

Calm (for weather to be) — Pinarlluni

Pinarskan, saqul'aanek nutegyarciqut.—When the weather is nice, we will go shoot ducks.



Photo: Calm waters inside the Port Lions breakwater,
Kizhuyak Bay, AM905

Pinarlluni is an Alutiiq verb that means the weather is calm. It comes from the root word *pinarte-* which can also be used to describe calm seas, good weather for working outside or traveling, or weather conditions that are improving. Add the post base *-ri* and it means the weather is becoming calm.

Calm weather is not the norm on Kodiak. Meteorologists estimate that the weather is truly calm just eight percent of the time, a lower rate than in neighboring coastal areas. Relatively speaking, Kodiak's calmest time of year is between late April and mid-September, with the best conditions in July. Although windy weather can occur at any time, the windiest month is typically December.

Importantly, Kodiak's calmest weather coincides with extended daylight. At the height of summer, there are eighteen hours of daylight on the island. Although clouds and fog are often present, long days allow for long periods of activity. This has important implications. It is imperative to harvest food and materials during the summer months when sea mammals, fish, and birds are both more abundant and more easily accessed due to calmer, lighter conditions. This makes summer a very busy time in Alutiiq communities. At other times of the year, harvesting can be more difficult even when resources are available.