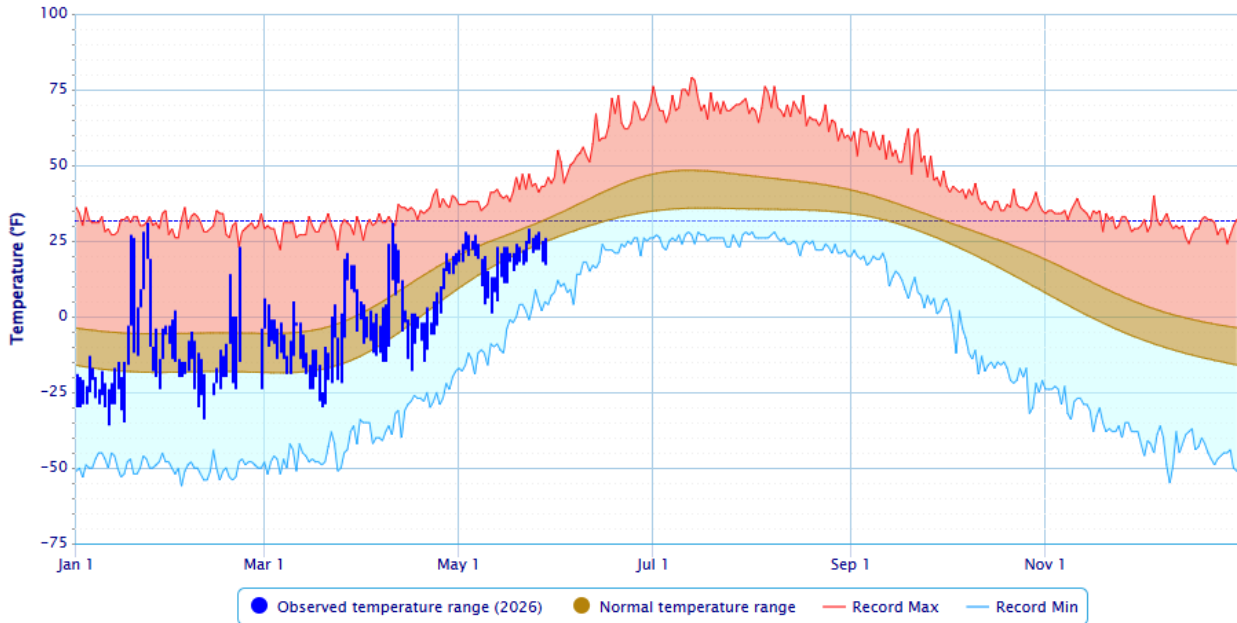
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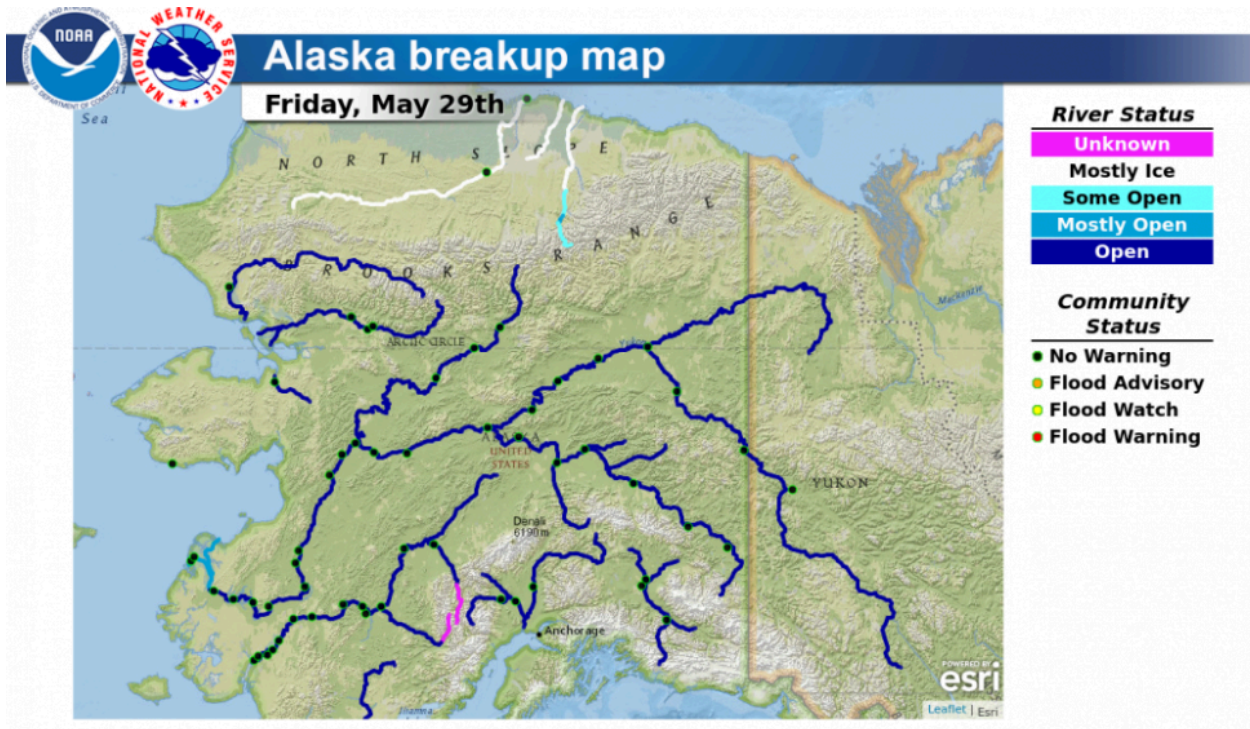


Daily Temperature Data – Barrow Area, AK (ThreadEx)

Period of Record – 1920-10-01 to 2026-05-28. Normals period: 1991-2020. Click and drag to zoom chart.



Barrow (Utqiagvik) thawing degree days have not begun to accumulate. Daytime maximum temperatures have yet to rise above freezing.



[Link to Current Breakup Map](#)

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Breakup Recap

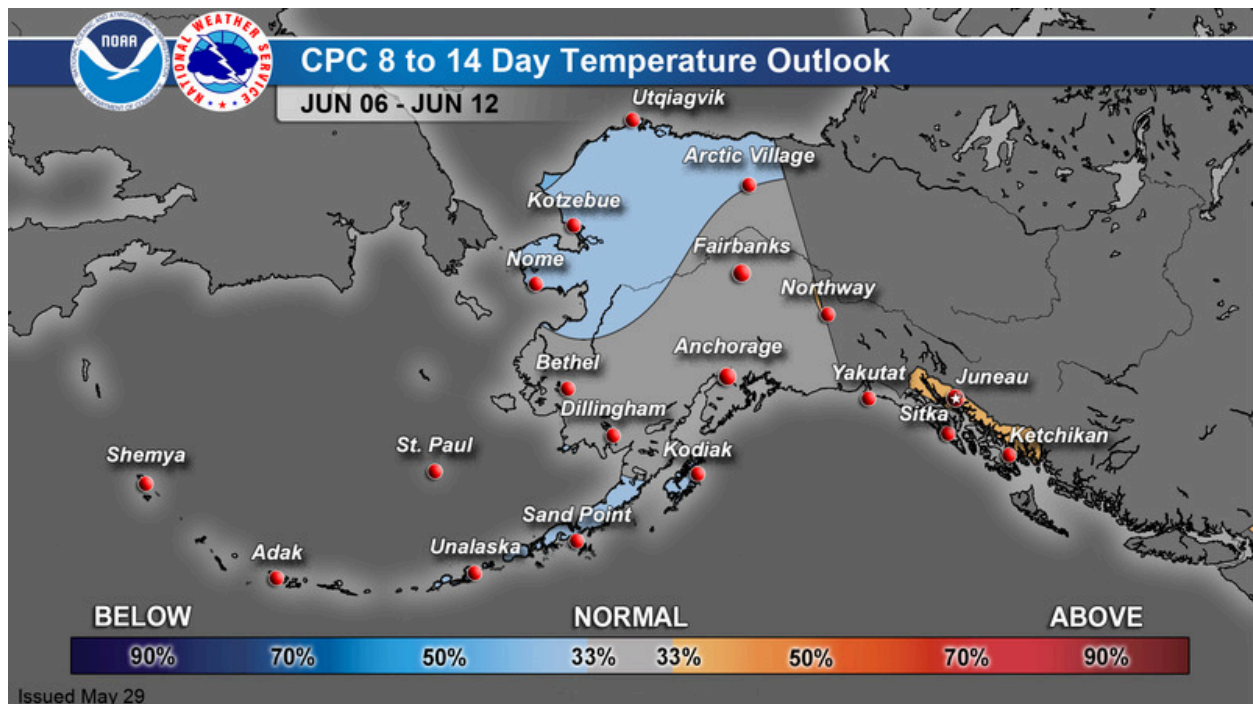
Locations of significant ice jams and flooding during 2026 Breakup:

- Black River at Chalkyitsik
- Lower Chatanika River north of Murphy Dome
- Koyukuk River at Hughes
- Kuskokwim River at most locations from Aniak down to Napaskiak as well as McGrath
- Yukon River from Ruby down to the mouth
- Buckland River at Buckland

Snowmelt flooding was reported for:

- near Anderson due to a blocked culvert
- Fort Yukon and Stevens Village

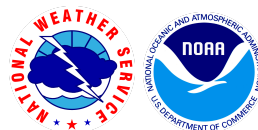
Climate Prediction Center (CPC) guidance indicates that below-average temperatures are likely to persist into early June (see below), further delaying snowmelt and river breakup across the North Slope.



Summary of 2026 Breakup Dates

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The following tables give an estimation of snowmelt runoff volume, flood potential, and forecast breakup date range for various locations across the state. Median breakup dates are for the period 1980 through 2023 and are calculated for locations with at least 5 years of data. Forecast breakup timing is expressed as a range based on snowmelt runoff volume and flood potential.

Locations where breakup has already occurred are identified with two asterisks following a single date; for example, Kuskokwim River at Nikolai breakup occurred on April 25, 2026 (4/25**).

Tanana-Fairbanks						
River-Reach	Location	Snowmelt Runoff Volume	Village Flood Potential	Median Breakup Date (1980-2025)	Years of Record (1980-2025)	Forecast Breakup Date Range
Chena River		Above				
	Chena Lakes Project		Broken Up			5/2**
Tanana River		Above				
	Northway		Broken Up	4/26	32	5/2**
	Salcha		Broken Up	4/26	5	5/2**
	Fairbanks		Broken Up	4/30	23	5/4**
	Nenana		Broken Up	4/30	46	5/4**
	Manley HS		Broken Up	5/3	33	5/6**

Yukon River						
River-Reach	Location	Snowmelt Runoff Volume	Village Flood Potential	Median Breakup Date (1980-2025)	Years of Record (1980-2025)	Forecast Breakup Date Range
Yukon River (Upper)		Above				
	Dawson, YT		Broken Up	5/4	46	5/5**
	Eagle		Broken Up	5/4	46	5/5**
	Circle		Broken Up	5/9	42	5/7**
	Fort Yukon		Broken Up	5/11	42	5/8**

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	Beaver		Broken Up	5/11	30	5/9**
	Stevens Village		Broken Up	5/11	28	5/10**
	Rampart		Broken Up	5/12	29	5/11**
Yukon River (Mid)		Above				
	Tanana		Broken Up	5/8	41	5/11**
	Ruby		Broken Up	5/9	40	5/14**
	Galena		Broken Up	5/11	45	5/14**
	Koyukuk		Broken Up	5/10	19	5/14**
	Nulato		Broken Up	5/12	27	5/15**
	Kaltag		Broken Up	5/12	40	5/15**
Yukon River (Lower)		Above				
	Grayling		Broken Up	5/12	17	5/16**
	Anvik		Broken Up	5/14	37	5/17**
	Holy Cross		Broken Up	5/14	39	5/21**
	Russian Mission		Broken Up	5/15	39	5/21**
	Marshall		Broken Up	5/15	34	5/21**
	Pilot Station		Broken Up	5/13	29	5/23**
	Mountain Village		Broken Up	5/15	39	5/23**
	Alakanuk/Emmonak		Broken Up	5/20	41	5/25**

Kuskokwim River						
River-Reach	Location	Snowmelt Runoff Volume	Village Flood Potential	Median Breakup Date (1980-2025)	Years of Record (1980-2025)	Forecast Breakup Date Range
Kuskokwim River		Below				
	Nikolai		Broken Up	4/23	40	4/25**
	McGrath		Broken Up	5/4	46	5/11**
	Stony River		Broken Up	5/2	38	5/7**
	Sleetmute		Broken Up	5/2	37	5/6**
	Red Devil		Broken Up	5/3	40	5/3**

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	Crooked Creek		Broken Up	5/4	40	5/4**
	Napaimute		Broken Up	5/1	13	5/3**
	Chuathbaluk		Broken Up	5/3	15	5/6**
	Aniak		Broken Up	5/5	43	5/6**
	Kalskag		Broken Up	5/5	37	5/11**
	Tuluksak		Broken Up	5/7	34	5/14**
	Akiak		Broken Up	5/8	40	5/14**
	Akiakchak		Broken Up	5/15	11	5/14**
	Kwethluk		Broken Up	5/5	13	5/12**
	Bethel		Broken Up	5/9	46	5/13**
	Napaskiak		Broken Up	5/8	6	5/14**
	Napakiak		Broken Up	5/10	31	5/15**

Southeast-Southcentral						
River-Reach	Location	Snowmelt Runoff Volume	Village Flood Potential	Median Breakup Date (1980-2025)	Years of Record (1980-2025)	Forecast Breakup Date Range
Southeast		Average				
Kenai River		Below				
Anchor River		Below				4/19**
Matanuska River		Below				
Susitna River		Below				
	Gold Creek		Broken Up	5/2	10	5/6**

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	Sunshine		Broken Up	5/2	37	5/6**
Talkeetna		Below				
	Talkeetna		Broken Up	4/28	5	5/6**
Yentna River		Below				
	Lake Creek		Broken Up	5/1	34	5/6**
Skwentna River		Below				
	Skwentna		Broken Up	4/30	31	5/6**
Copper River		Average				
	Gakona		Broken Up	5/1	36	5/6**
	Gulkana		Broken Up	5/1	34	5/6**

North Slope-Northwest						
River-Reach	Location	Snowmelt Runoff Volume	Village Flood Potential	Median Breakup Date (1980-2025)	Years of Record (1980-2025)	Forecast Breakup Date Range
Koyukuk River		Below				
	Bettles		Broken Up	5/10	44	5/12**
	Allakaket		Broken Up	5/11	40	5/12**
	Hughes		Broken Up	5/11	39	5/12**
Seward Peninsula		Below				
	Buckland		Broken Up	5/18	36	5/16**
Kobuk River		Below				
	Kobuk		Broken Up	5/14	42	5/14**
	Shungnak		Broken Up	5/16	34	5/16**
	Ambler		Broken Up	5/16	40	5/17**
Noatak River		Average				
	Noatak		Broken Up	5/19	27	5/16**
Brooks Range		Above				
	Colville at Umiat		Moderate	5/25	25	5/30-6/4

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	Colville at Colville Village		Moderate	6/3	23	6/5-6/9
Sagavanirktok River		Above				
	Dalton Highway		Moderate			

For more information and to submit comments, please contact:

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