

Trout — Anciq

ANCINEK PISURTAARTUKUK. – WE TWO ALWAYS FISH FOR TROUT.



Photo: Trout caught in the Karluk River. Photo by Mark Rusk, Alutiiq Museum collections.

Kodiak streams support two races of trout (*Onchorhynchus mykiss*), resident rainbows and anadromous steelhead. Rainbow trout live in freshwater throughout the year. In contrast, steelhead trout spend a large portion of their lives in marine waters. They enter local rivers between August and January, with peak runs in October. Fish overwinter in deep river holes or lake waters and spawn in late April and May. Adults then return to saltwater. Both races of trout are found predominantly on Afognak Island and southwestern Kodiak Island, in lake-headed rivers that also support red salmon.

Although the trout population is quite small, steelhead can reach 20 pounds and are a tasty source of food. Historic sources indicate that Karluk residents occasionally caught and dried trout, but their contribution to the diet was minor in comparison with other fish, particularly salmon. In classical Alutiiq cuisine, trout were predominantly a winter food, as they represented a source of fresh meat at a time when bad weather often limited access to other subsistence resources. Alutiiq Elders fondly remember fishing for steelhead through the ice. Today, sport fishermen seek

steelhead from the Karluk River.