

Using Long Term Climate Records to Predict Future Trends

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There is a relatively long record of weather observations for Albany, New York, with continuous monthly data extending back to 1820 and discontinuous records into the 1700s. The Albany weather record is assumed to be a good proxy for examining long term trends or cycles in the Albany Hydrologic Service Area. Weather data from the official records, which are located on site at the National Weather Service Office in Albany, was entered into a spreadsheet for analysis. Charting Albany precipitation, temperature and snowfall data reveals cycles on the order of 100 years in precipitation and snowfall. These cycles appear to correlate well with past flood/drought cycles in the Albany area. In presenting these data, we will learn about past climate cycles of the area and the clues they hold about possible future trends in weather and hydrology.