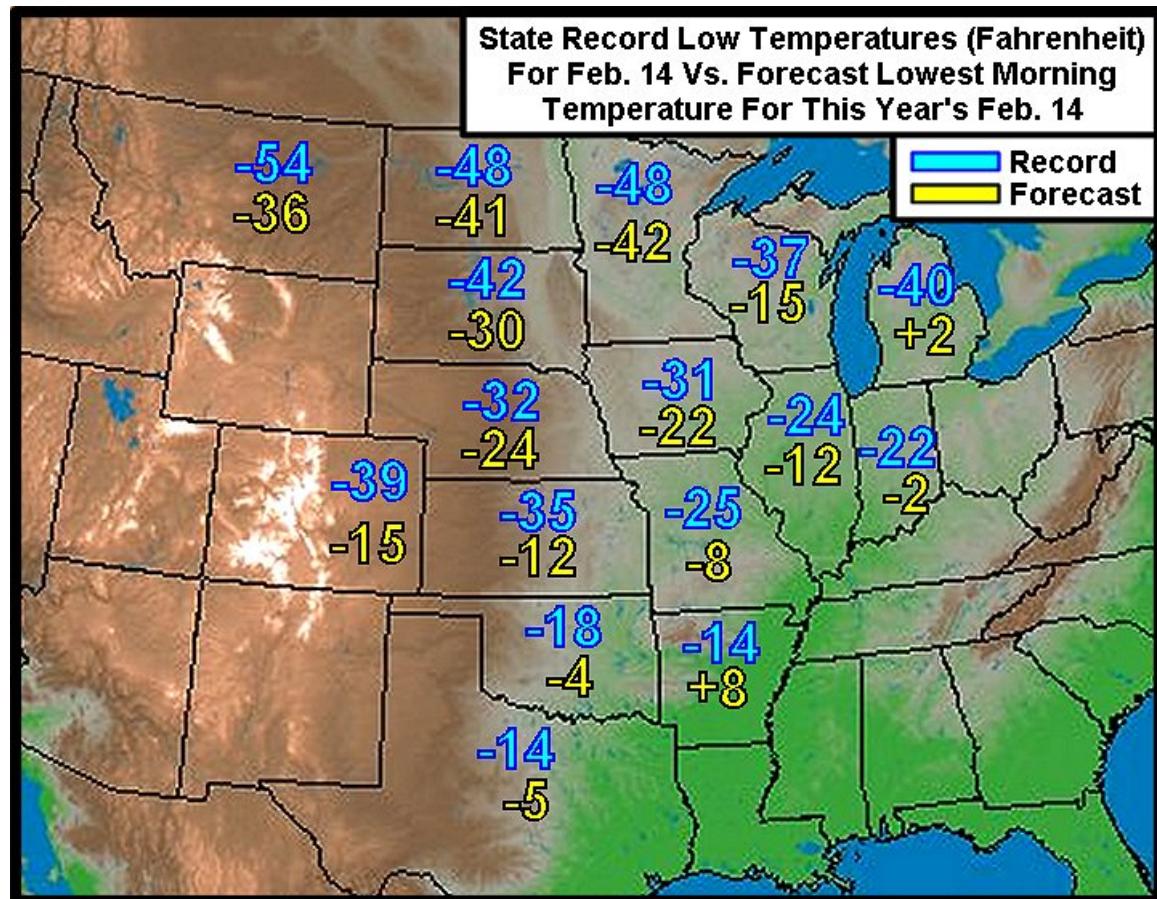


U.S. South Plains May See Record Cold After Snowstorm

By Drew Lerner

Kansas City, February 12 (World Weather Inc.) – Record setting cold temperatures may impact many areas across the Plains and western Midwest early next week as the massive arctic airmass creeps into the region. Interestingly, though, most of the state records for cold are not at risk of falling except perhaps in the southern Plains following the big weekend snowstorm.

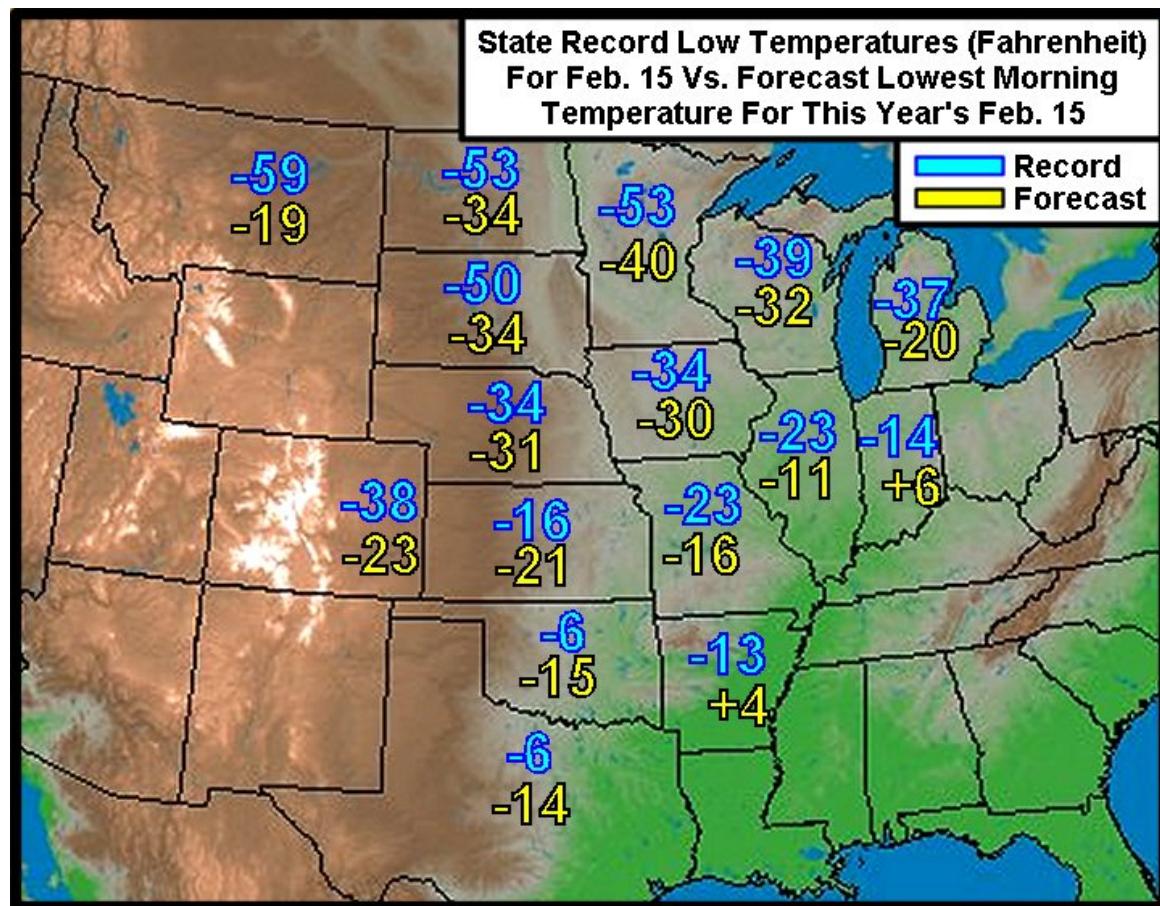
An impressive, slow-moving, arctic airmass continues to get all of the press from North America. The coldest temperatures seen in the contiguous United States this week slipped into the lower -40s Fahrenheit in central Montana and that occurred this morning. Temperatures also dropped to -36 in north-central North Dakota while the core of coldest air was still in Canada. The high pressure center will take the entire weekend and Monday to move from Saskatchewan and southern Alberta to Minnesota and Wisconsin. In the meantime, the southern Plains will experience its most broad-based snowstorm of the season impacting areas from Colorado and Kansas to Texas and northeastern Mexico before turning up through the Delta to the lower eastern Midwest and northeastern states early next week.



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A considerable amount of cold air will be pulled southward by the weekend snowstorm, although the core of the arctic airmass will remain in the northern Plains and upper Midwest. The snowstorm will generate increased northerly wind and that will pull some of the bitter cold from the central Plains into Oklahoma and Texas. Fresh snow and northeasterly wind speeds of 20 to 40 mph will bring on blizzard conditions Saturday night and Sunday and help temperatures early next week bottom out well below normal.

Needless to say, livestock stress will be a real issue in the southern Plains Sunday and Monday with the snow, blowing snow and falling temperatures creating a period of notable animal stress. Some of the nation's livestock has already been stressed in the northern Plains and upper Midwest with the cold winds that have occurred this week.

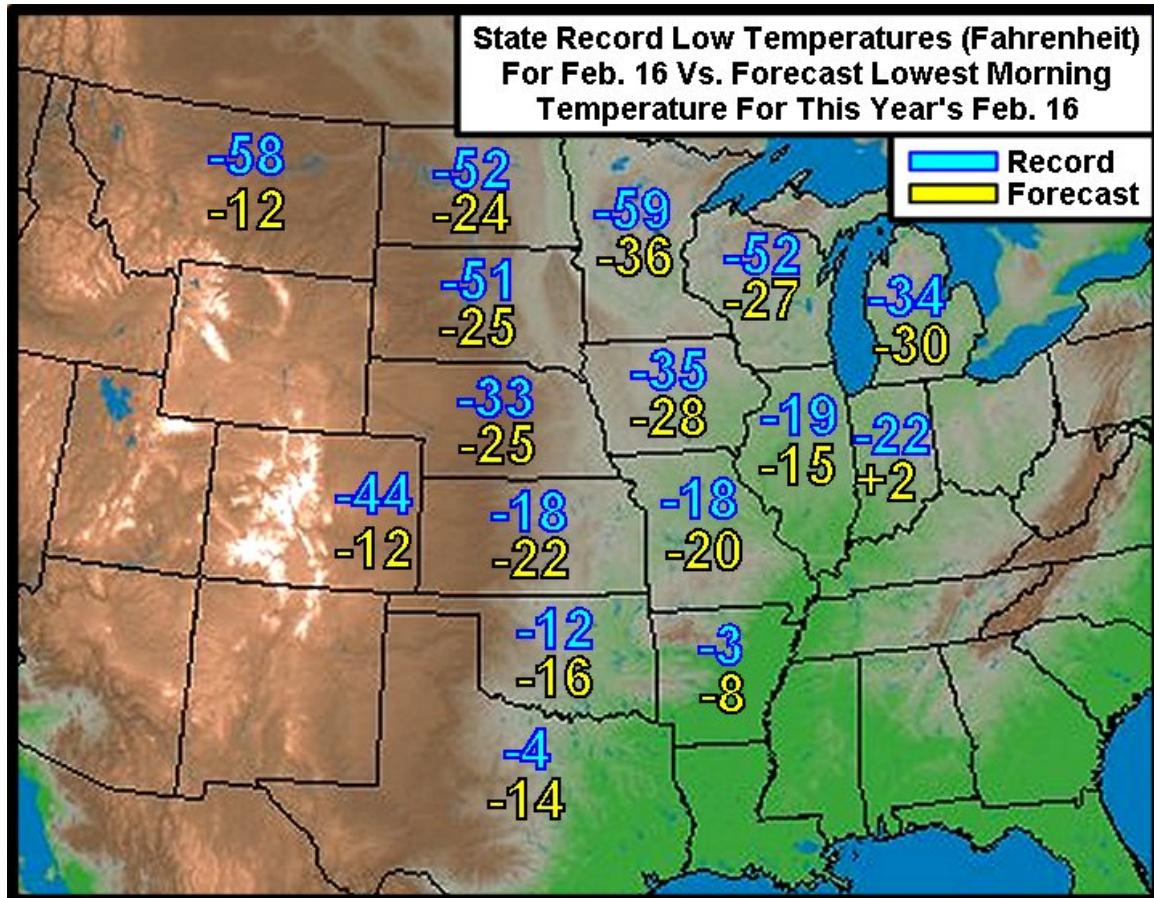


Even though we humans are labeling this cold airmass as brutal, massive, intensive, incredible, tremendous.....etc.; the reality is that we have been here before with more impressive cold surges. Recent years of warming atmospheric conditions has certainly spoiled us all into thinking that brutal cold does not happen anymore. Well, that is true when we look at the record books, but events like this do occur periodically and what we will experience this weekend does not compare to some of the record cold air masses that have occurred in the past, but it will still be impressive.

State record low temperatures for February 14, 15 and 16, vary in the lower -50s in the far northern Plains while the records in Nebraska, Iowa and Colorado are in the -30s. Most of these states will not experience temperatures Sunday through Tuesday colder than

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the previous records. However, Kansas, Oklahoma and Texas may experience temperatures never before reported on these three dates. The data presented here are state records for the date extending back to the late 1800s. Obviously, if one of these states reports the coldest temperature on record for the date there will likely many individual reporting states reporting the same.



The cold and wind will create a considerable amount of stress on animals and humans in the southern Plains that are not used to seeing such extremes and adding the significant snowfall on top of this will result in some power outages, transportation problems and even some death.

The cold airmass will begin to moderate next week, but the cold bias in North America is not over. Late February temperatures are poised to turn colder than usual in the western United States and may continue cool biased in both western Canada and the northern U.S. Plains. These traits are typical of La Niña events and the recent arctic airmass has sufficiently drawn enough cold air southward to help enhance and prolong the cool bias.

Having colder than usual temperatures in the western parts of North America in late February will allow the eastern part of the nation to warm up and that will culminate in a succession of storm systems similar to those expected this weekend and late next week from the south-central through the northeastern states. The only difference will be that as the eastern U.S. warms the storm track will shift to the north.

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La Nina events also tend to support more severe thunderstorm outbreaks in the late winter and spring. The above description for weather in late February and March should set the stage to see some of that severe weather beginning to evolve. So, that means, there is more fun coming!

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