

Flooding Danger in Fairbanks Lessens

The following is this weeks river report from Ted Fathauer of the National Weather Service in Fairbanks:

Surface temperatures at Fairbanks during the past week averaged 4 degrees above seasonal normals and this has resulted in a significant reduction in the snow pack at Fairbanks.

Snow depth at Fairbanks this morning (Monday) was six inches with a water content of 2.8 inches which is a reduction of 12 inches in snow depth and 2.5 inches in water content since last Monday.

It should be emphasized, however, that the snow conditions in Fairbanks are not representative of the conditions in most of the Chena River Basin.

For example, near mile 38 on the Chena Hot Springs Road, the snow depth ranges from 18 to 24 inches with a water content of six to eight inches, quite a bit more than in Fairbanks at the present period.

Upstream on the Chena, near mile 12 on Chena Hot Springs Road, the little Chena River has approximately 3 feet of ice with water running on top.

On the Upper Chena River near mile 38 on Chena Hot Springs Road the river is showing open patches of water.

To date breakup conditions have been ideal - - favorable for a slow and gradual runoff.

However, the outlook is still for minor flooding to occur around mid May. The high water mark is expected to be one to three feet above flood stage, or

four to six feet below the 1967 high water mark. Flood stage is 12 feet.

With the cooler temperatures for the next three days, there will not be a major rise on the Chena River for another week.

Flooding of several feet above bank full is still expected on the Chatanika and several streams in the Fairbanks and Nenana areas.

Throughout the Yukon and Kuskokwim River Basins there has been little change since last week except for some reduction in snow depths resulting from the warmer temperatures.

While a long period of above normal stream flow will prevail on the Koyukuk and Yukon Rivers, ice jams will be the primary threat to overbank flooding rather than high runoff.

The threat of ice jamming in the Kuskokwim River continues to be evident.