



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service



Kobuk Valley National Park, Western Arctic Parklands,

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Dear Chair and members of the Northwest Arctic Regional Advisory Council,

The Kobuk Valley Subsistence Resource Commission (KOVA SRC) would like to provide the Northwest Arctic Regional Advisory council with an update from their February 26, 2025 meeting.

This commission was established in accordance with the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act, Title VIII (16 U.S.C. §§ 3111-3126). The Commission is regulated by the Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. Ch. 10). 3. Objectives and Scope of Activities. As mandated by § 808 of Title VIII, the Commission will, on an annual basis, make recommendations to the Secretary of the Interior (Secretary) and the Governor of Alaska (Governor) on any changes in the subsistence hunting program or its implementation that the Commission deems necessary after consultation with appropriate local committees and regional advisory councils and after considering all relevant data and holding one or more additional hearings in the vicinity of the National Park.

The Kobuk Valley SRC met on February 26, 2025. There were five members present and with seven seats filled, there was a quorum. Members shared their observations from fall and winter in Noorvik, Kiana, Ambler, Shungnak, and Deering. Members discussed concerns about beavers and wolves. Members also shared that caribou have arrived in most Kobuk River communities and are around Deering. Members have concerns on how to balance communities need for healthy food with conservation. Members shared concern about cow harvest but asked what else they could do when shelves at the village stores remain empty and prices high.

The SRC also reviewed a draft proposal written by the Cape Krusenstern SRC chair. While CAKR was unable to vote due to lack of quorum, the KOVA SRC voted to submit a wildlife proposal to the Federal Subsistence Board with the same text as the draft from CAKR SRC. This proposal would align the *season* dates of ptarmigan on federal lands to the state lands in Unit 23. This change will make it simpler for folks hunting ptarmigan, especially during spring travel and allow them to harvest food without worrying about which land managing agency they are currently operating under. The SRC asks for RAC support. See the attached proposal.

Also attached is the roster. There are 2 current vacancies. I am excited to share I have had three letters of interest and so far, two people have gotten their applications in. We hope to maintain a full commission and encourage more applicants.

Thank you,

*Emily Creek, Subsistence Coordinator for the Kobuk Valley Subsistence Resource Commission*

**1 July 2026 - 30 June 2028**  
**Federal Subsistence Wildlife Proposal**  
Kobuk Valley Subsistence Resource Commission

This proposal suggests a change to: Harvest season

1. **What regulation do you wish to change?** PTARMIGAN • Residents of Units 11, 13, 15, 16, 20D, 22, 23, and Chickaloon - 20 ptarmigan per day, 40 in possession -Aug. 10 - Apr. 30
2. **How should the new regulation read?** PTARMIGAN • Residents of Units 23 - 20 ptarmigan per day, 40 in possession - **Aug. 10 – June 15**
3. **Why should this regulation change be made?** Many people travel from May into June hunting and/or camping and resupplying their campsites before breakup is final. Ptarmigan are a potential food source during these activities. This change in regulation would also align the Federal ptarmigan season regulation with the State of Alaska ptarmigan season regulation which is currently Aug 10 – June 15. Since State managed lands and Federal managed lands border each other in Unit 23, this would provide congruity for ptarmigan harvest no matter which lands people happen to be hunting on. Ptarmigan harvest is generally at a very low level away from the villages, which the vast majority of federal lands in Unit 23 are.
4. **What impact will this change have on wildlife populations?** Negligible. The amount of increased take is expected to be very low, as the majority of hunting activity is directed on the returning waterfowl at this time of year (May 1 – June 15), although ptarmigan can provide a useful food source for those camping to pursue waterfowl or traveling in the backcountry, or to their campsites/camping. The population levels of ptarmigan in Unit 23 have been controlled by biological/environmental factors and not by hunting pressure - which is why the State hunting season ending June 15 has not been subject to revision over the years.
5. **How will this change affect subsistence use?** It will provide an additional food source for people during the extended hunting season.
6. **How will this change affect other uses?** It will not.
7. **Which communities have used this resource?** All communities in Unit 23.
8. **Where has this resource been harvested?** In all areas of Unit 23.
9. **In what months has this resource been harvested?** August through June

### Kobuk Valley SRC Roster February 2025

<b>Name</b>	<b>Community</b>	<b>Appointing Source</b>	<b>Expires*</b>
Merle Custer	Shungnak	NWA RAC	3/5/2027
Tristen Pattee	Ambler	NWA RAC	3/08/2026
Rosa Horner	Kobuk	NWA RAC	11/4/2023
Vacant	-	Governor of Alaska	-
Vacant	-	Governor of Alaska	-
Benny Westlake	Kiana	Governor of Alaska	12/1/2024*
Nellie Griest	Shungnak	Secretary of the Interior	11/4/2027
Gordon Newlin	Noorvik	Secretary of the Interior	11/4/2027
Kevin Moto	Deering	Secretary of the Interior	11/4/2027