

SEWARD AND BALDWIN PENINSULAS, NW ALASKA

01 / 06

STA 0+00

 ALASKA.AI

**A thousand years to  
fill.  
A few hours to empty.**

STA 0+00    BASIN RIM

66 53 N 162 35 W





## Winter ran cold. The lakes went anyway.

Winter 2025 to 26 was on the cold side for Alaska and the region kept losing lake area. Researchers found around 30 more lakes affected by drainage in June and July 2026.

30 STAKES, ONE PER FLAGGED LAKE.  
AFFECTED BY DRAINAGE, NOT FULLY DRAINED.  
POSITIONS ILLUSTRATIVE.





## The ground sinks, then it finds a way out.

When ice rich permafrost thaws the ground surface subsides, and the depressions fill with water. The same process can cut a new stream channel that drains the lake, leaving a circular basin of bare ground.

BASIN, SEVERAL HUNDRED  
METRES ACROSS

FILL, ABOUT A  
THOUSAND YEARS

DRAIN, A FEW  
HOURS

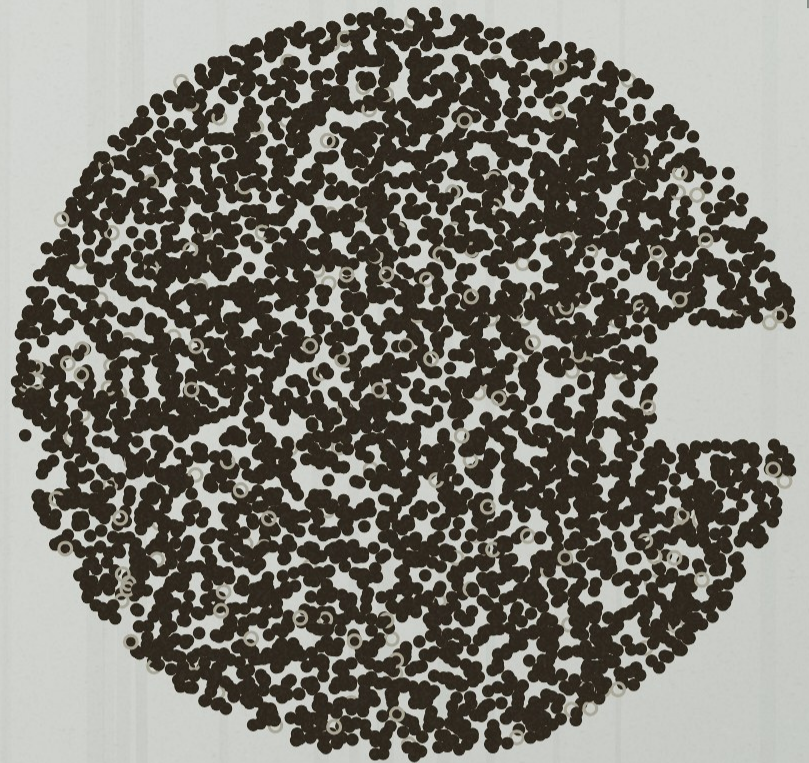






# ALMOST 200

of about 4,600 lakes in the region lost more than a quarter of their area in summer 2018 alone.



4,600 DOTS. 196 MARKED.  
EQUAL SIZE,  
SO THE MARKED AREA IS THE  
MARKED SHARE.

ARCTIC WIDE

**OVER 4 MILLION**

LAKES MAPPED AND  
ACTIVELY  
MONITORED ACROSS THE  
ARCTIC

ALASKA TUNDRA

**70 MILLION**

THERMOKARST PONDS MAPPED  
ACROSS THE ALASKA TUNDRA

DIFFERENT AREAS. NOT ONE SUM.





## Two things the picture can't settle.

Not all lake change comes from permafrost thaw. Lakes in floodplains and wetlands shift dramatically each season with spring snowmelt, and wildlife plays a role. The authors say the drainage suggests evidence of thaw. Suggests is their word.

WOODWELL DESCRIBES THE GATEWAY AS AN ONLINE PLATFORM IN DEVELOPMENT. WOODWELL WAS AWARDED A FIVE MILLION DOLLAR GOOGLE.ORG GRANT FOR USE OF AI TO TRACK PERMAFROST THAW. NCEAS REPORTED IN MARCH 2026 THAT GOOGLE.ORG SUPPORT IS COMING TO AN END.





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borough's next siting  
decision.**

SOURCES IN COMMENTS

[alaskaaihq.com](http://alaskaaihq.com)