



CUSTOMARY AND TRADITIONAL USE WORKSHEET, PTARMIGAN, UNITS 9, 10, 17

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Alaska Department
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Prepared for:
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Proposal 134

- **5 AAC 99.025 (a)(12) Customary and traditional uses of game populations. Small game.**
- Shorten the season and reduce the bag limit for ptarmigan in Unit 9
- Submitted by Lake Iliamna AC
- Regulation Unit 9: residents and nonresidents, August 10-April 30, bag limit of 20, 40 in possession
- AS 16.05.258 requires a C&T finding
- The board has not addressed customary and traditional uses of ptarmigan in Unit 9, or in the other units in this meeting's call where they range: Units 10 and 17.
- Two species of ptarmigan in 9, 10 and 17: Rock and Willow
- Full written worksheet provided in RC 4 – Tab 6.4



Criterion 1: Length and consistency of use

- Documented historical and current uses of ptarmigan for food
- Commonly harvested subsistence resource in all Bristol Bay/Alaska Peninsula communities (Table 1)
 - Not uncommon for 30% to 60% of households to be involved in the harvesting of ptarmigan
 - Egegik: In 1984/1985, ptarmigan were used by 72% of households, more than any other wildlife species
 - Port Alsworth: In 2004, ptarmigan were the most-harvested bird species
- Important alternate source of meat when large land mammal populations are low



Criterion 2: Seasonality

- Available year-round.
- Generally hunted from late fall to early spring.
 - Less commonly harvested in summer
 - Occasional hunting can occur as early as late August
- Fall hunting season often corresponds with large game hunting trips



Criterion 3: Efficient Means and Methods of Harvest and Economy of Cost

- Primarily taken with shotguns and .22 caliber rifles
- Some individuals still use snares and nets
- Historical use of salmon netting “fence”
 - Reported in Ekwok and Koliganek
 - Another technique was to “build a fence of willow sticks with snares placed along openings”
- Travel methods to hunt ptarmigan have included automobile, snowmachine, skiff, 3-wheeler/ATV, airplane, and by foot



Criterion 4: Geographic Areas

- Areas closest to communities are most heavily used for hunting ptarmigan.
 - Opportunistic harvests more far-ranging
- Found throughout the region.
 - Willow ptarmigan: sparsely timbered or treeless areas, willow-lined waterways in subalpine areas.
 - Rock ptarmigan: slopes and high valleys with shin-high shrubs, low herbs and grasses.
 - Summer range of rock ptarmigan generally at a higher altitude, often abutting willow ptarmigan range.
- Found mainly on the ground:
 - usually in willow patches, except during nesting season, when they spread out over the tundra.



Criterion 5: Means of Handling, Preparing, Preserving and Storing

- Ptarmigan (& sometimes eggs) are primarily used as food for human consumption.
 - Mostly eaten fresh or frozen.
- Akutan: documented processing by skinning rather than plucking.
- Likely similar processing methods as other regions of the state such as:
 - Dried whole.
 - Boiled or roasted without being eviscerated.
 - In more northern areas, are sometimes stored in storm sheds for a few days or weeks



Criterion 6: Intergenerational Transmission of Knowledge, Skills, Values and Lore

- Little data exist concerning GMUs 9, 10 and 17.
- Likely similar to other communities, although individual techniques and methods may vary.
 - Hunting knowledge typically taught parent to child.
 - Learning occurs experientially
 - Knowledge passed from generation to generation through stories
 - Children learn first hunting skills on small game such as ptarmigan.



Criterion 7: Distribution and Exchange

- Nearly every surveyed community that reported harvesting ptarmigan also reported sharing this resource.
- Table 1 (RC 4 – Tab 6.3) provides detailed information about using, harvesting, giving, and receiving ptarmigan in communities of GMUs 9,10, and 17.



Criterion 8: Diversity of Resources in Area; Economic, Cultural, Social and Nutritional Elements

- Alaska ptarmigan contribute to a diverse, substantial subsistence harvest of resources in all GMUs where they occur
- Important component during lean winter months when other resources are scarce
- Introduce young people to hunting practice and contributing to local subsistence economy



CONCLUSION

- Ptarmigan have a long history of use in Units 9, 10, 11, 13, 16B and 17
- Harvest data is variable and data collection infrequent
- Recommend against making an Amount Necessary for Subsistence determination at this time
- Questions?

