

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

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- 6people; 5.3.0.3.3.3

1. Trapper Education
 - Different animals, different traps need to know how to use safely- guide from those who know how
 - Need to know rules- good thing to take, how to- is a lifetime experience
 - Mandatory- to get a license (younger, less experienced)
 - This is an experience that offers a lifetime of opportunities to learn the skills/knowledge
 - Tailor the program to Wyoming

- Training is on the job- the real knowledge is in the trappers- formal training, waste of time
- Kids get discouraged quickly because its hard, expensive
- Some kind of test with rules and regulations period
- Non-consumptive users impact the ability (ie: vedauwoos cats)
- Training to help use of traps/release of traps

1.b

- Paragraph in the brochure about beaver behavior in winter to educate the customer
- Brochure more specific definition
- Clarification on submersed conibear

2. Public Education

2a. 5x6

- NC users fee based (c-stamp, etc)
- How to remove animals from traps
- Messaging on tamper information

2b.

- *NO COMMENTS WRITTEN*

2c.

- Tools/equipment will be stolen

3. Conservation Stamps 5x6

- User groups pitch in

Group 1B

1. Trapper Education- 5.5.0

- Yes and no, education should be mandatory- for new trappers
- Yes on recommendation
- Yes

1a

- No, class targeted for Wyoming
- Taught by experienced trapper

1b

- Trap release in brochure
- Support, (messaging, ID and info on trapping)

2. Public Education -5.5.2

- General no, influences public against trappers

2a

- Support for WGFD owned lands
- No, influences public against trapping

2b

- Info available on website
- Video releasing pets on website, public libraries, QR code on signs

2c

- No, not effective in a field application
- Tools available in brochure
- G&F provide information, not tools
- Sample at the office

4. Conservation Stamps 5x3

- Yes with funds dedicated to trapper education

Group 1C

1. Trapper Education - 4.5.5.5

- Supportive, online and in person

1a

- Supportive with WY specific info
- WY regulations, WY species

1b

- Supportive(include pics and examples)

2. Public Education - Education on how to mitigate conflicts- 5x4

2a

- Yes, hands on traps and how to operate them
- Signs can cause conflicts for trappers; if signs they should be general

2b

- Yes, administered by WGFD and trappers association (no agenda based training)
- Exempt: Alaska G&F website
- Target all age classes
- Online and workshops

2c

- Theft and loss of equipment
- Limited practicality

3. Conservation Stamps -3.3.3.0

- Supportive of user based funding
- Doesn't feel it would work, implementation challenges

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 - 4 participants-11

1. Trapping Setbacks: 0,2,3,1 (6)
 - No setbacks distance
 - If yes-->5 feet up tree=Marten traps exempted from within 30' of roads/trails
 - No change
 - How to accommodate multiple use?
 - Trapping
 - Skiing (other recreation etc)
 - Areas of high use could have special regulations
 - Special segregation in high use areas
 - Tie City etc
 - High use areas may have higher use at different times of year
 - How big of an issue is the distance from roads/trails?
 - Pets injured etc.
 - Training for pet owners on releasing pets from different traps
- 1b. CampGrounds/Trailheads (300')
 - Yes (goodwill gesture) (safety problem)
 - No (eliminates area to trap)(educate)
 - Needs to specify what campgrounds etc
 - Some may not be open

- Different times of year
- Boils down to education
- Definition of “public trails” unnecessarily restricts low-use areas

Group 2B- 6 participants

1. Trapping Setbacks: 5,5,2,1,0,1(14)

- Would that include two tracks?
 - Would eliminate prine coyote/bobcat trapping area (including all FB’s/predators)
- Does that include all traps (ground/raised)
- Need better definition of “public trail”
- Predators/furbearers utilize two tracks/trails
- Winter trapping can be difficult to get off road
- Could 30’ rule be seasonal?
 - High use areas dont vary seasonally

1b. 300’ from CampGround/Trailhead- 6

- Who determines when a “trailhead” area ends?
- Better definition for trailhead, campgrounds
- Setback should be seasonal for camp grounds
- Why 300’? Have been arbitrary numbers to start discussion
- Better definition of “recreation site”
- “Recreation sites” should be safe areas (no traps)
- A little limitation but not banning

Group 2C- 3participants

1. Trapping Setbacks: 5,0,4 (9)

- How often are trail maps updated?
 - Heavy use trails may not be numbered/missing
- No, trails are only used by others at certain times of the year (seasonal use)
- Yes, trails attract children, pets, etc (non-trapping users)
- How close 30’ protect pets and other users
- Other users may not use trails while recreating

1b. CampGrounds/Trailheads

- Good definitions of trailhead, campground, recreation site
- All support 300’ rule
- Density of other users on trail vary seasonally. (ie: winter use is low for non-trappers)

The Parking Lot

- Seasonal uses by trappers and recreational- who is going to give up what?
- If wolves move more into predatory zones, will there be a change to the 12” loop size and break away?

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- 3 people

1. Reporting Nontargets 5,0 - (9)
 - Would a voluntary database be an accurate representation
 - A database would have no biological purpose to WGFD
 - False reporting- if the public has access to a general reporting database
 - Transparency- a database would allow for better accountability
 - The general public should have some way to access a database
2. Snare Check Periods 0,5,2 (7)
 - Checking traps more frequently will reduce your overall odds of success- no change to current regulations
 - Reducing the trap time will potentially allow a dog (pet owner) to find their pet
 - No change- traveling distance makes reducing the current trapping time unreasonable
3. Working Group 0,2,5 (7)
 - No change. The current method WGFD uses to collect data is sufficient
 - Society should always be aware of the harvest data
 - Trapping data should be modeled after other hunted species- transparency

4. Land Closures 5,5,5 (15)

- In favor of it to reduce conflict, but would like to see the term “heavy use” defined
- Heavily used areas should be closed for safety purposes (people, kids, pets)

Group 3B- 4 people

1. Reporting Nontargets 1.0.0.5=6

- There should not be reporting of non-target species (predatory animals)
- Mandatory reporting will create a bad stigma for trappers
- No reporting. Current regulations already require reporting of non-target animals
- A database would document new or endangered species in an area, done anonymously so trappers are not singled out
- No reporting. No need to report animals that trappers are not targeting

2. Snare Check Periods 0.2.0.2=4

- No change. Time and money is wasted checking traps to frequently
- No to additional snare restrictions
- If using a kill snare, no need to change the regulation
- No change to snare restrictions, but additional education on power snare and spring loaded snares
- No change. Negative stigma associated with snare types as is

3. Working Group 4.5.4.5=18

- There should be a working group to better collect data and disseminate data to tie into education opportunities
- Good idea. The more education you can provide for people the better. Would want trappers to be sufficiently represented
- Cautiously supports. Realizes prices and populations fluctuates, but data collection would be useful to help G&F monitor the furbearer population
- A working group would be a good place for a centralized furbearers database and potentially allows trappers to avoid heavy use/trap areas

4. Land Closures 1.1.3.3=8

- No. Areas should not be closed. People targeting different species should be able to work together
- Yes. But heavy use areas should be reopened when not in the heavy use.
- Clarify what “heavy use” means, but supports some closures

Group 3C- 5 participants

1. Reporting Nontargets 1.1.1.0.2=6

- Supportive of anonymous reporting
- Concerned about use of information

- No. dont see the benefit
 - Supportive if it is for endangered/protective/domestic species, concerned about getting too much in the weeds with other species
 - Supportive of reporting non-fur bearing animals
 - Wants more logistical information about an “app” what about folks who can’t access the “app”?
 - Would rather have open dialog. Rather than have the potential intimidation an app might bring.
 - Would this database be accessible by the public, and how might that information be used against trappers?
2. Snare Check Periods 0.5.0.0.0=5
- No- physically impossible to check numerous traps over a large area in a reduced time frame
 - Supports a reduction to every 7 days
 - Does not support additional restrictions
 - Supports reducing the trapping time to 7 days. The language in the regulations is also confusing
 - No additional restrictions on traps
 - No change of regulations. On the check period because of the negative impact it would have on longtime trappers.
 - No changes on the restrictions but supports reduction on the check time.
3. Working Group 5.0.0.3.5=13
- Supports a working group to better capture trends in number of trappers and population numbers which may improve management practices
 - Concerned with how government ran predator control would impact other trappers, in regards to quotas but supports the idea of a working group
 - Does not support a working group x2
 - Does not support. Trappers are already “self managing”
 - Same as above. Trappers self regulate
4. Land Closures 5.4.4.2.4=22
- No
 - Yes, supports closure during heavy use periods to allow for wildlife management
 - Supports closure in specific areas during specific time periods x2
 - Supports closure during only periods of heavy use
 - Don't support closure. Takes away from the trapper