

## Frazer Lake — Unugtuaraa

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**PISURYARTAALLRIIT UNUGTUARAAMEN. – THEY USED TO GO FRAZER LAKE TO HUNT.**

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Photo: Bears fishing in the Dog Salmon River below Frazer Lake.

Frazer Lake is a long, narrow body of water surrounded by the steep mountains of south-central Kodiak Island. It lies between Karluk Lake and Red Lake and drains south into Olga Bay through Dog Salmon Creek. Although home to Dolly Varden char and rainbow trout, salmon are not native to the lake. For most of Kodiak's history, a thirty-foot waterfall in upper Dog Salmon Creek kept fish from reaching Frazer Lake. Between 1951 and 1971, sockeye eggs, fry, and adult fish were introduced to the lake, brought from neighboring lakes and one on the Alaska Peninsula. In 1962, a fish ladder was constructed to assist spawners over the falls. These efforts helped to establish one of the largest sockeye runs in the archipelago.

Alutiiq Elders report hunting bears around Frazer Lake. People traveled from Karluk village in springtime to harvest bears for gut to make waterproof clothing. In spring, bear gut is strong and not riddled with tiny holes from a diet filled with fish bones. To reach Frazer Lake, hunters journeyed up the Karluk River and then across the low valley that leads to the head of the lake.

People also accessed the Frazer by traveling down Karluk and O'Malley lakes and through a valley that led west to upper Dog Salmon Creek.

The routes to Frazer Lake were relatively easy, but the trip had a reputation for danger. *Unugtuaraa*, the Alutiiq name for Frazer Lake, means "night again". It refers to missing hunters. Night after night people who traveled to Frazer Lake failed to return home. People who made the trip sometimes disappeared. As Elder Larry Matfay explained, "Another night they didn't show up."