



Only the southern part of the Mackenzie District lies outside the permafrost area and in this region the summers have about three months with temperatures over 50°F.; throughout the Mackenzie basin the frost-free period varies from 50 to 100 days. Soil and climatic conditions in some areas are suitable to agricultural pursuits but very light precipitation places a check on such operations. Recently, a Federal Government soil survey being conducted to establish the agricultural possibilities of the northern areas has located a large amount of arable land along a 200-mile stretch of the Liard River which has added almost a million acres to the total arable land of Canada. This land is best suited for livestock farming with some feed production, although garden crops may also be grown.

On the mainland north of the treeline, freezing temperatures may occur during any month of the year and the winters are long and bitterly cold. On the other hand, the climates of the Archipelago are moderated by the sea so that the extremes are not as severe as they would be in a continental area of the same latitude. Temperatures are generally below zero for six months or more but occasional mild periods occur during the winter, particularly in the western Arctic. Summers are short and cool throughout. The Arctic Archipelago is one of the driest regions in the world and snowfall is light. Much of the ground is swept bare all winter but deep drifts are formed in ravines and in the lee of obstacles.

Although this large area is considered to have great mineral potential, the only production at present includes uranium, radium and gold from the east coast of Great Bear Lake, gold from the Yellowknife area north of Great Slave Lake and a small amount of