March-May 2026 Northern Michigan Search Interest Forecast

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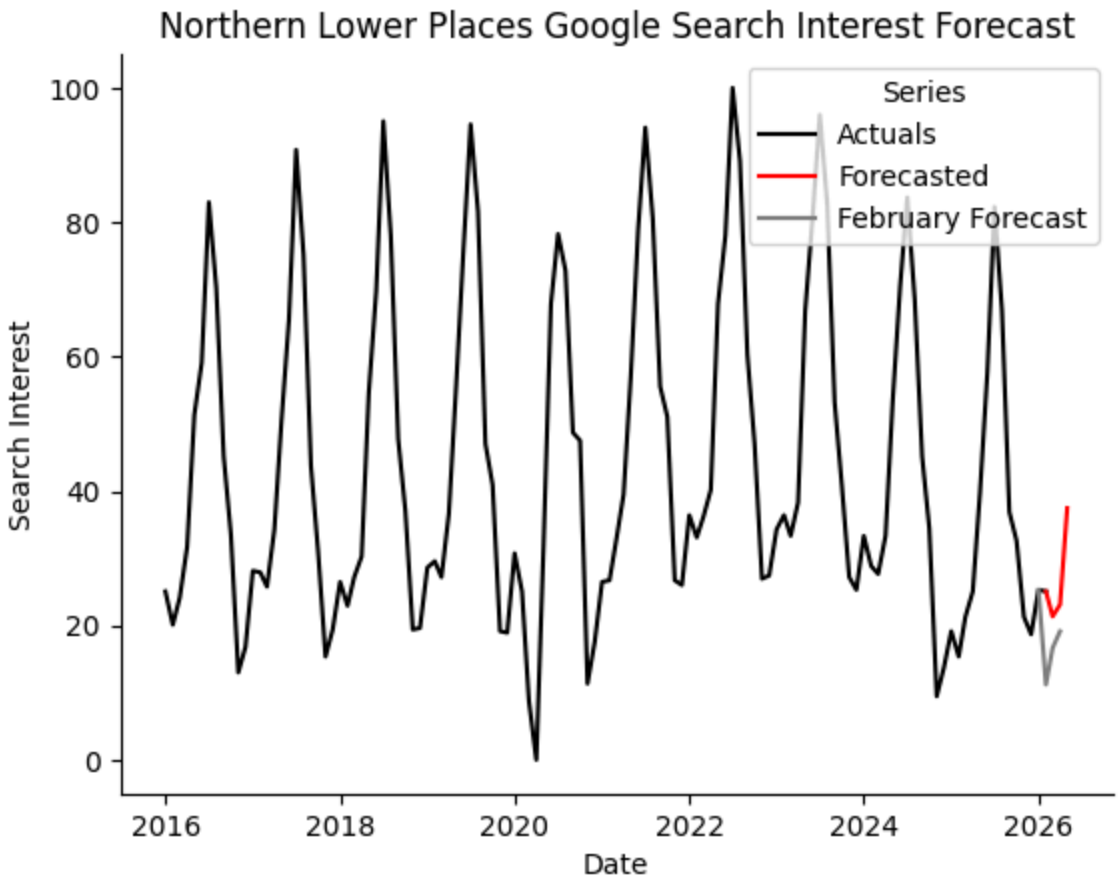
Below are my search interest forecasts for the combined Northern Lower and combined Upper Pensinsula places for March, April, and May 2026. Note that the possible range for historical search interest is normalized to a maximum of 100 and a minimum of 0, but forecasts outside this range are permissible as these values are forecasted to be outside the historical range.

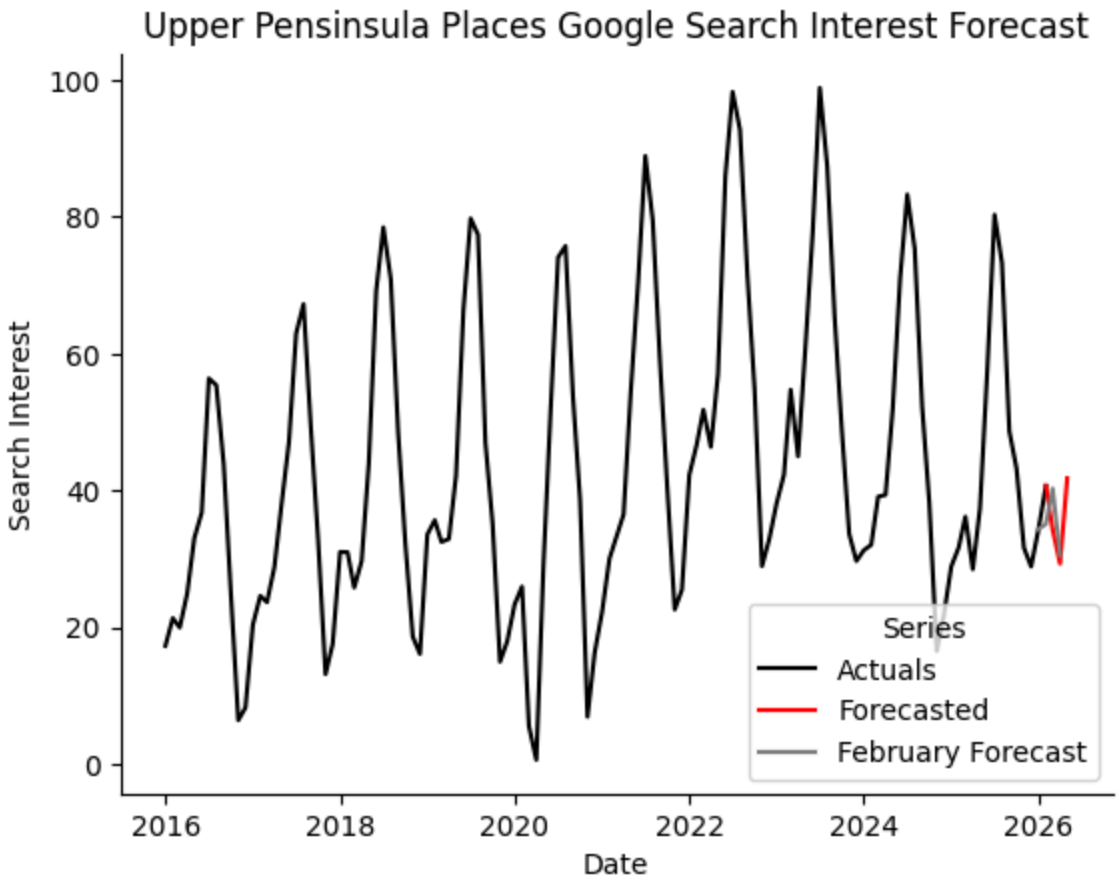
The winter low search interest was higher than forecasted for both peninsulas. For the Upper Peninsula, search interest was significantly higher than last winter and similar to the 2023-2024 winter. For the Lower Peninsula, search interest was also higher than last year but lower than the year before. Starting last summer, the downward trend in search interest started to stabilize and reverse itself. The current forecast methodology incorporates the average YoY trend from each of the last twelve months. Therefore, the forecasts are starting to even out much more than before to incorporate the most recent year's trends. I will retain this methodology.

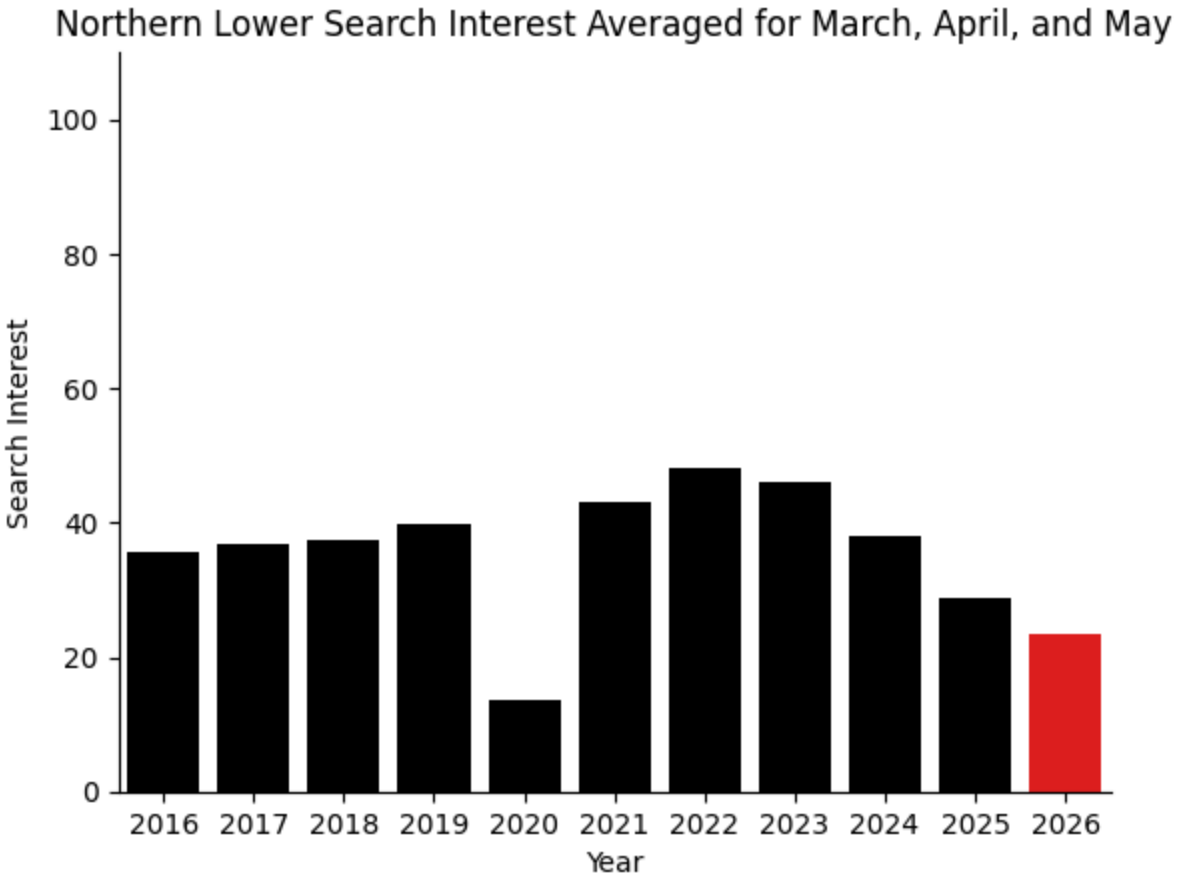
The forecasts also consider weather. Colder, snowier winters are associated with more search interest for the Upper Peninsula. As of this month, I will no longer use average daily temperature in the models, due to weather.gov no longer providing this data field for Houghton Lake or Sault Ste Marie. However, minimum and maximum daily temperature are still considered.

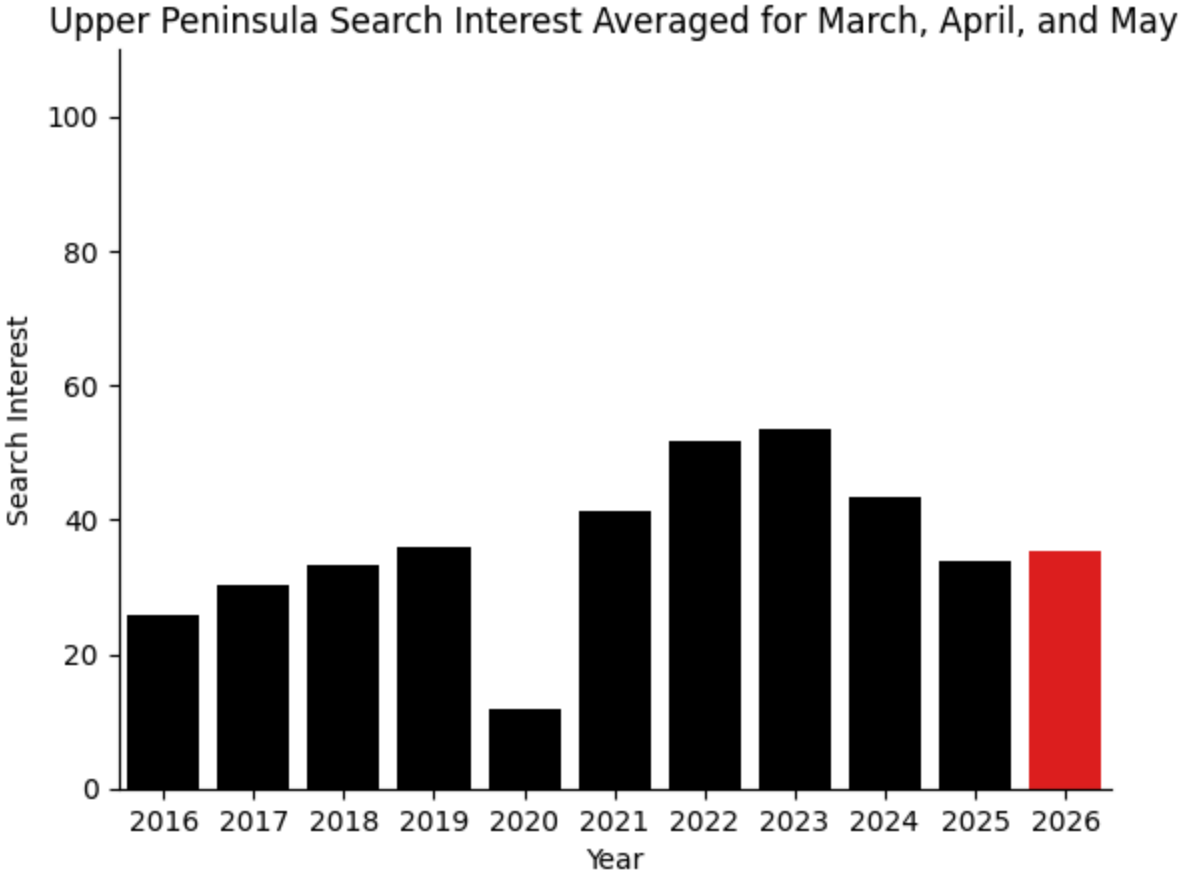
My other change for this year is to exclude the places of Greenland, Wolverine, and Free Soil from my list of places. It's highly unlikely that search interest for these terms is related to the places in Michigan. For instance, due to popular interest in 'Greenland' the search interest for the entire Upper Peninsula in February originally increase by about 20 points.

I also provide barcharts comparing the average search interest for the forecast months to the same months in previous years. Fpr the Upper Peninsula the forecast is higher and for the Lower Peninsula the forecast is lower than last year.


Northern Lower Places Google Search Interest Forecast
Search Interest
Date
Series
Actuals
Forecasted
February Forecast
0
20
40
60
80
100
2016
2018
2020
2022
2024
2026


Upper Pensinsula Places Google Search Interest Forecast
Search Interest
Date
Series
Actuals
Forecasted
February Forecast
0
20
40
60
80
100
2016
2018
2020
2022
2024
2026


Northern Lower Search Interest Averaged for March, April, and May
Search Interest
0
20
40
60
80
100
2016
2017
2018
2019
2020
2021
2022
2023
2024
2025
2026
Year


Upper Peninsula Search Interest Averaged for March, April, and May
Search Interest
0
20
40
60
80
100
2016
2017
2018
2019
2020
2021
2022
2023
2024
2025
2026
Year

The following table shows the top five places that are forecasted to have the highest search interest compared to the same time period in 2025.

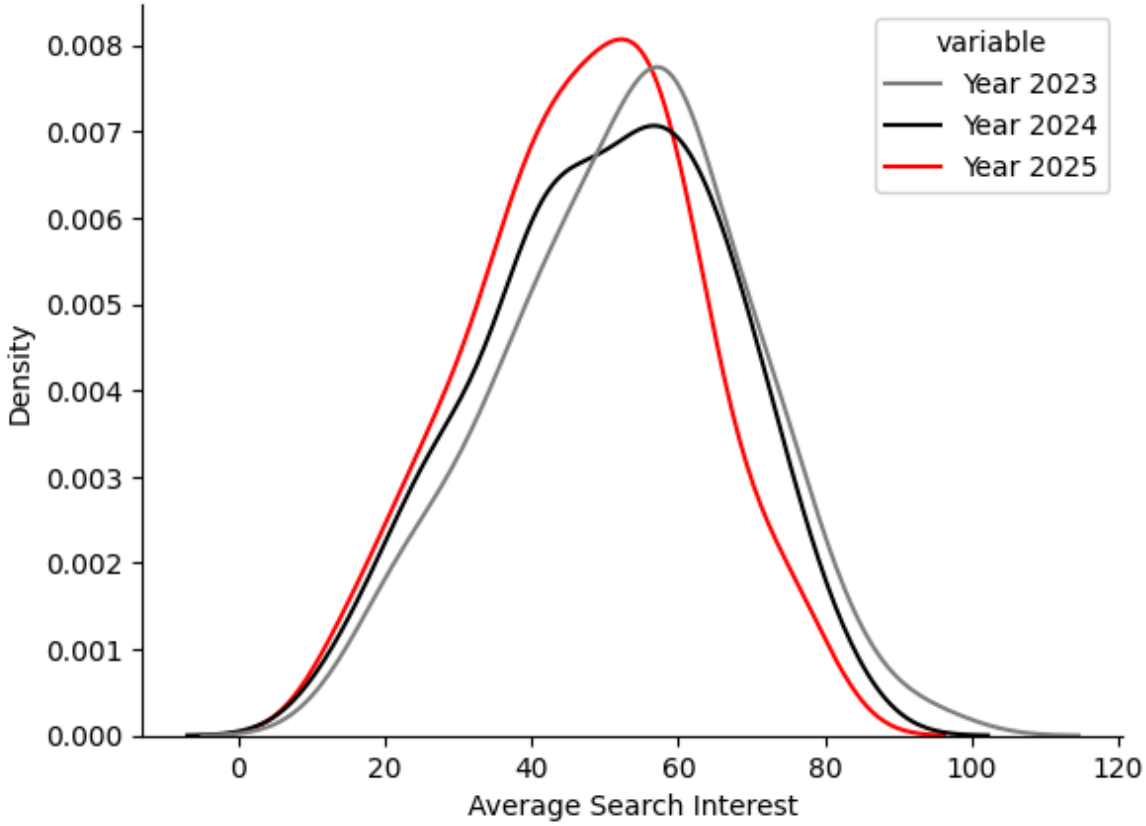
	Place	Peninsula	Difference
0	South Range	Upper	15.9
1	Haring	Lower	15.2
2	Lakes Of The North	Lower	15.1
3	Copper City	Upper	14.8
4	Elberta	Lower	13.6

Three things impact the value of the search interest forecasts for each place.

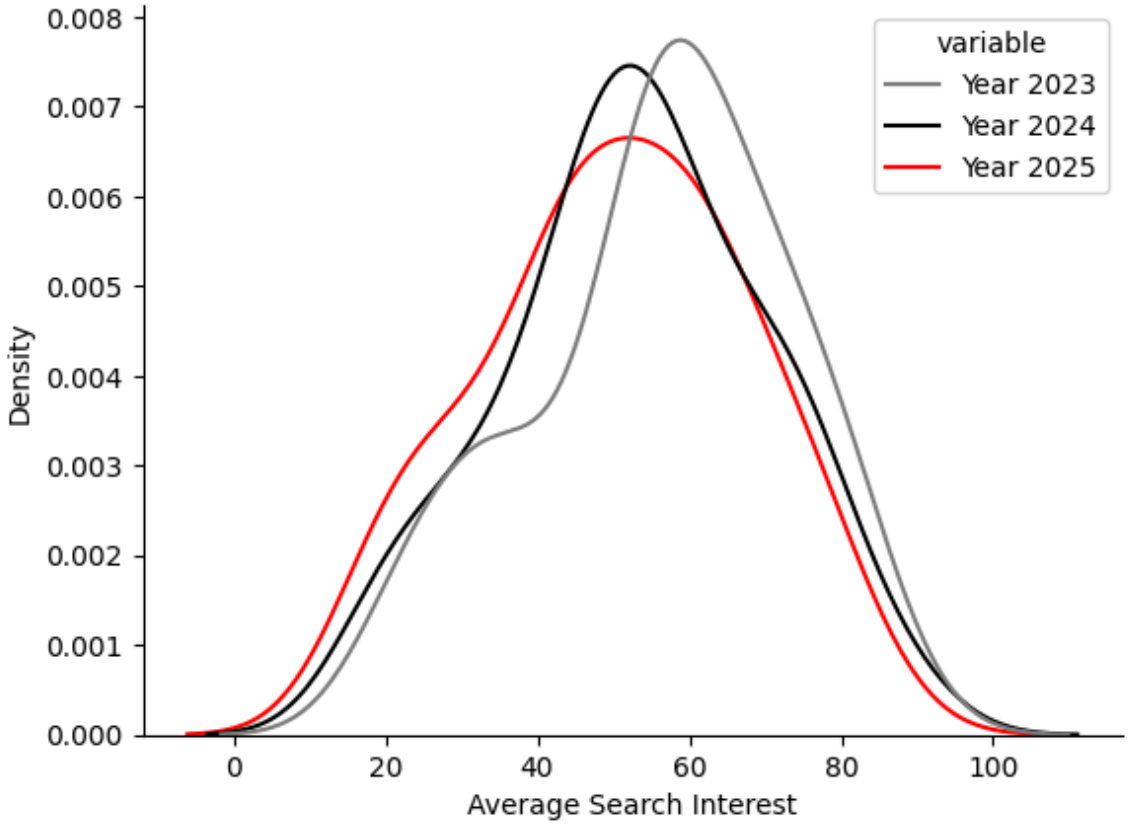
1. The previous year's monthly value for each individual place.
2. While not directly impacting the model forecast, seasonal (12 mo) differencing accounts for the fact that search interest is higher in some portions of the year than others (so previous year actual is impacted).
3. Model difference: based on forecasted weather and gas price changes, the model will predict 12 mo changes from the previous year for each individual place. These levels are adjusted for the previous 12 month trend. Then these new levels are aggregated via regression to the peninsula level series.

The two KDE plots below plot the distributions of the individual place actual values for the months of January, February, and March for the previous three years. Note that the values for 2025 serve as the last actual values for 2026. For both peninsulas, the values for 2025 are lower than 2023 and 2024. I believe this shows the impact the downward trend in search interest since 2023/2024.

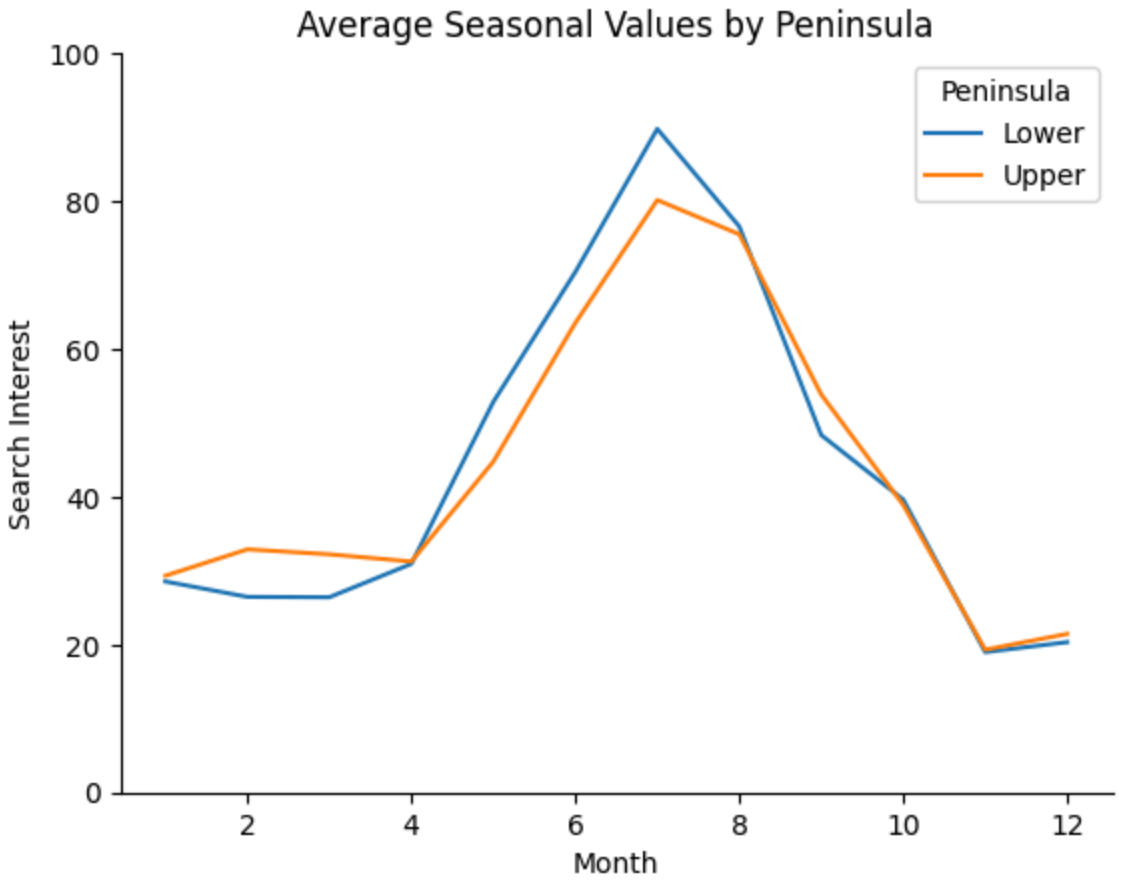
Lower Peninsula Place Level Search Interest Averaged for March, April, and May



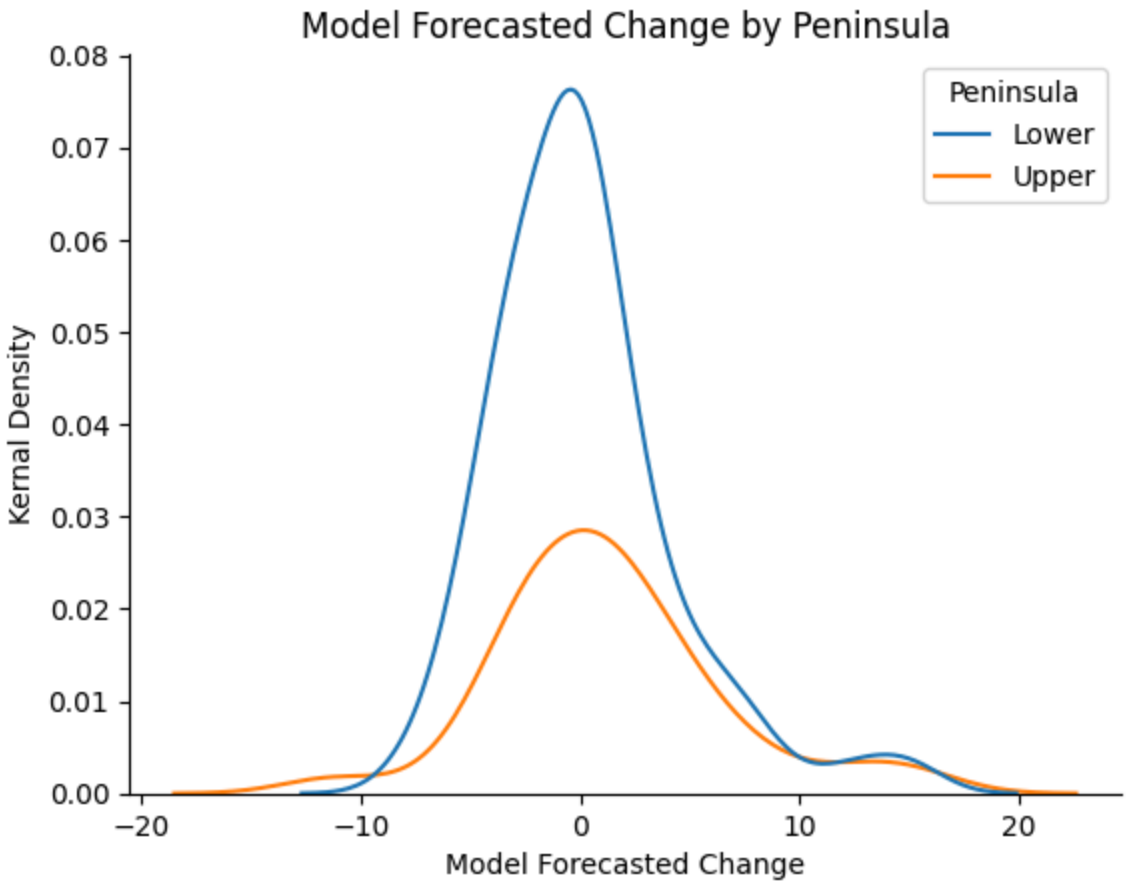
Upper Peninsula Place Level Search Interest Averaged for March, April, and May



The following figure shows the aggregate average search interest for each calendar month. Both the Upper and Lower Pensinsulas have a seasonal peak in July/August with the Lower Peninsula peak solidly in July. The Upper Peninsula has higher values for January-March likely due to winter snow sports like snowmobiling. For the March-May period, we generally see fluctuation in search interest at lower levels.



Finally, forecasts are determined by the forecasted place level change from the previous year based on weather and gasoline prices and are adjusted based on the last 12 months of trends for each individual place. For both peninsulas, the most likely forecasted change from the previous year is near zero. (Note, however, that the final forecast numbers by peninsula are weighted by the size of the contribution of the place to total search interest.)



Places Impacted by Weather and Gas Prices

In addition to the above more aggregated analysis, I will now look at places that are impacted by weather and gasoline prices. (Many places are not impacted by these factors in the model and instead have an average increase or decrease year over year.) After identifying the places impacted by weather or gas prices, I then divide these places projected to have higher or lower search interest (on average) during the forecast months from the previous year. This is due to both the impact of weather and gasoline prices and the average trend year over year.

For the Northern Lower Peninsula, 60 of 142 places are impacted by weather or gasoline prices in the model. Of these, 27 are forecasted to have higher search interest during these three months than last year. The remaining are forecasted to have lower search interest than last year. These places are listed and the chart shows their yearly average search interest values for the three forecast months. Here, the verticle line signifies the start of the forecast period.

Northern Lower Places with Weather Impact Higher Interest than Last Year

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['crystal mountain', 'luther', 'northport', 'suttons bay', 'au sable', 'onekama', 'ta
was city', 'bay view', 'custer', 'boyne city', 'carp lake', 'mio', 'eastport', 'elber
ta', 'rapid city', 'prudenville', 'lakes of the north', 'tustin', 'maple grove', 'her
sey', 'jennings', 'sterling', 'norwood', 'vanderbilt', 'alba', 'boon', 'twining']

Northern Lower Places with Weather Impact Lower Interest than Last Year

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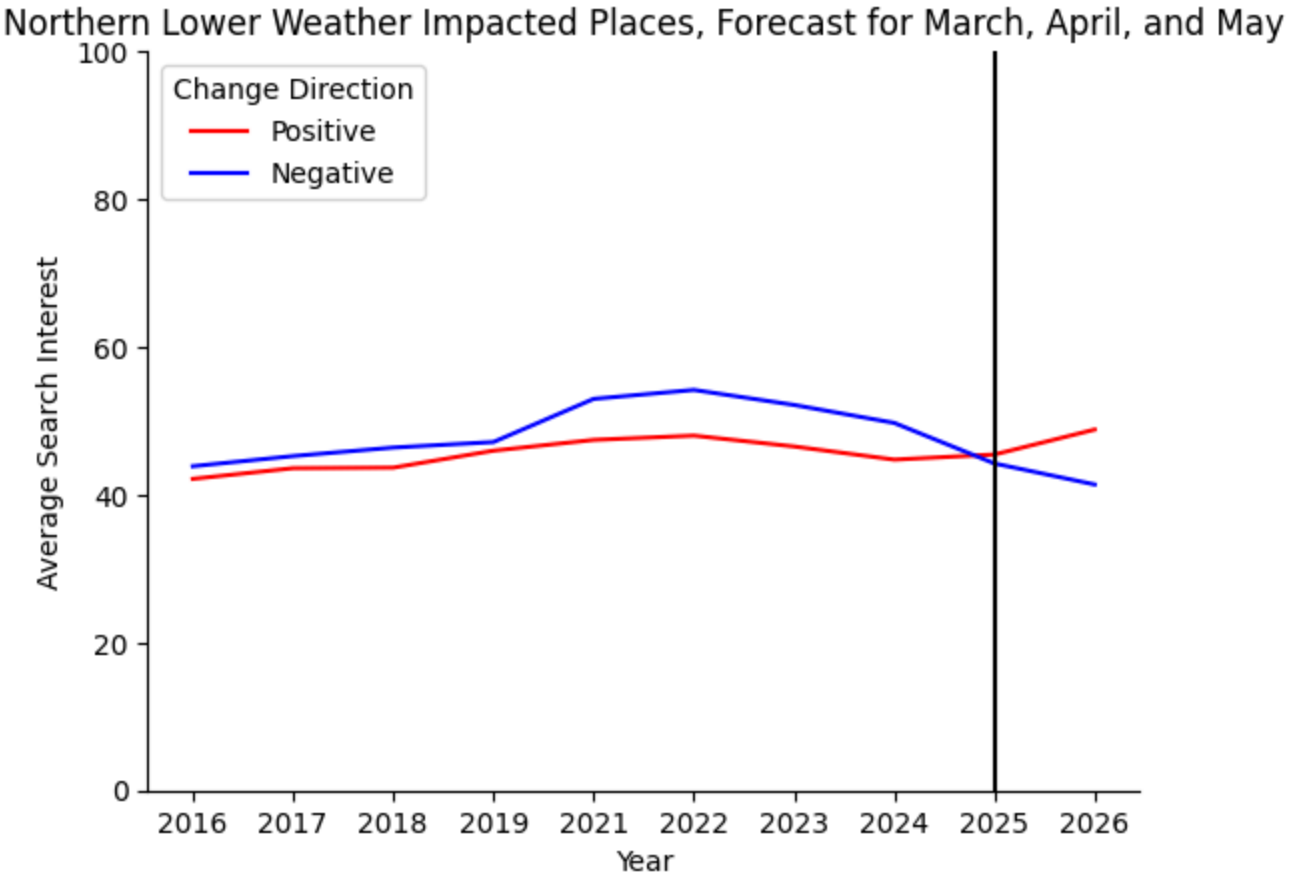
['caberfae', 'sand lake', 'ludington', 'glen arbor', 'lake ann', 'walloon lake', 'man
istee', 'hubbard lake', 'harrisville', 'onaway', 'cedar', 'omena', 'benzonia', 'cross
village', 'rogers city', 'wellston', 'roscommon', 'cheboygan', 'omer', 'west branch',
'harrison', 'maple city', 'ossineke', 'alpena', 'thompsonville', 'gladwin', 'hillma
n', 'boyne falls', 'ironton', 'mcbain', 'reed city', 'oden', 'baldwin']



For the Upper Peninsula, 35 of 72 places are impacted by weather or gasoline prices in the model. Of these, 24 are forecasted to have higher search interest during these three months than last year. The remaining are forecasted to have lower search interest than last year. These places are listed and the chart shows their yearly average search interest values for the three forecast months. Here, the verticle line signifies the start of the forecast period.

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Upper Peninsula Places with Weather Impact Higher Interest than Last Year
_____________________________________
['copper harbor', 'newberry', 'gladstone', 'ontonagon', 'eagle harbor', 'big bay', 'w
hite pine', 'ishpeming', 'watersmeet', 'rapid river', 'menominee', 'iron river', 'nor
way', 'bessemer', 'calumet', 'copper city', 'dollar bay', 'atlantic mine', 'laurium',
'republic', 'three lakes', 'kincheloe', 'south range', 'carney']

_____________________________________
Upper Peninsula Places with Weather Impact Lower Interest than Last Year
_____________________________________
['munising', 'grand marais', 'sault', 'manistique', 'baraga', 'ironwood', 'gwinn', 'p
almer', 'negaunee', 'quinnesec', 'mass city']
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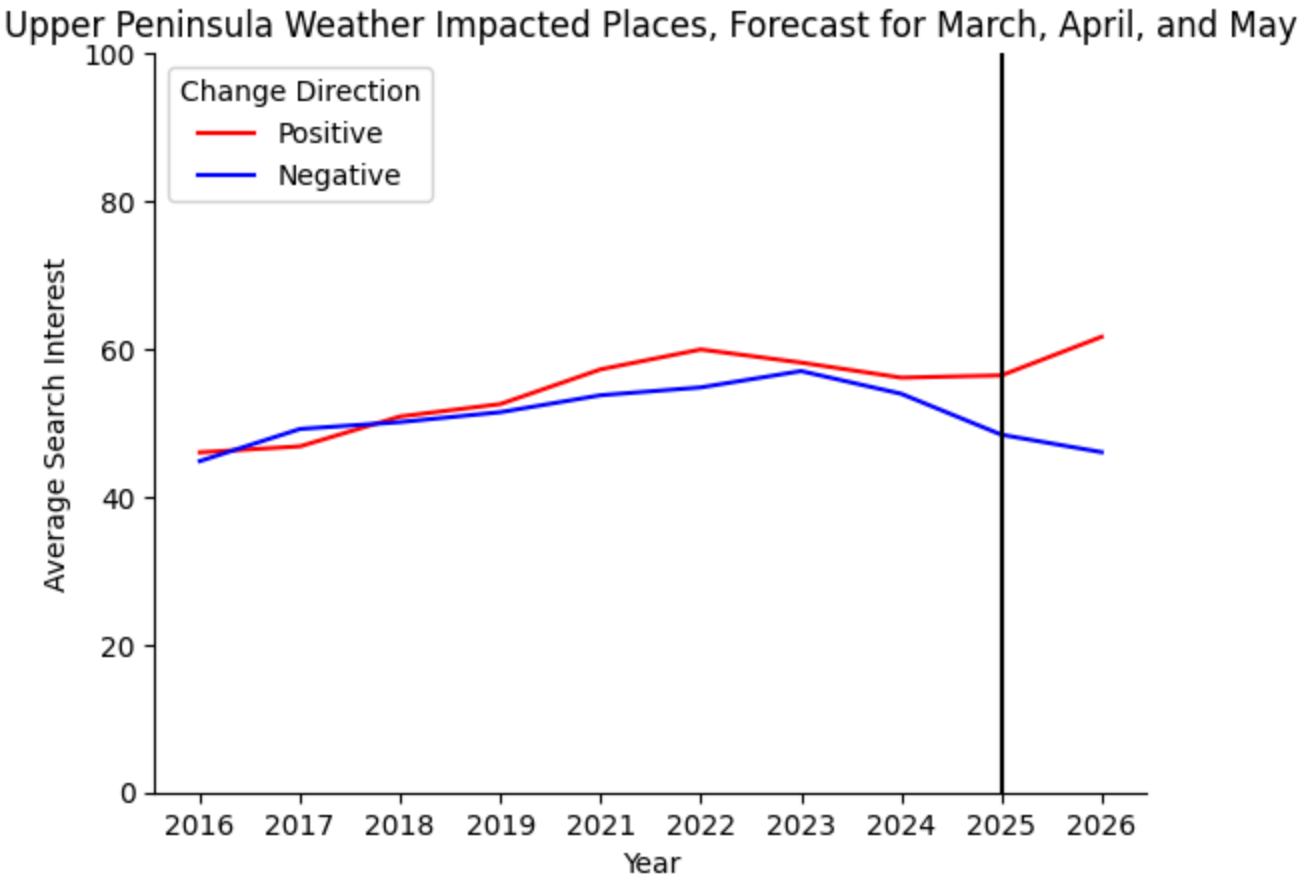
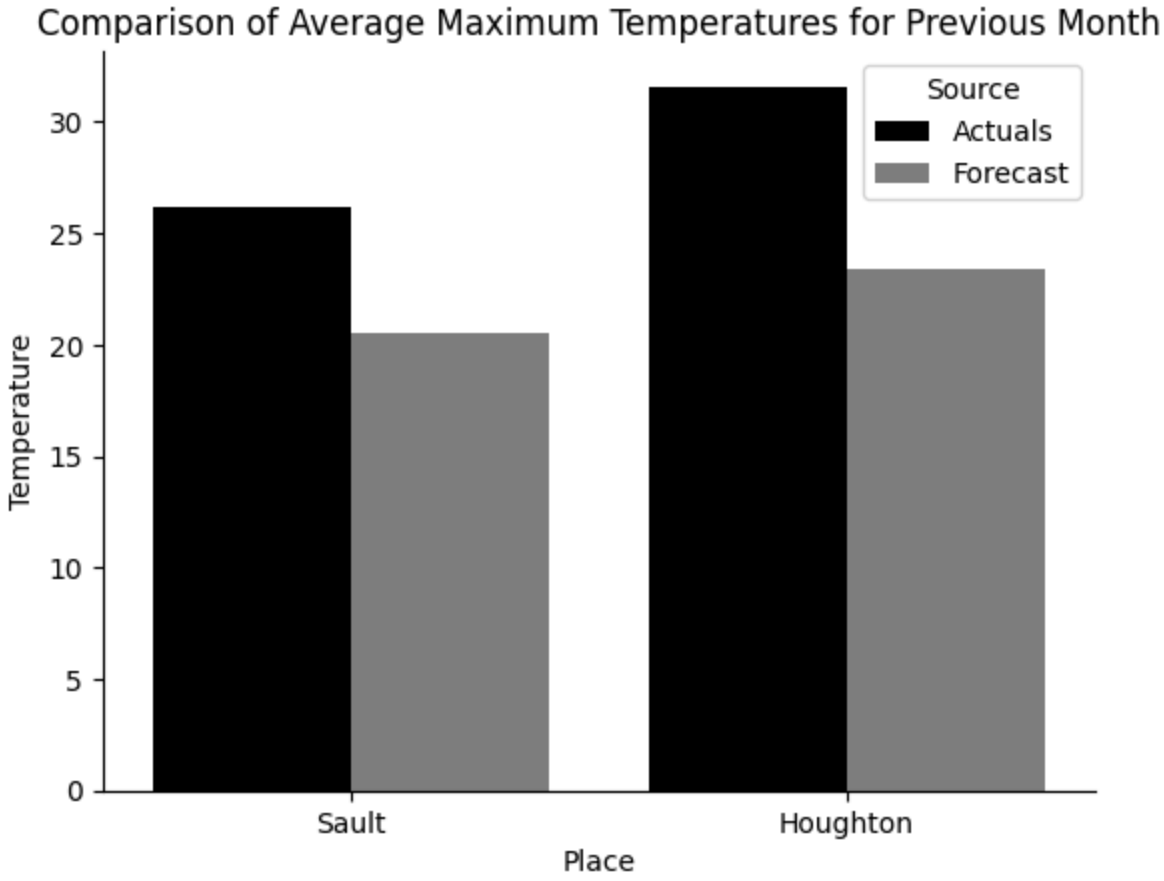
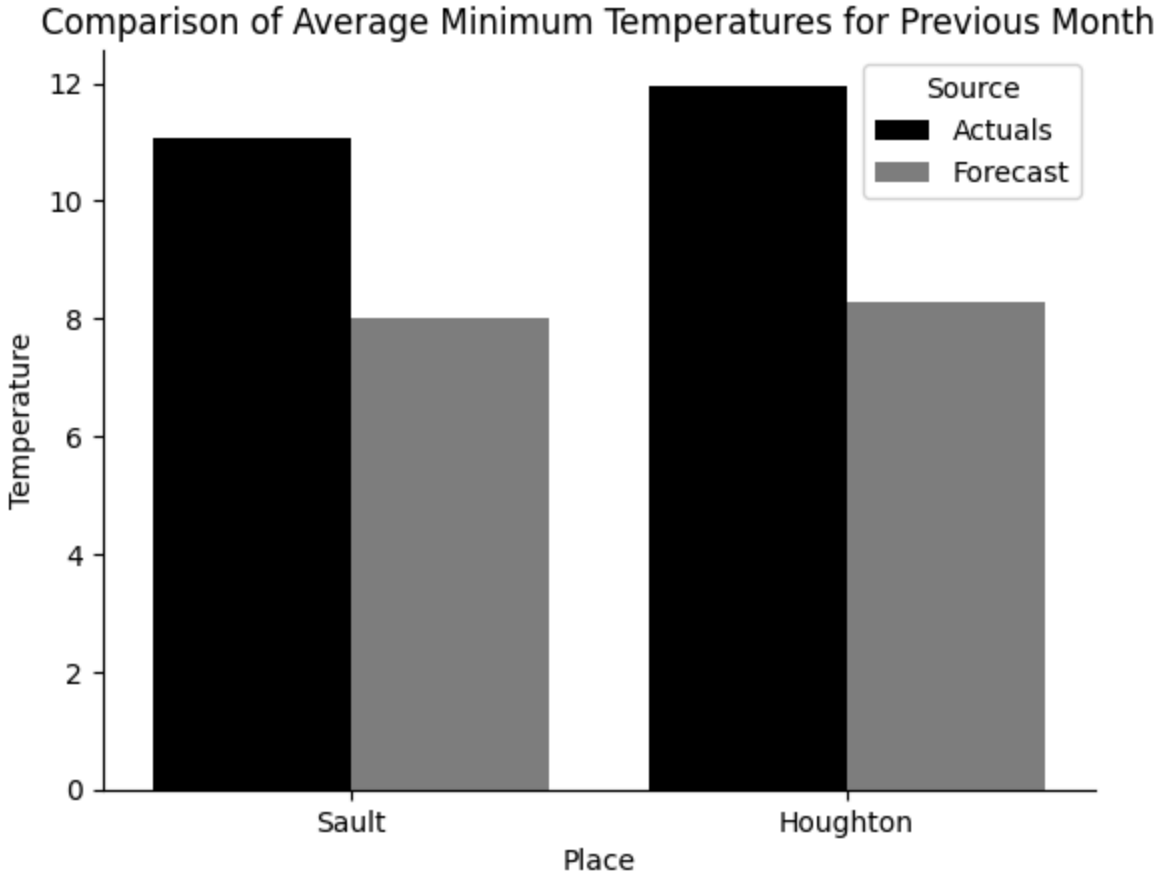


Finally, I'm going to compare the accuweather min and max temperature forecasts to actuals.

Based on the accuweather forecasts, both maximums and minimum temperatures were significantly higher than forecasted. We had quite a warm up mid-February.




Comparison of Average Minimum Temperatures for Previous Month
Source
Actuals
Forecast
Temperature
0
2
4
6
8
10
12
Sault
Houghton
Place