

## Lake — Nanwaq

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### NANWAQ CIKUMAUQ. – THE LAKE IS ICED UP.

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Photo: Early morning at Olga Lake, 2005.

Although no place in the Kodiak Archipelago is more than eighteen miles from the ocean, lakes and rivers are important topographic features for both people and animals. In addition to drinking water, fresh watercourses provide access to char, trout, salmon, and waterfowl and an avenue into the interior.

Although ponds are common, there are few lakes in the archipelago and most are fairly small. Karluk Lake, the largest, covers only 14.7 square miles. These topographic characteristics reflect Kodiak's glacial history. Most streams descend directly out of steep, glacially carved mountains into adjacent bays. Lakes and larger streams tend to occur in a few valleys not completely covered in ice during the last glacial epoch.

Elder Larry Matfay remembered ice fishing for steelhead on a frozen lake. Covered with a blanket, he would watch for fish through a small hole in the ice. The blanket blocked the sunlight, allowed him to see the fish, and kept the fish from spooking. As the fish began to swim by, he would use a leister—a multipronged spear—to capture it. Small fish lures carved from ivory and found in archaeological sites suggest that this practice may be quite ancient, perhaps more than two thousand years old.