



Historical Early Ice at the Pribilof Islands in the Bering Sea



Prepared 25 Jan 2012
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To address the increased interest in early sea ice conditions at St. Paul Island, the historical ice analysis records from the NWS sea ice desk dating back to 1986 were examined to determine how the 2012 ice advance to the Pribilof Islands compares with previous years. The earliest ice edge arrival dates, as well as the persistence of sea ice coverage at the Pribilof Islands were determined during the month of January for this comparison.

January 5th, 2000 was found to be the earliest date of the ice edge reaching the northern coast of St. Paul Island, and January 10th, 2000 was the earliest date of the ice edge reaching St. George Island. This year the ice edge pushed south to St. Paul Island on January 23rd, which was the 4th earliest in our 27 years of records. January 25th of this year was the 3rd earliest date of the ice edge arrival to the north coast of St. George Island.

Earliest Sea Ice at St. Paul Island

Day	Year
Jan 5	2000
Jan 9	2009
Jan 11	2002
Jan 23	2012
Jan 29	1993 2007 2010

Earliest Sea Ice at St. George Island

Day	Year
Jan 10	2000
Jan 16	2009
Jan 25	2012

Looking at records for the month of January, the ice was most persistent at the Pribilof Islands during 2000 with 17 days at St. Paul Island and 10 days at St. George Island. Ice was present at St. Paul Island for 7 of the last 27 years in our records and only 3 at St. George Island. When considering persistence, 2012 ranks as the 3rd highest year (even if the pack remains to the end of the month).

Most Persistence of the Ice Pack at the Pribilof Islands

Year	Days of Ice at St. Paul Island	Days of Ice at St. George Island
2000	17	10
2009	12	3
2012	4 (as of 1/25/12)	1 (as of 1/25/12)
1993 2007 2010	3	-
2002	2	-

