

NORTH DAKOTA STATE CLIMATE OFFICE



March

2026



A rainbow shines after a brief rain shower at Powers Lake 6SE NDAWN

March 2026 was an exceptionally warm month across much of the United States. While it fell well short of some of North Dakota’s most famous warm Marches (such as 1910, 2012, and 2021), the month still finished significantly above average for the state.

Interestingly, despite the widespread warmth in the Lower 48, Canada experienced a notably cold March, with some areas recording temperatures among the coldest on record. This cold air mass just north of the border had a localized effect, keeping temperatures in the far northeastern corner of North Dakota noticeably cooler than the rest of the state.

As is often the case with warm spring months, March 2026 was much drier than average across most of North Dakota. The only exception was the northern tier of counties, which saw closer-to-normal or slightly wetter conditions.



Figure 1: Pronghorn graze near the Pyramid Park NDAWN station



The maximum monthly precipitation recorded by NDAWN in North Dakota during the month of February was 1.17 inches at the Peace Garden station in Rolette County. That was 140% of average. The minimum monthly precipitation recorded at NDAWN in North Dakota was in Cass County at the Gardner 2SSW station with only 0.07 inches of precipitation, 6% of normal (Figure 3).

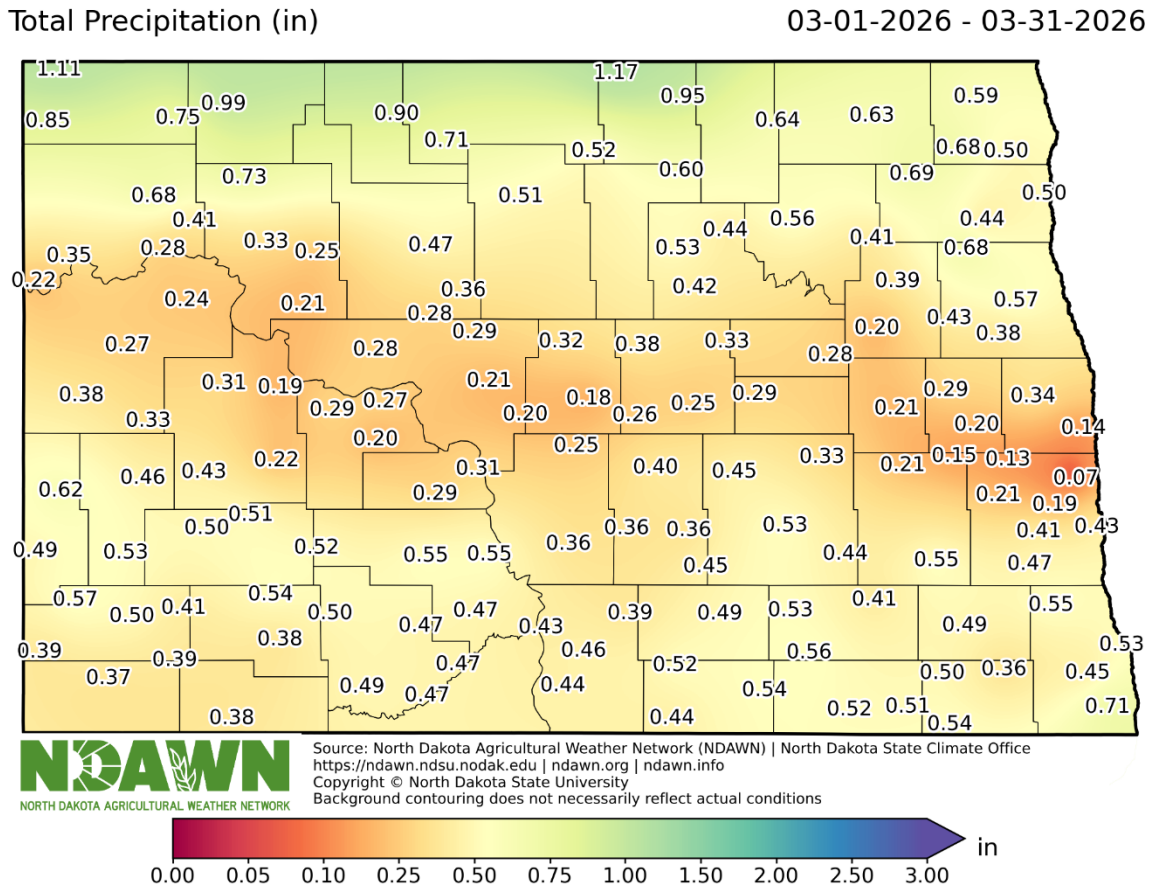


Figure 3: Total Precipitation measured at NDAWN stations with all-season precipitation gauges in March 2026

Precipitation



For the current water year (October 1 – March 31), southeast North Dakota remains dry, with most of the rest of the state well above average precipitation (Figure 4).

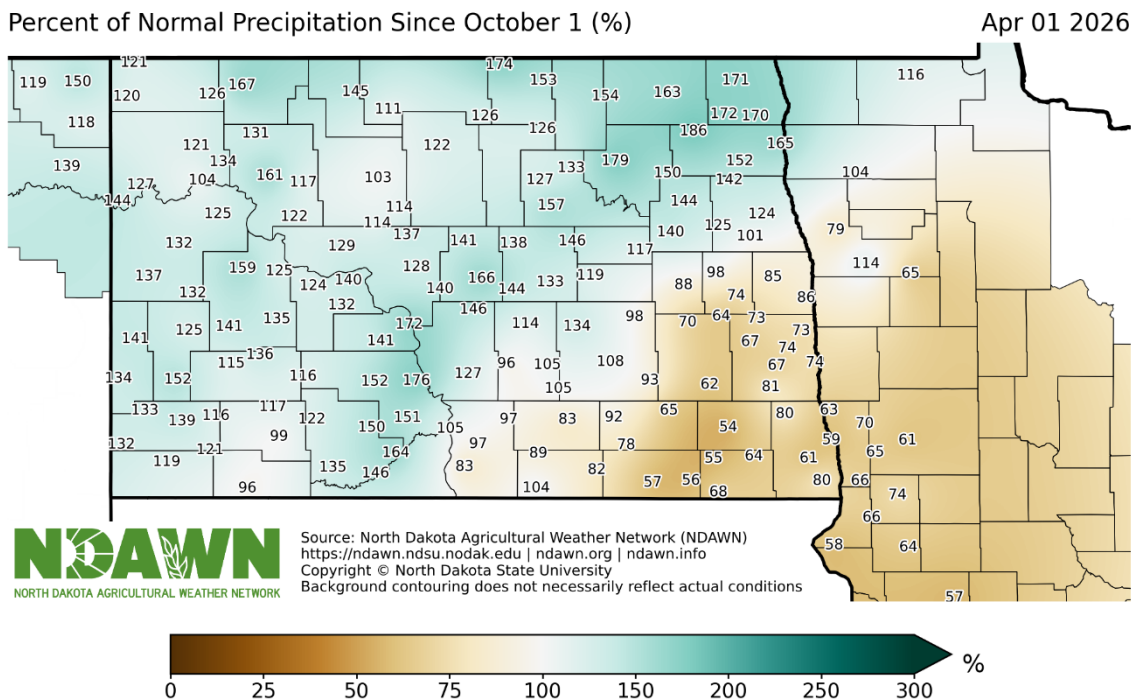


Figure 4: Percent of Average Precipitation measured at NDAWN stations with all-season for the current water year

Frozen soils have kept the drought monitor unchanged throughout March. (Figure 5).

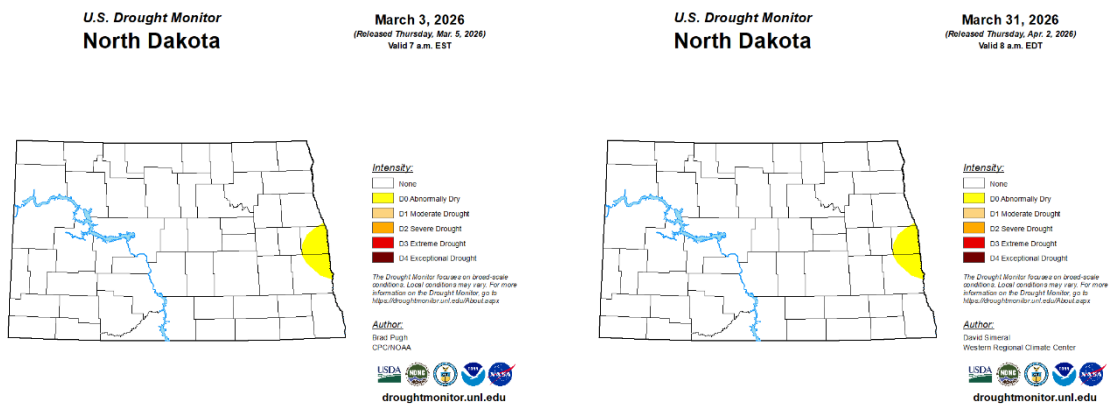


Figure 5: U.S. Drought Monitor conditions March 3, 2026 (left) and March 31, 2026 (right)

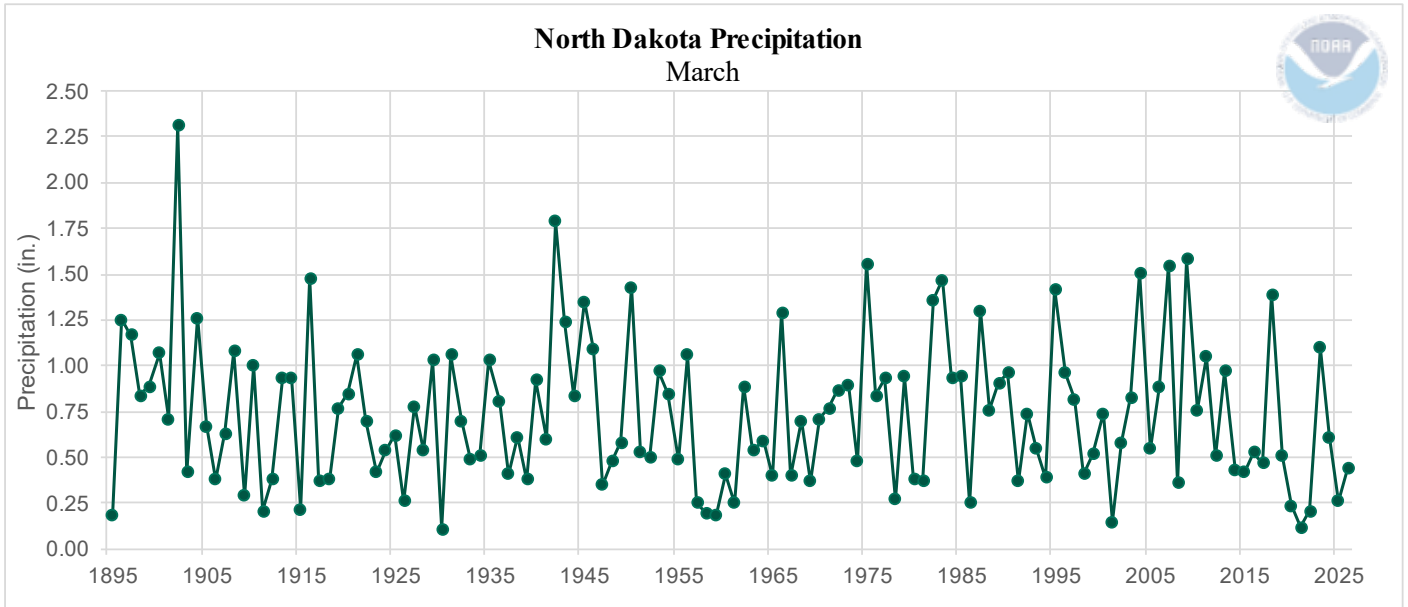


Figure 6: Average Statewide Total Precipitation in North Dakota for the month of March (via NCEI)

North Dakota Precipitation Summary

	Precipitation	Normal	Anomaly	Rank	Record Year
March 2026	0.44"	0.80"	-0.36"	94th Wettest	2.31" (1902)
				39th Driest	0.11" (1930)

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



Temperature Summary

March 2026 Statewide Average Temperature: 30.5°F

Departure from Normal Statewide Temperature: 3.7°F above normal

March was warmer than average for most of the state, as has been the trend this year (Figure 7). The exception was the northeastern border region, which saw colder than average temperatures.

Departure from Normal Average Air Temperature (°F) 03-01-2026 - 03-31-2026

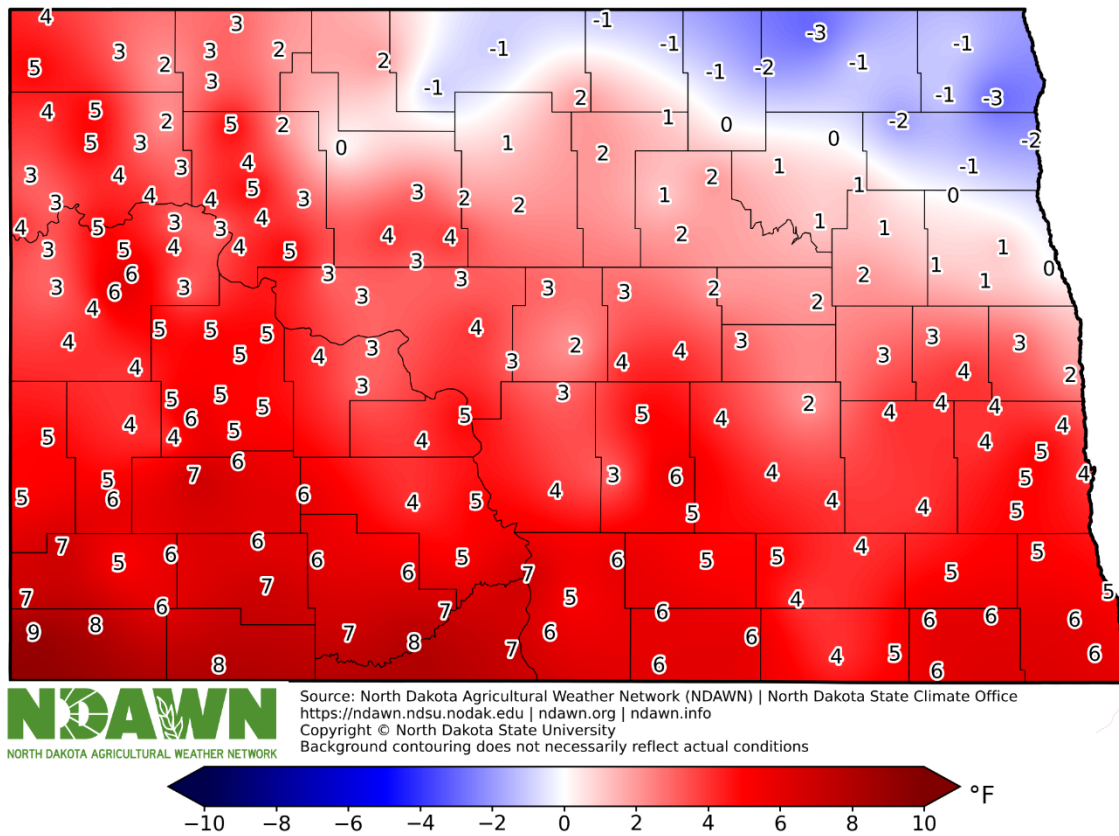


Figure 7: Departure from Normal Average Air Temperature measured at NDAWN stations in March 2026



The highest temperature recorded during March at NDAWN stations in North Dakota was 79.2°F at St. Gertrude 12S NDAWN and Fort Yates 2W NDAWN on March 19 (Figure 8).

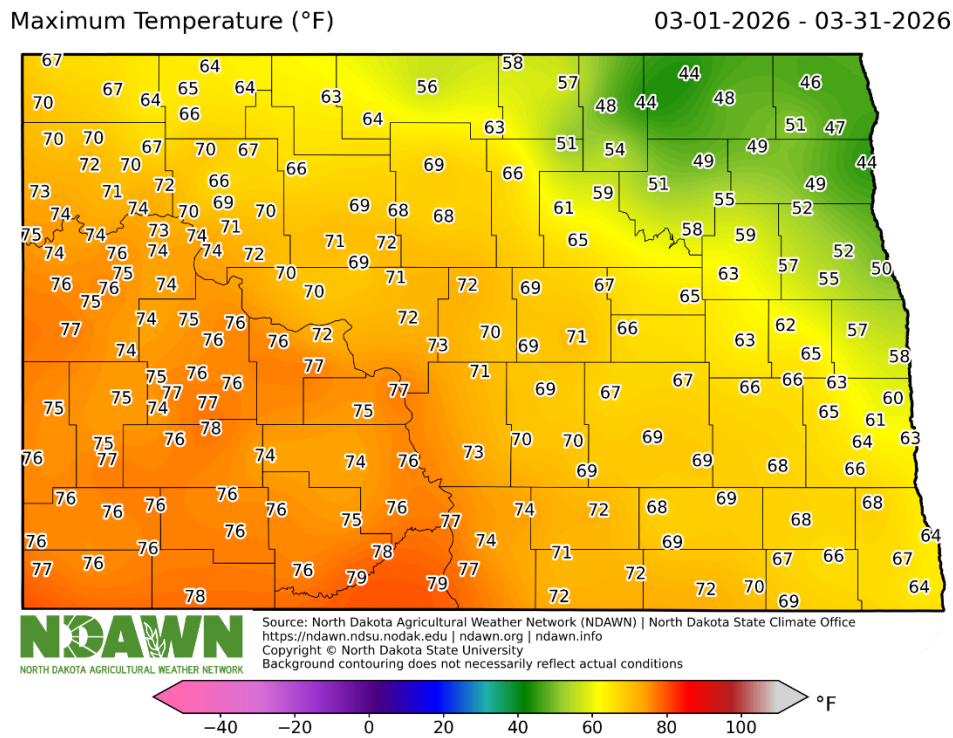


Figure 8: Maximum Air Temperature measured at NDAWN stations in March 2026

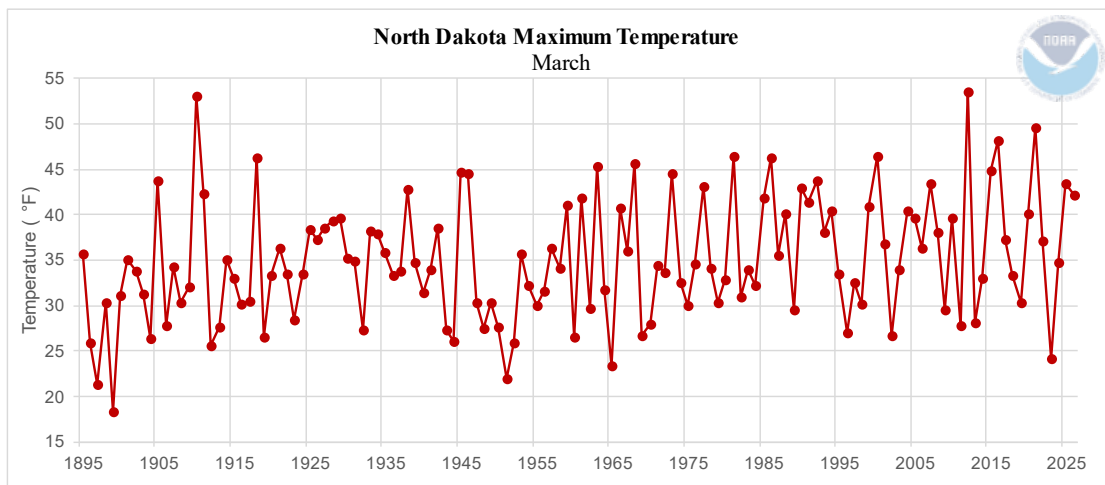


Figure 9: Average Maximum Temperature in North Dakota for the month of March (via NCEI)

Temperature



The lowest temperature recorded during March at NDAWN stations in North Dakota was -25.2°F at the Peace Garden NDAWN station on March 16 (Figure 10).

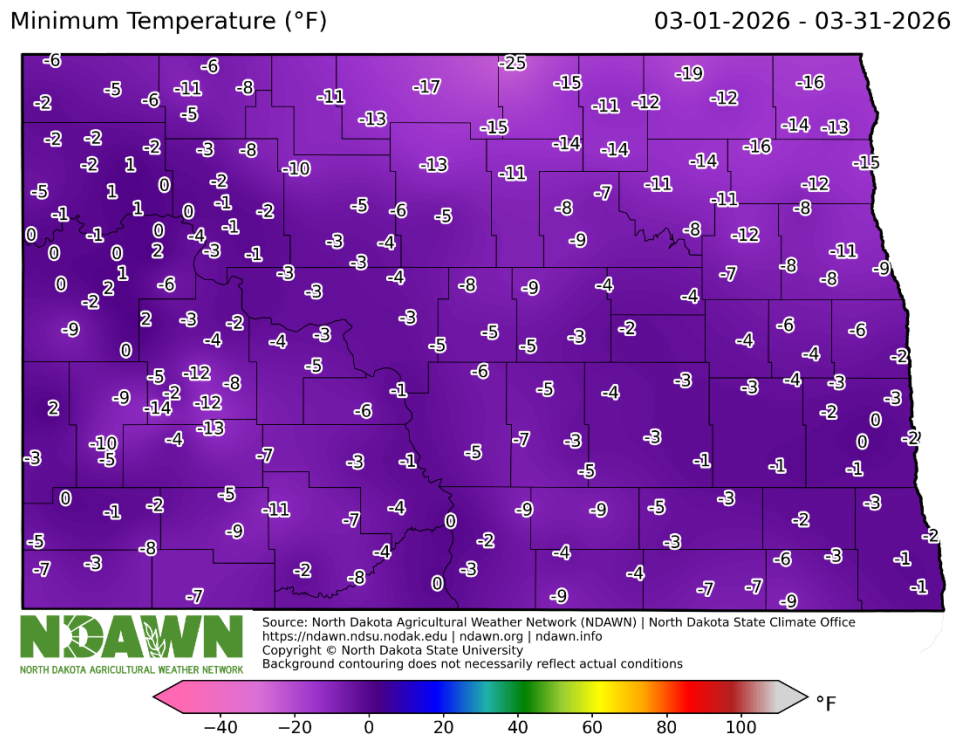


Figure 10: Minimum Air Temperature measured at NDAWN stations in March 2026

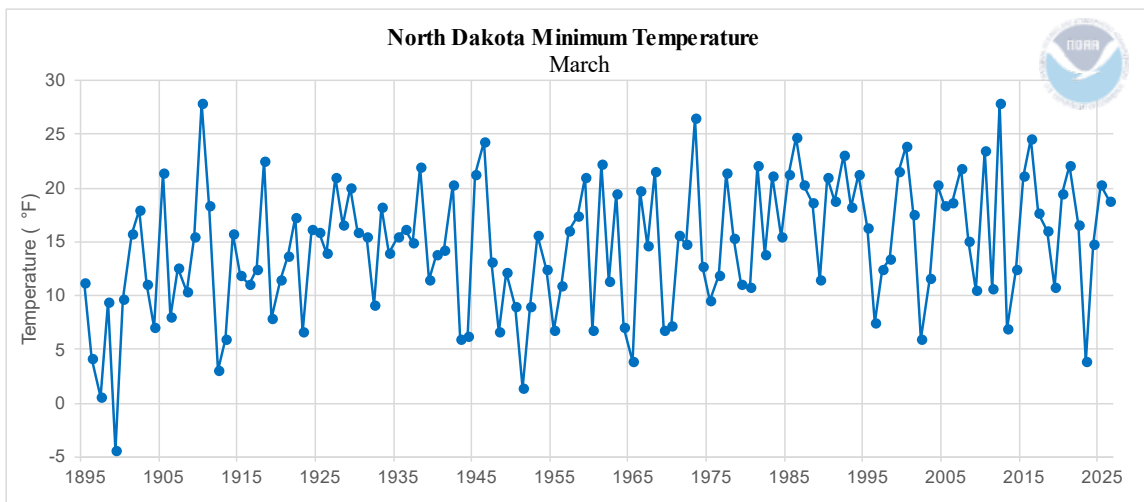


Figure 11: Average Minimum Temperature in North Dakota for the month of March (via NCEI)



North Dakota Temperature Summary

March 2026	Average T	Avg Max T	Avg Min T	Maximum	Minimum
	30.5°F	42.1°F	18.8°F	79°F	-25°F
Anomaly	+3.7°F	+4.8°F	+2.4°F		
Rank					
Warmest	28th Warmest	23rd Warmest	37th Warmest		
Coolest	105th Coldest	110th Coldest	97th Coldest		
Record					
Warmest	40.6°F (2012)	53.5°F (2012)	27.8°F (1910, 2012)		
Coolest	7.0°F (1899)	18.4°F (1899)	-4.4°F (1899)		

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

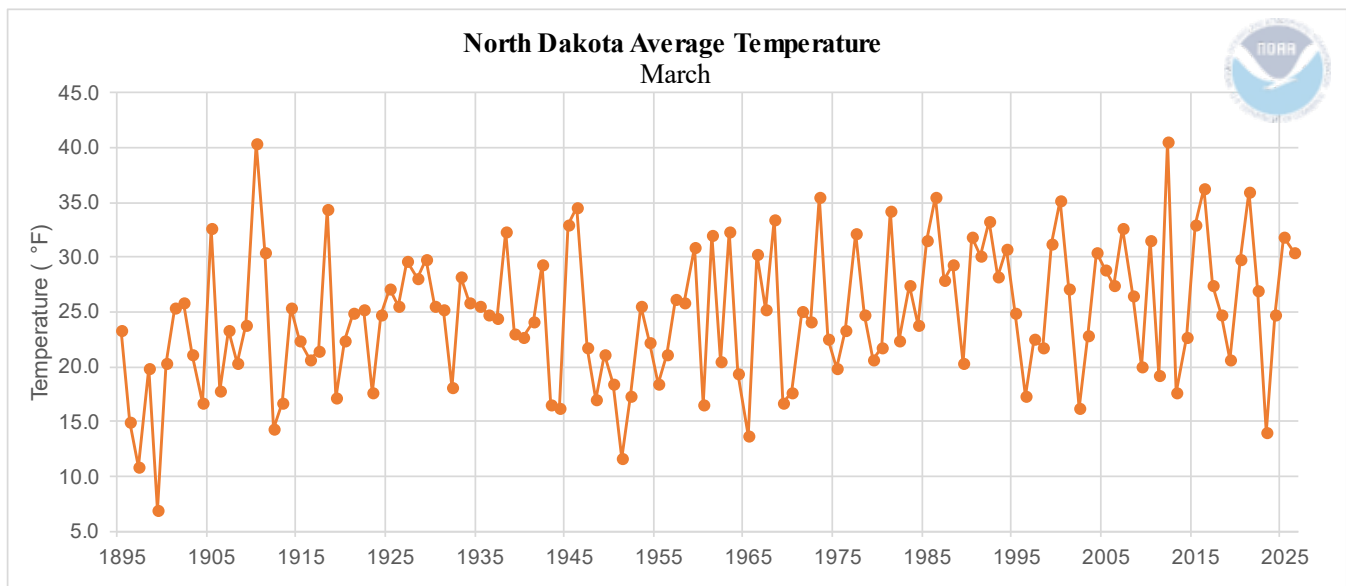


Figure 12: Average Temperature in North Dakota for the month of March (via NCEI)

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