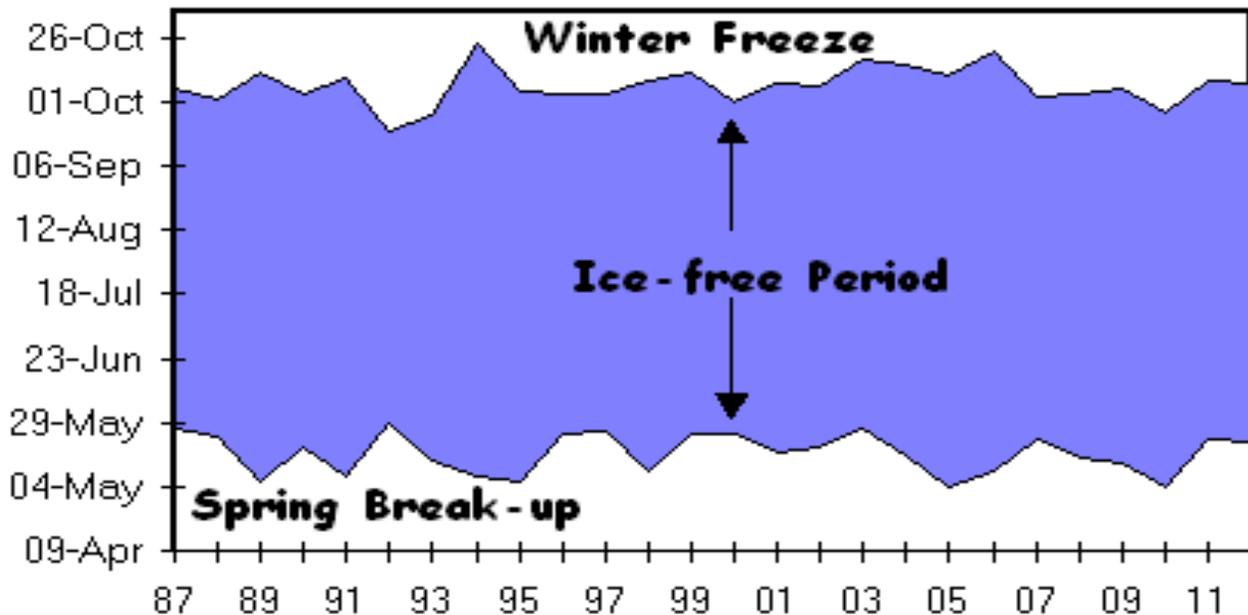


## Porcupine River Ice-Free Period



**Data source: Water Survey, Environment Canada**

### What is happening?

- This graph shows the length of the ice-free period observed for the Porcupine River near the U.S./Canada border and includes some preliminary data for 2012.
- There is year-to-year variation in the dates of the ice-free period, but no clear trend in the timing or length of the ice-free season.
- In 2011, the ice-free period started May 23rd, above five days later than average. The end of the open water season was October 10th, just two days later than the long term average. As a result the open water season in 2011 was 140 days and just three days longer than the long-term average over the last 26 years.

### 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?

- 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 Porcupine River near the U.S./Canada border, and were obtained from Water Survey, Environment Canada. Dates of the ice-free period for 1991 were estimated from data recorded for the Porcupine River at Old Crow.

### Links

- [Old Crow River ice-free period](#)
- [Temperatures at Old Crow](#)
- [Peel River ice bridge](#)

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**Data added:** March 14, 2014.