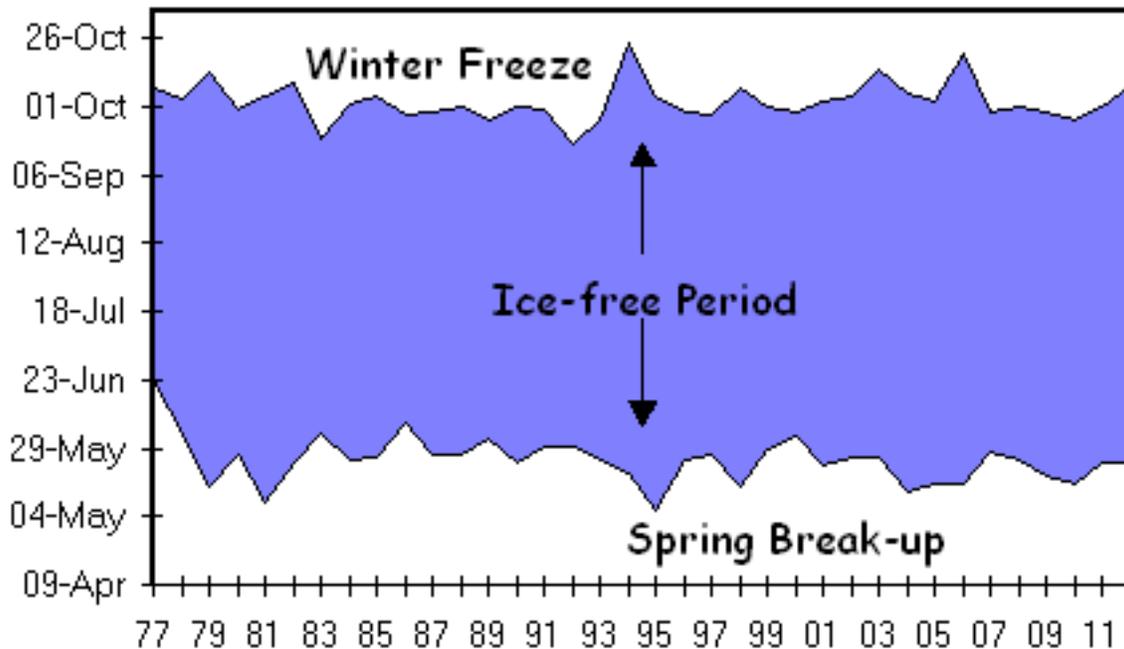


Old Crow River Ice-Free Period



Data source: Water Survey, Environment Canada

What is happening?

- This graph shows the year to year variation in the timing of the ice-free period over the past 36 years. There is no obvious pattern over the last three decades, nor is there any trend in the length of the ice-free season, which averages 131 days.
- The dates provided for 2012 are preliminary but the ice-free period in 2011 began May 25th and ended October 2nd; these dates are within a day or two of the long term average.

Why is it happening?

- The timing of winter freeze and spring break-up depends on weather conditions in the river basin in fall, winter and spring. Long-term trends in these weather conditions can be expected to affect the river's ice conditions.

Why is it important?

- Dates of spring break-up recorded for the Old Crow River are related to the timing of ice break-up in the Old Crow Flats, an important breeding ground for many waterfowl populations (Canadian Wildlife Service, unpublished report).
- Timing of spring break-up and of winter freeze affects nesting waterfowl, river crossing

and travel conditions for people and migrating animals, and conditions in the river such as growth of algae.

- The length of the ice-free season affects summer habitat for animals using open running water.

Technical Notes

- The ice-free period of the river is defined as the period during which ice formation does not affect river flow by more than 5% compared to flow during open water conditions. Thus, the break-up and freeze-up times presented here reflect the final stage of ice break-up and first stage of ice freeze-up on the river.
- The data presented here are from the Old Crow River near the confluence with the Porcupine River, and were obtained from Water Survey, Environment Canada. The beginning of the ice-free period in 2003 was estimated due to equipment failure.

Links

- [Porcupine River ice-free period](#)
 - [Temperatures at Old Crow](#)
 - [Peel River ice bridge](#)
 - [Waterfowl, Old Crow Flats](#)
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Data added: March 14, 2014.