

September 2012 Weather Summary

Multiple consecutive low pressure systems formed in western Alaska in mid-September and followed a similar path over the Kenai Fjords coastline, leaving little opportunity for coastal communities to dry out between storms (Figure 1). Measurable rainfall was recorded at the Seward airport 26 of the 30 days of the month. Total monthly precipitation for September was greater than the sum of precipitation received February-August 2012 and denoted the month as the second wettest September on record (1995 holds the record as the September recording the greatest total monthly precipitation).

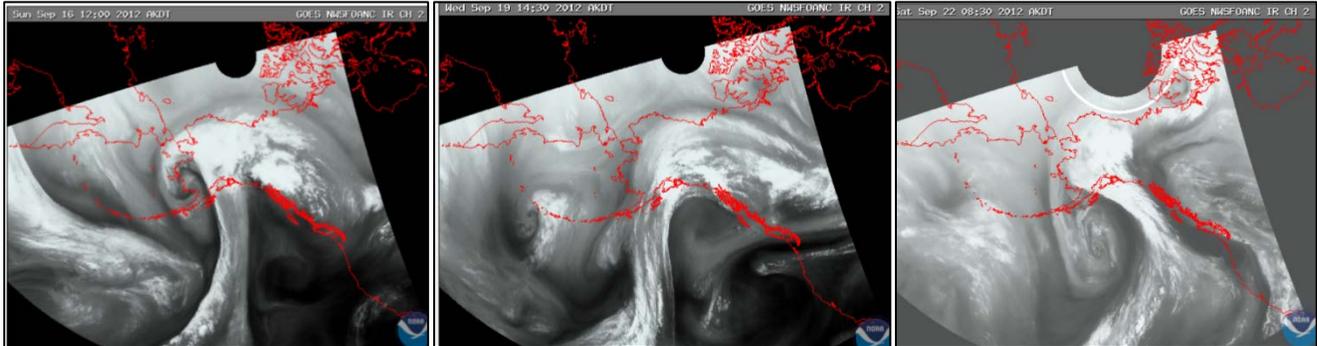


Figure 1. Water vapor images posted on the [Anchorage National Weather Service Forecast Office](#) website on September 16, 19, and 22 illustrate the repeat weather pattern that soaked the Kenai Fjords area in September.

As recorded at the Seward airport, total precipitation for the month was 26.29 inches (267% of normal), 16.43 inches above the 30-year average (1981-2010) for the month. The monthly average temperature was 48.2 degrees F; 1.3 degrees F below the 30-year average. September 9th was the windiest day of the month at the Seward airport with an average daily wind speed of 16.8 mph.

Seward may have been wet, but it was one of the drier and less windy places in the Kenai Fjords area in September. The McArthur Pass Remote Automated Weather Station (RAWS) received more than twice the amount of rain than the Seward airport, and the outer coast and Harding Icefield weather stations recorded higher wind gusts than in town (Table 1).

| Precipitation Totals and Maximum Wind Gusts Kenai Fjords National Park September 2012 | | | |
|---|-------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------------|
| Station | Accumulation (in) | Max. Wind Speed (mph) | Date Max. Wind Gust was Recorded |
| Seward Airport | 26.29 | 40 | 9/19/2012 |
| Exit Glacier SNOTEL | 28.7 | n/a | n/a |
| Harding Icefield RAWS | 17.89 | 103.1 | 9/22/2012 |
| Pedersen Lagoon RAWS | 50.74 | 89.3 | 9/9/2012 |
| McArthur Pass RAWS | 56.44 | 98.4 | 9/26/2012 |

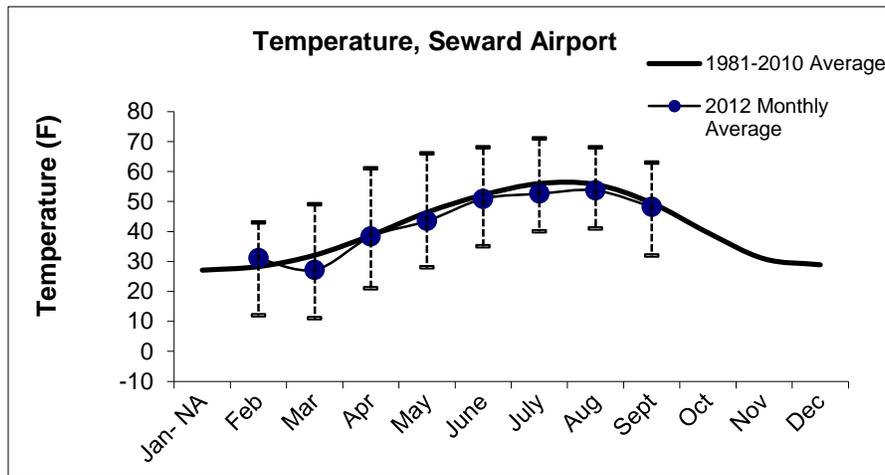
Table 1. Kenai Fjords area weather station summaries.

Also of note:

- The [National Weather Service Climate Prediction Center's](#) three month weather outlook (October-November-December) favors normal temperatures and normal precipitation for the Kenai Fjords area.
- The major storm that tracked into the Gulf of Alaska the last week of September made national news; read more about what the [Washington Post](#) reported on this “textbook storm”.
- To view and/or download the visible radar image of Alaska’s September 2012 “textbook storm” check out [NASA’s Earth Observatory Natural Disasters Image Library](#).
- NASA features Bear Glacier, located in Kenai Fjords National Park, as one of their numerous images of climate change. To view this and other satellite images documenting landscape change, see [NASA’s State of Flux gallery](#).
- [NASA](#) reports that two opposite sea ice records were recorded in September: the Arctic Ocean’s ice cap reached a record summertime low extent while the Antarctic sea ice reached a record high maximum winter extent.
- Read the autumn edition of the [Alaska Climate Dispatch](#) to learn more about areas in Alaska and northern Canada that are likely to undergo the greatest or least ecological pressure due to climate change and more.
- NOAA climate services portal serves as a single point-of-entry for NOAA’s extensive climate information, data, products, services, and the climate science magazine [ClimateWatch](#).

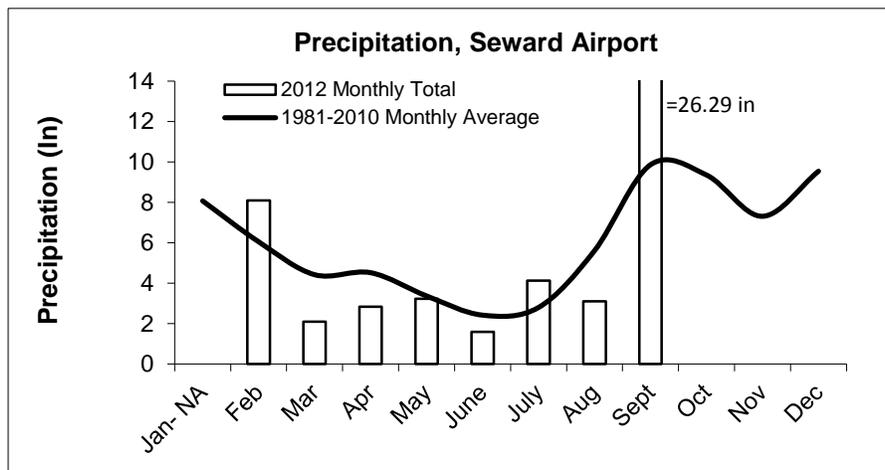
Read more to find out about the local climate for September 2012

Seward Airport Temperature, September 2012 (station 26438)



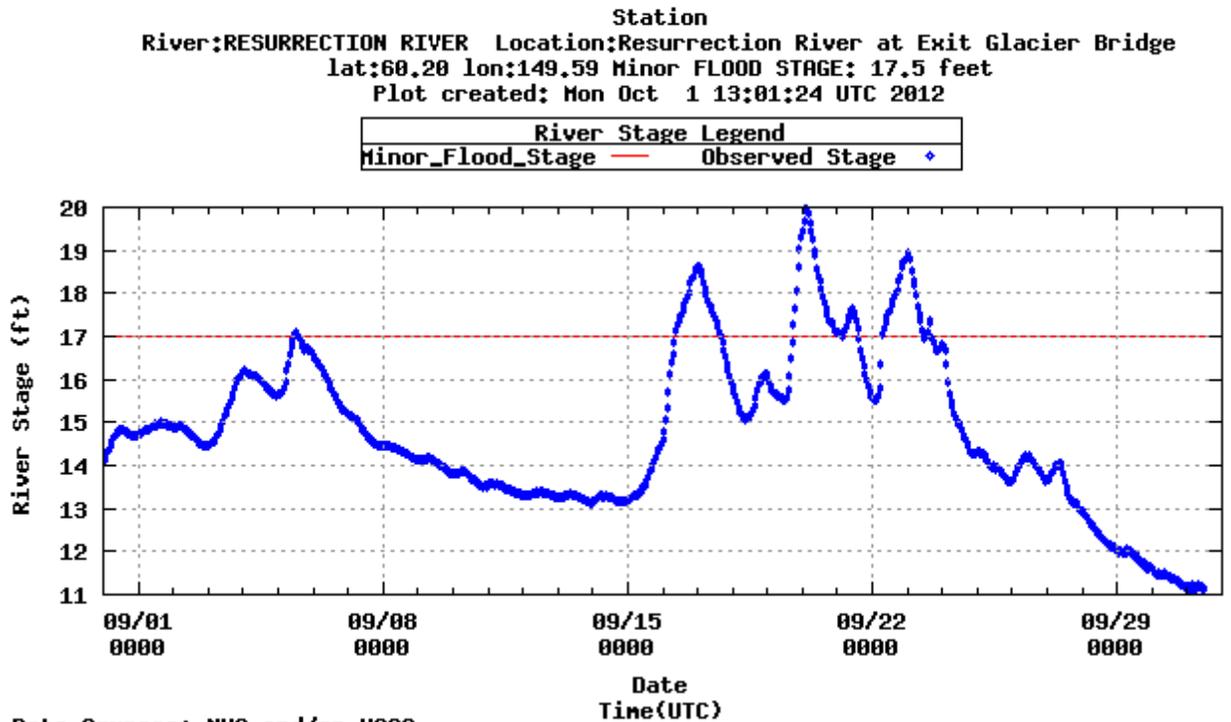
Monthly and 30-year average temperature (F) at Seward airport. 2012 monthly average values are shown with a thin solid line. The range of maximum and minimum daily temperatures for each month are shown with dashed vertical lines. So far, temperatures in 2012 are following the annual trend line, although at slightly decreased temperatures.

Seward Airport Precipitation, September 2012 (station 26438)



Monthly and 30-year average precipitation (inches) at Seward airport. Total precipitation for the month of September was off the chart as it exceeded the normal monthly precipitation by 167%.

Rivers



Data Sources: NWS and/or USGS

Resurrection River at Exit Glacier Bridge is monitored by the Alaska-Pacific River Forecast Center: Resurrection River set a record stage height of 19.97 ft in late September. This stage height value delineates the flood stage categories "moderate" to "major" flooding.

Exit Creek water level (stage height) data is only collected during the summer. Although not quantifiable, Exit Creek flooded its banks in September causing closures and damage to the NPS-managed portion of the road to Exit Glacier.

Weather Station data (map of [some] stations [Western Region Climate Center](#) or [MesoWest](#))

[Seward Airport](#)
[Grouse Crk Divide](#)
[Exit Glacier SNOTEL](#)
[McArthur Pass](#)
[Pilot Rock](#)

[Seward Hwy MP#12](#)
[Exit Glacier](#)
[Harding Icefield](#)
[Nuka Glacier](#)
[Buoy 76-Cape Cleare](#)

[Pedersen Lagoon](#)

Weather Forecasts

[Seward Summary](#)
[Marine Forecast](#)
[Surface Map](#)

[Graphical Forecast](#)
[4-8 Day Forecast](#)