

The Suitland Ground Hog Report - 1975

by  
Donald R. Wiesnet  
Senior Research Hydrologist  
NOAA/National Environmental Satellite Service  
Suitland, Md. 20233

Against the advice of several of my respected colleagues, I have decided that I would join the ranks of the long-range weather forecasters. The decision was reached as a result of examining 8 years of satellite data on the snow cover on the Northern Hemisphere.

This informal communication is designed to provide a record of a long-range, hemispheric snow cover forecast so that it can be later evaluated. A word of caution: The Eurasian land mass dominates the statistics on snow cover owing to its large size. In other words, a forecast can be made for the Northern Hemisphere that will serve also for the Eurasian continent, but snow cover in North America alone cannot as yet be forecast, in my view.

FORECAST

1. In early January, I forecast that snow cover in the Northern Hemisphere for the entire winter would be less than the 1973-74 snow cover.
2. In early January, I forecast that February snow cover for the Northern Hemisphere would be less than the January 1975 snow cover.

These figures do not include sea-ice extent or sea-ice snow cover. The forecast is based on satellite data collected in prior years and statistically processed. A paper is in preparation on this subject, but a sense of loyalty to the ESC, compelled me to share this forecast with you. The "Suitland Ground Hog" plans to review the forecast annually at the Eastern Snow Conference until such time as the membership objects violently or expels me from the organization.