

Government of Northwest Territories
Gouvernement des Territoires du Nord-Ouest

NWT Water Monitoring Bulletin

October 5th 2026

Bulletin sur la surveillance
des eaux des
TNO – 5 Octobre 2026

NWT Water Monitoring Bulletins are posted monthly. These bulletins are intended to provide an update of water flow and level data at select NWT Hydrometric Network gauge stations across the Northwest Territories.

Where available, data from river sites are presented as flow (discharge) or water level and data from lake sites are presented as level. The figures in this report represent current conditions for this year, relative to historic minimum and maximum values, extreme values (10th to 90th percentiles) and the average range, which is calculated as the interquartile range.

The NWT Hydrometric Network is a partnership between Government of Northwest Territories – Environment and Climate Change (ECC) and Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC) and is operated by the Water Survey of Canada (ECCC). Both historic and real-time data for all stations are available at https://wateroffice.ec.gc.ca/index_e.html. All 2025 and 2026 data are considered provisional and may contain values that are later corrected.

Any questions regarding information contained in this Bulletin can be directed to NWTWaters@gov.nt.ca.

Les Bulletins sur la surveillance des eaux aux TNO sont publiés mensuellement. Ces bulletins visent à fournir des mises à jour sur les données concernant l'écoulement et le niveau de l'eau à certaines stations de jaugeage du Réseau hydrométrique des Territoires du Nord-Ouest.

Si elles sont disponibles, les données sur les rivières et les fleuves sont présentées sous forme d'écoulement (débit) et celles des lacs sont présentées sous forme de niveau. Dans le présent rapport, les données font état des conditions de cette année et sont comparées aux valeurs minimales, maximales et extrêmes (10^e au 90^e centile) ainsi qu'à la moyenne (calculée en tant qu'écart interquartile).

Le Réseau hydrométrique des TNO est le fruit d'un partenariat entre le ministère de l'Environnement et du Changement climatique du gouvernement des Territoires du Nord-Ouest et Environnement et Changement climatique Canada (ECCC) et est exploité par la Division des relevés hydrologiques du Canada. Vous pouvez consulter les données historiques et les données en temps réel de toutes les stations au https://eau.ec.gc.ca/index_f.html. Toutes les données de 2025 et de 2026 sont considérées comme provisoires et peuvent contenir des valeurs qui seront ultérieurement corrigées.

Pour toute question sur le contenu du présent document, écrivez un courriel à l'adresse NWTWaters@gov.nt.ca.

Current status

- This report is our **Monthly Water Monitoring Bulletin**, which provides regular updates on water levels and precipitation in the NWT.
- Water levels are generally higher than levels observed at this time last year, across most of the large lakes and rivers in the NWT, with some exceptions.
 - Rivers or lakes where the water level is currently **well below average**:
 - Great Bear Lake (similar to last year)
 - Great Bear River (similar to last year)
 - Snare River (lower than last year)
 - Rivers or lakes where the water level is currently **below average**:
 - La Martre River (similar to last year)
 - Prosperous Lake (lower than last year)
 - Liard River (similar to last year)
 - Coppermine River (lower than last year)
 - Rivers or lakes where the water level is currently **average**:
 - Hay River (higher than last year)
 - Mackenzie River (higher than last year)
 - Great Slave Lake (higher than last year)
 - Arctic Red River (higher than last year)
 - Taltson River (higher than last year)
 - Lockhart River (lower than last year)
 - Hoarfrost River (lower than last year)
 - Cameron River (similar to last year)
 - Prelude Lake (similar to last year)
 - Yamba River (lower than last year)
 - Rivers or lakes where the water level is currently **above average**:
 - Peel River (higher than last year)
 - South Nahanni River (similar to last year)
 - Tazin River (higher than last year)
 - Slave River (higher than last year)
- **September precipitation** was below average in Fort Liard, and Fort Simpson; average in Hay River, Yellowknife, and Norman Wells; and above average in Fort Smith.
- **September temperatures** were generally above average in nearly all NWT communities, except Norman Wells and Inuvik (average).
- Water levels on Great Slave Lake and the Mackenzie River for the rest of the fall be strongly influenced by precipitation received in northern British Columbia and Alberta.
 - Since April, cumulative precipitation in northern British Columbia has been generally below average, and in northern Alberta has been generally average to above average.

- Seasonal climate forecasts from ECCC for October-December 2026 suggests:
 - Below average precipitation is possible in the Dehcho region, and above average precipitation is possible in eastern areas of the NWT.
 - Warmer than normal temperatures for most of the NWT, with higher confidence for eastern NWT.
- A strong El Niño is present and, at this time, is forecast to continue to at least February, with a high likelihood of continuing into the first part of Spring 2027. Generally speaking, El Niño means warmer than normal temperatures and less snowfall than normal in western and northwestern Canada, including the NWT.

Situation actuelle

- Le présent rapport est notre **Bulletin mensuel sur la surveillance des eaux**, qui fournit des mises à jour régulières sur les niveaux d'eau et les précipitations aux TNO.
- Les niveaux d'eau sont généralement plus élevés que ceux observés à la même période l'année dernière, dans la plupart des grands lacs et des grandes rivières des TNO, sauf quelques exceptions.
 - Rivières et lacs dont le niveau de l'eau est actuellement **bien inférieur à la moyenne** :
 - Grand lac de l'Ours (semblable à l'année dernière)
 - Rivière Great Bear (semblable à l'année dernière)
 - Rivière Snare (inférieur à l'année dernière)
 - Rivières et lacs dont le niveau de l'eau est actuellement **inférieur à la moyenne** :
 - Rivière La Martre (semblable à l'année dernière)
 - Lac Prosperous (inférieur à l'année dernière)
 - Rivière Liard (semblable à l'année dernière)
 - Rivière Coppermine (inférieur à l'année dernière)
 - Rivières et lacs dont le niveau de l'eau est actuellement **dans la moyenne** :
 - Rivière Hay (supérieur à l'année dernière)
 - Fleuve Mackenzie (supérieur à l'année dernière)
 - Grand lac des Esclaves (supérieur à l'année dernière)
 - Rivière Arctic Red (supérieur à l'année dernière)
 - Rivière Taltson (supérieur à l'année dernière)
 - Rivière Lockhart (inférieur à l'année dernière)
 - Rivière Hoarfrost (inférieur à l'année dernière)
 - Rivière Cameron (semblable à l'année dernière)
 - Lac Prelude (semblable à l'année dernière)
 - Rivière Yamba (inférieur à l'année dernière)
 - Rivières et lacs dont le niveau de l'eau est actuellement **supérieur à la moyenne** :
 - Rivière Peel (supérieur à l'année dernière)

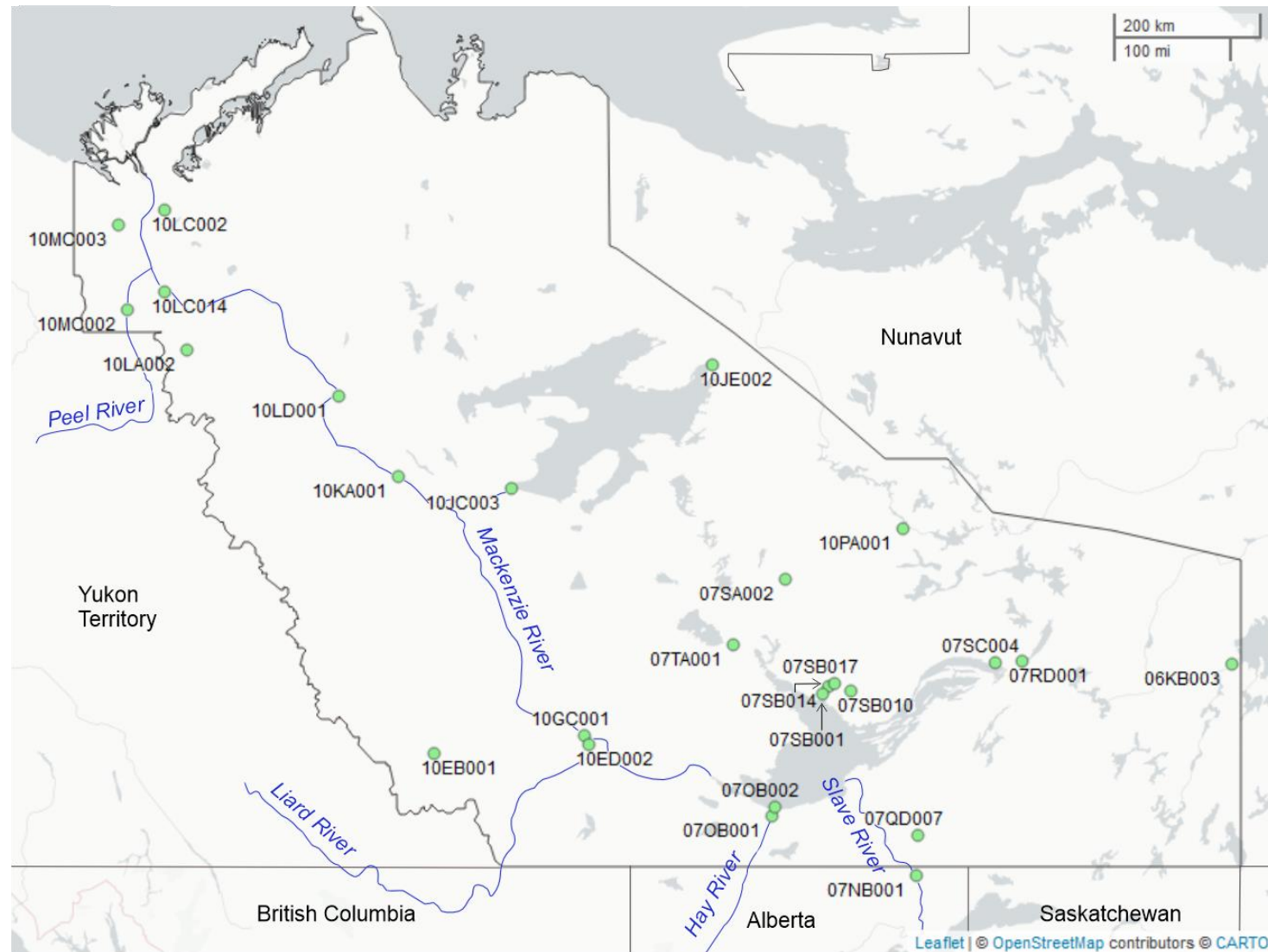
- Rivière Nahanni Sud (semblable à l'année dernière)
 - Rivière Tazin (supérieur à l'année dernière)
 - Rivière des Esclaves (supérieur à l'année dernière)
- **En septembre, les précipitations** ont été inférieures à la moyenne à Fort Liard et à Fort Simpson, dans la moyenne à Hay River, à Yellowknife et à Norman Wells, et supérieures à la moyenne à Fort Smith.
 - **En septembre, les températures** ont été généralement supérieures à la moyenne pour presque toutes les collectivités des TNO, sauf Norman Wells et Inuvik (dans la moyenne).
 - Le niveau d'eau du Grand lac des Esclaves et du fleuve Mackenzie pour le reste de l'automne sera fortement influencé par les précipitations reçues dans le nord de la Colombie-Britannique et de l'Alberta.
 - Depuis avril, les précipitations cumulatives dans le nord de la Colombie-Britannique ont été globalement inférieures à la moyenne, tandis que, dans le nord de l'Alberta, elles ont été globalement dans la moyenne ou supérieures à la moyenne.
 - Les prévisions climatiques saisonnières d'ECCC pour la période d'octobre à décembre 2026 indiquent ce qui suit :
 - Il pourrait y avoir des précipitations inférieures à la moyenne dans la région du Dehcho et des précipitations supérieures à la moyenne dans les secteurs de l'est des TNO.
 - Des températures au-dessus des normales saisonnières sont attendues dans la majeure partie des TNO, avec un degré de confiance plus élevé quant à ces prévisions pour l'est des TNO.
 - Un fort épisode du phénomène El Niño est en cours, et, à l'heure actuelle, on prévoit qu'il se maintiendra au moins jusqu'en février, avec une forte probabilité qu'il se prolonge jusqu'au début du printemps 2027. De manière générale, El Niño est synonyme de températures au-dessus de la normale et de chutes de neige moins abondantes que la normale dans l'ouest et le nord-ouest du Canada, ce qui comprend les TNO.

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Hydrometric station map



Above – A map of the hydrometric stations included in this report.

Information on interpreting figures

Water level and flow figures

The light blue line shows water levels/flows from last year (2025), while the dark blue line shows current water levels/flows in 2026. The darkest grey band represents the average range (calculated as the interquartile range, which is the 25th to 75th percentile), the next lightest grey bands represent a wider range of values (10th to 90th percentiles), and the lightest grey bands represent the highest and lowest levels or flows on record. If the dark blue line is within the dark grey band, current conditions can be assumed to be normal.

The terms used to describe water level or flow conditions are defined as follows:

- **Average:** within the interquartile range (25th-75th percentile range).
- **Above average / Below average:** within the 75th-90th percentile range or 10th-25th percentile range, respectively.
- **Well above average / Well below average:** above the 90th percentile or below the 10th percentile, respectively.

The grey bands are calculated for data prior to 2025. If the line from 2025 or 2026 is above (or below) the grey band, it means that the water level or flow from that year was the highest (or lowest) on record.

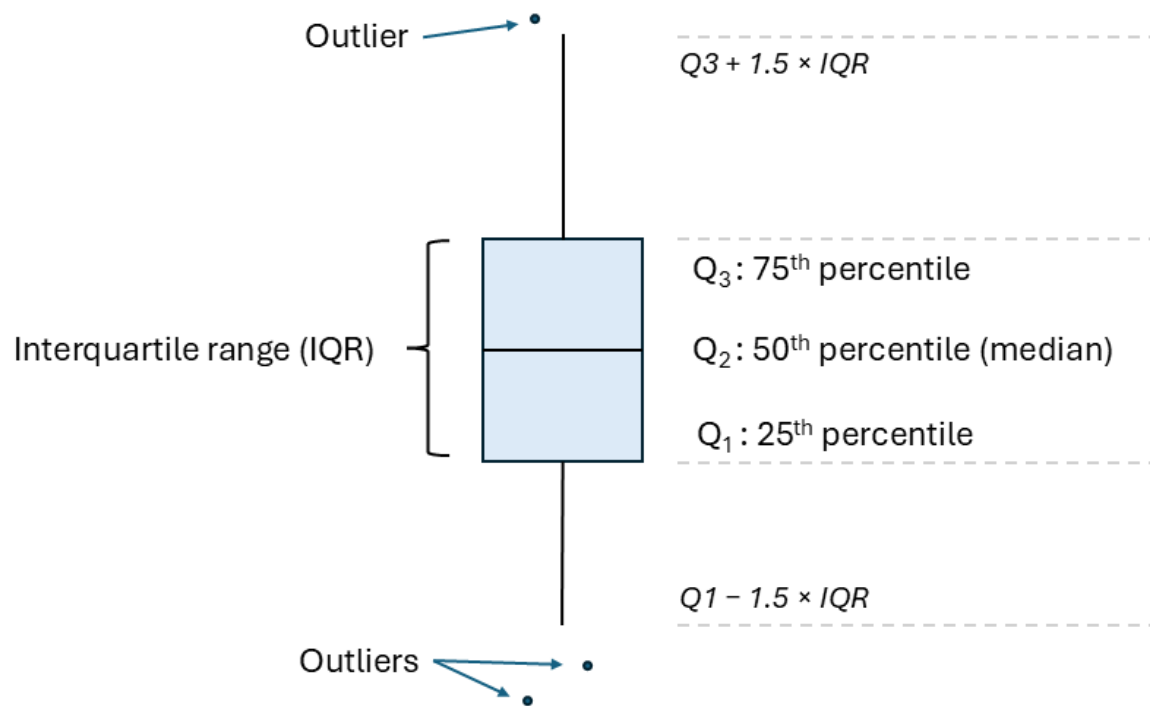
Climate figures

Monthly air temperature and precipitation data are displayed for six communities in the NWT (Fort Smith, Hay River, Yellowknife, Fort Simpson, Norman Wells, and Inuvik) and presented as box and whisker plots. The box in each plot represents the average range (calculated as the interquartile range, which is the 25th (Q₁) to 75th (Q₃) percentile) for each month. The whiskers are the vertical black lines, the ends of which represent the extreme values (~10th and ~90th percentiles¹). Each grey dot is the value from a previous year, beginning in 1950. The red or blue dots represent the values for the current year.

The terms used to describe temperature or precipitation conditions are defined as follows:

- **Average:** within the interquartile range (25th-75th percentile range).
- **Above average / Below average:** within the 75th to ~90th percentile range, or the ~10th to 25th percentile range, respectively.
- **Well above average / Well below average:** above the ~90th percentile or below the ~10th percentile, respectively.

¹ Note, for the climate figures, the ends of the whiskers are calculated by $Q_1 - 1.5 \times IQR$ and $Q_3 + 1.5 \times IQR$, which generally approximate the 10th and 90th percentiles, respectively. They are referred to here as ~10th and ~90th percentiles, for simplicity.

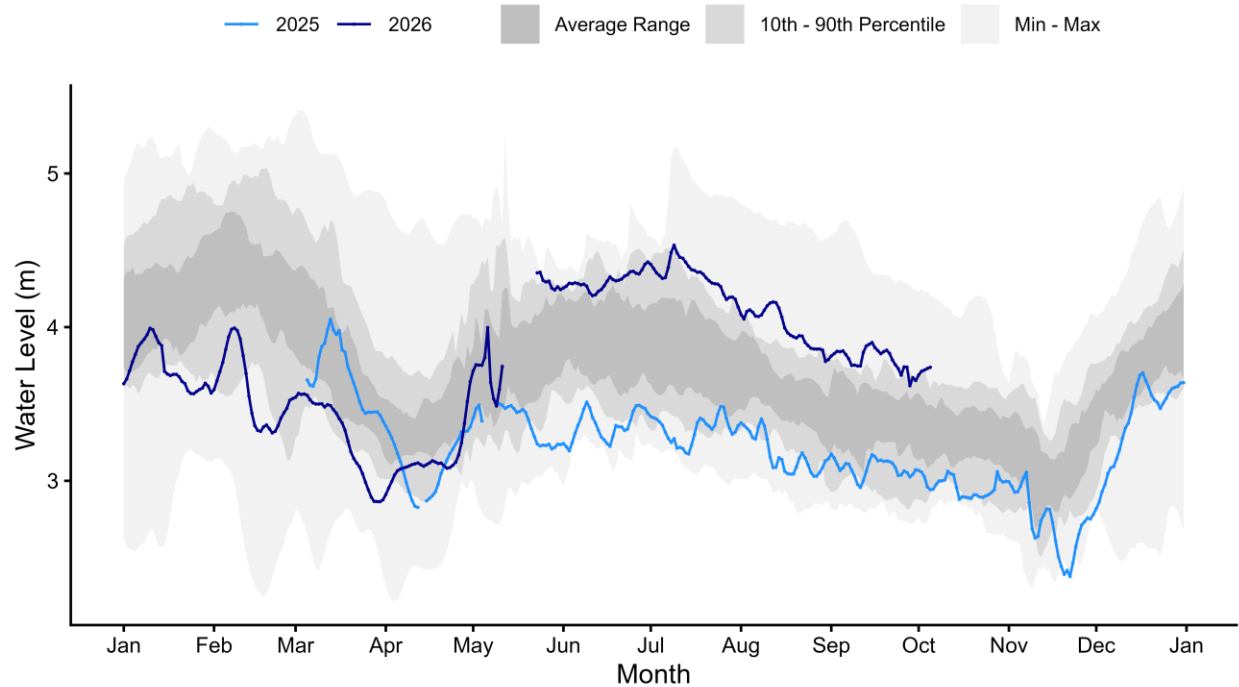


These data are primarily acquired and managed by Environment and Climate Change Canada, but in some cases values have been infilled with GNWT climate station data when ECCC data are unavailable.

Water level and flow data

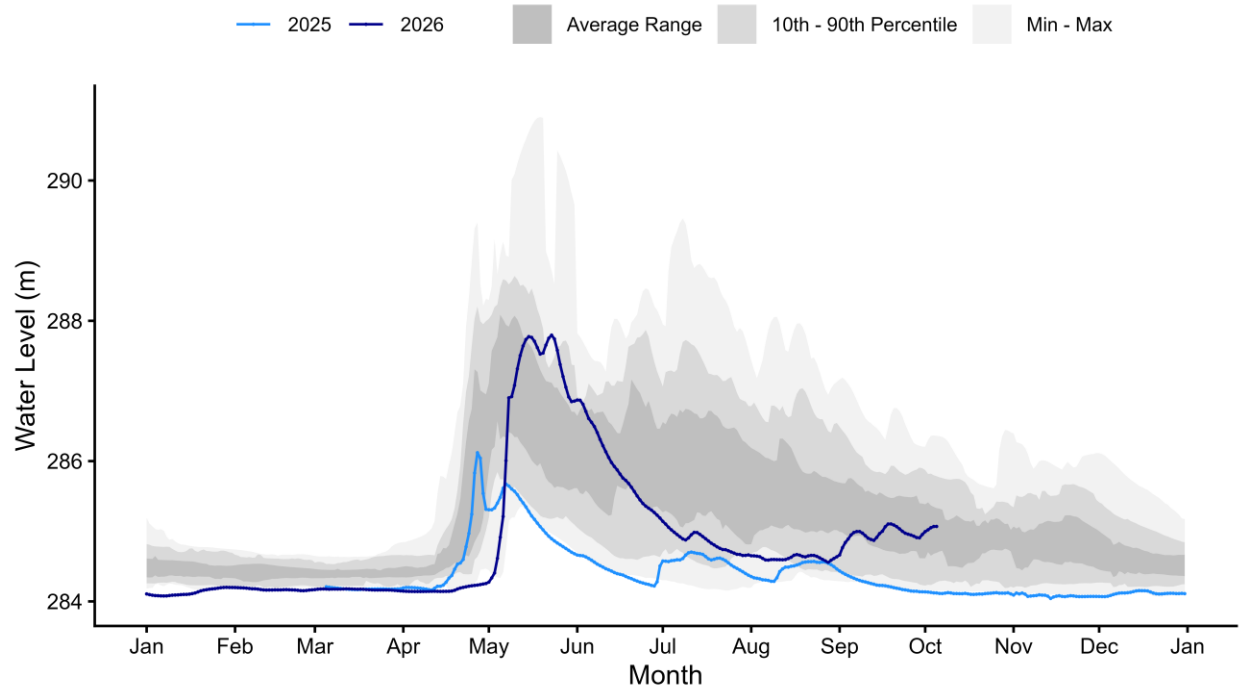
Slave River at Fitzgerald [07NB001]

Record Length: 25 years | Period of Record: 2002-2026



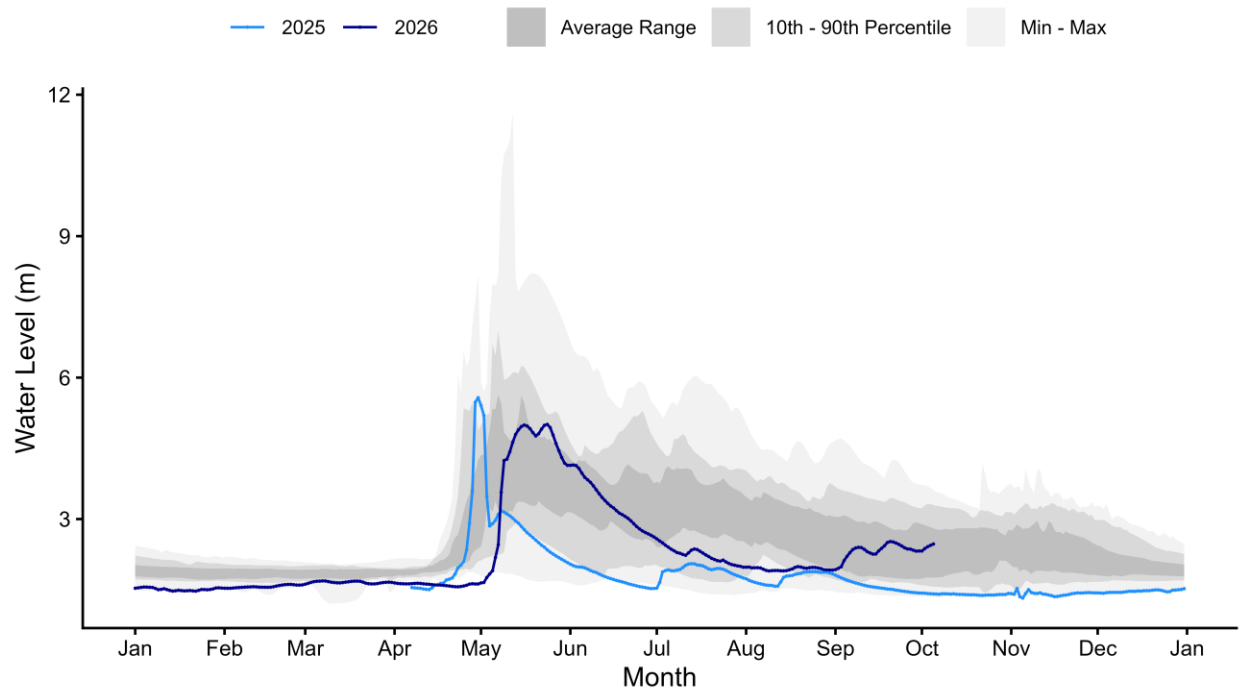
Hay River near Alberta/NWT Boundary [07OB008]

Record Length: 35 years | Period of Record: 1986-1998; 2004-2023; 2025-2026



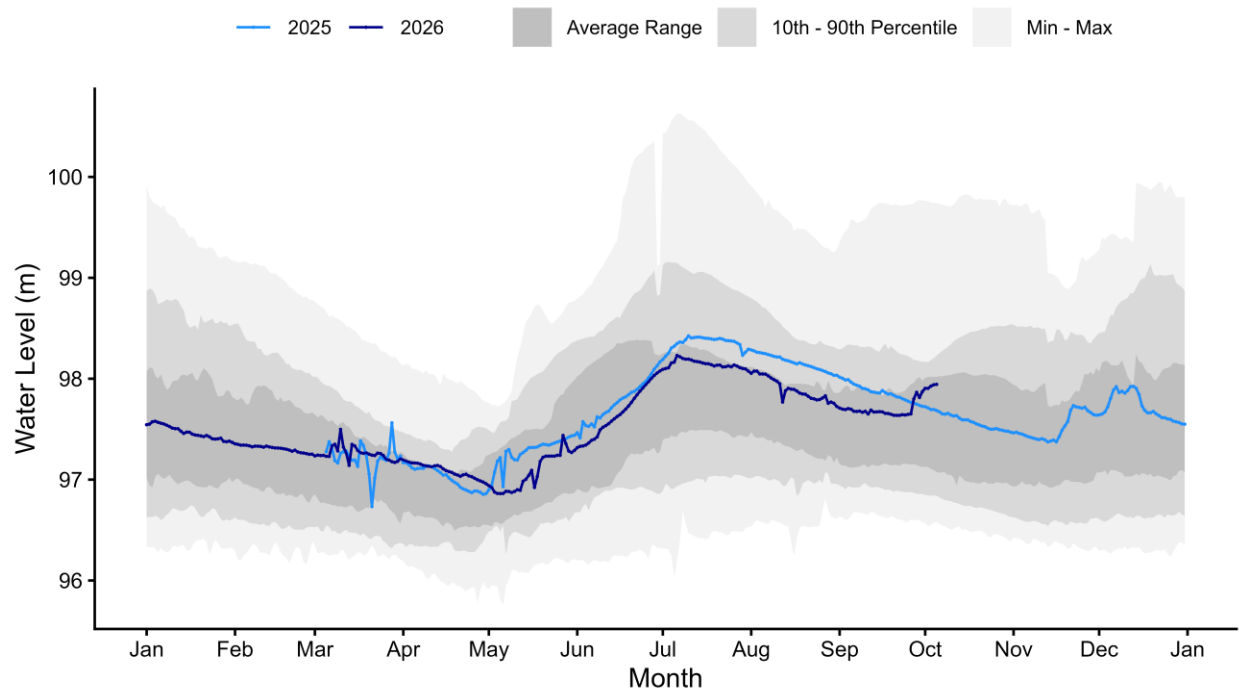
Hay River near Hay River [07OB001]

Record Length: 25 years | Period of Record: 2002-2026



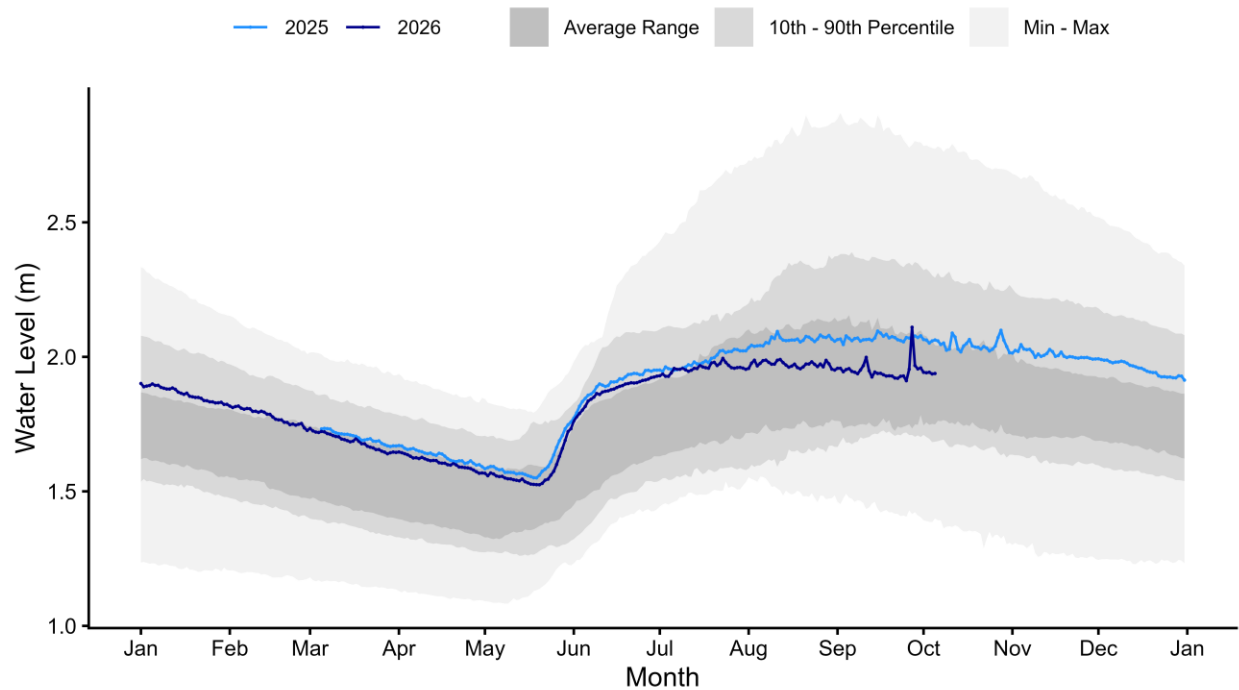
Taltson River below Hydro Dam [07QD007]

Record Length: 24 years | Period of Record: 2002-2008; 2010-2026



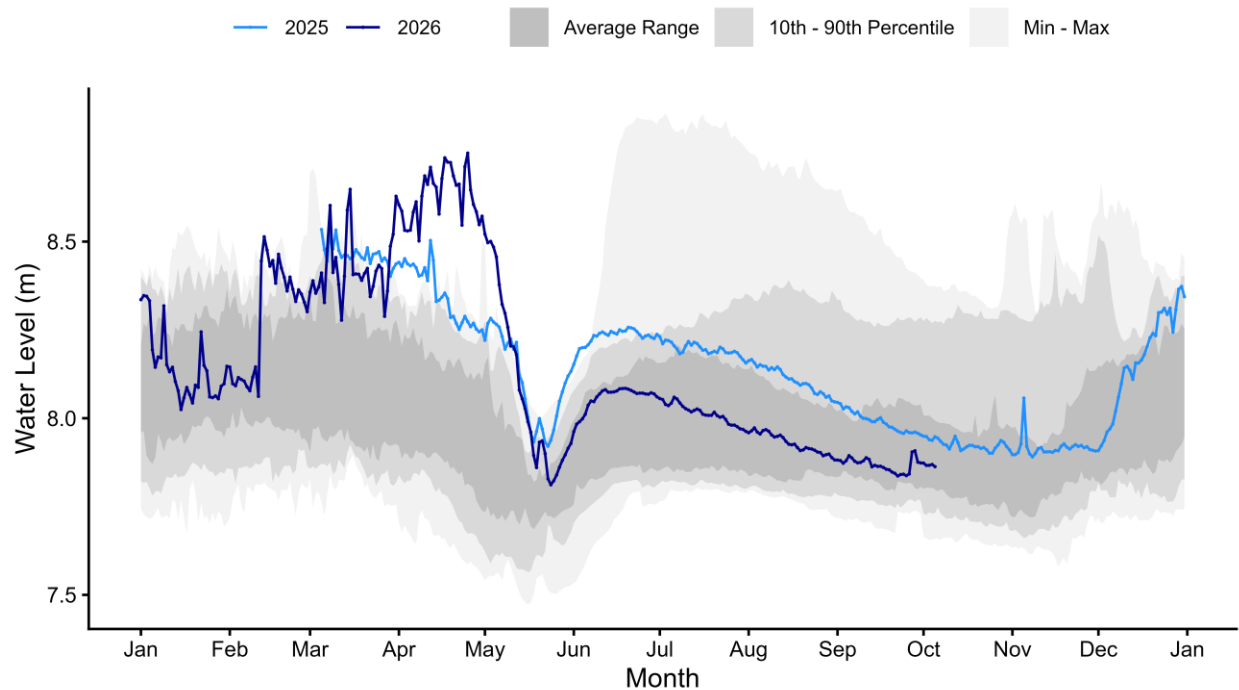
Lockhart River at outlet of Artillery Lake [07RD001]

Record Length: 25 years | Period of Record: 2002-2026



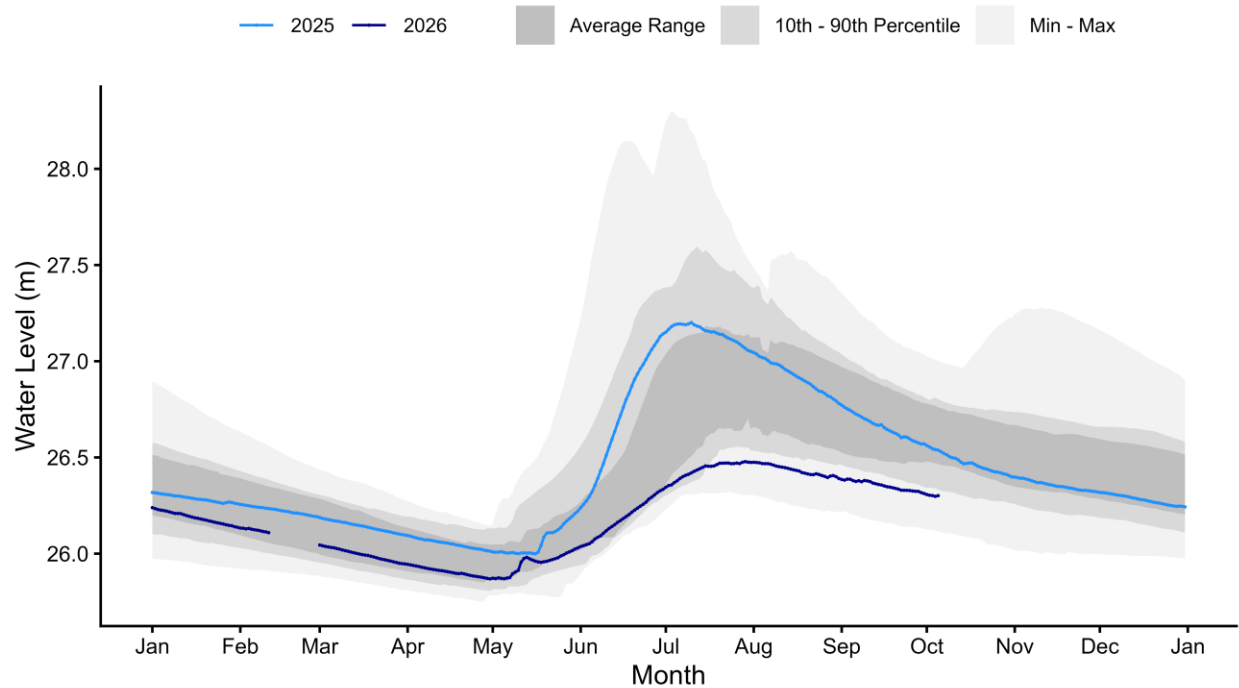
Hoarfrost River near the mouth [07SC004]

Record Length: 17 years | Period of Record: 2010-2026



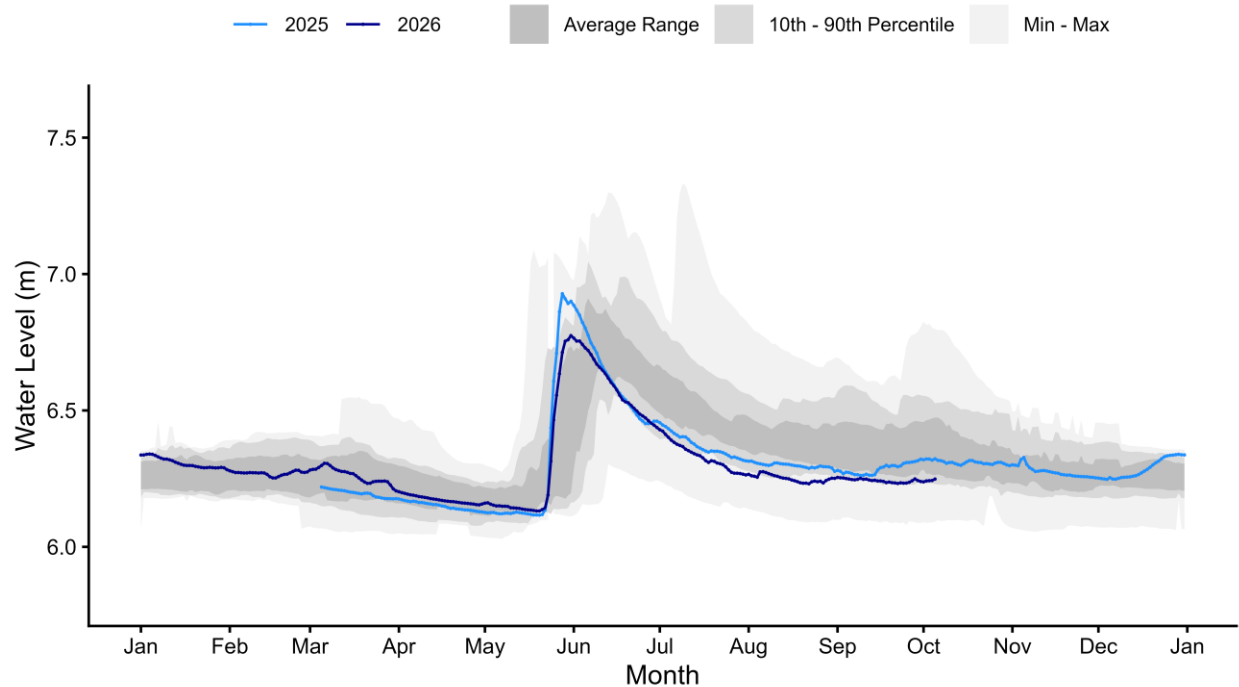
Snare River below Ghost Lake [07SA002]

Record Length: 25 years | Period of Record: 2002-2026



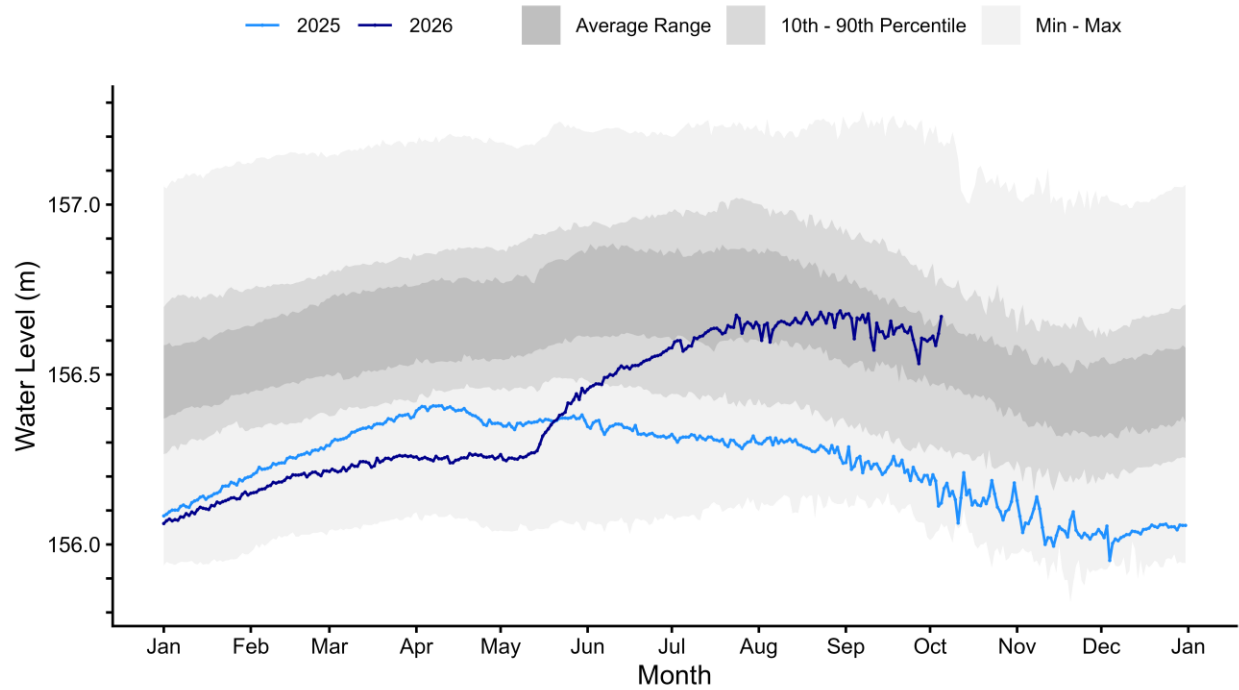
Coppermine River below Desteffany Lake [10PA001]

Record Length: 25 years | Period of Record: 2002-2026



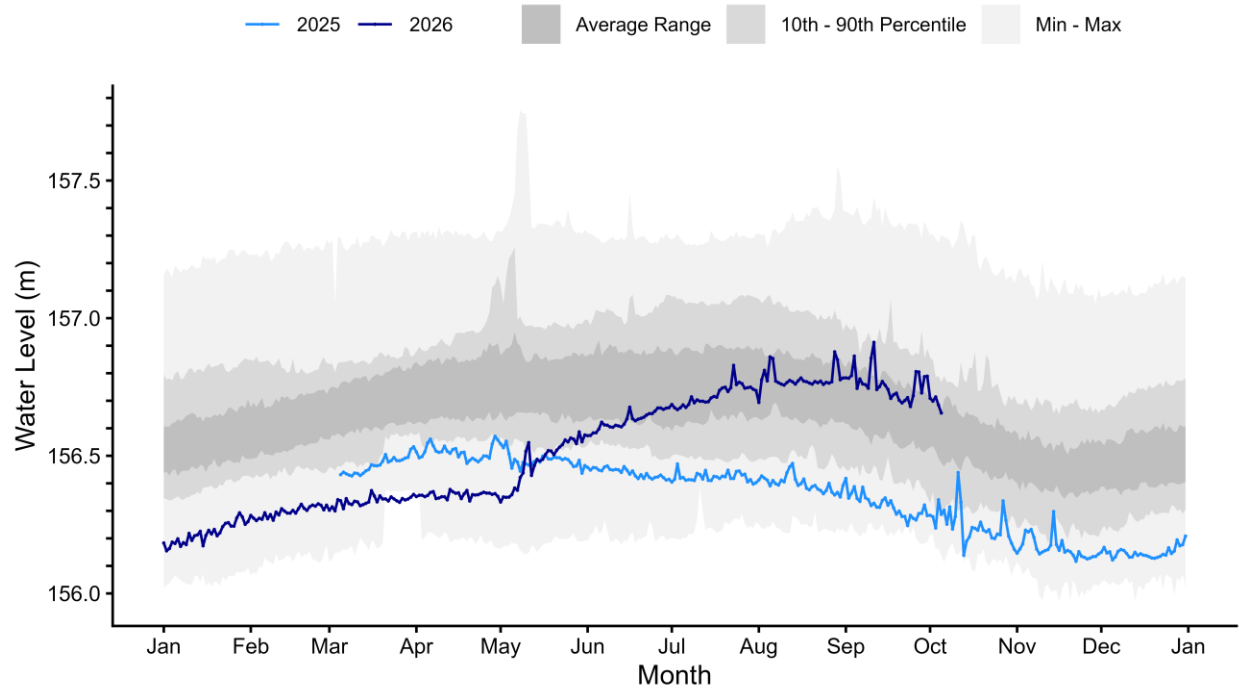
Great Slave Lake at Yellowknife Bay [07SB001]

Record Length: 91 years | Period of Record: 1934-1935; 1938-2026

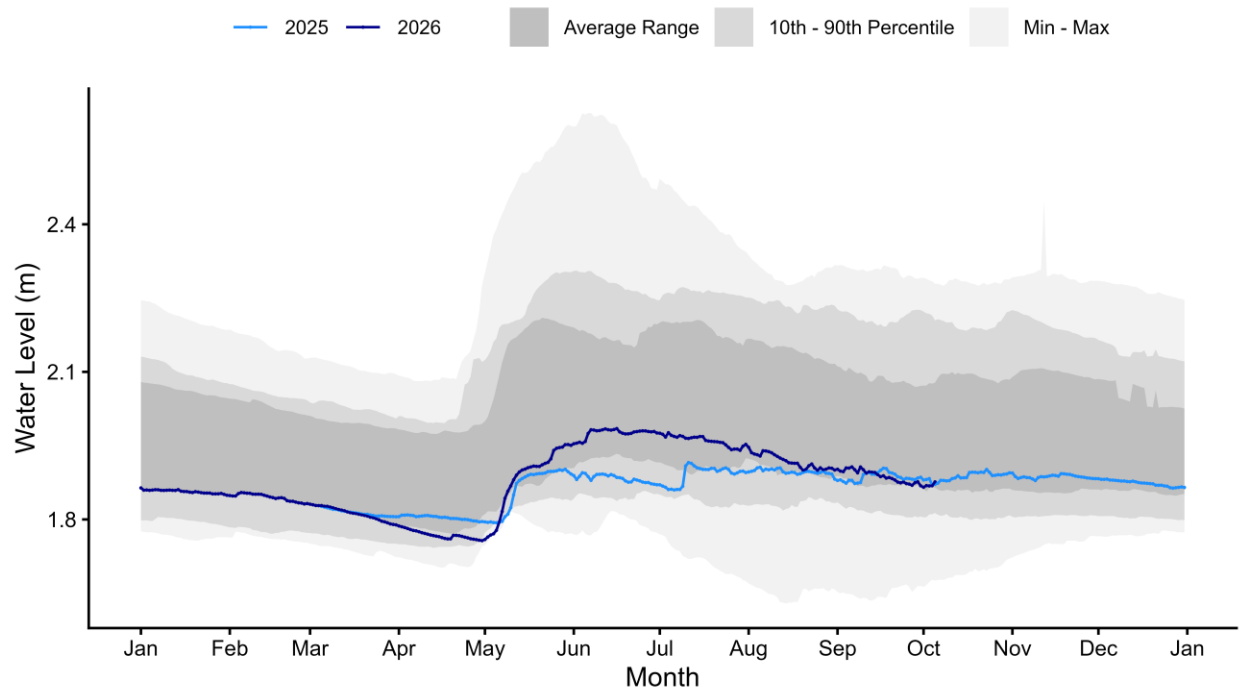


Great Slave Lake at Hay River [07OB002]

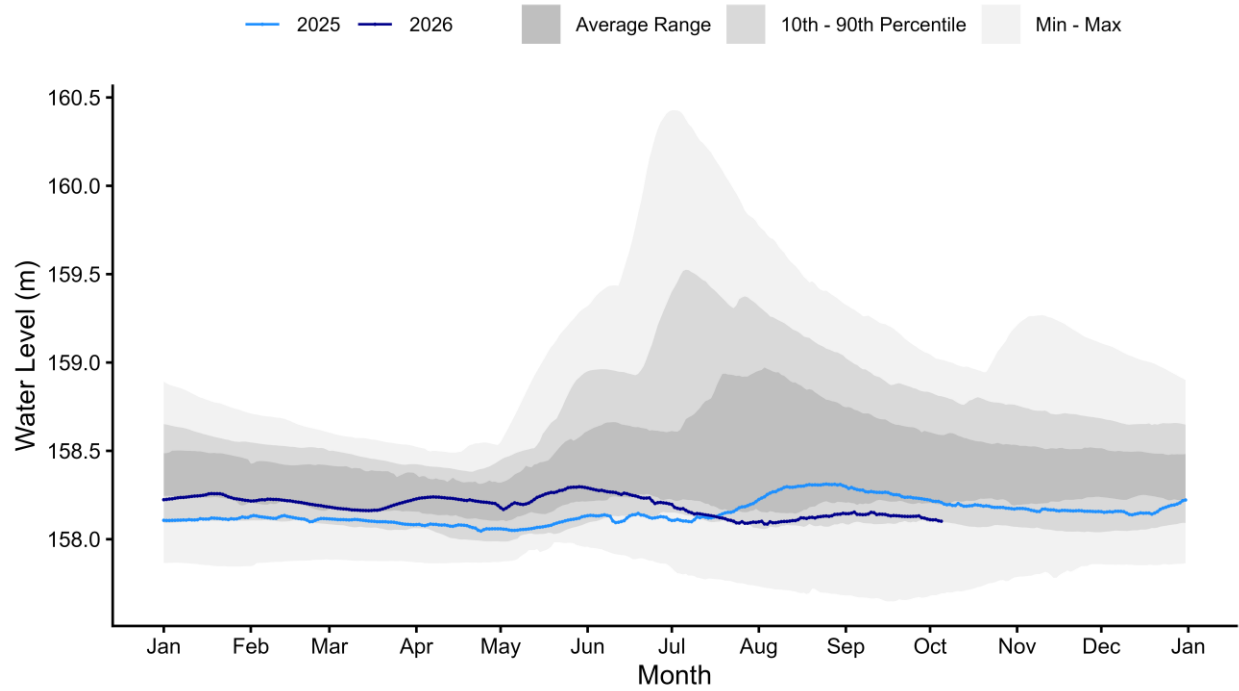
Record Length: 56 years | Period of Record: 1959-1970; 1983-2026



Cameron River below Reid Lake [07SB010]
Record Length: 25 years | Period of Record: 2002-2026

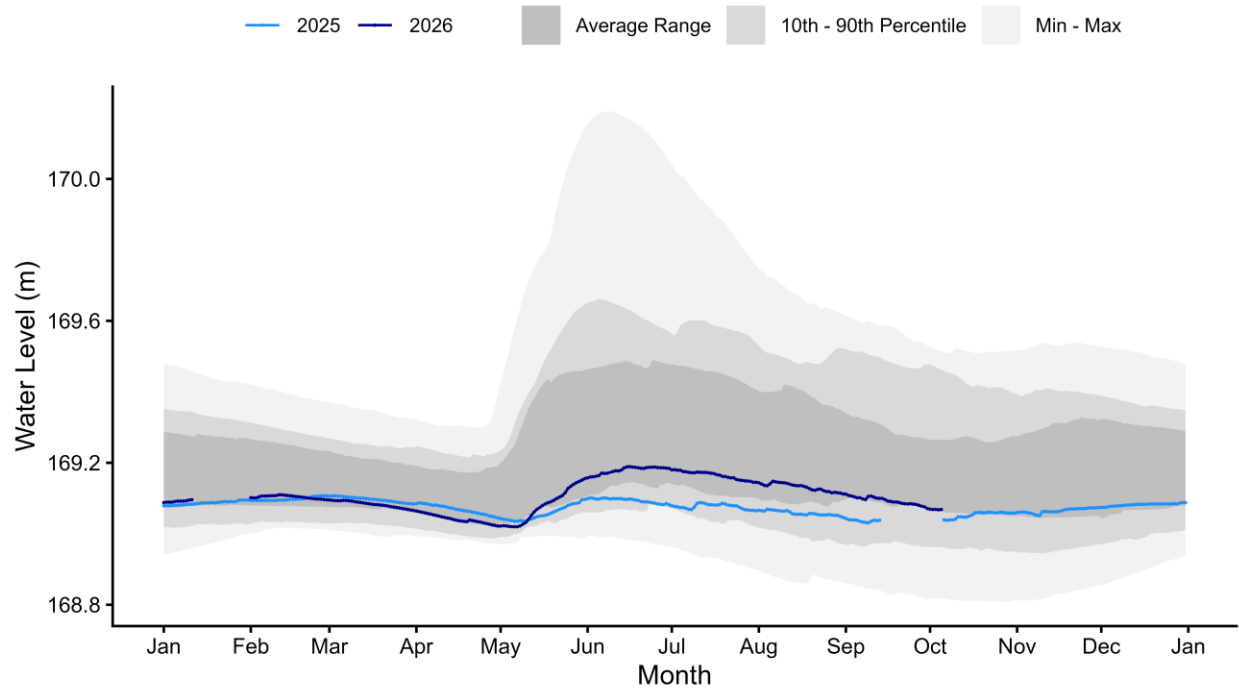


Prosperous Lake near McMeekan Bay [07SB014]
Record Length: 40 years | Period of Record: 1987-2026



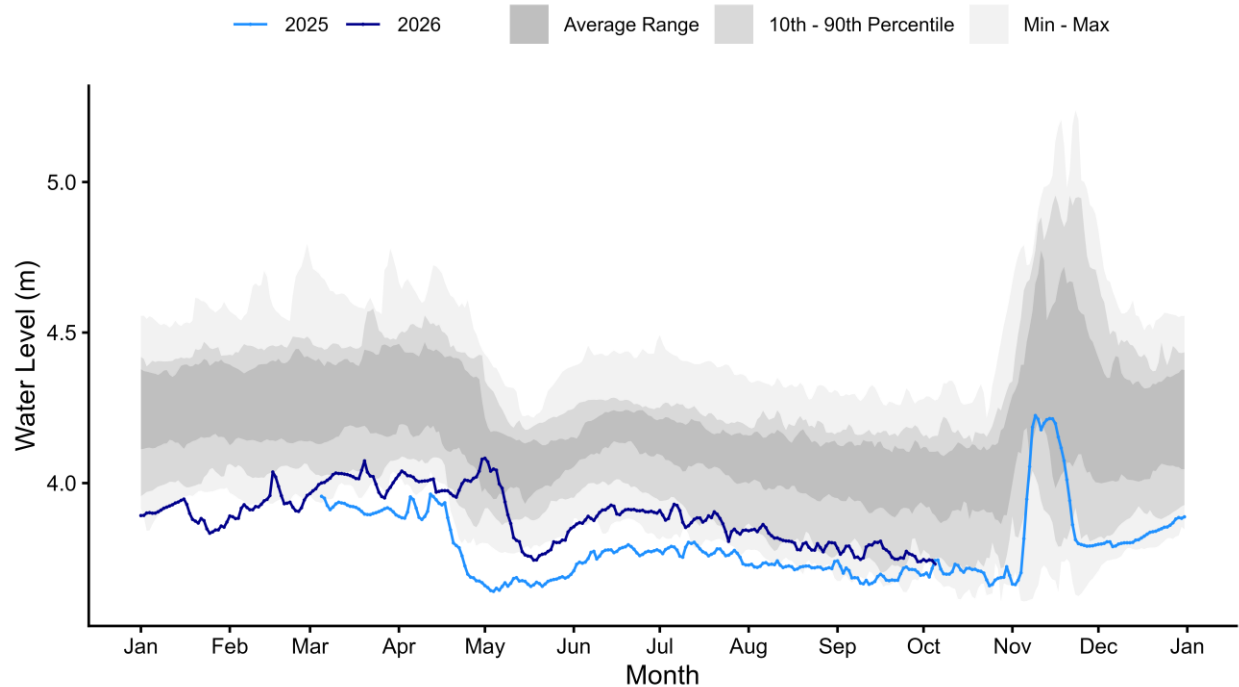
Prelude Lake near Yellowknife [07SB017]

Record Length: 32 years | Period of Record: 1995-2026



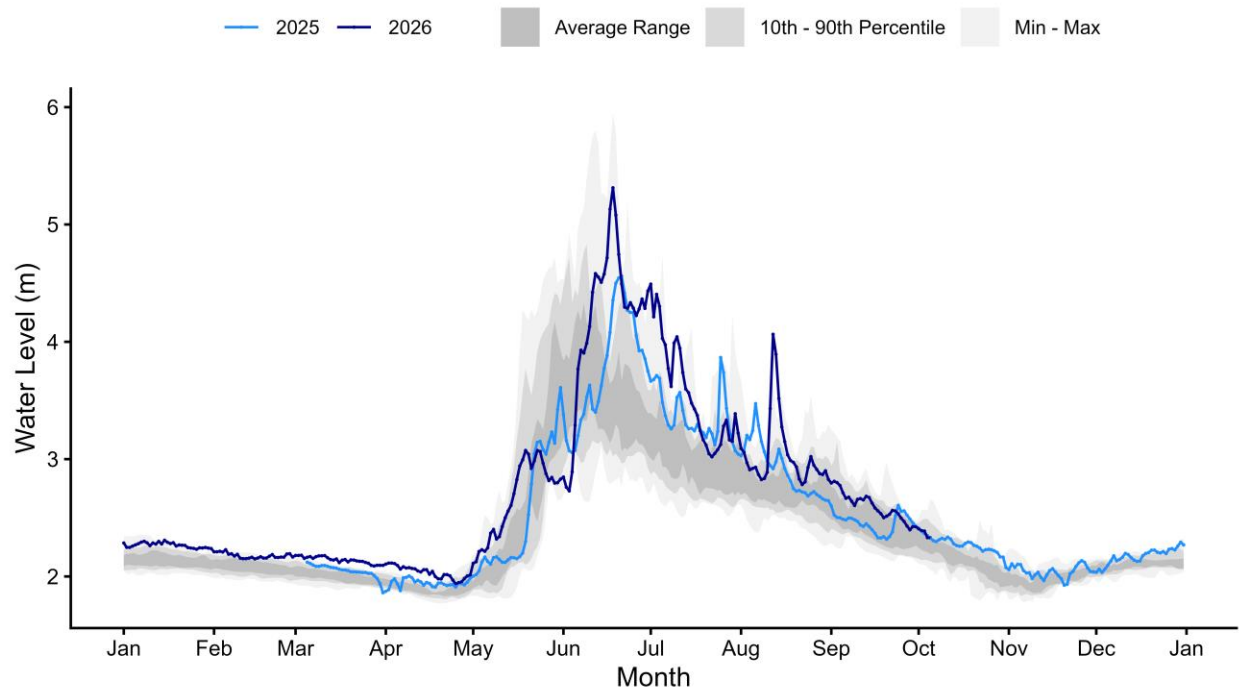
La Martre River below outlet of Lac La Martre [07TA001]

Record Length: 25 years | Period of Record: 2002-2026



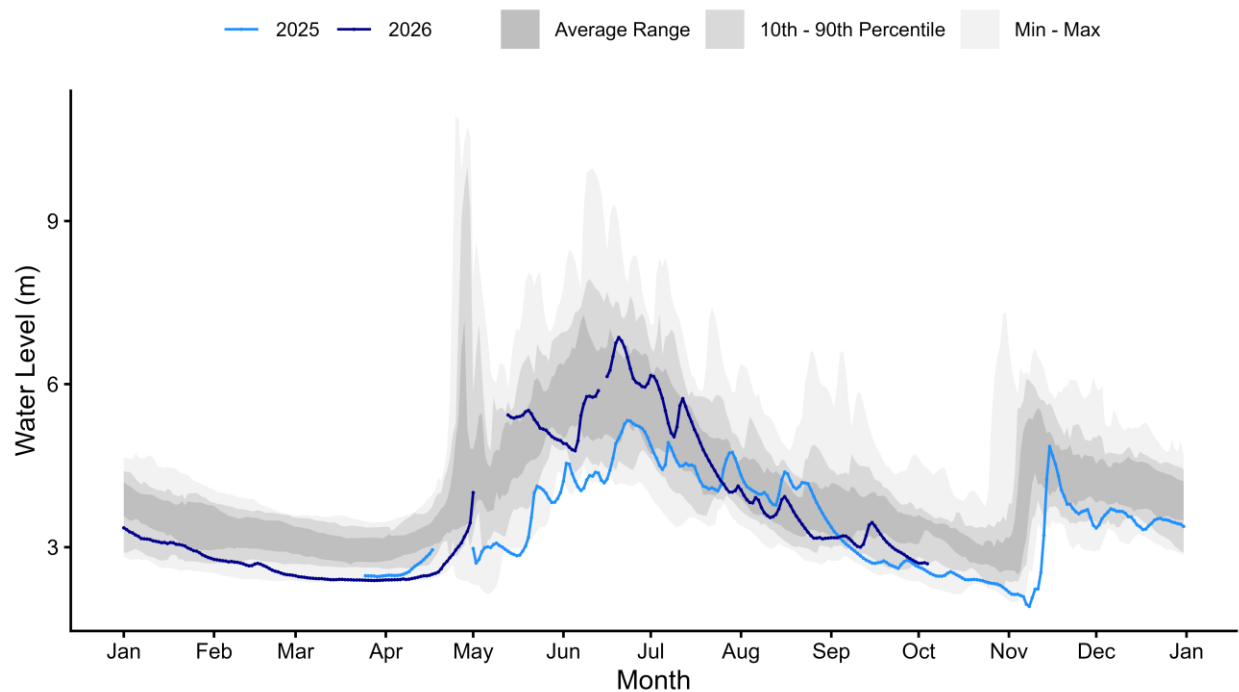
South Nahanni River above Virginia Falls [10EB001]

Record Length: 20 years | Period of Record: 2002-2019; 2025-2026



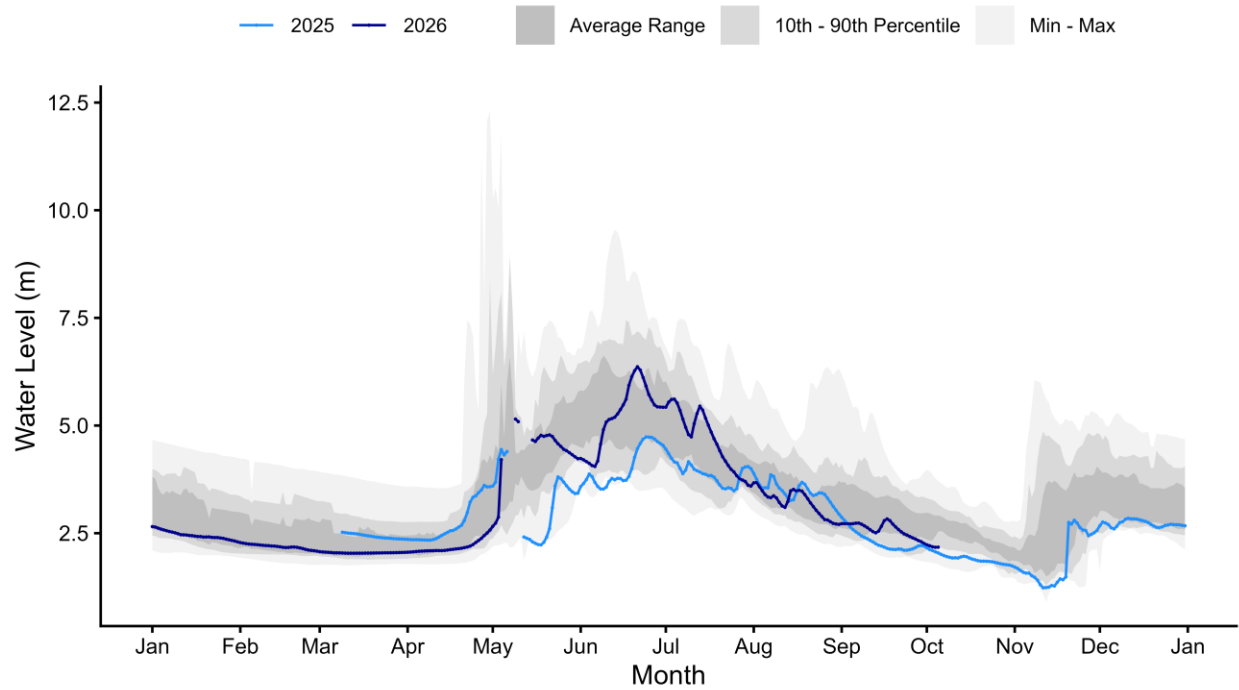
Liard River at Fort Liard [10ED001]

Record Length: 25 years | Period of Record: 2002-2026



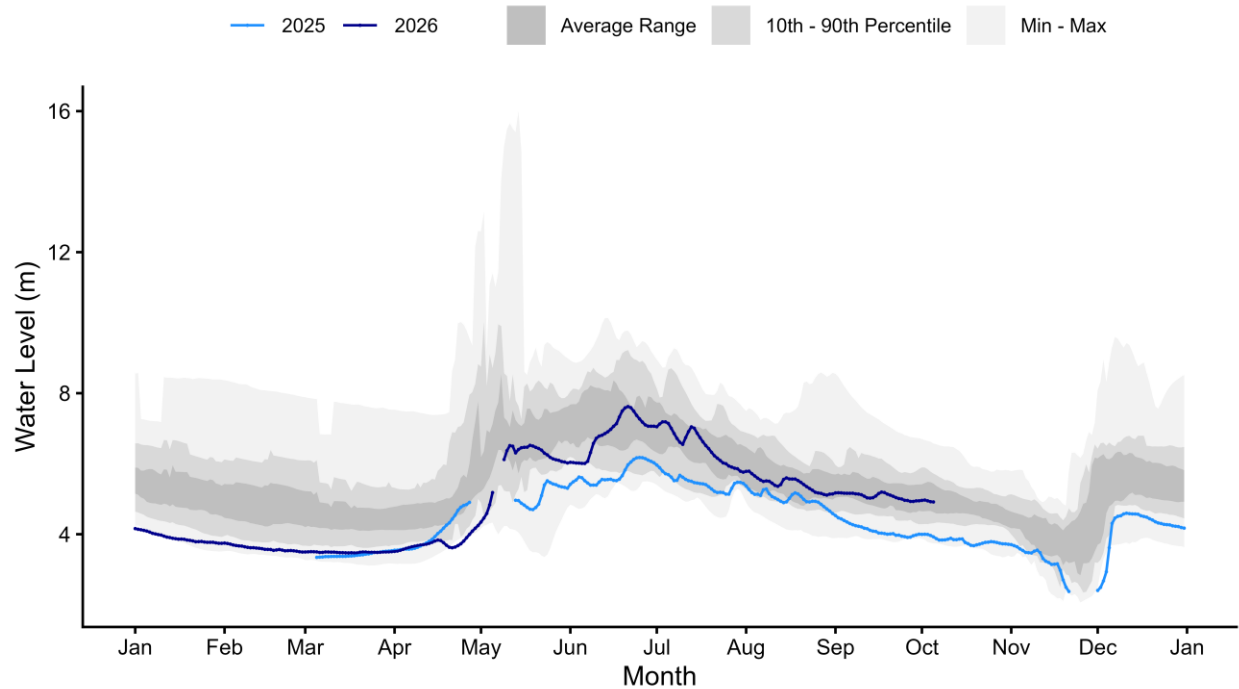
Liard River near the mouth [10ED002]

Record Length: 25 years | Period of Record: 2002-2026

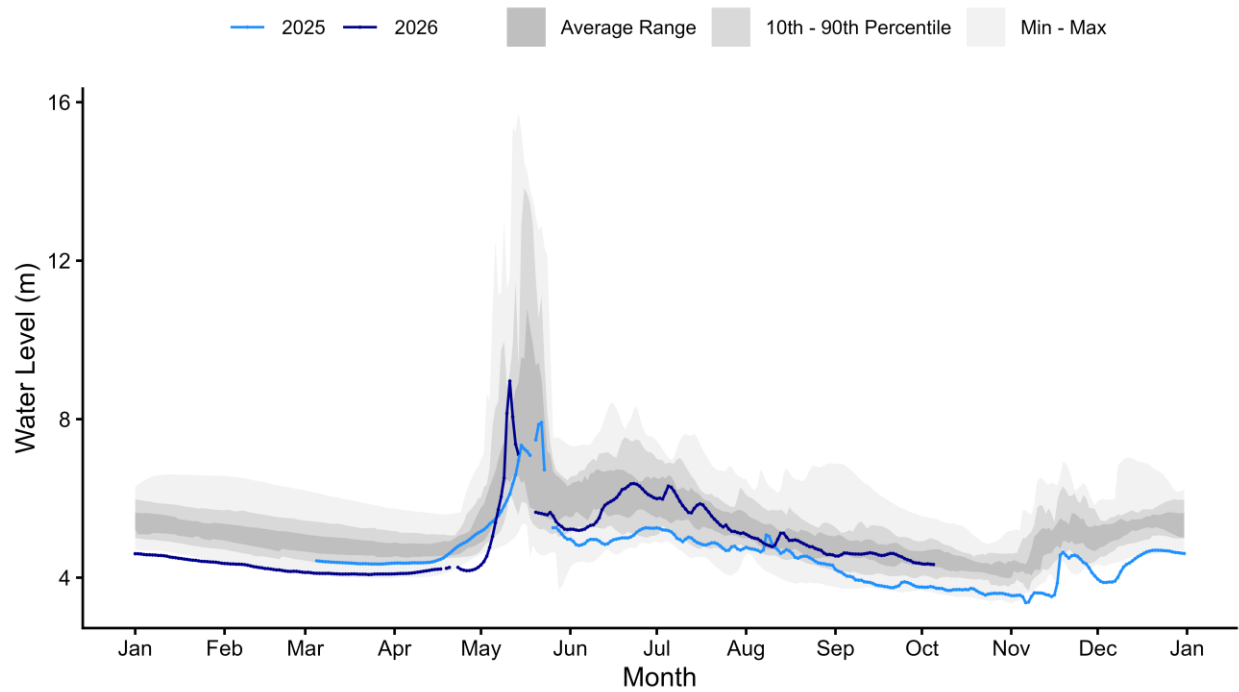


Mackenzie River at Fort Simpson [10GC001]

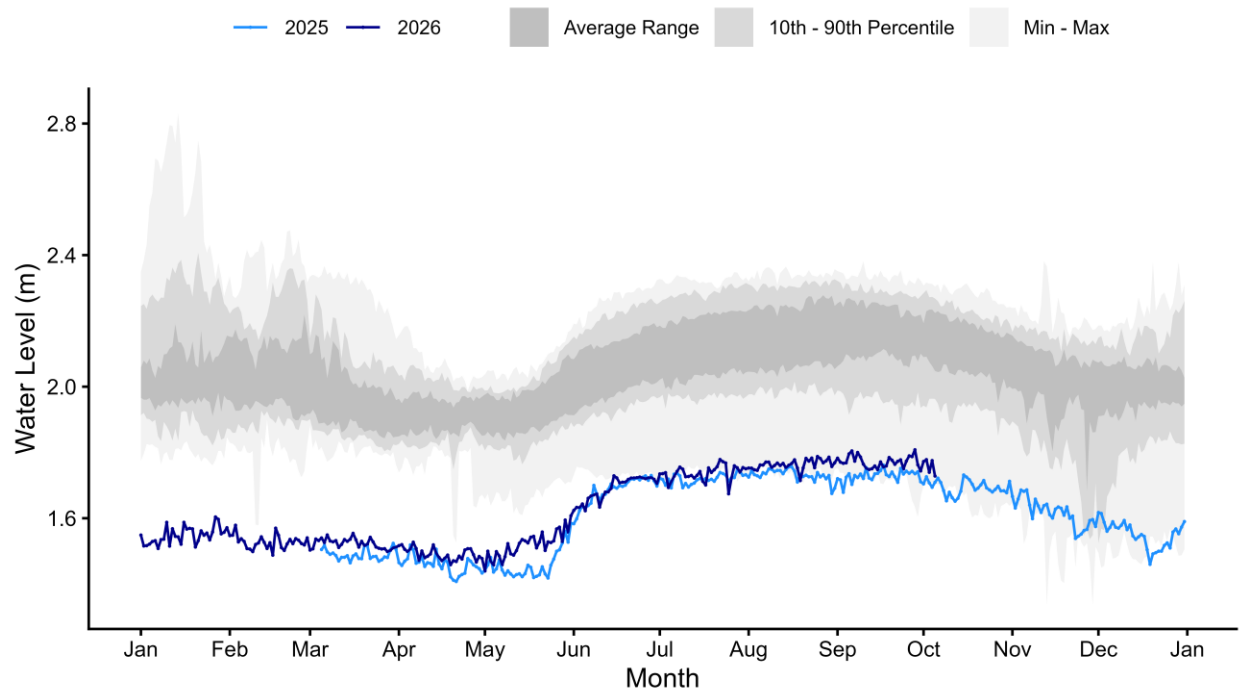
Record Length: 26 years | Period of Record: 2001-2026



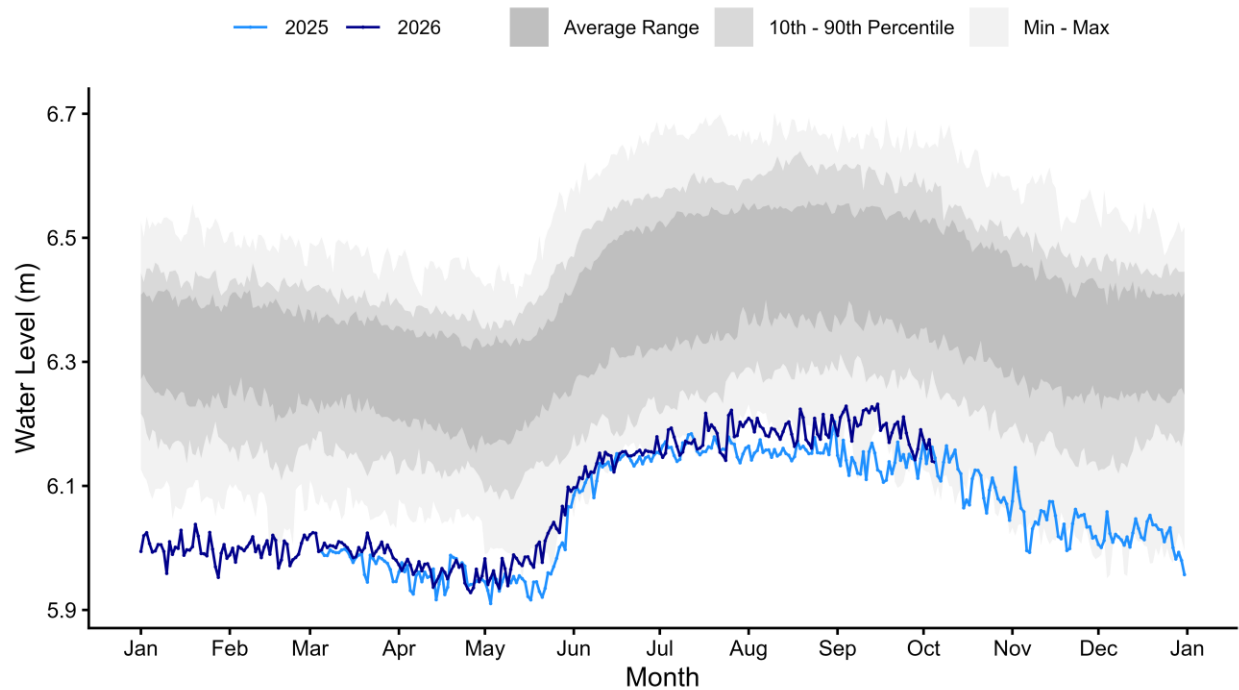
Mackenzie River at Norman Wells [10KA001]
Record Length: 25 years | Period of Record: 2002-2026



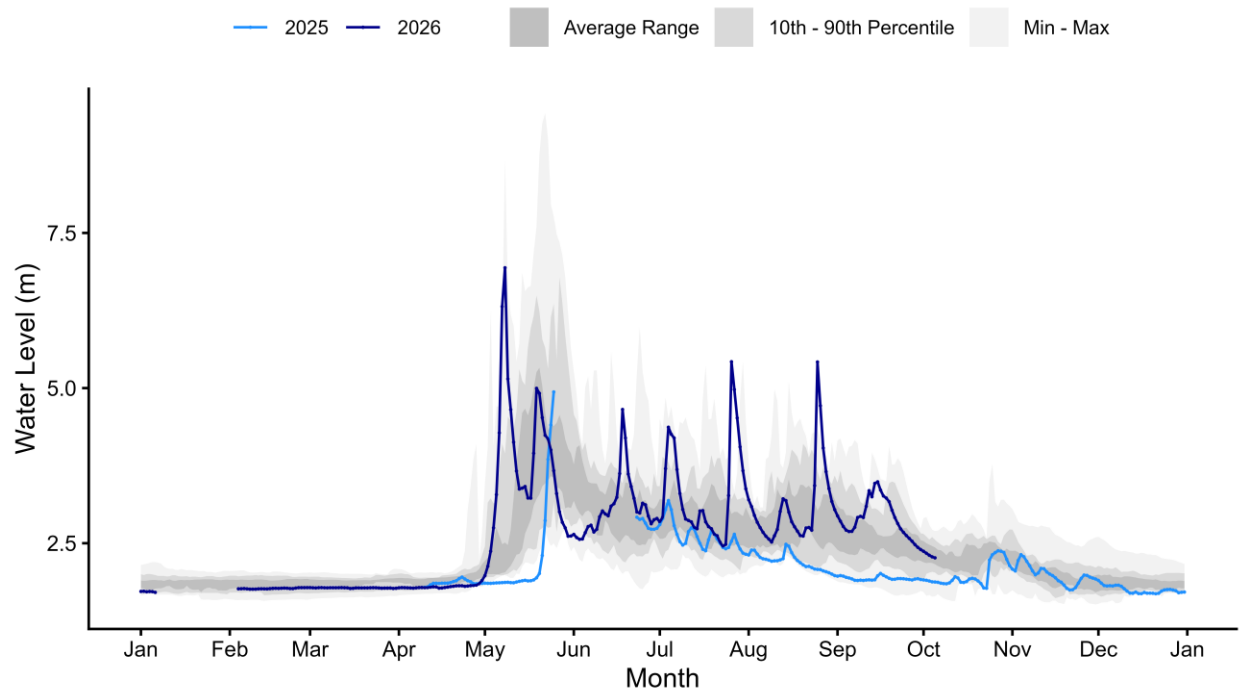
Great Bear River at outlet of Great Bear Lake [10JC003]
Record Length: 25 years | Period of Record: 2002-2026



Great Bear Lake at Hornby Bay [10JE002]
Record Length: 43 years | Period of Record: 1984-2026

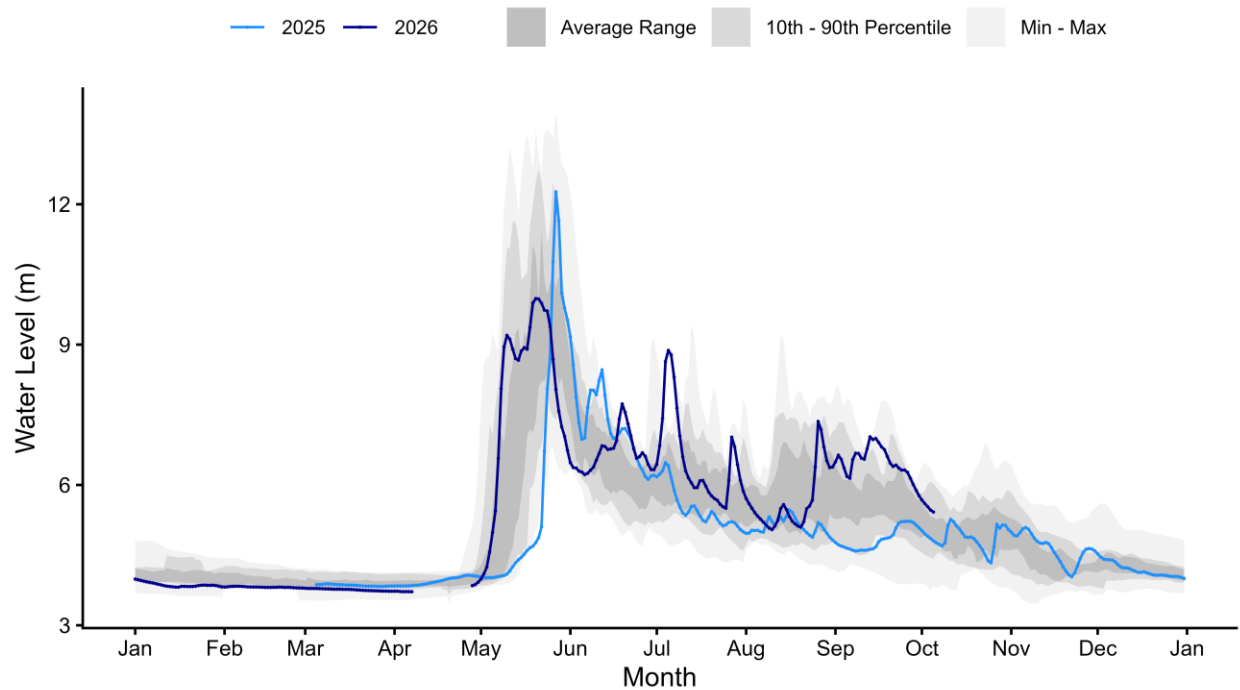


Arctic Red River near the mouth [10LA002]
Record Length: 22 years | Period of Record: 2002-2021; 2025-2026



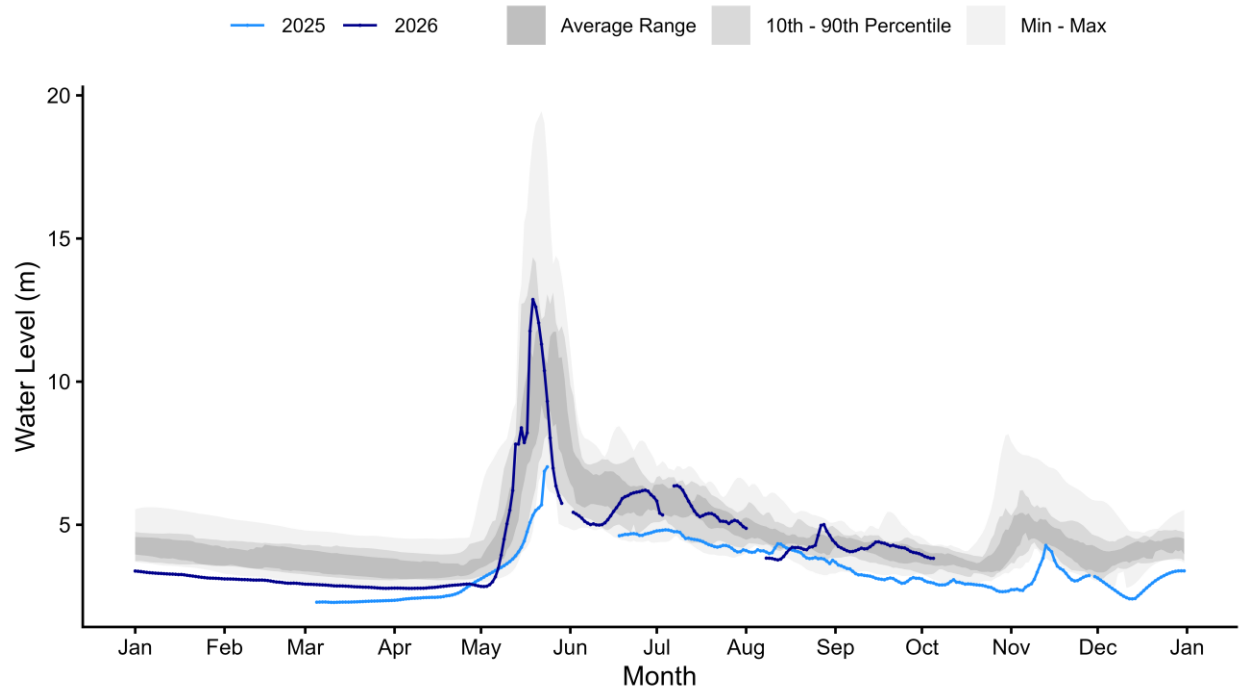
Peel River above Fort McPherson [10MC002]

Record Length: 19 years | Period of Record: 2002-2018; 2025-2026



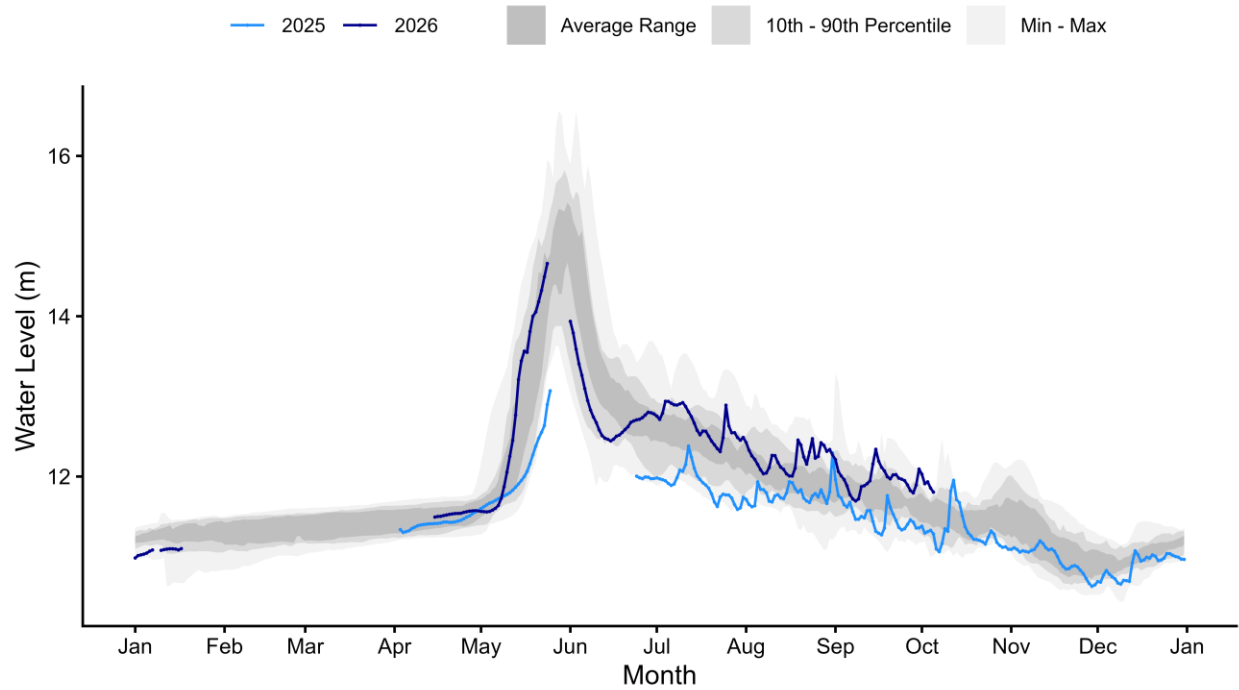
Mackenzie River at Arctic Red River [10LC014]

Record Length: 20 years | Period of Record: 2002-2019; 2025-2026



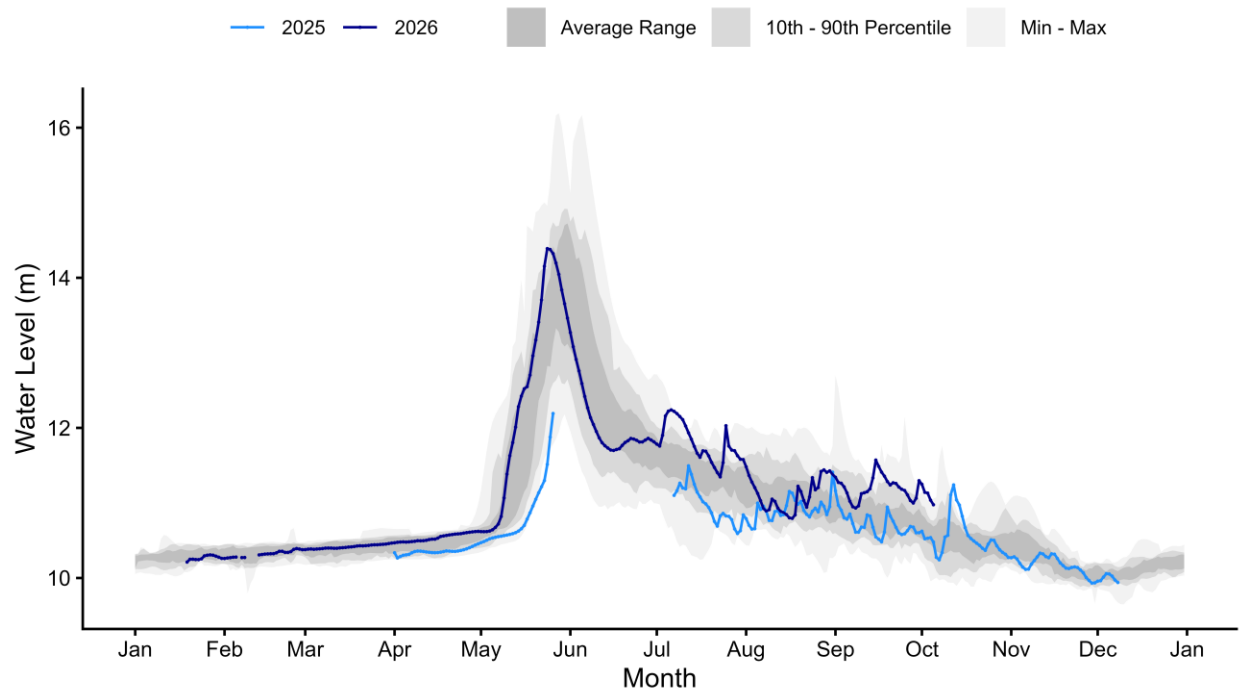
Mackenzie River (East Channel) at Inuvik [10LC002]

Record Length: 25 years | Period of Record: 1984-1990; 2002-2017; 2025-2026



Mackenzie River (Peel Channel) above Aklavik [10MC003]

Record Length: 36 years | Period of Record: 1982-1986; 1991-2019; 2025-2026



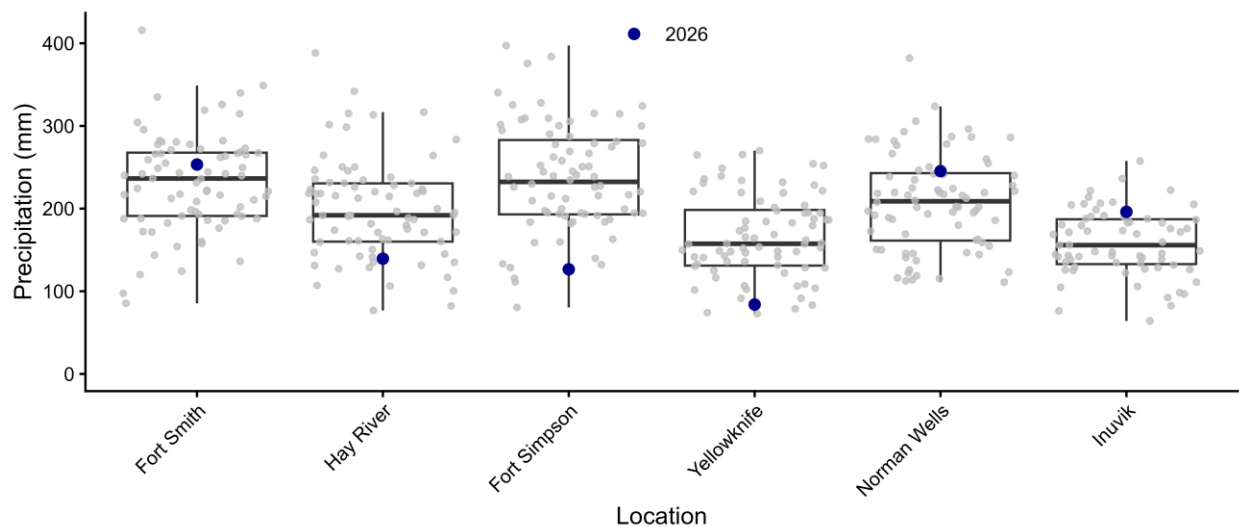
Climate Data

NWT communities



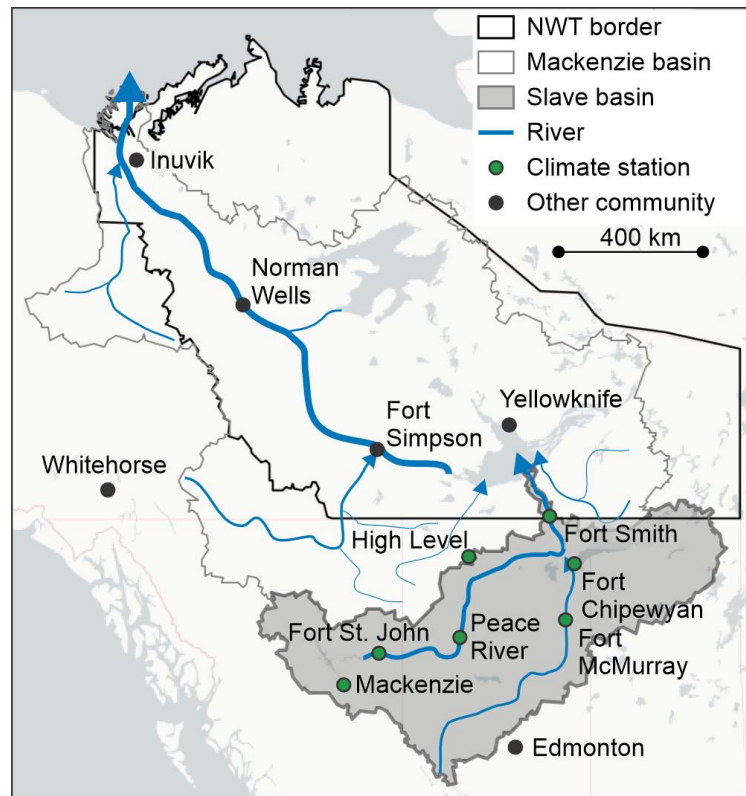
Cumulative precipitation for select NWT communities

April 1st, 2026 to October 4th, 2026



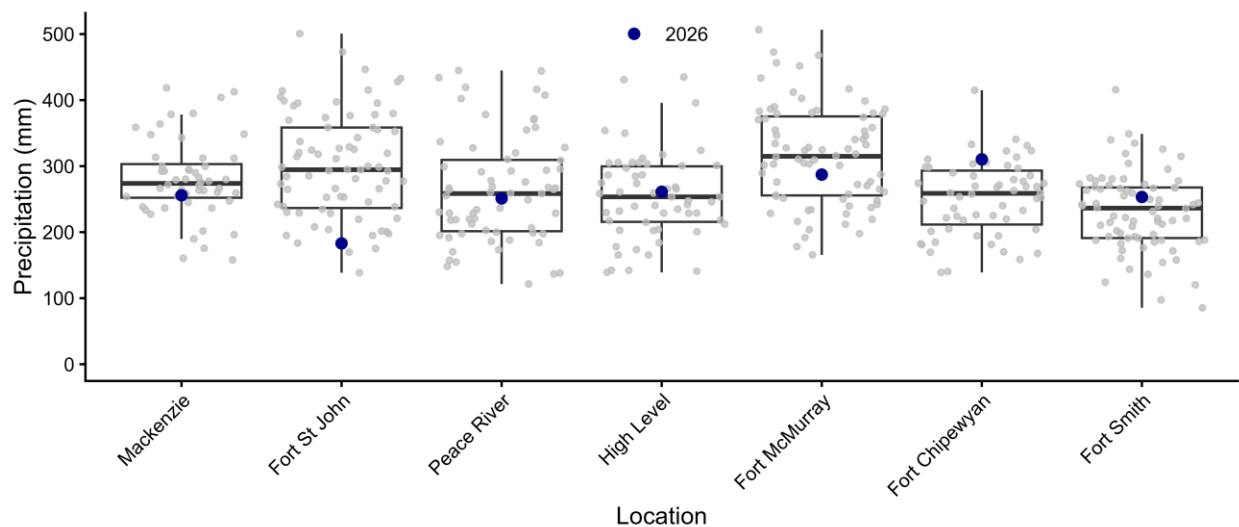
This figure shows total precipitation (rain and snow) that has fallen in select communities across the NWT from April 1st until October 4th. The blue dot is the current year, and the grey dots are all previous years from 1950 to present. See the map above for geographical context.

Slave River basin communities



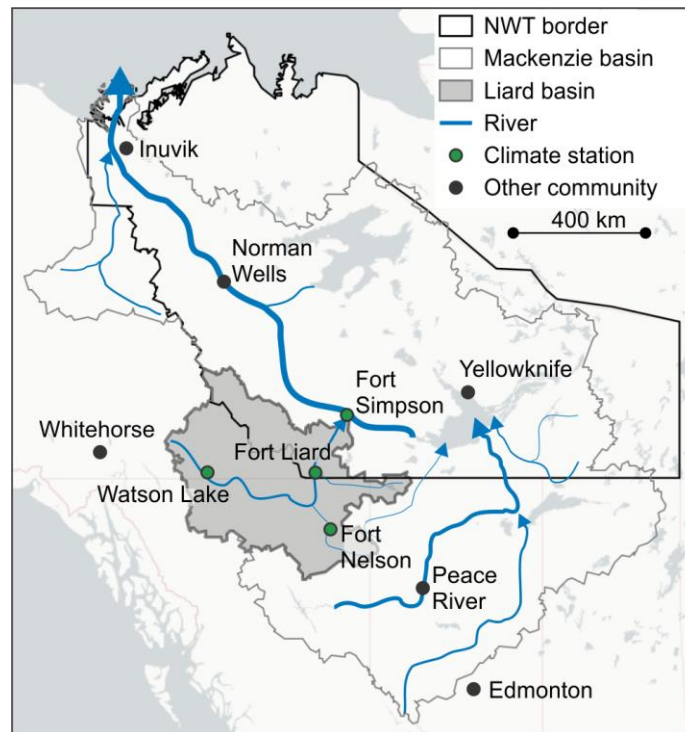
Cumulative precipitation for AB/BC/NWT communities in the Slave River Basin

April 1st, 2026 to October 4th, 2026



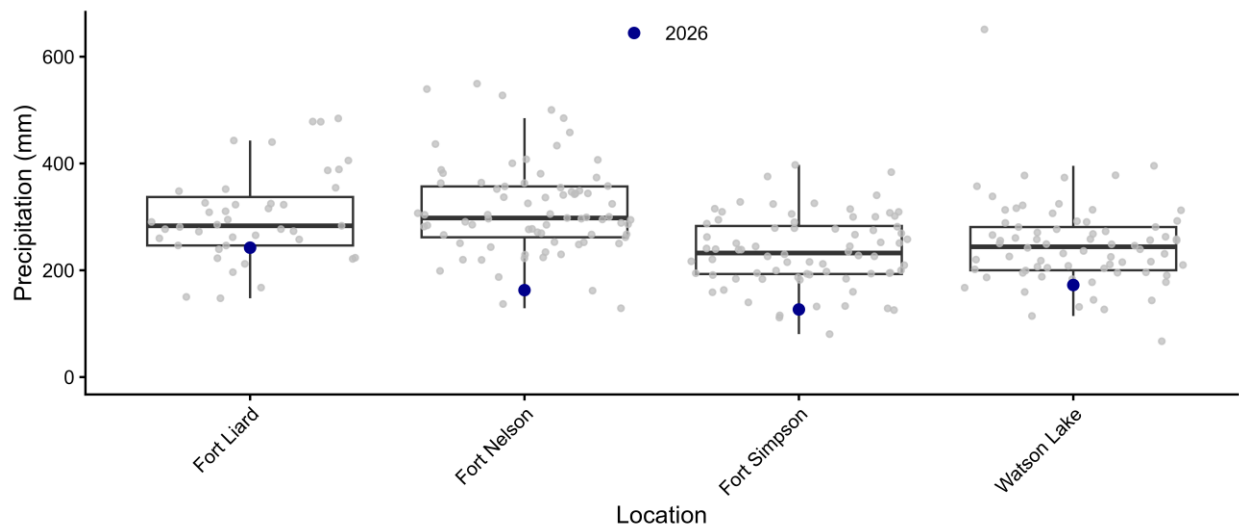
This figure shows total precipitation (rain and snow) that has fallen in select communities in the Slave River basin from April 1st until October 4th. The blue dot is the current year, and the grey dots are all previous years from 1950 to present. See the map above for geographical context.

Liard River basin communities



Cumulative precipitation for BC_NWT_YT communities in the Liard River Basin

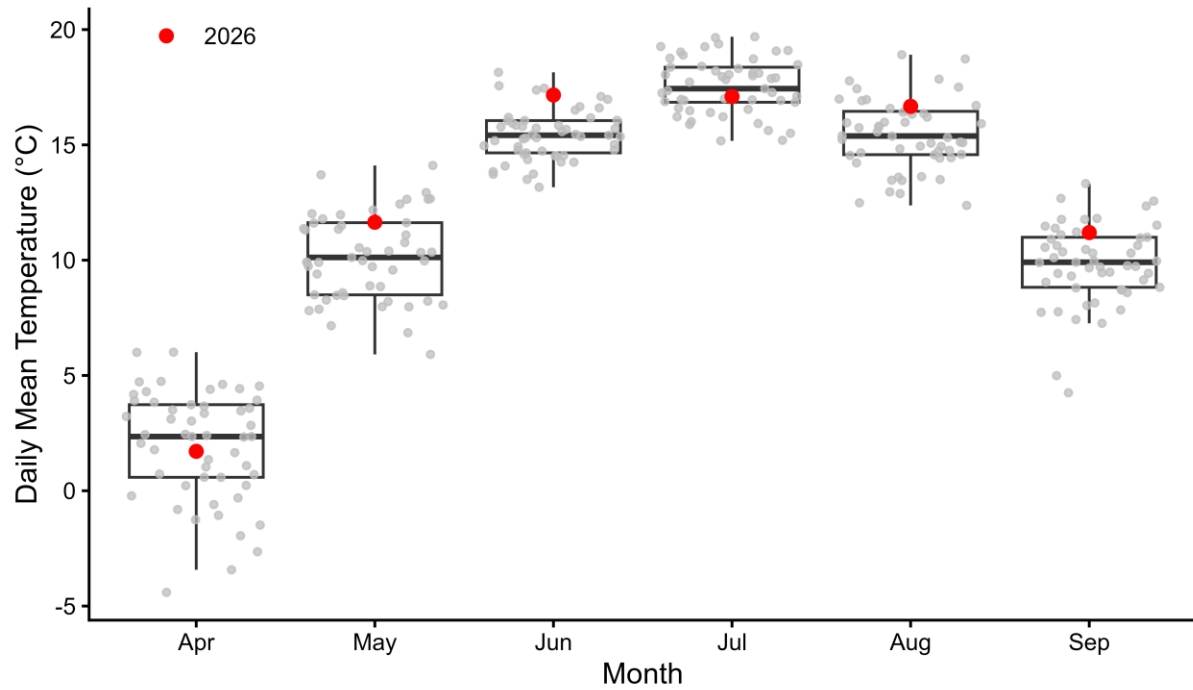
April 1st, 2026 to October 4th, 2026



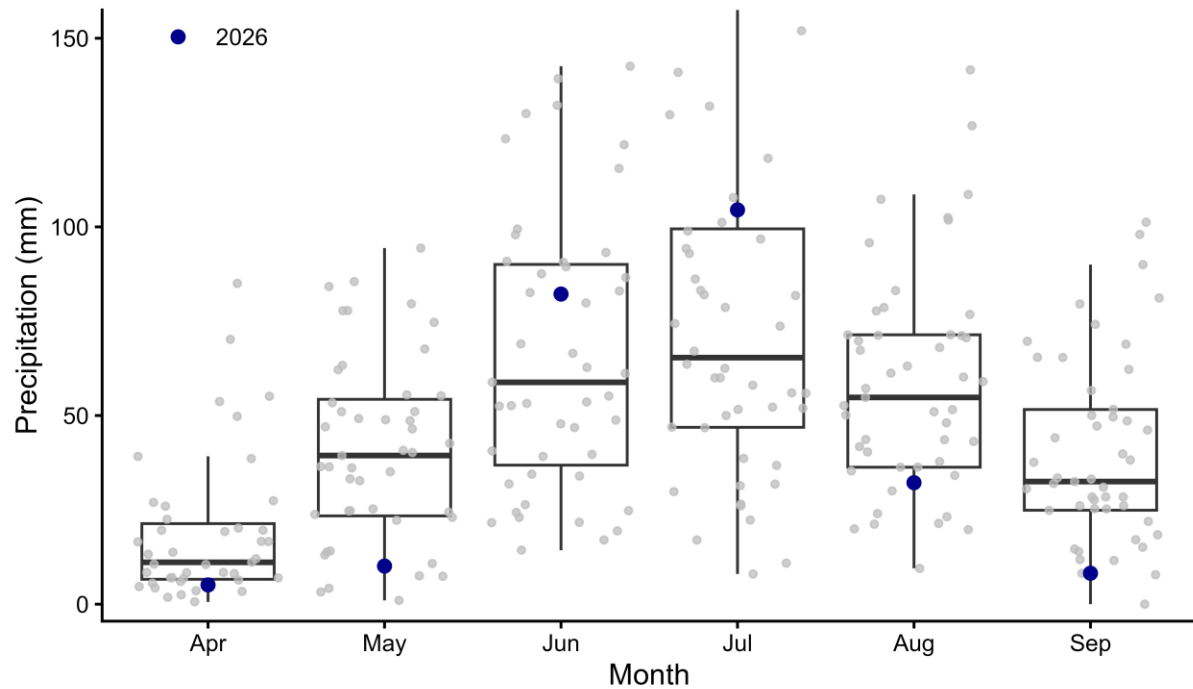
This figure shows total precipitation (rain and snow) that has fallen in select communities in the Liard River basin from April 1st until October 4th. The blue dot is the current year, and the grey dots are all previous years from 1950 to present. See the map above for geographical context.

Fort Liard

Fort Liard Air Temperatures

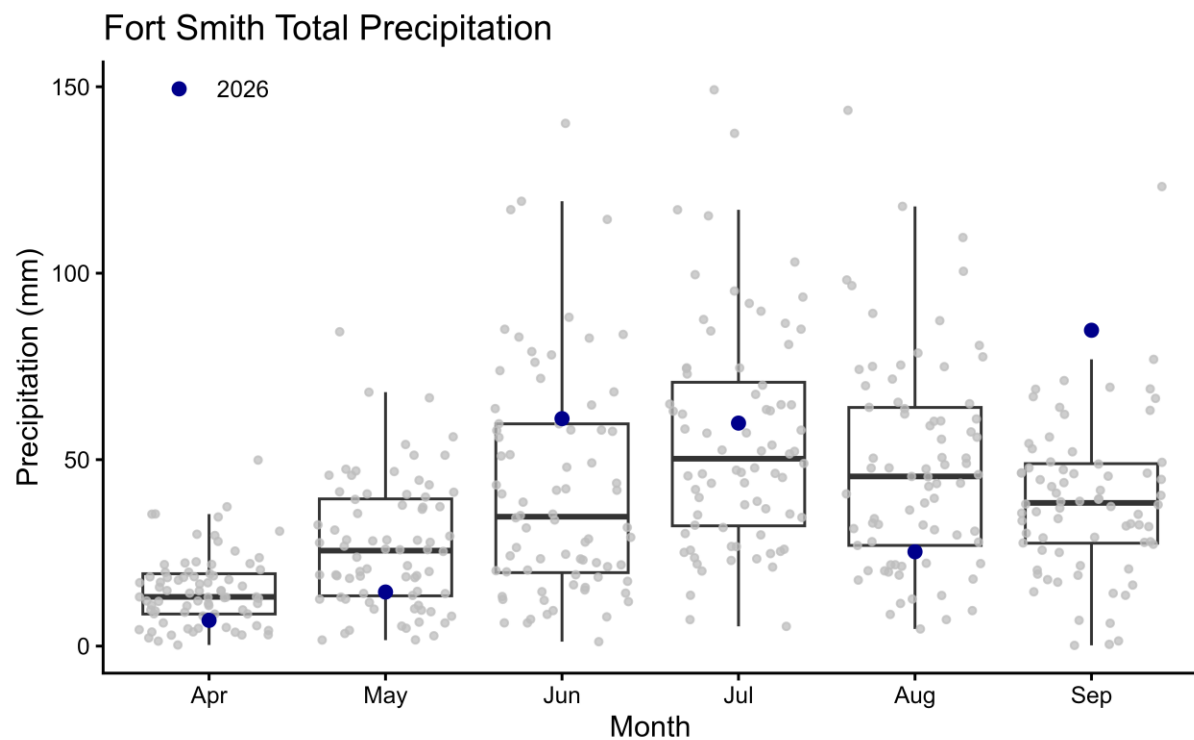
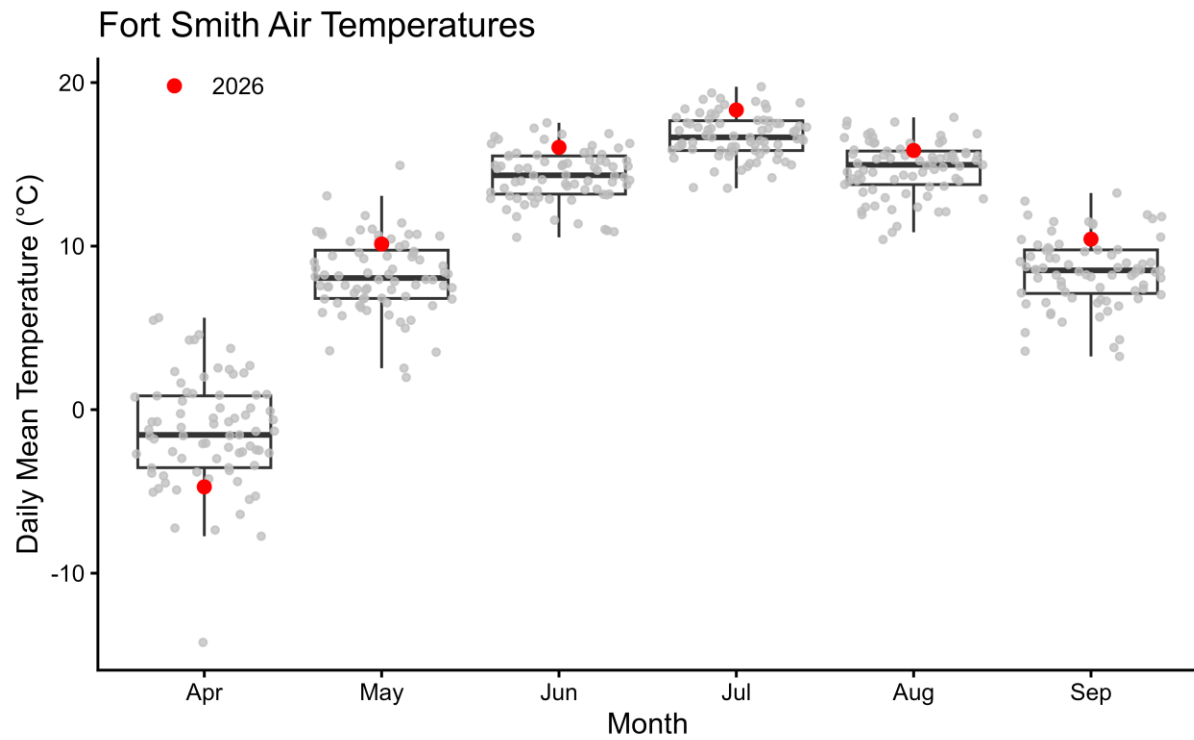


Fort Liard Total Precipitation



These two figures (above) represent mean monthly air temperature and total monthly precipitation for spring and summer (April to September) at Fort Liard. The red or blue dot is the current year (up to report date), and the grey dots are all previous years from 1950 to present.

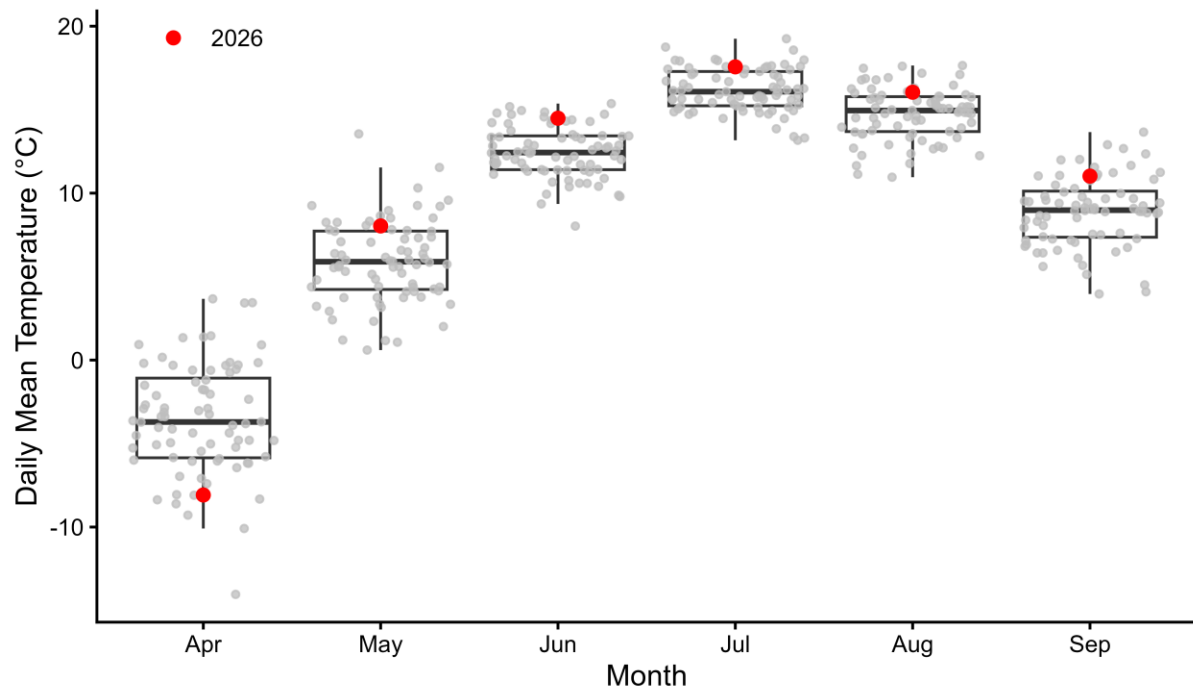
Fort Smith



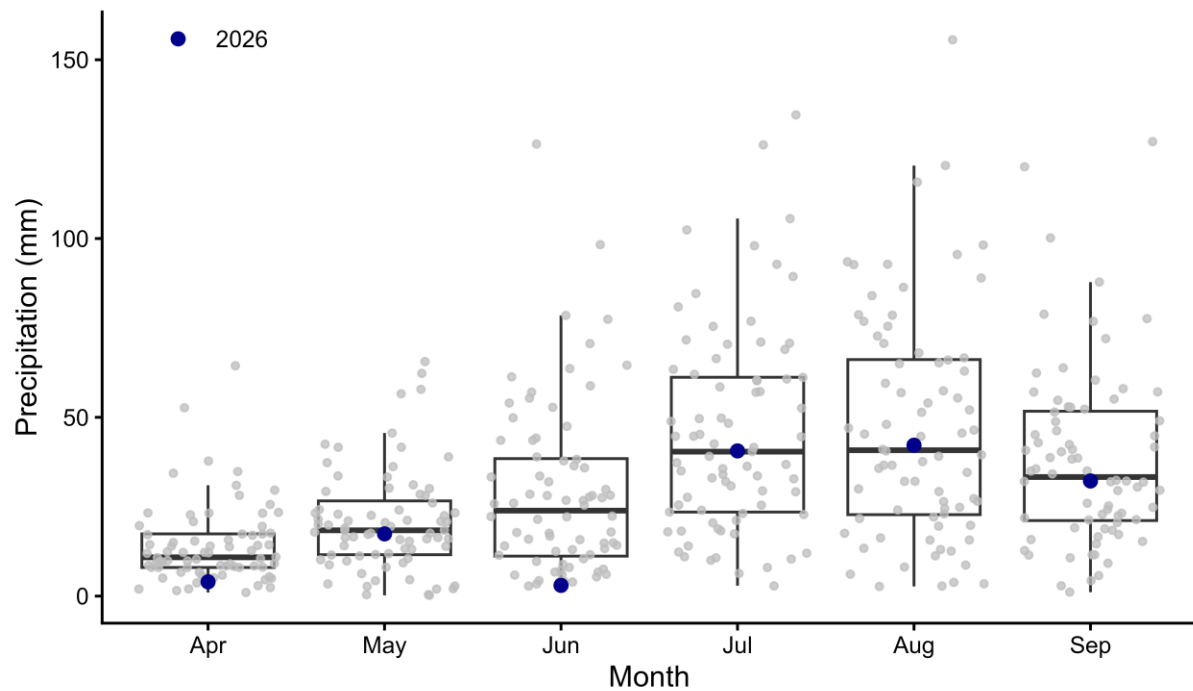
These two figures (above) represent mean monthly air temperature and total monthly precipitation for spring and summer (April to September) at Fort Smith. The red or blue dot is the current year (up to report date), and the grey dots are all previous years from 1950 to present.

Hay River

Hay River Air Temperatures

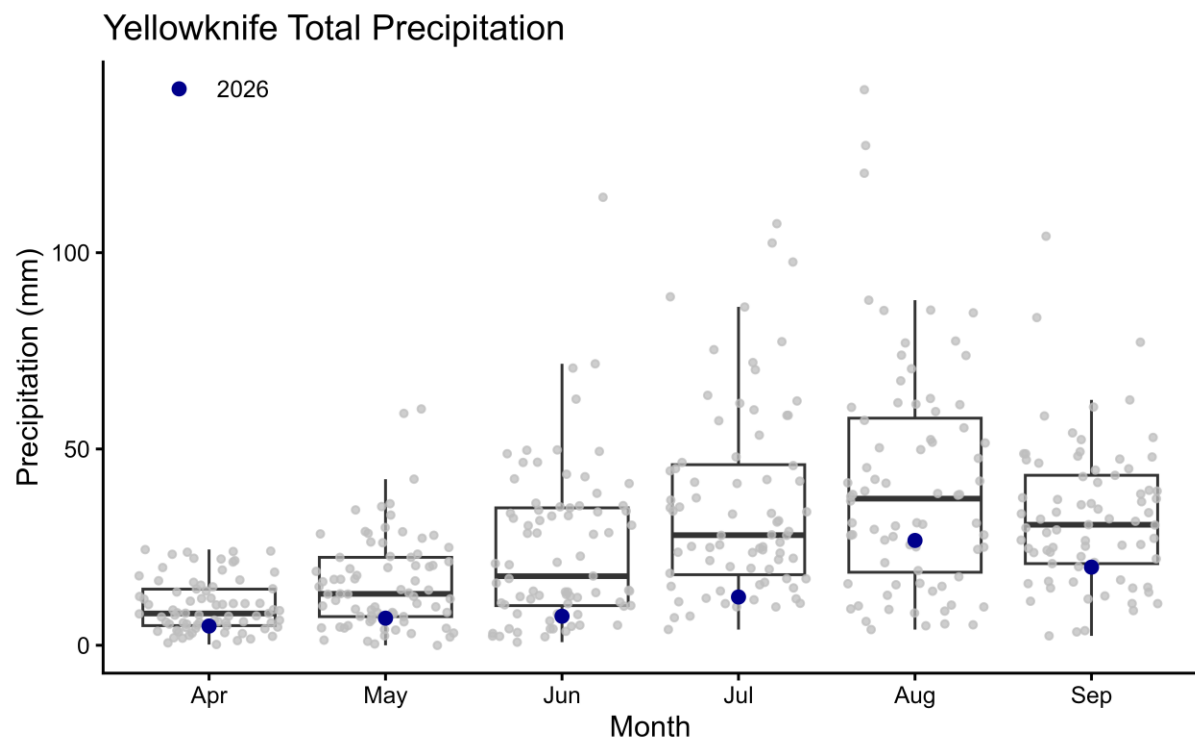
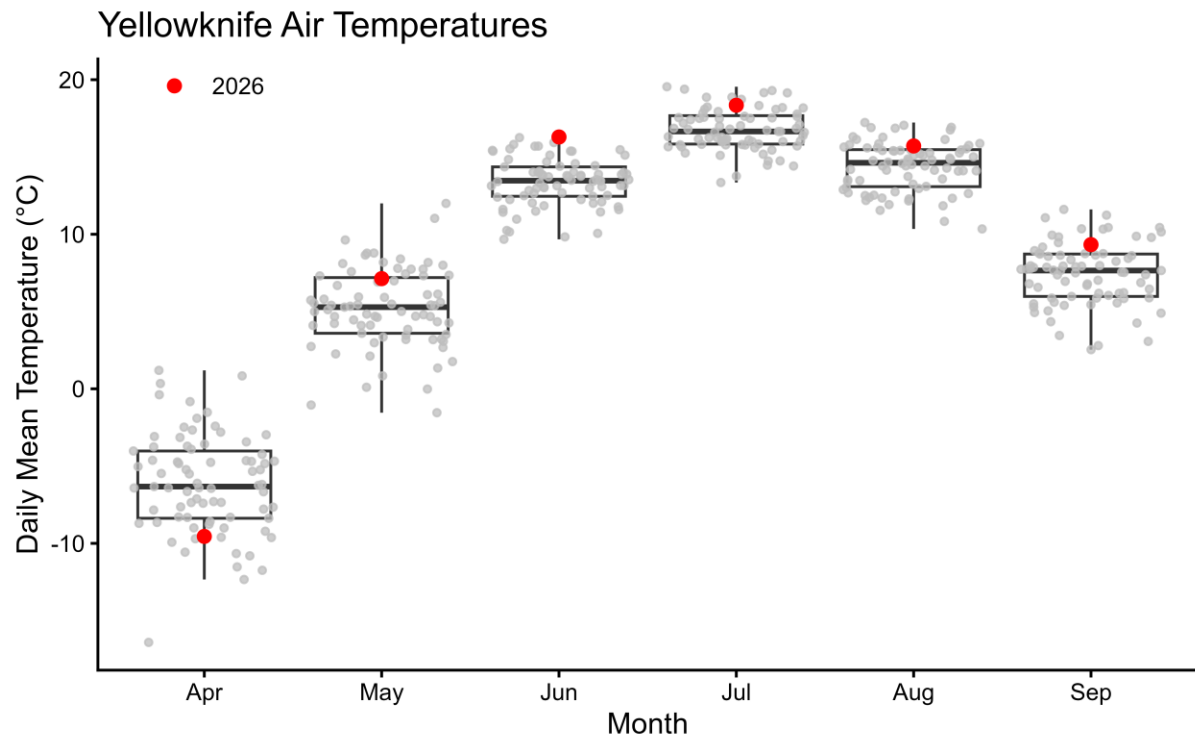


Hay River Total Precipitation



These two figures (above) represent mean monthly air temperature and total monthly precipitation for spring and summer (April to September) at Hay River. The red or blue dot is the current year (up to report date), and the grey dots are all previous years from 1950 to present.

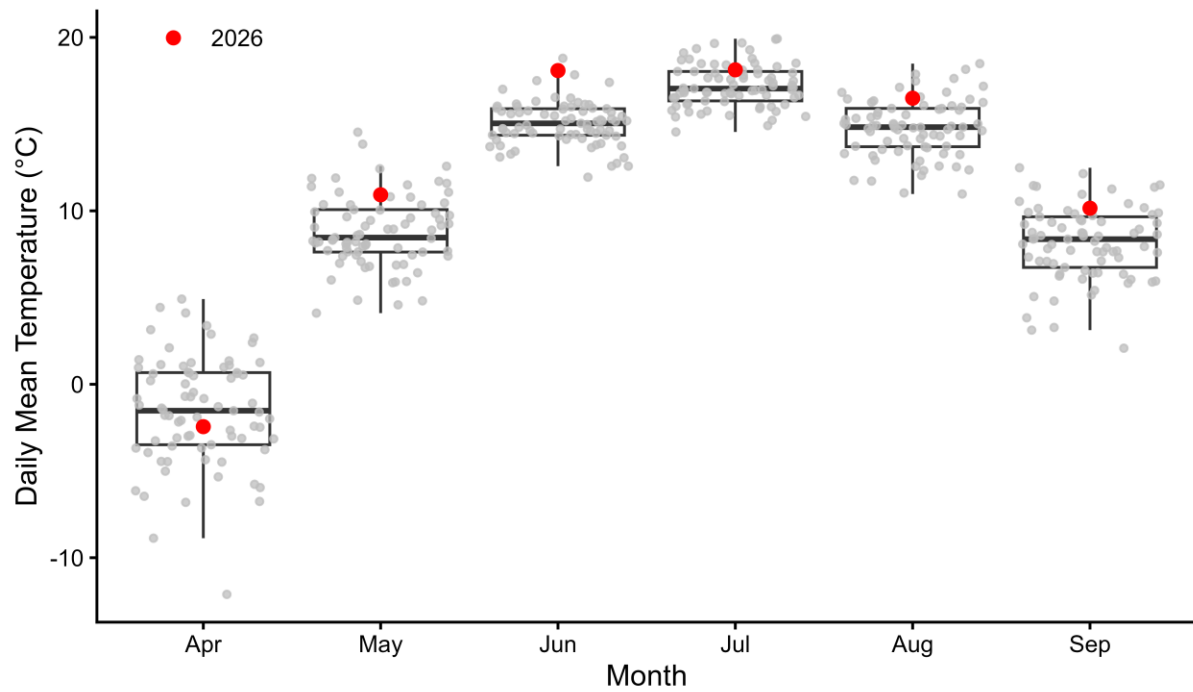
Yellowknife



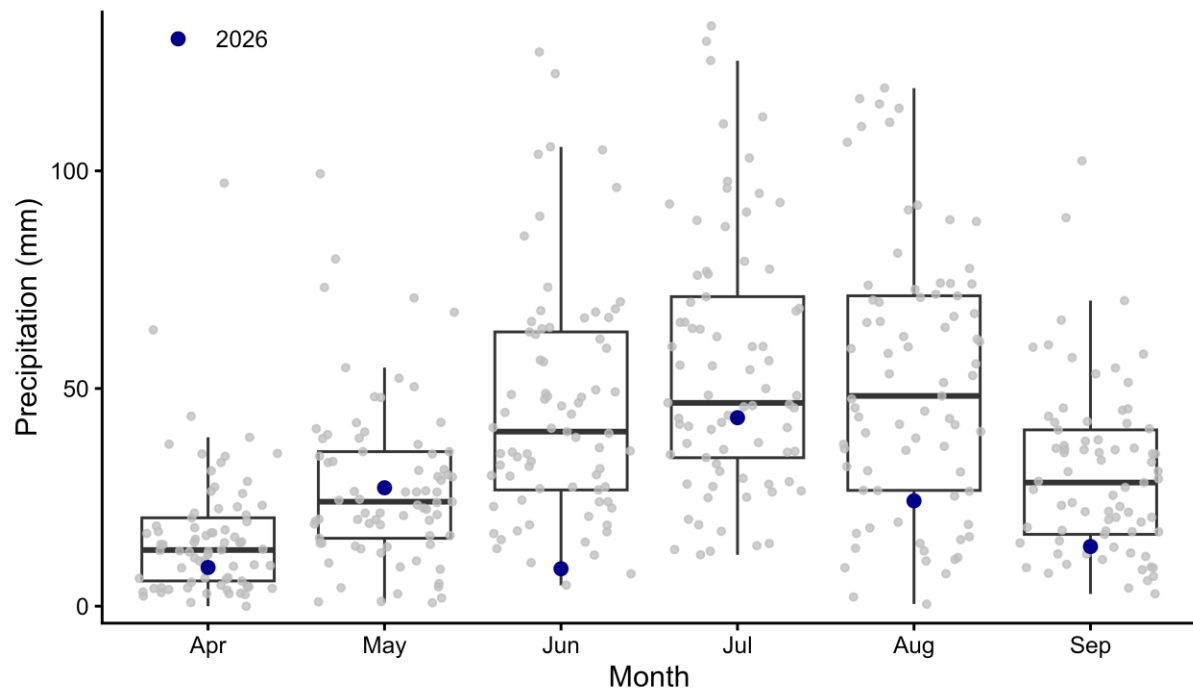
These two figures (above) represent mean monthly air temperature and total monthly precipitation for spring and summer (April to September) at Yellowknife. The red or blue dot is the current year (up to report date), and the grey dots are all previous years from 1950 to present.

Fort Simpson

Fort Simpson Air Temperatures



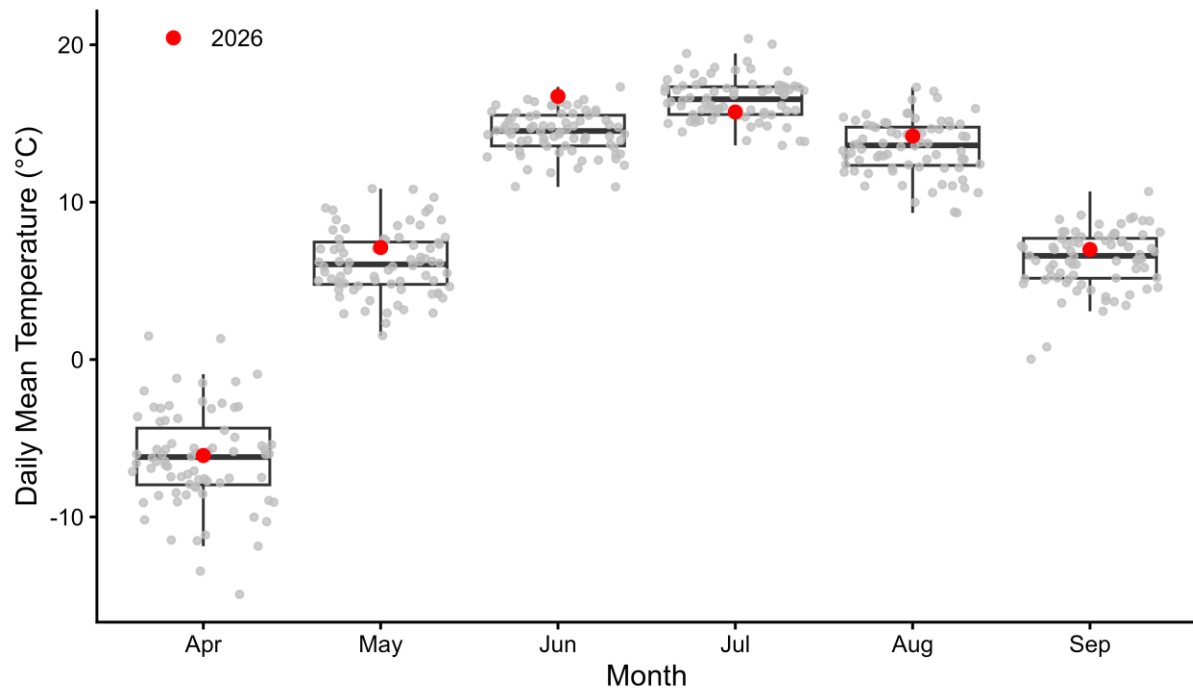
Fort Simpson Total Precipitation



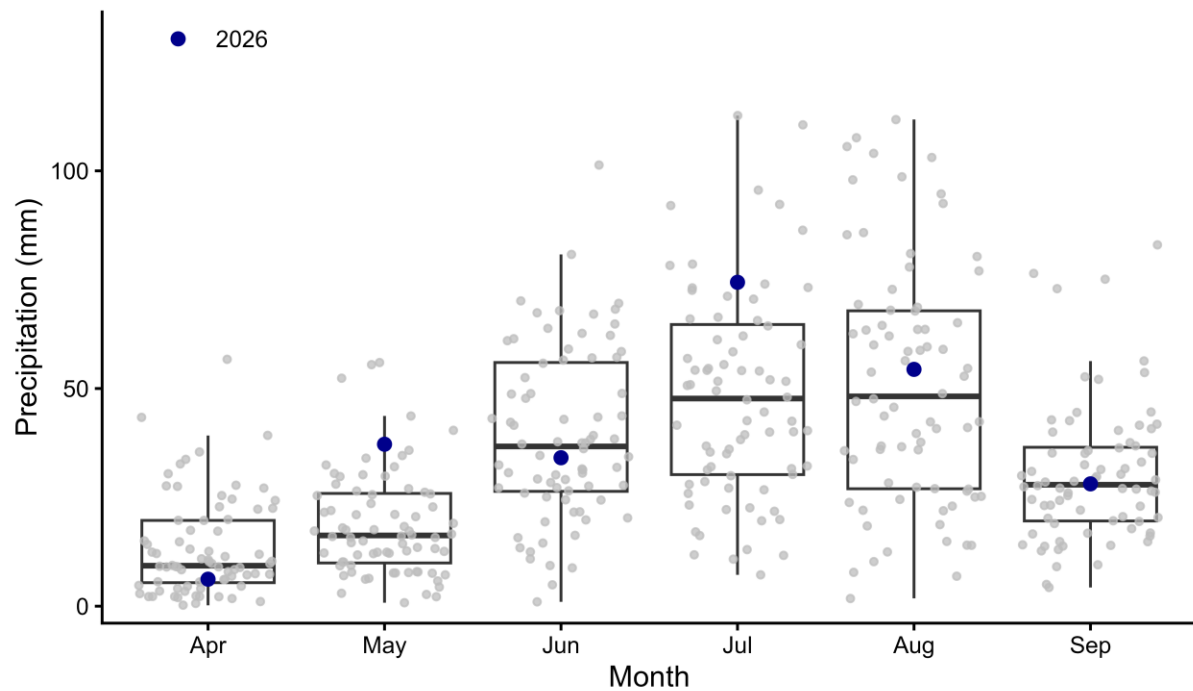
These two figures (above) represent mean monthly air temperature and total monthly precipitation for spring and summer (April to September) at Fort Simpson. The red or blue dot is the current year (up to report date), and the grey dots are all previous years from 1950 to present.

Norman Wells

Norman Wells Air Temperatures

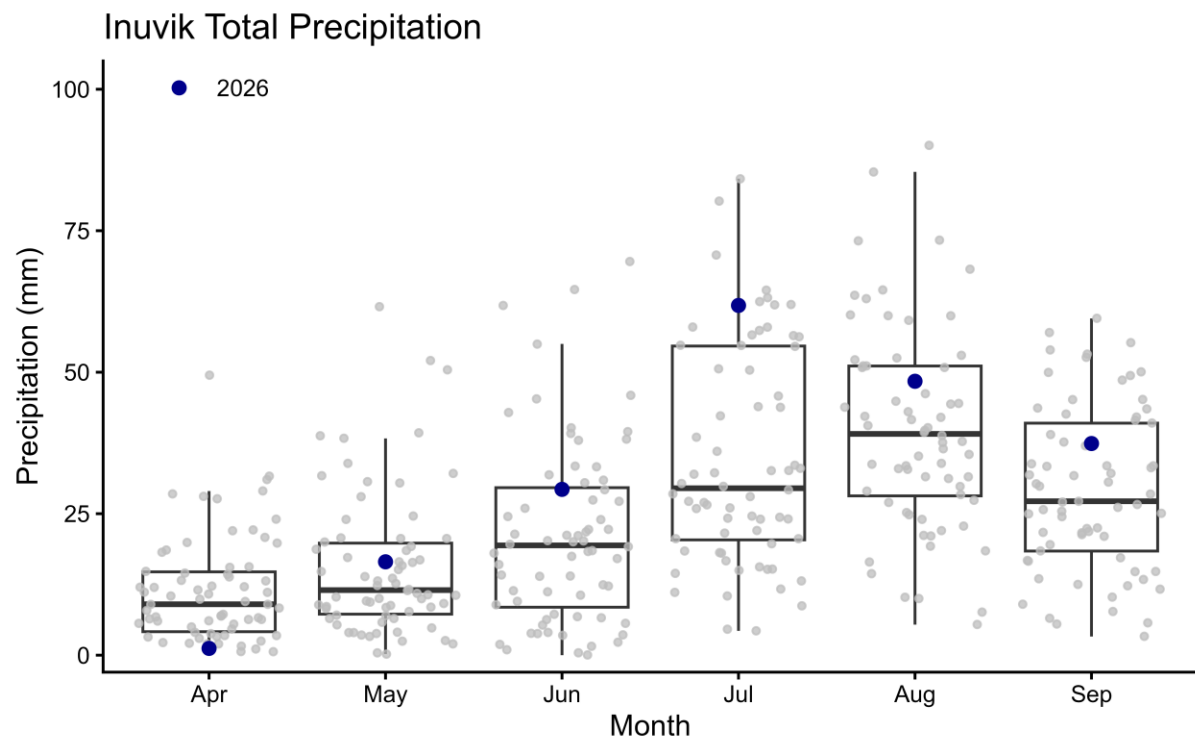
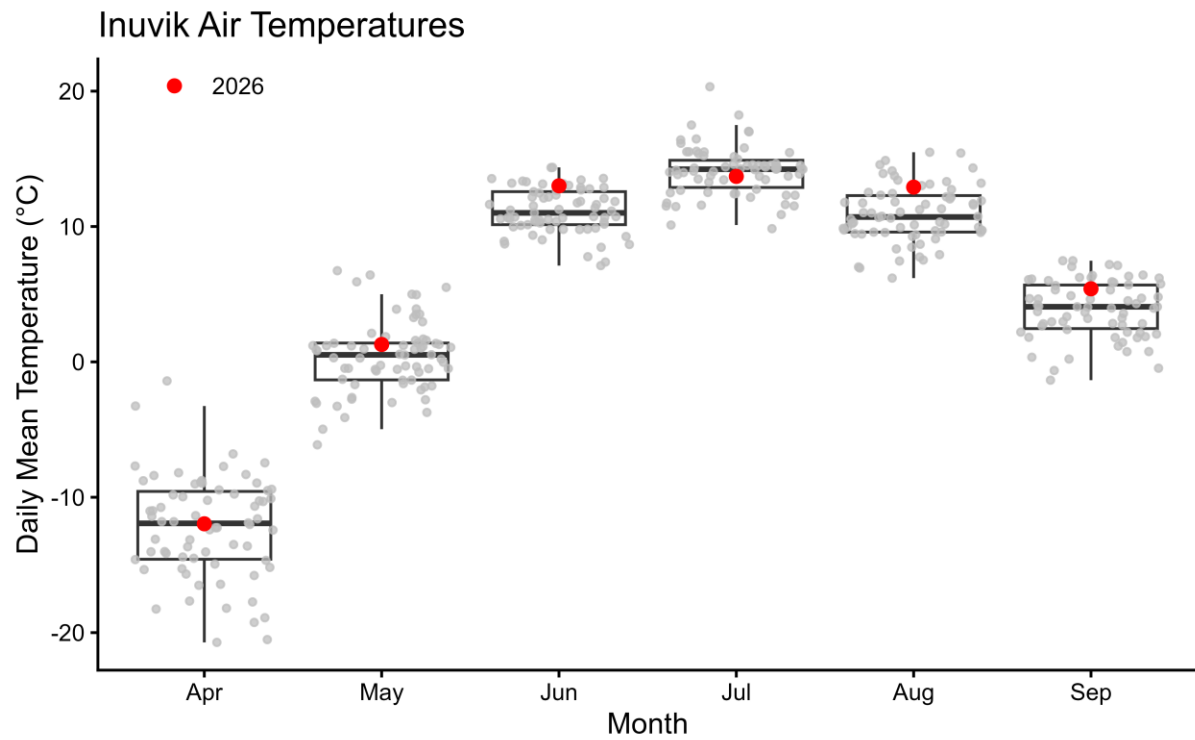


Norman Wells Total Precipitation



These two figures (above) represent mean monthly air temperature and total monthly precipitation for spring and summer (April to September) at Norman Wells. The red or blue dot is the current year (up to report date), and the grey dots are all previous years from 1950 to present.

Inuvik



These two figures (above) represent mean monthly air temperature and total monthly precipitation for spring and summer (April to September) at Inuvik. The red or blue dot is the current year (up to report date), and the grey dots are all previous years from 1950 to present.