

Customary and Traditional Use Worksheet, Black Bears, GMU 18



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Subsistence Division
RC 4, Tab 4.3

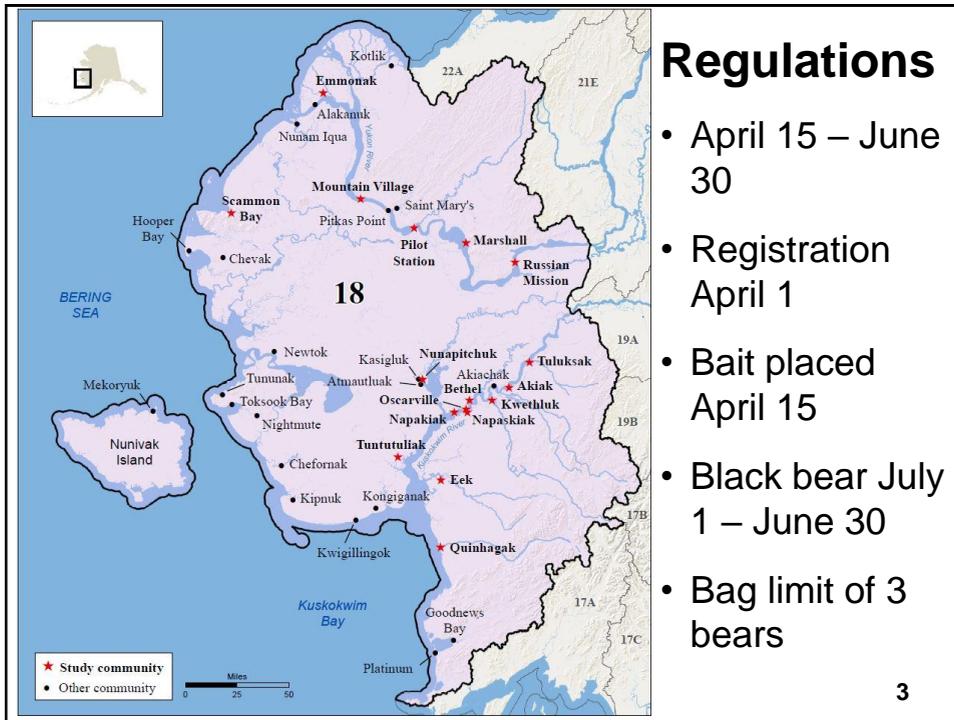
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Proposal 17: Permit for hunting bears with the use of bait or scent lures

- Change the opening date for bear baiting, and the date hunters can register bait stations in Unit 18.
- The Board has not made a determination as to whether there are C&T uses of black bears in Unit 18.
- There is a positive customary and traditional use finding for brown bears in Unit 18 and an amount reasonably necessary for subsistence of 20 – 30 bears.

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Criterion 1: Length and Consistency of Use

- Ethnographic and scholarly sources have documented the harvest and use of black bears in western Alaska
- Since 1980 department harvest surveys in Unit 18 communities document hunting and use of black bears
- Black bears are targeted or taken opportunistically for food, fat, and fur

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Criterion 2: Seasonality

- Hunted in fall, early winter, and early spring
- In fall black bears often harvested during moose hunting trips
- Fall bear hunting documented in surveys conducted in several lower Yukon and Kuskokwim river communities.
- Black bear considered best to eat in fall and early winter
- Also in spring when food stores are diminished
- Historically hunted during spring trips into the mountains

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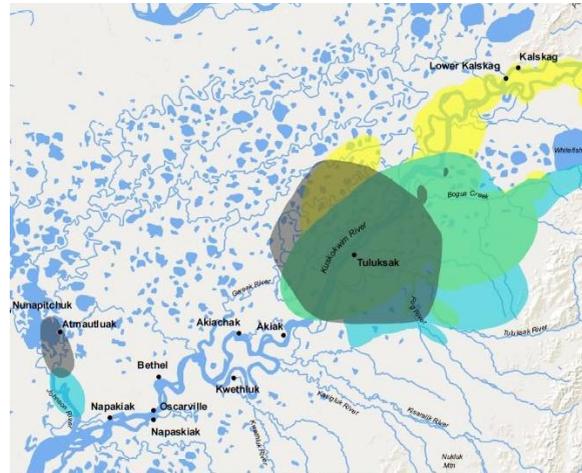
Criterion 3: Means and Methods of Harvest

- Historically killed at close range by spear or bow and arrow
- Ethnographic sources identify detailed methods for safety during bear hunts
- Currently primarily by firearms, snares reported used as recently as the 1980s

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Criterion 4: Geographic areas



- Mostly hunted in wooded lowlands and areas where moose are also found
- Unit 18 hunters active throughout lower Yukon River and most of the Kuskokwim River drainages

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

- Ethnographic sources identify traditional practices related to harvesting black bears
- Hides used for boat construction following spring hunting and gathering trips into the mountains
- Meat dried, frozen, jarred, boiled, baked, or roasted
- Hides used as bedding and for clothing
- Intestines were used for waterproof garments and bags

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

- People are required to treat black bears with great respect due to the power ascribed to them
- Strength of a bear could be imparted to children through certain rituals
- Hunting often in family-based groups to teach hunting and processing skills, and methods of sharing

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Criterion 7: Distribution and Exchange

- Sharing of black bear within and between communities is documented across Unit 18
- Bear meat shared widely, especially when fresh meat is scarce
- Desirable parts given to elders or saved for community feasts
- Customary practices regarding division of the animal among hunters

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

- Unit 18 residents harvest a variety of wild food resources and in great quantities
- Black bear meat is generally a small but integral portion of the wild food supply
- Department surveys have documented widespread harvest and use of black bears by area residents
- Wild food harvests, including black bear, foster health and wellbeing, help maintain cultural heritage, and provide critical economic support

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Conclusion

- No current recommendation on amount reasonably necessary for subsistence due to lack of harvest data
- Questions

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