



North Dakota Climate Bulletin

Winter 2025 – 2026

Volume 20, No. 1

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From the Office of the State Climatologist

The North Dakota Climate Bulletin is a quarterly publication of North Dakota's weather and climate from the North Dakota State Climate Office in the School of Natural Resource Sciences, North Dakota State University in Fargo, North Dakota.

The Winter of 2025-2026 will likely be remembered the most for the many Alberta Clippers that impacted travel over the entire winter. Although much of the state recorded lower than average snowfall, the many clippers produced high wind and even with light snow amounts, caused numerous days with blowing snow problems. The southwestern portion of North Dakota will probably remember the winter as a year “without a winter”, as temperatures were mild and little snow fell.



Optical effects dazzled the sky often this winter.

Seasonal Precipitation Summary

Winter 2025-26 Statewide Average Precipitation: 1.72” (103% of normal)

Precipitation varied noticeably across the North Dakota Agricultural Weather Network (NDAWN) between December 1 and February 28, which is par for the course in the Northern Plains. The highest precipitation total for the season occurred at the NDAWN station Grafton 10E in Walsh County with 3.15 inches, which is 188% of normal (+1.47”). The lowest seasonal rainfall occurred in Barnes County at the Dazey 2E NDAWN station, which recorded 0.97 inches, which was 59% of normal (-0.68”).

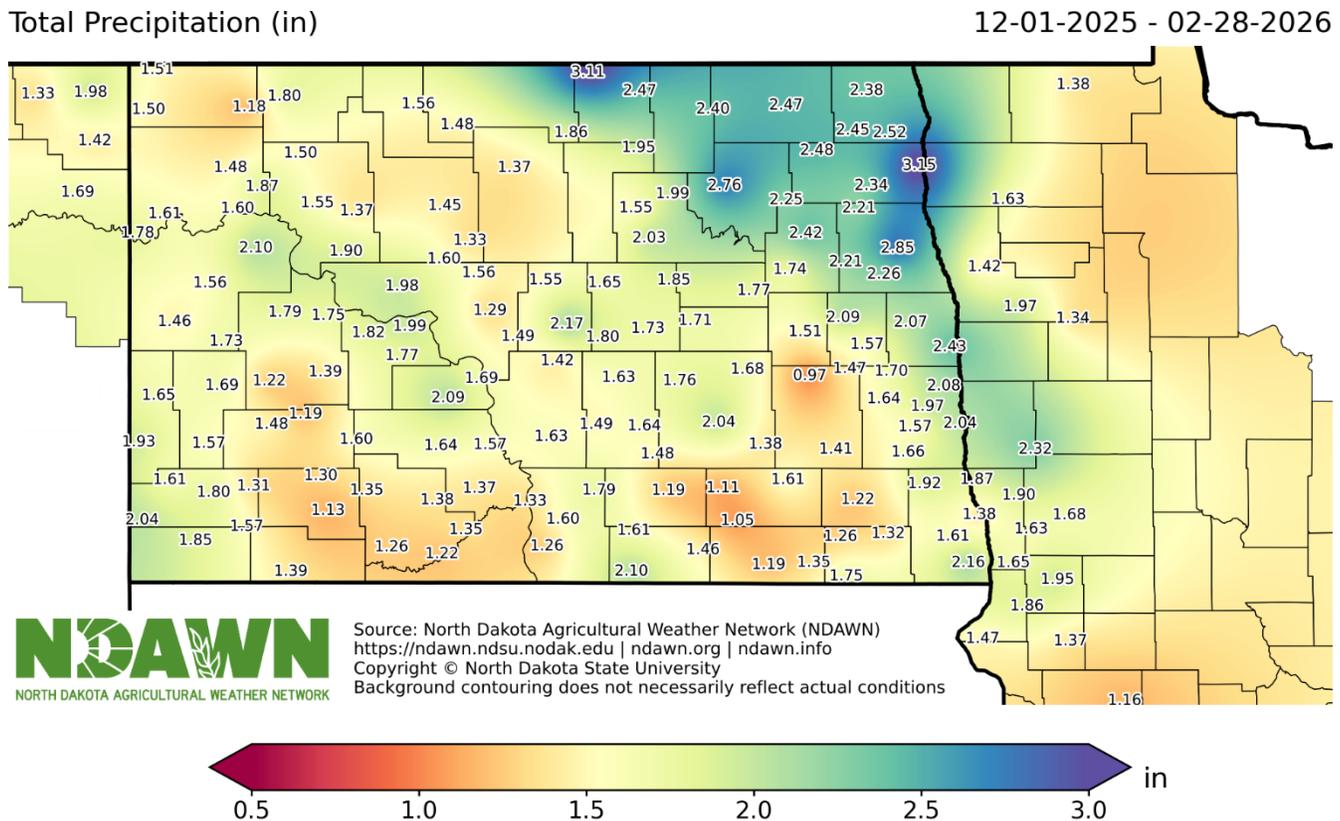
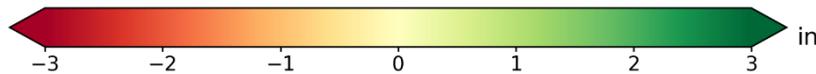
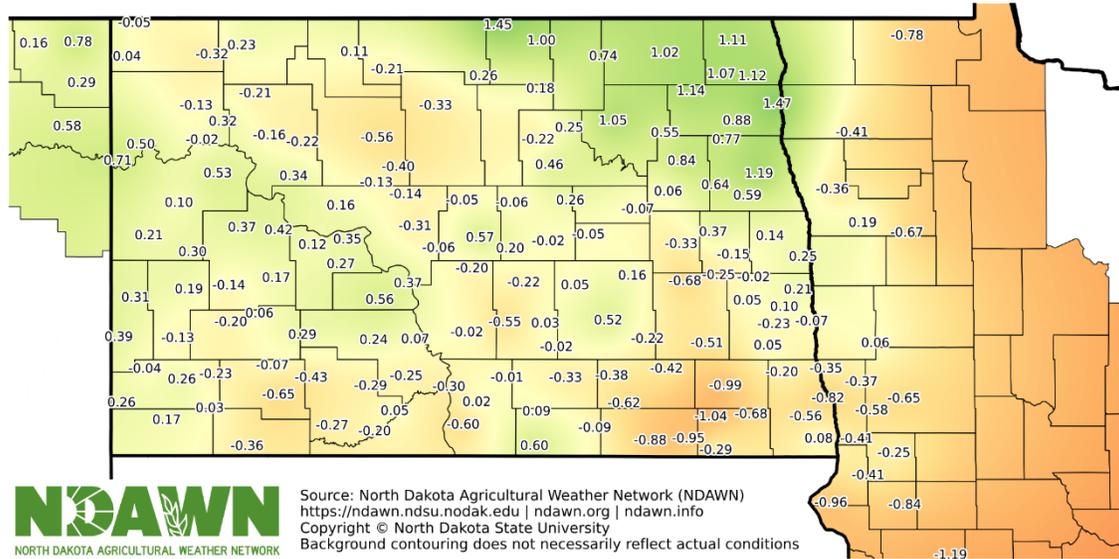


Figure 1: Total precipitation recorded by NDAWN stations with all-season precipitation gauges in Winter 2025-26

Departure from Normal Precipitation (in) 12-01-2025 - 02-28-2026



Percent of Normal Precipitation (%) 12-01-2025 - 02-28-2026

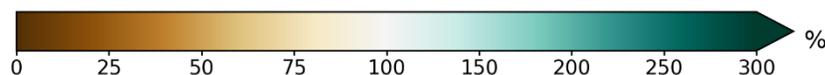
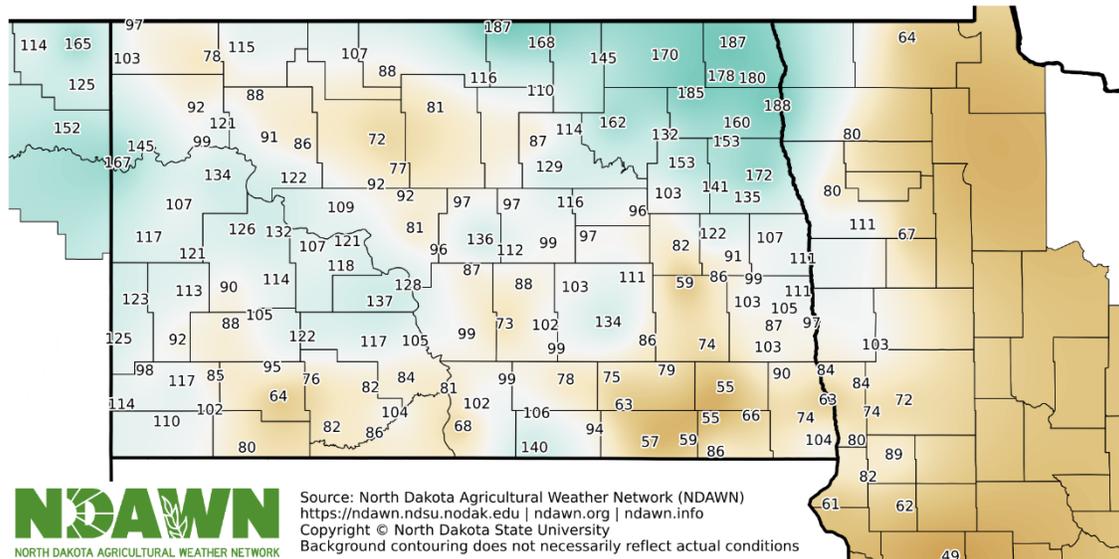


Figure 2: Departure from normal (top) and percent of normal precipitation (bottom) at NDAWN stations with all-season precipitation gauges in Winter 2025-26

Frozen soils have kept the drought monitor unchanged throughout the winter (Figure 3).



Figure 3: U.S. Drought Monitor conditions change between December 2, 2025 (left) to February 24, 2026 (right)

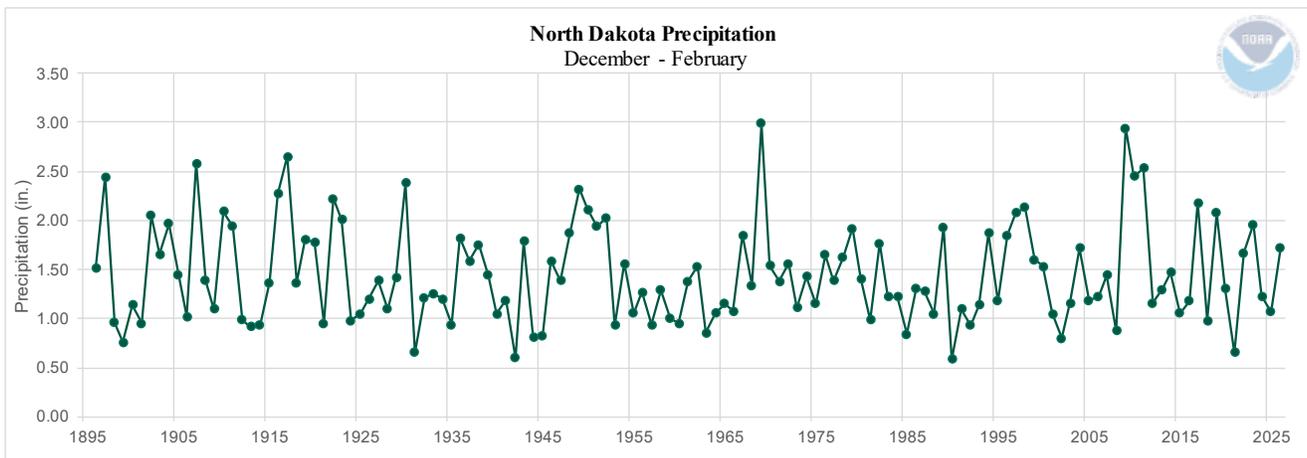


Figure 4: Average Precipitation in North Dakota for the winter season (via NCEI)

North Dakota Precipitation Summary

	Precipitation	Normal	Anomaly	Rank	Record
Winter 2025-26	1.72"	1.67"	+0.05"	38 th Wettest	2.99" (1969)
				95 th Driest	0.59" (1990)

Table 1: Winter precipitation summary for North Dakota. 2026 statistics from NDAWN station data. Ranking and records based on NCEI climate data (1895-2026) (NOAA).

Seasonal Temperature Summary

Winter 2025-26 Statewide Average Temperature: 16.6°F (3.0°F above normal)

A much warmer than normal February, pushed the Winter season to finish warmer than average overall. The Sunny Slope 3W and Fort Yates 2W NDAWN stations both finished 7°F above than normal (Figure 5). Only the far northeastern corner of the state saw temperatures near or slightly below normal, aided by a more consistent snowpack.

Departure from Normal Average Air Temperature (°F)

12-01-2025 - 02-28-2026

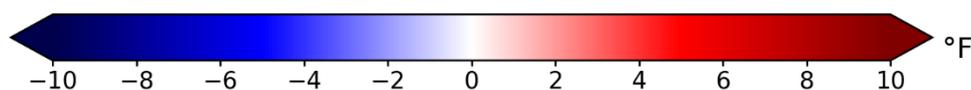
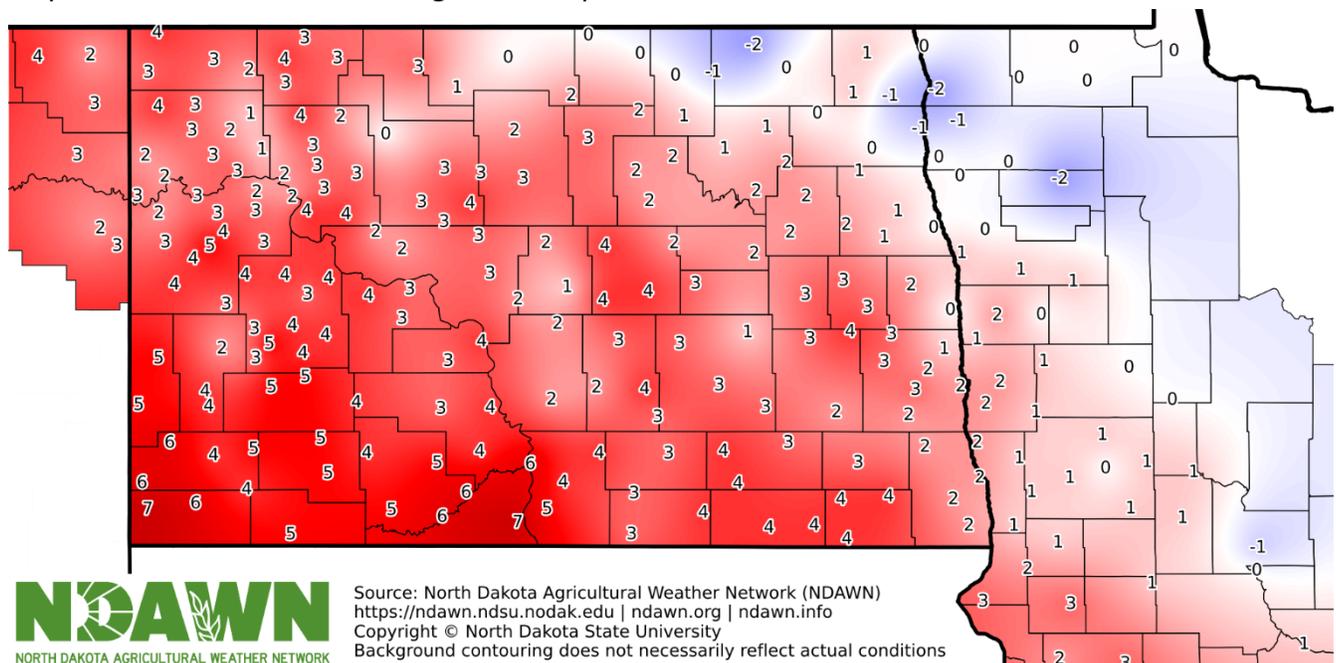


Figure 5: Departure from normal average air temperature recorded by NDAWN stations in Winter 2025-26

The warmest temperature of the winter was recorded at the Sunny Slope 3W NDAWN station on February 5 with a reading of 63°F (Figure 6). The coldest temperature of the season occurred at the Peace Garden NDAWN station with a minimum of -40°F on January 25. That was the only -40°F reading of the season.

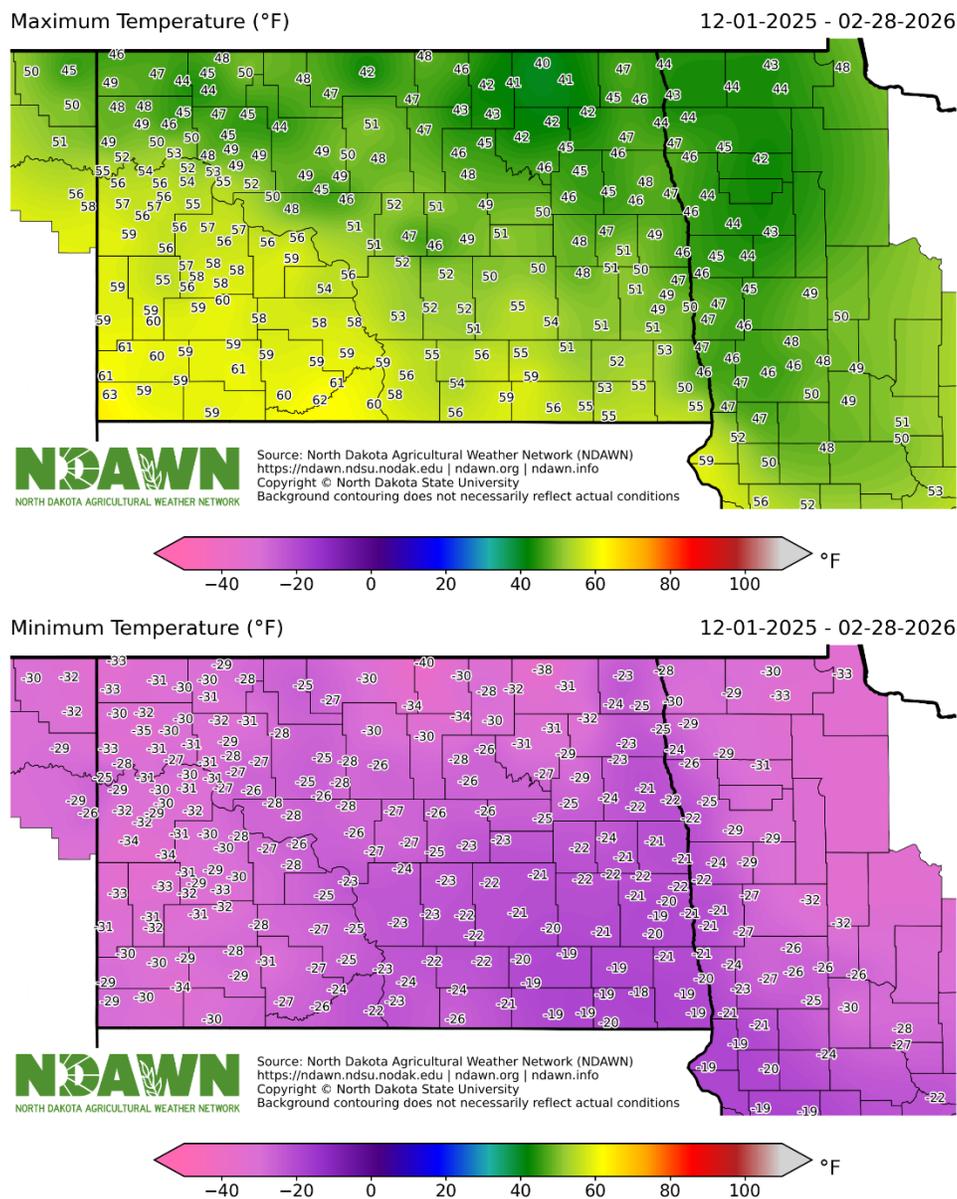


Figure 6: Maximum (top) and minimum air temperature (bottom) recorded by NDAWN stations during Winter 2025-26



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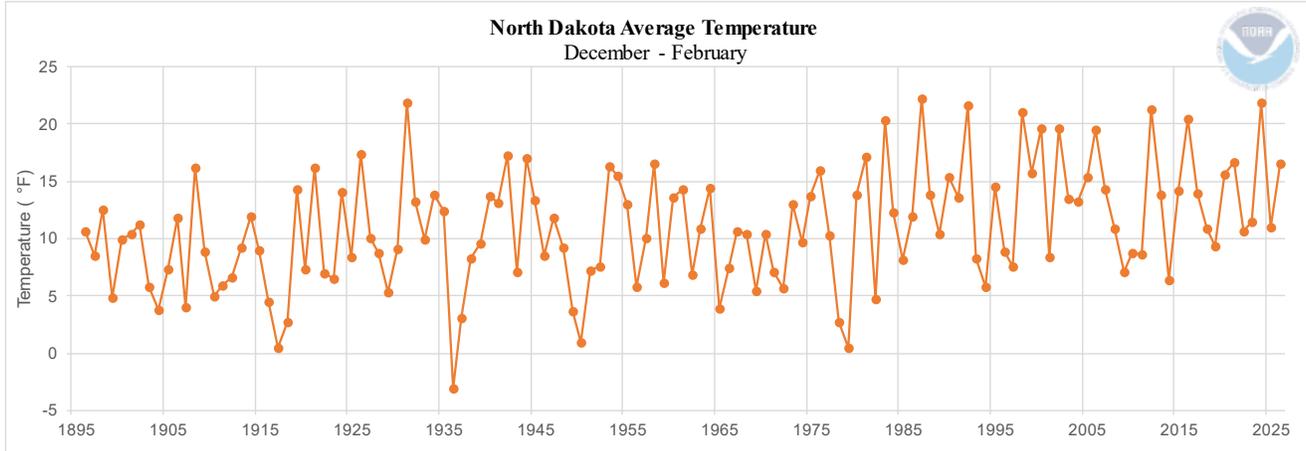


Figure 7: Average Temperature in North Dakota for the winter season (via NCEI)

North Dakota Temperature Summary

Winter 2025-26	Average T	Avg max T	Avg min T	Maximum	Minimum
	16.6°F	26.6°F	6.6°F	63°F	-40°F
Anomaly	+3.0°F	+3.4°F	+2.7°F		
Rank					
Warmest	17th Warmest	16th Warmest	17th Warmest		
Coollest	115th Coolest	116th Coolest	115th Coolest		
Record					
Warmest	22.2°F (1987)	31.5°F (1992)	13.4°F (2024)		
Coollest	-3.0°F (1936)	6.3°F (1936)	-12.3°F (1936)		

Table 2: Winter temperature summary for North Dakota. 2026 statistics from NDAWN station data. Ranking and records based on NCEI climate data (1895-2026) (NOAA).

Detailed monthly summaries and the full archive can be found at ndsu.edu/ndsco.

NDAWN monthly, seasonal, and annual climate statistic maps can be found at ndawn.info/climate_statistics.

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