

## Customary and traditional use worksheet, Snowshoe and Alaska Hares GMUs 18, 22, 23, and 26A



Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Subsistence  
Presentation to the Board of Game  
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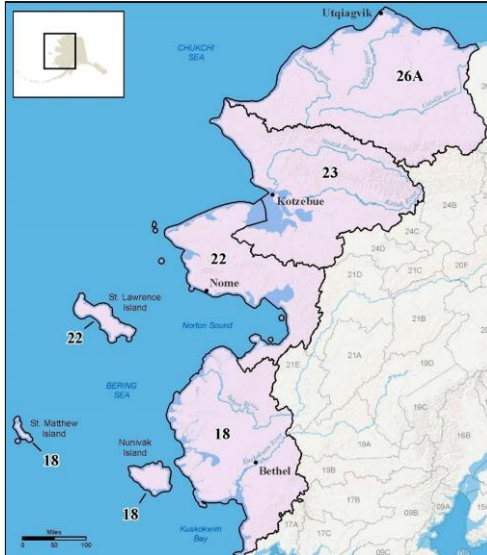
## Customary and Traditional Use Determinations

- Under the Alaska subsistence law (AS 16.05.258(a)), the Alaska Board of Game (Board) is required to identify the game populations or portions of populations that are customarily and traditionally taken or used for subsistence (“C&T finding”).
- The Board has not made a determination as to whether there are C&T uses of Snowshoe or Alaska hares in Game Management Units (GMUs) 18, 22, 23 and 26A
- Full written worksheet provided (RC 4 TAB 3.2)

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## Seasons/Bag Limits



### Current regulations:

There is currently no closed season, no harvest limit, and no salvage requirement for Alaska or snowshoe hares in GMUs 18, 22, 23, and 26A

### Proposed changes:

**Proposal 15:** Address C&T uses of Alaska hare in Unit 18. Set a bag limit of 2 Alaska hares per day, 6 in possession with a season August 1-May 31

**Proposal 43:** Address C&T uses of Alaska hare in Unit 22. Set a bag limit of 2 Alaska hares per day (no season limit), establish salvage requirements, and create a season September 1- April 15

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## Criterion 1: Length and consistency of use

- Hares have been harvested for food and fur in Western and Arctic Alaska since before historic contact
- Department research shows subsistence use of hares is highly variable between communities and over time
- Harvests often occur in conjunction with other resource pursuits, especially caribou and moose
- Both kinds of hares are targeted and taken opportunistically for food or fur, or both.

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## Criterion 2: Seasonality

- Within their overlapping ranges, hare species may be harvested in any month of the year
- Hares are generally harvested from early winter to early spring, when hare fur is of highest quality and other sources of meat are scarce
- The harvest of hares during winter and spring is aided by tracks that hares leave in snow, the tendency for hares to aggregate in winter, and their vulnerability to snowblindness in spring

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## Criterion 3: Efficient means and methods of harvest and economy of cost

- Traditionally and historically caught in snares and nets and shot with bow and arrow;
- Use of firearms often occurs in conjunction with other resource pursuits, especially land mammal hunting;
- Snares are also used contemporarily, especially close to communities.

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## Criterion 4: Geographic areas

- Snowshoe hare is widely distributed and available across most of GMUs 18 and 23, the eastern portion of GMU 22, and the southern portion of GMU 26A
- Snowshoe hare is primarily harvested in shrub habitats where they feed and shelter
- Alaska hare is variably distributed across a smaller range that includes western Alaska. They are found throughout GMUs 18 and 22 and southcentral portion GMU 23
- Alaska hare is harvested primarily in open tundra where they feed

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## Criterion 5: Means of handling, preparing, preserving, and storing

- Traditionally, hares provided critical fresh food when other sources were scarce
- Hare is generally consumed fresh or frozen and was traditionally occasionally dried for future consumption
- Snowshoe hare fur is sometimes used to make soft clothing for children, socks, mittens, and blankets
- Alaska hare is used in garments for people of any age due to its insulating quality.
- In the past, sharpened hare teeth were used as chisels and gouges.

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## Criterion 6: Intergenerational transmission of knowledge of skills, values, and lore

- Parents, siblings, aunts, uncles, and grandparents often participate in the subsistence education of children
- Small mammals including hare are among the most common targets for early learning opportunities across Western and Arctic Alaska
- Snowshoe hare hides are sometimes used to instruct novice skin sewers

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## Criterion 7: Distribution and exchange

- Sharing of hare is documented across Western and Arctic Alaska
- Sharing networks occur between communities

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## Criterion 8: Diversity of resources in an area; economic, cultural, social, and nutritional elements

- Households across Western and Arctic Alaska use a wide variety of land and marine mammals as well as fish, birds, and vegetation
- Small land mammals like hares generally provide a small portion of the wild food supply, but are commonly available during the winter and spring months when other wild resources may be limited or unavailable
- Subsistence foods are of vital importance to residents of rural Alaska

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## Conclusion

- Hares have a long history of use in GMUs 18, 22, 23, and 26A
- Harvest is variable and data collection infrequent
- Recommend against making an Amount Necessary for Subsistence determination at this time
- Questions?

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