

SUNSHINE GUIDE TO LAKE SAKAKAWEA, NORTH DAKOTA

LOCATION: Lake Sakakawea is located on the Missouri River in west-central North Dakota. The lake is a reservoir, and backs up from Garrison Dam, northwest of Bismarck. The lake was named in honor of the Shoshone woman who served as guide and interpreter on the Lewis and Clark expedition. The lake is some 178 miles long. The plains landscape is some 1,800 feet above sea level.

	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
HOURS OF DAYLIGHT	8:53	10:13	11:52	13:37	15:08	15:57	15:37	14:18	12:38	10:55	9:21	8:30
HOURS OF SUNSHINE	4:32	5:51	7:00	8:03	9:13	10:08	11:27	10:13	8:02	6:20	4:14	4:00
AREA OF BLUE SKY	41%	41%	40%	42%	43%	46%	58%	57%	51%	46%	40%	40%
LOW FOR MONTH	-27 °	-21 °	-9 °	14 °	27 °	39 °	45 °	41 °	28 °	16 °	-3 °	-21 °
SUNRISE TEMPERATURE	-2 °	2 °	15 °	31 °	42 °	52 °	57 °	54 °	43 °	32 °	18 °	5 °
AFTERNOON TEMPERATURE	18 °	22 °	35 °	55 °	67 °	75 °	83 °	82 °	70 °	57 °	38 °	25 °
HIGH FOR MONTH	43 °	48 °	62 °	78 °	88 °	93 °	99 °	98 °	92 °	81 °	61 °	48 °
FROSTY MORNINGS	100%	100%	93%	56%	13%	0%	0%	0%	9%	48%	93%	100%
AFTERNOONS OVER 90 °	0%	0%	0%	0%	3%	9%	26%	25%	5%	0%	0%	0%
AFTERNOON HUMIDITY	68%	67%	60%	46%	42%	46%	41%	38%	44%	48%	62%	68%
DRY DAYS	75%	77%	76%	75%	69%	62%	71%	74%	77%	83%	79%	76%
REASONABLY DRY DAYS	95%	96%	93%	89%	85%	81%	85%	89%	90%	94%	95%	95%
5-DAY PRECIPITATION	0.08	0.08	0.12	0.21	0.33	0.53	0.33	0.25	0.20	0.14	0.09	0.09
LIKELY SNOWFALL	6.6"	5.3"	7.0"	3.8"	0.8"	0.0"	0.0"	0.0"	0.2"	1.8"	4.7"	6.4"
SNOWY DAYS	25%	23%	20%	10%	1%	0%	0%	0%	1%	4%	18%	24%
THUNDER DAYS	0%	0%	0%	3%	11%	27%	29%	21%	8%	1%	0%	0%
FOGGY DAYS	3%	4%	4%	2%	1%	1%	1%	1%	3%	3%	4%	4%

COMMENTS: The area has a continental four-season year. The sun shines on some 60% of the year's daylight hours, ranging from a low of 45% in November to a high of some 73% in July. The annual range of temperatures is severe. You can expect temperatures of more than thirty degrees below zero on the winter's coldest day and more than a hundred degrees above it on the summer's hottest day. Precipitation is quite light, with almost all of it coming from the May through September thunderstorms. Winter precipitation is almost entirely snow, which the steady winds blow into sheltered areas while the winter sun evaporates what is left. A typical summer afternoon will be long, very sunny, have low humidities, and be hot more often than merely warm. Summer nights are typically cool. A common winter afternoon will be short, sunny more often than cloudy, humid, and very cold. Most winter days remain below freezing all day--often well below. Winter nights are bitterly cold, with half or more dropping below zero. Blizzards are a common winter feature.