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U. S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
 ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE SERVICES ADMINISTRATION
 IN COOPERATION WITH CRAIG CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
 CLIMATOGRAPHY OF THE UNITED STATES NO. 20 - 5

LATITUDE 40° 30' N
 LONGITUDE 107° 33' W
 ELEV. (GROUND) 6280 feet

CLIMATOLOGICAL SUMMARY

STATION CRAIG, COLORADO

MEANS AND EXTREMES FOR PERIOD 1936 - 1965

Month	Temperature (°F)								** Mean degree days	Precipitation Totals (Inches)						Mean number of days						Month
	Means				Extremes					Mean	Greatest daily	Year	Snow, Sleet			Precip. .10 inch or more	Temperatures					
	Daily maximum	Daily minimum	Monthly	Record highest	Year	Record lowest	Year	Mean					Maximum monthly	Year	Greatest daily		Year	90° and above	32° and below	32° and below	0° and below	
	(30)	(30)	(30)	(30)	(30)	(30)	(30)	(30)					(30)	(30)	(30)		(30)	(30)	(30)	(30)	(30)	
JAN	32.3	1.5	16.9	53	1950+	-45	1963	1460	.92	.75	1956	15.8	35.5	1951	11.0	1951	3	0	14	31	15	JAN
FEB	36.9	7.3	22.1	59	1963	-43	1951	1207	.81	.76	1945	10.2	15.0	1939	7.0	1947	3	0	9	28	9	FEB
MAR	43.6	16.2	29.9	71	1943	-24	1948	1123	1.04	.90	1945	11.8	21.8	1945	6.0	1963+	4	0	4	31	3	MAR
APR	57.2	27.7	42.5	81	1946	-2	1945	684	1.37	1.24	1950	5.1	13.7	1964	7.0	1950	5	0	*	23	*	APR
MAY	68.2	35.0	51.6	87	1936	14	1953	401	1.38	1.64	1944	0.8	5.1	1942	4.0	1942	4	0	0	11	0	MAY
JUN	77.7	41.1	59.4	100	1936	21	1942	153	1.18	1.62	1945	†	†	1952+	†	1947+	3	1	0	3	0	JUN
JUL	85.9	47.3	66.6	99	1959+	31	1945	19	.92	.88	1941	0	0	--	0	--	3	8	0	*	0	JUL
AUG	83.4	46.1	64.8	96	1949	28	1962+	47	1.35	1.72	1953	0	0	--	0	--	4	4	0	1	0	AUG
SEP	75.4	37.1	56.3	93	1950	17	1945	262	1.21	1.25	1961	1.1	18.5	1965	9.3	1965	4	1	0	9	0	SEP
OCT	63.9	27.6	45.8	84	1957	9	1952	579	1.23	1.29	1959	1.0	6.2	1949	4.0	1949	4	0	0	24	0	OCT
NOV	46.6	22.8	34.7	71	1949	-19	1955+	1002	.95	.83	1938	7.8	24.8	1964	11.0	1964	3	0	4	29	3	NOV
DEC	36.6	8.1	22.4	64	1939	-31	1962+	1338	1.06	1.13	1951	12.9	28.6	1948	11.7	1948	4	0	10	31	9	DEC
Year	59.0	26.5	42.8	100	JUN 1936	-45	JAN 1963	8275	13.42	1.72	1953	66.5	35.5	JAN 1951	11.7	DEC 1948	44	14	41	221	39	Year

(a) Average length of record, years.

† Trace, an amount too small to measure.

** Base 65°F

+ Also on earlier dates, months, or years.

* Less than one-half

CLIMATE OF CRAIG, COLORADO

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Craig is located in northwestern Colorado in the valley of the Yampa River, and is about 45 miles west of the Continental Divide running along the 10,000 to 12,000 foot mountains of the Park Range. To the south and to the northeast mountains rise to over 10,000 feet altitude about 25 miles from Craig. The Yampa River emerges from the mountains a short distance east of Craig, then flows westward through open rolling hills, plateaus and bluffs to the Green River near the state border. Altitudes in this area range from less than 6,000 feet near the river to more than 8,000 feet on some of the higher plateaus and hills. Northward from Craig the slope is generally upward, through similar hilly broken country.

The climate of Craig is highland continental, characterized by low precipitation, a rather large daily temperature range, low humidity, moderate amounts of wind, and abundant sunshine. Summer days are warm, but seldom hot; summer nights are cool. In winter the nights are cold, but the days are more comfortable than might be expected from the temperature averages, because of the low humidity and usual bright sunshine. The prevailing direction of air movement into the area is from the west. The west winds arrive comparatively dry after their long travel over land and loss of much of their moisture in passing over mountain ranges to the west. Relatively open areas to the north and northwest permit somewhat easier access to the area for storms from the north than to other more protected areas of western Colorado.

The average annual precipitation of about 14 inches places Craig in a semi-arid climatic classification. A moderately high degree of variation from year to year in precipitation is shown by a range of about 60% to 150% of long term average for individual years. Precipitation in the surrounding areas varies considerably with elevation and exposure, but amounts decrease generally westward from Craig, particularly at lower altitudes. Amounts are greater in the higher country to the east, reaching 20 to 30 inches or more annually in the mountains. Mountain precipitation is heavier in winter than in summer, a significant factor in providing snow accumulations adequate for a year around water supply to lower and drier areas.

Long term precipitation averages for Craig indicate a fairly even distribution through the year, although there are wide variations from month to month in individual years. September appears as a dry month

(less than one-fourth inch total) more often than any other month. May and October have been wet (more than two inches total) more often than other months. Although a 44-year average annual precipitation of slightly under 14 inches at Lay, about 16 miles west and at about the same altitude, is almost the same as that for Craig, the seasonal distribution at Lay shows distinctly drier averages for June and November, and the highest averages for March and September. This difference in pattern is probably largely the result of variations in terrain and exposure, but it may be affected also by possible changes in the precipitation regimes since 1936, as compared with the older Lay record.

As the temperature averages indicate, summers are relatively cool at Craig. The record highest of 100 degrees has been registered only once in the period of record. Temperature maximums above 95 degrees have occurred in only eight months in the 30 years period of record, and in four of the years temperatures did not reach 90 degrees at any time during the summer. Winters are cold, but the average daily maximum for January has been above freezing in more than half of the years, indicating a high frequency of winter days warm enough to melt the snow cover. Snowfall is not extremely heavy, annual totals ranging from 33 inches to 77 inches. "Open" winters occur in years when the colder months are dry. On the other hand, the ground may remain covered with snow for several weeks after a heavy snow followed by an extended period of low temperatures in one of the colder months.

Degree day data are provided as an index of heating requirements for buildings. Degree days are obtained by subtracting the mean temperature for each day from 65°. Daily values thus obtained are added to obtain monthly totals. The need for the heating of buildings is considered none or slight if a day has a mean temperature of 65° or higher. Average monthly fuel requirements will be approximately proportional to the degree day totals.

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 Environmental Science Services Administration
 P. O. Box 1079
 Denver, Colorado 80201
 October 1966

Average Temperature (°F)

Year	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Ann'l
1936	-	-	30.9	40.4	56.2	65.8	71.6	67.8	55.8	45.2	33.0	21.4	-
1937	4.8	26.3	30.0	43.3	52.2	58.0	67.4	66.3	58.0	46.6	33.9	25.9	-
1938	22.6	26.3	33.1	43.3	49.1	57.2	64.1	63.9	57.8	45.2	28.2	18.8	42.2
1939	18.6	9.2	30.0	41.7	52.2	57.3	66.0	63.7	57.6	42.8	34.4	27.0	42.0
1940	17.6	25.4	35.5	42.9	53.6	61.6	68.0	65.8	58.2	45.8	27.5	23.8	43.8
1941	17.4	26.0	33.6	40.5	53.4	57.5	65.2	64.0	51.8	44.4	33.1	23.6	42.5
1942	13.4	24.2	25.8	40.5	47.5	56.8	65.2	65.2	51.6	44.4	33.2	23.0	40.3
1943	21.2	25.8	29.7	48.3	48.2	56.0	66.2	65.7	55.9	44.8	32.3	23.0	43.1
1944	11.7	21.0	29.8	48.3	50.6	55.9	62.8	63.2	55.5	47.8	30.4	19.4	41.7
1945	21.6	25.8	28.4	35.8	52.0	54.9	65.7	65.6	53.6	47.0	33.4	21.2	41.7
1946	17.2	24.2	36.8	47.5	48.2	59.7	67.9	64.6	55.4	42.0	30.4	29.2	43.6
1947	15.6	25.8	32.4	41.3	53.7	60.9	66.0	65.2	57.7	45.6	26.4	19.4	42.3
1948	13.6	19.4	25.6	43.8	53.8	60.9	66.4	65.4	59.7	45.6	26.9	20.2	41.7
1949	7.7	16.3	34.2	46.2	53.0	58.4	65.1	63.5	55.8	42.1	38.7	23.2	42.0
1950	16.9	26.6	33.1	43.0	46.7	58.6	64.2	63.1	57.3	49.9	35.4	28.5	43.6
1951	16.0	25.3	31.1	42.2	52.5	56.5	68.1	65.2	55.3	44.2	29.6	19.8	42.5
1952	12.8	14.7	24.0	42.5	52.5	61.3	65.5	64.4	56.7	46.7	25.7	19.5	-
1953	25.3	22.3	33.9	36.7	46.5	61.0	68.4	64.1	58.0	45.9	35.6	20.5	43.2
1954	25.6	30.5	30.6	45.4	53.7	59.1	69.5	64.4	58.0	46.3	36.3	20.5	45.0
1955	14.6	14.1	24.3	39.1	50.4	57.8	68.1	67.7	58.1	45.9	26.6	25.9	41.1
1956	25.5	12.6	28.4	42.7	53.9	62.8	65.4	62.8	58.0	45.8	28.2	16.8	41.5
1957	13.6	24.2	30.6	41.1	49.2	53.9	65.8	65.8	53.9	46.3	28.2	23.1	41.5
1958	17.7	30.6	31.1	40.1	56.0	61.9	64.4	64.9	55.7	45.0	31.3	20.2	44.2
1959	20.0	25.6	31.2	41.6	51.2	63.3	66.5	64.8	50.0	43.3	26.6	20.3	43.1
1960	19.8	15.9	32.5	44.5	50.8	61.5	68.0	64.7	60.0	46.3	32.6	20.5	43.1
1961	18.8	27.8	33.1	40.9	53.0	63.7	67.8	67.7	50.8	43.8	29.7	17.9	42.9
1962	9.8	25.1	25.2	46.1	52.9	60.7	65.4	63.8	55.4	46.9	37.2	23.8	42.7
1963	12.5	31.9	31.6	41.3	54.9	65.9	69.1	66.1	60.6	50.7	34.6	19.6	44.4
1964	13.4	13.5	21.2	40.8	51.5	58.4	69.3	63.3	55.8	46.6	29.0	19.8	40.2
1965	20.6	18.6	19.9	42.7	49.7	57.8	65.6	63.1	50.0	47.7	37.9	23.6	41.4

STATION HISTORY

The first official weather observations in the area were made at Lay, about 16 miles west of Craig, beginning in 1890 and continuing through 1935. This station was located at the Lay post office, elevation 6172 feet. A. G. Wallihan, observer. Observations were made at Craig for a few months from 1894 to 1913, but no complete years of record are available. Details of locations of the weather stations in Craig for the period summarized in the tables are given at the right. Since February 1937, the Craig station has operated as an airway station, sending reports by teletype to Denver several times each day.

Total Precipitation (Inches)

Year	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Ann'l
1936	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
1937	.57	1.02	1.19	.77	1.07	1.24	2.94	1.00	.97	1.49	1.20	2.05	11.04
1938	.99	1.65	1.80	1.07	2.79	.53	2.94	1.00	.97	1.49	1.20	2.05	11.04
1939	.61	.67	1.80	1.07	2.79	.53	2.94	1.00	.97	1.49	1.20	2.05	11.04
1940	1.44	.89	.83	2.03	.95	.08	.83	.55	2.75	2.09	1.17	.48	14.17
1941	.88	.73	1.34	2.03	1.44	1.11	2.44	1.56	1.33	4.55	.44	.53	18.48
1942	.83	.63	.55	1.38	.67	1.18	1.05	1.29	.77	1.70	.75	.42	9.72
1943	1.12	.61	1.01	.91	1.64	2.11	1.11	1.56	.06	.77	.71	.71	10.55
1944	.95	.82	.84	1.86	3.75	.89	.55	.40	.77	1.17	1.17	.99	13.49
1945	.66	1.95	3.10	1.97	2.16	4.55	1.39	2.46	.37	.47	.90	.85	20.83
1946	.22	.28	.90	2.20	.92	.82	1.03	2.88	.53	2.93	1.39	.81	14.91
1947	.61	1.01	.79	2.03	1.10	3.34	1.67	1.67	1.42	2.02	.86	1.06	17.36
1948	.60	.61	.99	.87	.17	1.20	.66	.78	.91	.80	1.40	2.20	11.39
1949	1.70	.67	1.88	1.13	2.41	2.21	.80	.71	1.32	2.03	.80	1.69	15.55
1950	1.80	.21	.61	1.98	1.43	1.17	.72	.41	1.95	.66	.04	1.35	12.13
1951	1.96	1.12	.36	1.65	2.15	1.09	.87	2.16	.23	2.41	.51	3.89	18.40
1952	1.60	.67	1.70	1.18	2.24	1.58	.67	1.38	.09	.00	.39	.82	12.32
1953	.59	.28	.57	1.88	1.95	.76	1.94	2.85	.09	1.27	1.50	.68	14.36
1954	.80	.28	1.65	.19	1.74	.64	.96	1.97	3.14	1.33	.82	.64	14.16
1955	.93	1.27	.26	.36	1.00	1.16	.59	2.71	1.26	1.17	1.55	1.06	13.32
1956	2.10	1.14	.34	.84	.51	1.10	1.16	.63	.07	.72	.79	1.27	9.67
1957	2.13	.86	1.40	1.50	3.53	3.06	.94	.92	.17	1.97	1.82	.74	18.74
1958	.23	.87	1.29	.60	.87	1.16	.82	.53	.57	1.57	1.32	.63	7.43
1959	.78	.89	.81	1.12	.50	2.05	.82	1.87	2.32	2.13	.54	.45	14.08
1960	.78	1.35	.88	.54	.70	.65	.74	.55	.43	.84	1.31	.41	9.18
1961	1.12	.53	1.18	1.49	2.05	.23	.42	.71	.34	.64	.62	1.01	12.54
1962	1.09	2.02	.21	1.65	.56	.33	.55	.36	.81	.71	.69	.37	8.91
1963	.31	.42	1.06	2.16	.16	1.13	.55	3.09	1.21	.58	.91	.54	12.42
1964	.65	.47	.97	1.94	.86	1.99	.43	2.69	1.88	.40	1.36	2.39	15.03
1965	1.30	.72	.71	1.55	1.61	.87	1.35	2.00	2.48	1.82	1.75	1.75	16.31

Dates

Distance and Direction from Post Office

Elevation (feet)

Observer

1. May 1936 - January 1937	6 blocks NW	6193	L. S. McCandless
2. February 1937 - July 1944	5-1/2 blocks NW	6186	Mr. & Mrs. C. A. Stoddard
3. July 1944 - June 1945	4 mi. N	6193	Mr. & Mrs. S. D. Stanfill and Mrs. Laura B. Finley
4. June 1945 - July 1948	1/2 mi. ENE	6188	Mrs. Viola Rudd and Miss Jewell H. Rudd
5. July 1948 - April 1949	6 blocks NW	6231	Mr. & Mrs. L. G. Stuckey
6. May 1949 - May 1952	3/4 mi. NW	6231	E. I. Mealen
7. May 1952 - August 1962	1 mi. NW	6247	Mr. & Mrs. G. F. Jordan
8. September 1962 - Present	1 mi. NW	6280	Mrs. Olive Jean Smith