

PROPOSAL 53 – 5 AAC 99.025(a)(12). Customary and traditional uses of game populations. Reevaluate the customary and traditional use finding for migratory game birds statewide as follows:

The proposal requests that the Board of Game (board) review the information provided in the customary and traditional use worksheet provided by ADF&G as well as other available information, including information from the public, to determine if populations of migratory game birds (ducks, geese, swans, snipe, and cranes) statewide support customary and traditional subsistence uses. If a positive determination is made, the regulation would read as follows:

5 AAC 99.025. Customary and traditional uses of game populations (a)

SPECIES & UNIT	FINDING	AMOUNT REASONABLY NECESSARY FOR SUBSISTENCE USES
(12) Small Game		
<u>(X) Migratory game birds</u>	<u>positive</u>	

All units with a harvestable portion except within the nonsubsistence areas as defined in 5 AAC 99.015.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? AS 16.05.258 requires the board to identify game populations or portions of populations that support customary and traditional subsistence uses (a “C&T finding) and to adopt regulations that provide reasonable opportunities for Alaska residents to participate in these subsistence uses. 5 AAC 85.065(a)(4) provides hunting opportunities for migratory game birds, including ducks, sea ducks, geese, tundra swans, sandhill cranes, and common snipe. However, until January 2017 the board had only made a positive C&T finding for Canada geese in Unit 6. In January 2017, the board made a positive customary and traditional use determination for emperor geese throughout their Alaska range as well as for all migratory waterfowl (ducks, geese, swans), sandhill cranes, and common snipe in Units 18, 22, 23, and 26A. The finding was based in part on a report prepared by ADF&G titled “Customary and Traditional Use Worksheet: Migratory Game Birds, featuring Emperor Geese” (RC 5, Tab 4 at the January 2017 meeting). The report provided background harvest and use information on uses of migratory game birds in Alaska organized around the eight criteria used by the Board of Game and the Board of Fisheries to identify customary and traditional uses (5 AAC 99.010(b)). Although the board expressed an interest in including all migratory game birds (ducks, geese, swans, snipe, and cranes) throughout their ranges in Alaska (excluding nonsubsistence areas) in their positive finding, the legal notice for the meeting limited action to emperor geese throughout their Alaska range and other migratory game birds only in Units 18, 22, 23, and 26A. After adopting the C&T finding, the board requested that ADF&G prepare a proposal to address a C&T finding for migratory game birds statewide to be considered at the statewide regulatory meeting in November 2017.

Making a C&T finding would not result in any changes to seasons, bag limits, or other state regulations governing the taking of migratory game birds.

Because of the broad scale of the proposed C&T finding, it is not recommended that the board establish an amount reasonably necessary for subsistence (an “ANS finding”) for migratory game birds at this time.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game (HQ-F17-006)
