

Trapping Meeting Notes from Lander in-person meeting (9/10/2020)

Topic 1: Education and Awareness

Discussion Questions:

1. **Trapper Education - Should the Game and Fish require mandatory trapper education?**
 - a. **Recommend use of the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies approved North American Trapper Education online course.**
 - b. **Update/redesign the trapping brochure to provide more information (species ID, education opportunities, messages, etc.)**
2. **Public Education - Should the Game and Fish develop consistent trapping education topics/themes relevant to those using public lands (hiking, walking dogs, bird watching, riding bikes, trail running, etc.)?**
 - a. **Should we use this information for messaging on a dedicated page on the Game and Fish webpage and signs on Commission-owned lands, trailheads and recreation areas as well as working with other agencies to promote similar signage/education.**
 - b. **Should the Game and Fish continue to promote how to release your pet workshops and other non-trapper based trapping education and training around the state?**
 - c. **Should the Game and Fish work with partners and stakeholder groups to provide hand tools at major trailheads or parking areas that can be used to remove a pet from a trap or snare? Sell tools through the Game and Fish Website and Regional Offices?**
3. **Conservation Stamp- Should the Game and Fish require Conservation Stamps for trappers and anyone using Commission owned or administered properties (antler hunters, dog walkers, bird watchers, other recreators, etc.)?**

Discussion:

Group 1A- 11 people

1. **Trapper Education - 46**
 - Yes- option for offline? Access for all
 - No- Does not need to be led by WGFD because there are already other groups that provide this
- b. **Trapping brochure update- clearer seasons to read.**
 - Also no- what needs updating?
 - Updated with constitution- does that change someone's ethics?

- Update with educational links
- Brochure should be for trappers, focus on regulations

2. Public Education - 42

- Link specific to trapping on WGFD website
- Public unlikely to use website for info about trapping in an area
- Better signage at the rec locations
- Trailheads- signs “Trapping could be used here”
- Include/collaborate with other agencies USFS
- Why sign trapping if other activities (ie: hunting) are not treated similarly
- High use areas→ conflict where signs may be more important
- Trapping occurs across the state
 - Information on WGFD website so people are aware

b. Other groups facilitate pet trap release workshops

- More neutral person? Pet advocacy groups? Not WGFD
- Include trapping law and regulations in workshops
- Trappers could help train people

c. Pet-release tools: NO. Pet owners responsibility.

- WGFD should not provide tools
- Yes, have tools at trailhead.

3. Conservation Stamp - 26

- Anyone harvesting animal should have one
- Most trappers already have a stamp
- Yes- nonconsumptive and trappers should have a stamp
- No. How do you enforce requiring a stamp for nonconsumptive users?

Group 1B - 10 people

1. Trapper Education - 10

- No- hunter education already has problems
- Yes- but “mandatory is a problem.
 - Young people may be prevented from participating if availability is not ensured
- Considerations:
 - Who will be instructors? How to train them? Availability to all across the state
 - Who participates? Game wardens may need additional education

b- Trapping Brochure

- Good as it is

2. Public Education - 28

a.

- Don't phrase as "warning-traps"
 - Do frame educationally
 - Need to use scientific data
 - Signage could heighten conflict when maybe there isn't (perceived) or hasn't been conflict
- Do need a minimal sign "traps in area" "hunting, fishing, trapping in area"
- Additional signage waste of time

b. Pet Release workshop

- Trappers are experts --> involve them (local)

c. Tools for pet release

- If you provide education, don't need to provide tools
- Liability when providing tools?
- Waste of time
- With education, people would be made aware of tools needed to get themselves

3. Conservation Stamp

- What would the funds be used for? What is the necessity?
- Most people who trap already have a stamp. Very few don't
- Change regulations- trappers should be required to have a stamp
- Spending time on new legislation to enforce trapping stamps is not necessary
- Casual visitors don't need to be required to get a conservation stamp
- Be careful with over-regulation
 - Consider if the stamp money is needed

Group 1C - 8 people

1. Trapper Education - 20

- Don't make it mandatory
- Yes- require trapping education for all users of public land

a.

- Yes- require AFWA course
 - Tweak the course for WY relevance

b.

- Yes update brochure
- Could include release pet education info in brochure (photos)
 - Could also make a separate brochure for non-trappers with educational info about trapping, hunting etc.
- On current brochure, include info about how to report when dogs are caught

2. Public Education - 35

- Yes- all public lands users should be educated

a. Webpage

- Yes- very important to include on WGFD webpage
 - Defer this responsibility to federal agencies
 - Need a generic awareness of trapping sign. Like “be bear aware” sign
- b. Pet release workshops
- Yes- WGFD should continue to promote
 - Assistance from Biologists, trappers, dog trainers
- c. Tools for release
- Concerns about theft
 - Education is needed and tools can be promoted there
 - WGFD could sell tools but with instructions on use
3. Conservation Stamp - 30
- Most trappers already purchase them
 - Should be required
 - Anyone using WGFD lands should purchase one
 - Consideration: enforcement requires more resources
 - If trappers are required to purchase them, everybody using those lands should be required
 - Concerns about out-pricing people out of these activities

Parking Lot Questions

- How many licensed trappers in WY do not purchase a Conservation stamp?
- Have there been conversations with BLM, USFS about requiring conservation stamps on those lands for other users?
- Why was the identification of traps not included in questions?
- Information on where trapping occurs?
- Important to inform public on value of trapping, Game and Fish should educate public
- More education for dog owners
- Terminology foothold vs leghold
- No flesh bait, puts eagles at risk
- Reporting harvests is constitutional, be a good steward of the resource
- Cant have BMPs without data

Topic 2: Trails and Campgrounds

Discussion Questions:

1. **Trapping Setbacks- Should the Game and Fish develop trap setback requirements and definitions for trapping furbearing and predatory animals?**
 - a. **Should public trails have a setback requirement of 30’**
 - b. **Should public campgrounds, trailheads and recreation sites have a recommended setback of 300’?**
 - c. **Some definitions to consider.**
 - i. **Public trails: defined as any trail on public land designated by administrative signs or numbers or as designated on the most current official map of the agency.**
 - ii. **Campground: defined as any campground on public land designated by an administrative agency.**
 - iii. **Trailhead: defined as any trailhead on public land designated by an administrative agency.**
 - iv. **Recreation site: defined as any site with construction improvements made for recreation as designated by an administrative agency including, but not limited to, picnic areas, boat launches, fishing access areas, etc.**

Discussion:

Group 2a

1. Setbacks

- Winter trails/seasonal differences
- Leashes (Feasibility)
- “Control” of dogs
- Differing levels of control of pets/children
- Seasonal trapping
- Traps in area signs
- Set backs seem ridiculous because trappers don't want to trap trails/camp grounds
- Setbacks specific to predatory so does not work for furbearers
- Regulations already in place
- Enforcement

c. i.

- Regulation does not fix this loss of freedom
- Seasonality of trails (popular)
- Way defined all BLM property- campground issue
- More specific established campground
- Government built (dispersed campsites)
- Improved trail- increased specificity

- QUESTION- why against setbacks
- Who has more rights?
- Equitability
- Who has responsibility - polar viewpoints
- Personal responsibility
- TH- signed- support for definition
- TH- Marking increases tampering
- Cant legislate common sense
- Differing levels of “common sense”
 - Responsibility

Group 2B

1. Setbacks

- Yes and No
- No- too vague (specify)
 - Restricting
 - Willing to have setbacks but must be reasonable
- Seasonal
- Yes
- Based on types of traps and/or animal
- Accountability from everyone
- Responsibility
- Setbacks out of respect

c. i.

- Designated
- Education vs regulation
- Seasonality in regards to definitions
- Year round trapping- predator vs furbearer
- Seasons for trapping
- Case by case basis
- Identified areas where appropriate remove vagueness
- Middle ground and compromise
- Support for definitions
- Consistency between agencies
- Trail
- Designated - administrative fee site
- To put into law and regulations need people that understand trapping and how things occur on landscape
- Definitions need to be more clear

- Specificity in regards to TH

Group 2C

1. Setbacks

- Question on predatory and how that would impact?
- Any legislation against trapping is stupid
- Enforcement and communication
- More collaboration between GF & trappers etc
- Consistency as to enforcement
- Issues with definitions
- Differentiating
- CLEAR.CONCISE DEFINITIONS.
- Is this issue of setbacks real or perceived?
- What are the actual numbers?
- Data driven
- Equitability
- Look at data for states that have enacted setbacks- RESULTS
- Seasonality in regards to trails
- Campground makes sense- a form of comprise
- Definition is the root of everything
- What is a “designated campground”
- Consistency among agencies
- Give trappers a factual voice

Topic 3: Regulations & Reporting

Discussion questions:

- 1. Reporting of Non-target Species - Should the Game and Fish develop a database and app to track voluntary reporting of non-target species trapped(including dogs) and work to require reporting in the future?**
- 2. Snare Check Periods - Should the Game and Fish reduce the check period requirement for snares and consider additional trap and snare restrictions (RAM power snare, spring-loaded snares)?**
- 3. Furbearer Working Group - Should the Game and Fish form a Department Furbearer Working Group to keep up to date with furbearer management practices, population trends and evaluate the need for harvest quotas and seasons?**
- 4. Commission Owned Land Closures - Should the Game and Fish consider Commission owned or administered land closures during heavy use periods (pheasant release areas, etc.)?**

Discussion:

Group 3a- 10 people

1. Non target Species
 - Absolutely not, used against trappers
 - Serves no purpose, propaganda against trapping
 - Inefficient use of limited resources (time)
 - “Voluntary” will have no commitment
 - Strong no, all high profile cases already tracked who defines wild dogs/cats vs domesticated dogs/cats
2. Check periods
 - Animals aren't left to rot by trappers it doesn't matter if kill traps are checked
 - Strong no, puts more stress on working class. Eats up valuable time, less coyotes killed more dogs killed
 - Less efficient use of resources
 - Additional snare restrictions?
 - Waste of time and resources, snares are already very effective
 - No, but if it happens, wording must be very specific
3. Furbearer Working Groups
 - Must have good biological data to support quota
 - Not enough harvest data to set quota
 - Why not manage furbearers like big game species?
 - Creating bigger governments unnecessary positions
4. Commission owned lands closures
 - Should not consider
 - Must define “heavy use” could be good idea
 - Responsible trappers can trap safely in “heavy use” areas
 - Seasonal aspect very important, trappers make every effort to avoid conflict

Group 3B- 8 people

1. Reporting non-target species
 - Against, no regulations on unleashed dogs
 - Accidental trapping of dogs very rare, this will be used against trappers
 - Game and Fish doesn't manage predators
 - Irrelevant that they aren't managed, should be mandatory reporting, dogs are family
 - Important to track non-target, will help determine where education is needed
 - T is a tragedy when it occurs, but the number of dogs trapped is insignificant

- Dogs are an investment, cost thousands
 - More and more recreationalists every year with dogs
 - Dog owner is responsible
2. Snare check period
 - Yes, other states have similar restrictions
 - Increased restrictions lowers effectiveness of trappers waste of time/resources
 - Cannot check bobcat traps, will scare off animals
 - Snares should be checked 5-7 days
 - Snare restrictions
 - Already regulated (Breakaways, tags, non-relaxing)
 - Regulations on ram power snare, very short amount of time to release non-target animal
 3. Furbearer Working Group
 - Yes, we must advocate for furbearers and people negatively affected by trapping
 - Absolutely not, not enough data to make informative decisions
 - Biologist should be hired to track furbearer populations, need to know how populations are doing
 - Extra position means more money spent, less resources
 4. Commission Owned land Closures
 - Yes- must define "heavy use"
 - More bird dogs means increased chance for conflict
 - Important to consider all "heavy use" not just pheasant hunting (ie: ice fishing, sled dogs)

Group 3C- 10 people

1. Reporting on Non-target species
 - Yes, responsible for every kill, identify issues report killed and caught
 - No, what benefit is it? Used by anti-trappers
 - Already required to report some non-target species
 - Must define "non-target" species
 - Need data to manage wildlife populations
 - If you have license and in season, should not be required to report
 - Data could be used against trappers
 - Don't need to know everything trappers catch
2. Check period for snares
 - No, once animal is in snare, its dead. No need to check
 - Es check every 24 hours
 - Non-target could be caught and could be released if checked more frequently
 - Track legal vs. non-legal harvests

- Trapper education is key
 - Additional restrictions
 - Ban the power snare
3. Furbearer working group
- Yes, provide leadership
 - Indifferent, if Game and Fish wants to spend hunt and fishing license revenue
 - Yes, to gain more data, add science, more knowledge
4. Commission owned land closures
- No trapping occurs during pheasant hurting at Ocean Lake
 - Trappers fund conservation
 - Real problem vs perceived problems
 - Yes
 - Yes, if problem is identified