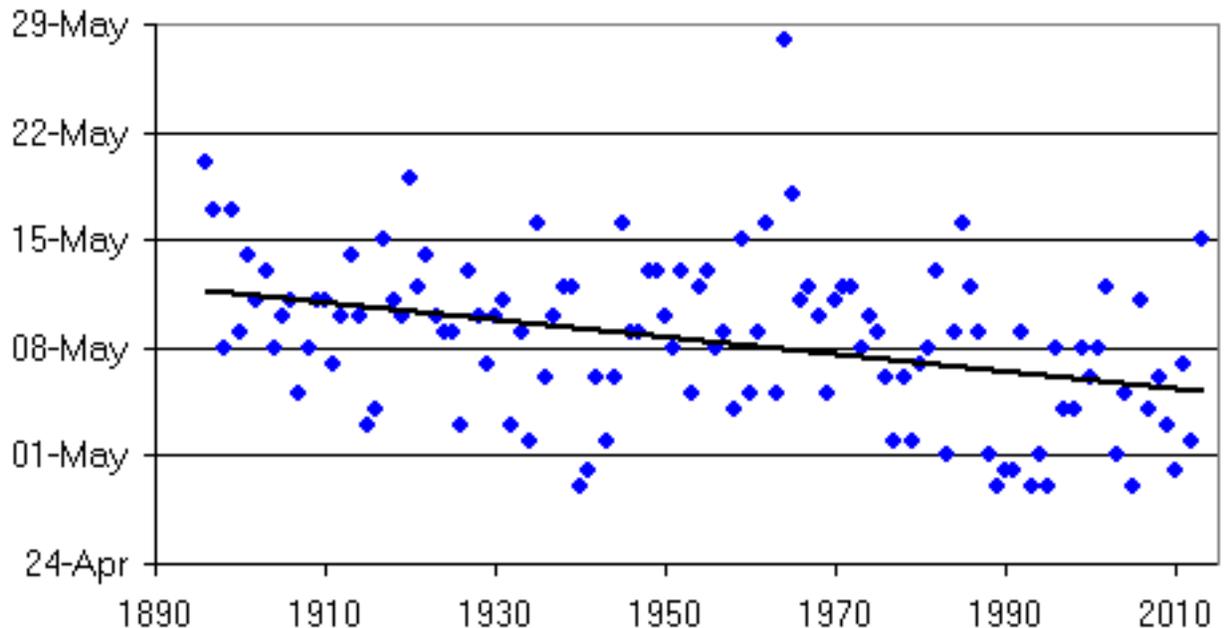


Yukon River Break-up Dates at Dawson City



Data source: Water Resources, Yukon Government

What is happening?

- This graph shows a very long record for spring break-up at Dawson City dating back to the years of the Gold Rush. There is a significant trend towards earlier spring break-up so that it now occurs about one week earlier.
- The average date of break-up based on 118 years of records is May 9th with a one month range between the earliest (April 29th) and latest date (May 28th).
- Recent dates for break-up have been May 7th in 2011, May 1 in 2012 and May 15 in the late spring of 2013.

Why is it happening?

- The timing of spring break-up is related to weather conditions in the river basin and should reflect long-term changes in climate.
- Dawson lies just a few kilometers south of the Co-op study region. However, it is important to note that most of the Yukon River watershed upstream of Dawson lies far south of the Arctic Borderlands area. Therefore we should be cautious in drawing conclusions using this indicator.

Why is it important?

- The date of spring break-up provides useful information of how weather conditions can vary between years in a particular watershed. Temperatures and snow depth both influence the thickness of ice cover while the timing of warm weather in spring affects the timing of break-up.
- The timing of break-up affects travel (by people and animals) along river corridors.

Technical Notes

- The data presented here were obtained from the Water Resources Branch of the Yukon Government.

Links

- [Spring break-up at Old Crow](#)
 - [Peel River ice bridge](#)
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Data added: June 7, 2013