

2017-18 Bering Sea Ice Review

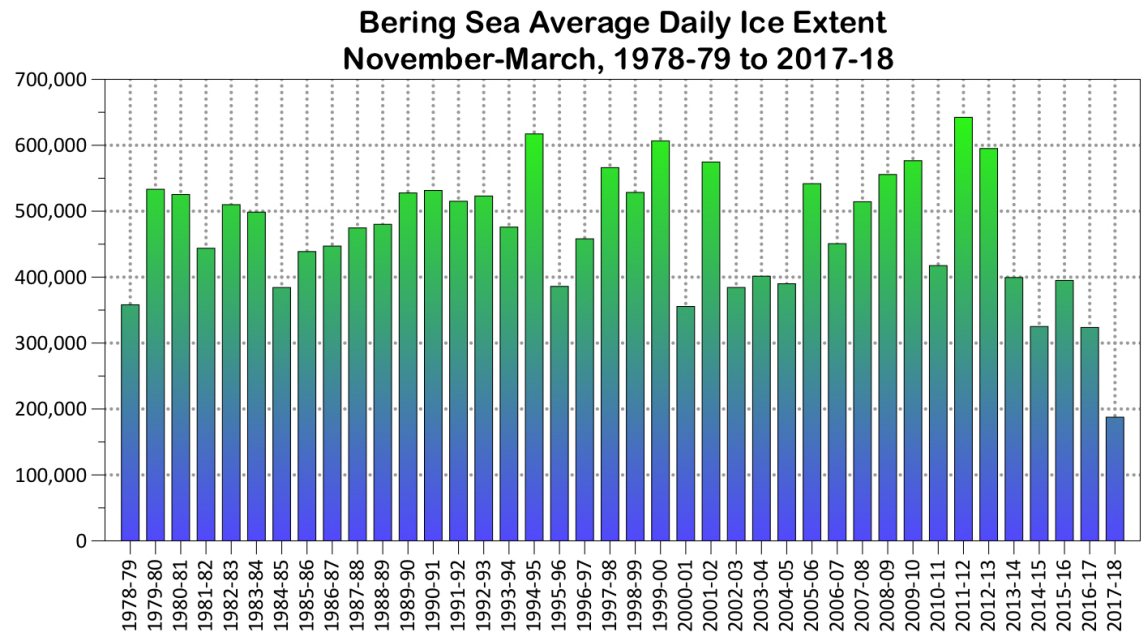
Rick Thoman, NWS Alaska Region

John Walsh, UAF

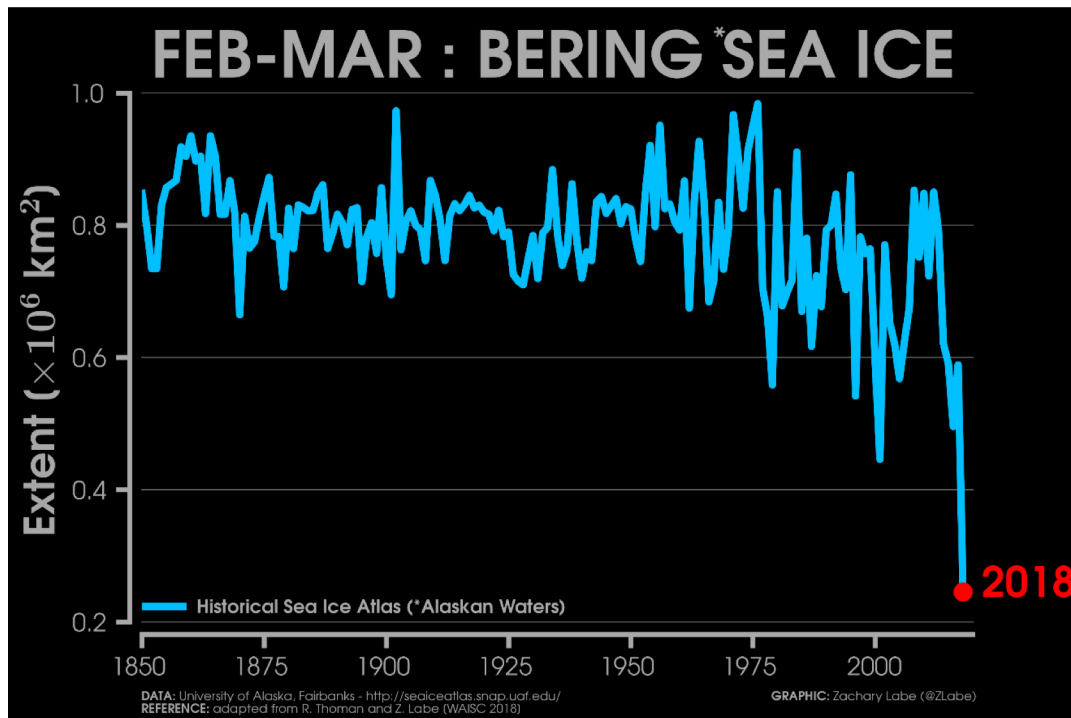
Zach Labe, UC Irvine

Record low sea ice in the Bering Sea, 2017-18

-- 40% below the
previous lowest of the →
satellite era



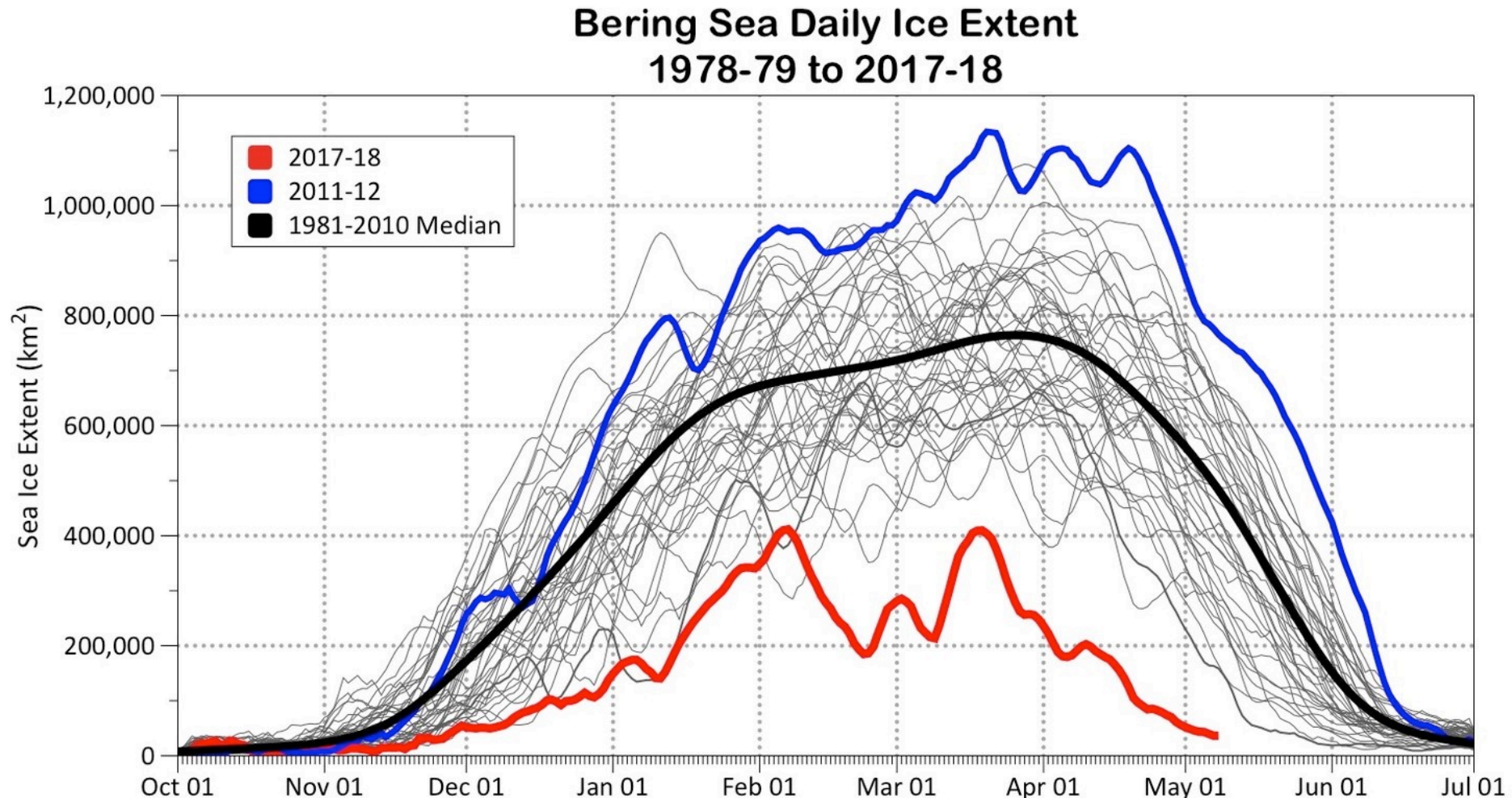
Data source: NSIDC Sea Ice Index, Version 3



← the lowest (by far) since 1850



Bering Sea ice extent (updated through May 08, 2018)



Data source: NSIDC Sea Ice Index, Version 3
Updated through May 08, 2018



Community Views

Utqiagvik: Dec 21, 2017

Photo: Craig George



Shishmaref: Feb 22, 2018

Photo: Sharon Nayokpuk



Little Diomed, February 20, 2018

Photo by Carla Ahkvaluk



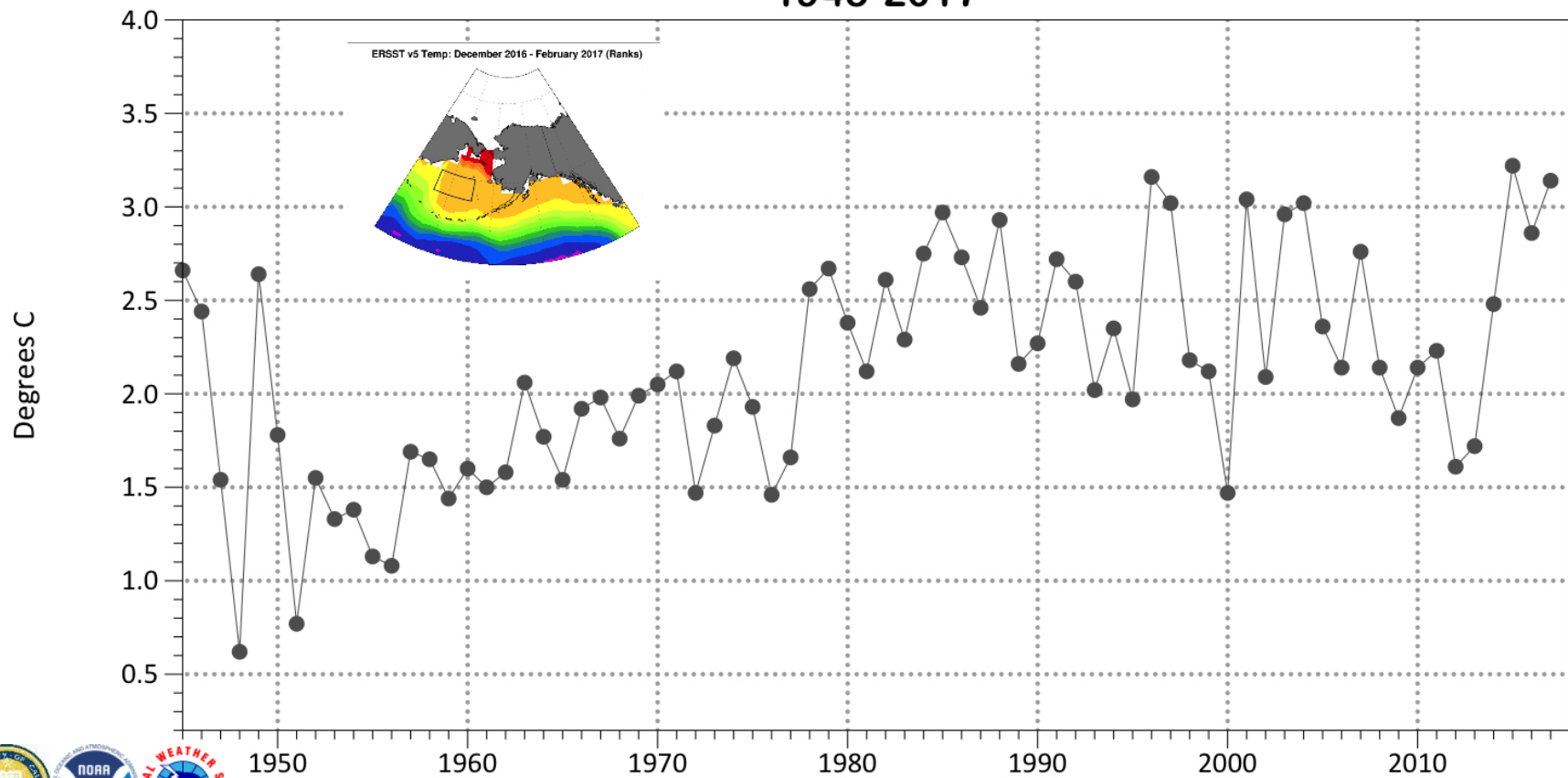
Why so little ice?

Bering Sea: “warm” for several years

Late Start: Large Scale Warmth

Persistent storminess

**Central Bering Sea Dec-Feb Mean SST
1945-2017**

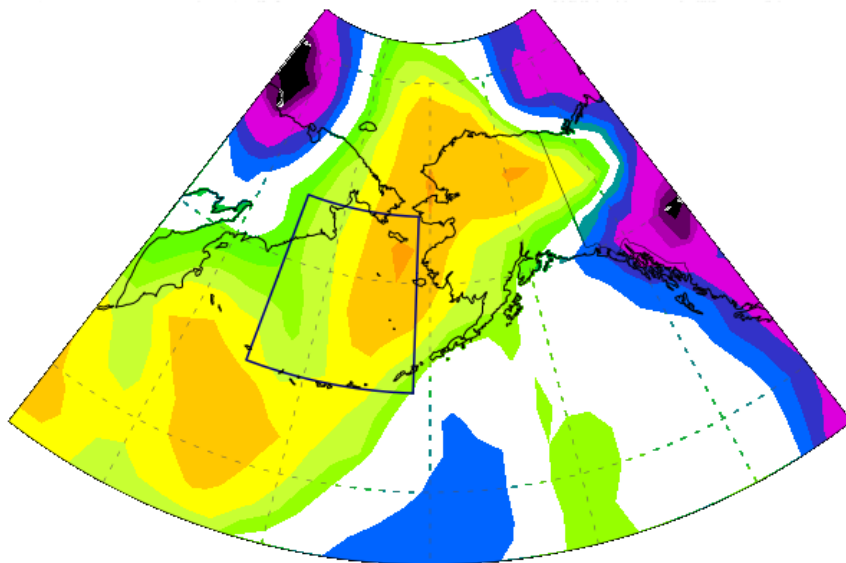


Data source: NOAA ERSSTv5 & UAF/B. Brettschneider



2017-18 South Wind Strength Rankings (post-1948): Proxy for “storminess”

Near-Surface Winds



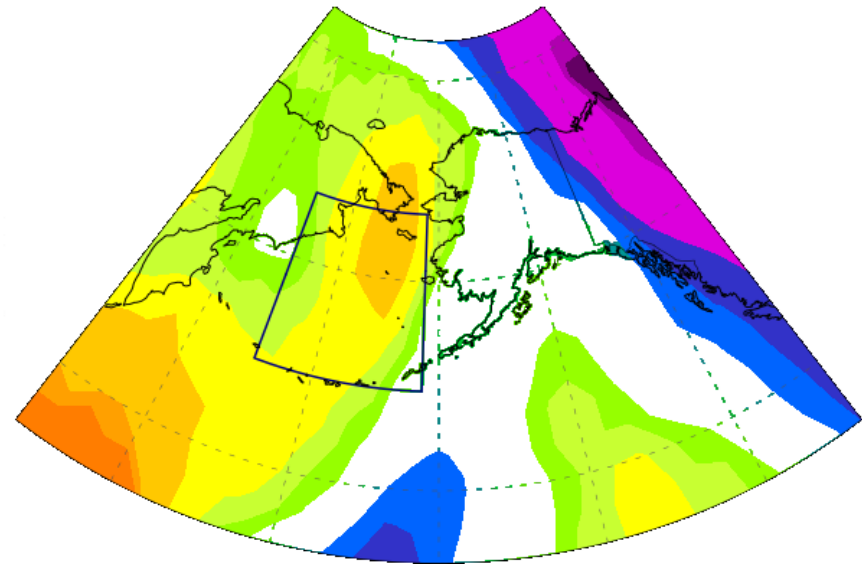
Brian Brettschneider 2018 (Data Source: ESRL R1).



Much above normal

Above normal (since 1949)

Steering-Level Winds



Brian Brettschneider 2018 (Data Source: ESRL R1).



Much above normal

Above normal (since 1949)

925 mb

December-February 2017-18

500 mb