

Atlas of Canada 6th Edition  
 (archival version)

Average Maximum Snow Depth

This map shows the average maximum snow depth in centimetres computed over 18 winter seasons (1979 to 1997). Over southern Canada this usually occurs in January or February, while the time of maximum accumulation occurs much later in mountain areas and in the Arctic. The main features of the map are the pronounced maximum in snow accumulation over the western Cordillera, where snow depths can exceed several metres, with a secondary maximum over Quebec and Labrador. These maxima are related to their proximity to oceans, which act as sources of moisture and winter storms, and to the orographic effect of the mountains in the case of western Canada. The two maxima are linked by a band of higher snow accumulation that follows the boreal forest zone; this is a preferred track for winter storms. To the north of this zone is the relatively shallow snow cover of the Arctic (low snowfall with extensive wind packing). To the south, the depth of snow is limited by the shorter accumulation season and the substantial sublimation of snow over the Canadian Prairies.

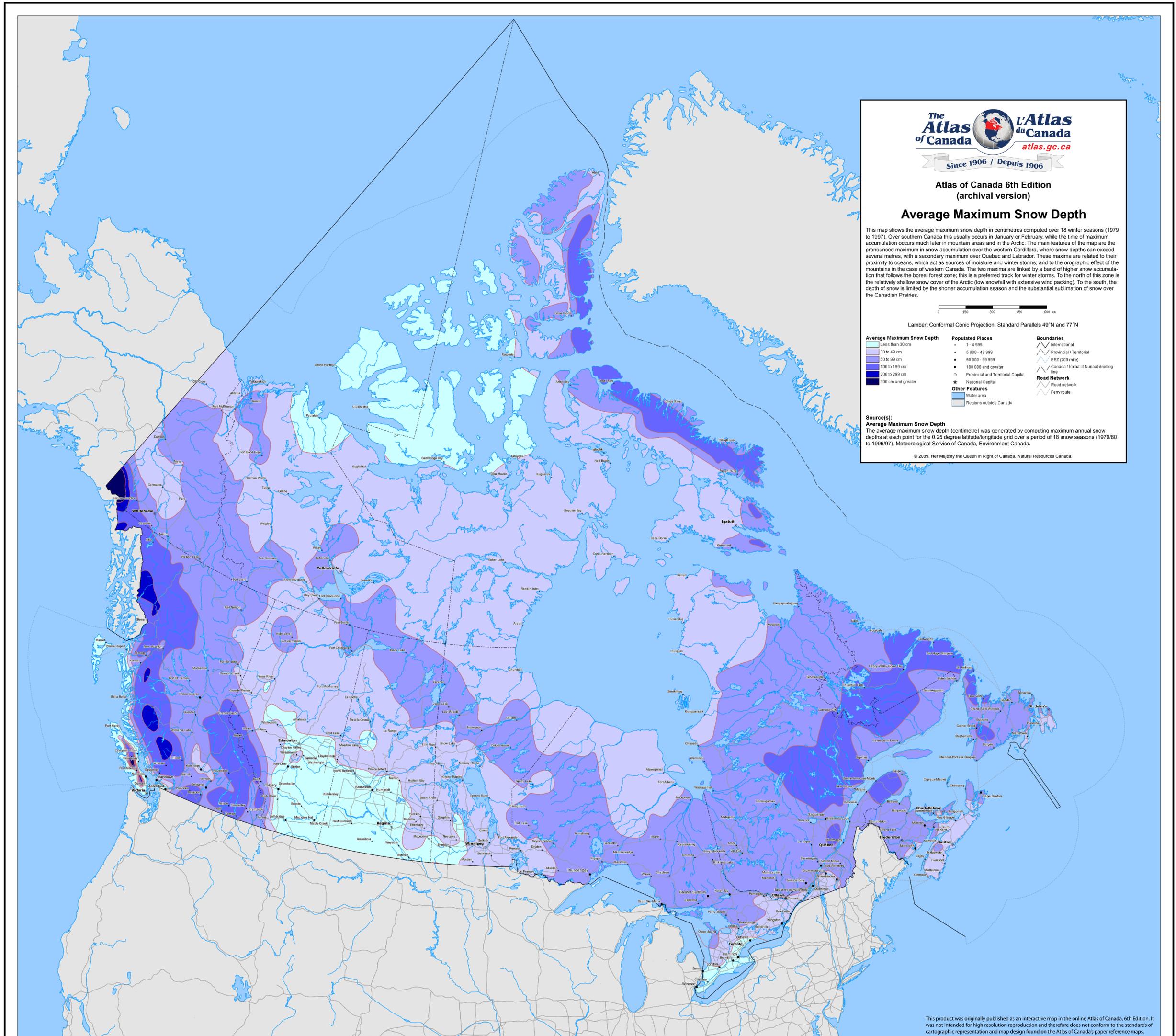


Lambert Conformal Conic Projection. Standard Parallels 49°N and 77°N

Average Maximum Snow Depth	Populated Places	Boundaries
Less than 30 cm	1 - 4 999	International
30 to 49 cm	5 000 - 49 999	Provincial / Territorial
50 to 99 cm	50 000 - 99 999	EEZ (200 mile)
100 to 199 cm	100 000 and greater	Canada / Kalaallit Nunaat dividing line
200 to 299 cm	Provincial and Territorial Capital	Road Network
300 cm and greater	National Capital	Road network
	Other Features	Ferry route
	Water areas	
	Regions outside Canada	

Source(s):  
 Average Maximum Snow Depth  
 The average maximum snow depth (centimetre) was generated by computing maximum annual snow depths at each point for the 0.25 degree latitude/longitude grid over a period of 18 snow seasons (1979/80 to 1996/97). Meteorological Service of Canada, Environment Canada.

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