



2023 WISCONSIN TRAPPING REGULATIONS

Fully immersive trapping camps, workshops and trainings offered by Wisconsin Trappers Association and Wisconsin DNR instructors are a fantastic option for honing ethical trapping techniques and learning ways to use all parts of a harvested animal.

In the photo above, graduates from Women's Trap Camp continue their education at the Fur to Fork workshop. This new course is open to anyone who has graduated from a trapper education course and wants to learn more about how to prepare the food they catch on their trapline.

Advanced trainings and workshops are offered periodically throughout the year. For a list of course offerings please visit [Go Wild](#) and click "Find a Class to Enroll In."

REPORT NATURAL RESOURCE VIOLATIONS

CALL or TEXT 800-TIP-WDNR
(800-847-9367)

Toll-Free, Statewide, 24-Hour, Confidential

PUB-WM-002-2023



This pamphlet gives you a summary of Wisconsin's trapping laws and how they affect you. For complete trapping and hunting laws, consult the Wisconsin State Statutes Chapter 29 or Chapter 10 of the Administrative Code of the Department of Natural Resources.



CONTENTS

| | |
|--|----|
| What's New In 2023..... | 3 |
| Definitions..... | 4 |
| Special Rules Clarification | 4 |
| License And Permit Information..... | 5 |
| Mississippi River Zone..... | 7 |
| Trapping Hours..... | 7 |
| Trap Checking Requirements..... | 8 |
| Trap Size And Placement Restrictions..... | 8 |
| Methods | 9 |
| Body-Grip Trap Regulations..... | 10 |
| Cable Restraint Regulations..... | 11 |
| Foot-Activated Cable Restraints..... | 12 |
| Colony Traps | 13 |
| Possession Restrictions | 13 |
| Special Regulations: Bobcat And Fisher | 13 |
| Trapping On DNR-Owned And -Managed Lands | 14 |
| Transfer Of Bobcat Or Fisher Permits..... | 14 |
| Furbearer Registration And Certification..... | 15 |
| Game Management Units | 16 |
| Marten Restoration Areas..... | 19 |
| Seasons And Bag Limits | |
| Beaver..... | 20 |
| Fisher And Otter..... | 21 |
| Bobcat..... | 22 |
| Coyote, Raccoon, Red And Gray Fox | 23 |
| Mink And Muskrat..... | 24 |
| Carcass Data Collection..... | 25 |
| Trapping In State Parks | 25 |
| Youth Supervised And Mentored Trapping | 26 |
| Best Management Practices For Trapping Furbearers In The U.S. | 27 |
| Trapper Education Course..... | 28 |
| Questions?..... | 32 |

Dear Trappers,

Wisconsin continues to be a leader in regulated trapping. Each year, 200 Wisconsin Trappers Association instructors demonstrate their commitment by donating countless hours to teach new students what it means to be a trapper in Wisconsin. Their dedication is vital to ensuring all new trappers have the education and tools necessary to make good decisions while afield.

Wisconsin's leadership is also demonstrated by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources' continual collaboration with partner groups and the public in reviewing our regulations for new opportunities and ways to improve trapping in the state.

The department is currently moving through the rulemaking process for two trapping-related rules. The first is a proposal to increase the fee for the trapper education course from \$12 to \$20. The increase will provide a few additional dollars for the trapper education budget and help instructors cover costs associated with putting on a course (room rentals, equipment and other needs). The course fee was last increased in 2008.

The other rule looks to expand opportunities and support for trappers with disabilities. If approved, this change will allow a trapper holding a class A, B, C or D disabled permit and a permit or harvest authorization for bobcat, fisher and river otter to receive direct assistance from a licensed trapper not holding a permit or authorization for these species. Assistance could include help setting, checking or registering. These proposals are still moving through the rulemaking process, but did receive support during the 2023 spring hearings. If approved, look for additional information to be shared in 2024.

Thank you once again for your interest, support and commitment to regulated trapping in Wisconsin. Prior to, during and after the trapping season, act as if the future of trapping depends on your actions – because it does! Have a safe, productive and memorable season.

Shawn Rossler, DNR Furbearer Specialist

WHAT'S NEW IN 2023

As of March 1, 2023, DNR no longer accepts trapper education course certifications completed in other states. Out-of-state trapper education certification completed before March 1, 2023, may be reviewed for acceptance in Wisconsin.



Credit: Ed Culhane/Wisconsin DNR

DEFINITIONS

Body-Grip Trap: a steel trap designed to allow the animal's head, neck or torso to enter the trap opening and be held by compression of the jaws when sprung.

Cable Restraint: a cable noose used for restraining furbearing animals that does not allow the device or trapped animal to reach unfrozen water.

Cage or Box Trap: a trap that is designed to allow an animal to enter the trap enclosure, be captured and remain alive inside the cage or box-type enclosure until it can be released unharmed or reduced to possession by the operator of the trap. This trap may not be used as a water set or with any other type of trap.

Capable of Submersing: a set designed to allow the trapped animal to travel to water of sufficient depth to cause irreversible complete submersion.

Colony Trap: an enclosure-type device that allows for the capture of one or more furbearing animals in a single setting as a submersion set.

Enclosed Trigger Trap: any trap with a push- or pull-activated trigger located inside an enclosure and recessed 1¼ inches or more from an opening that is no greater than 1¾ inches in diameter. The diameter of the opening is measured as the straight-line distance across the opening between the two inside points that are farthest apart. If the opening is square or rectangular, this measurement must be made from the two opposite corners that are furthest apart.

Foot-Activated Cable Restraint: a passive or spring-activated cable noose used for restraining furbearing animals by the foot that does not allow the device or trapped animal to reach unfrozen water.

Furbearing Animal: for the purpose of this pamphlet, bobcat, fisher, otter, coyote, raccoon, red fox, gray fox, mink, muskrat, beaver, skunk, weasel, woodchuck and opossum are included in this definition.

Jawed Trap: a trap designed to catch an animal by the foot, but does not include enclosed trigger traps, cable restraints or body-gripping traps.

Non-Submersion Set: any trap set that is capable of capturing an animal and not capable of submersing the captured animal.

Sight Exposed Bait: any bait that can be seen from above.

Snare: a wire noose used for restraining furbearing animals in a water set.

Water Set: a trap or snare that is set or staked in a manner to permit the trap, snare or trapped animal to reach unfrozen water.

ANIMALS PROTECTED AT ALL TIMES

The following wild animals are designated protected and have no open season: badger, Canada lynx, cougar, flying squirrel, moose, American marten, white or albino deer, wolverine and any other species designated protected, endangered or threatened.

SPECIAL RULE CLARIFICATIONS

Preseason Marking of Trap Sites: Using stakes or other devices to mark a trap site anywhere prior to the season opener is not allowed on DNR-managed lands and is not recommended on other public lands. It does not legally reserve the site for the person placing the stake or markers.

Unprotected Species

Opossums, skunks, porcupines, red squirrels, woodchucks and weasels are unprotected and may be trapped year-round by persons possessing a trapping license. A trapping license is not required for landowners or occupants trapping unprotected species causing damage or which are otherwise a nuisance.

Trapping on Managed Forest Law (MFL) and Forest Crop Law (FCL) Lands: With permission of the landowner/property manager, trapping is allowed on lands enrolled under the Forest Crop Law program and lands designated as “open” under the Managed Forest Law program.

Trapping Along Roadsides: Permission to trap on road rights-of-way can be a complex issue. Highway rights-of-way are established to provide areas for vehicle and sometimes pedestrian travel and not for the purpose of trapping. Most are owned either by the state or by the local unit of government. However, in some cases, the adjoining landowner still maintains ownership of the underlying land. Trappers must have permission from the owner of the land underlying any public road, street or highway right-of-way area before trapping the location. The Wisconsin Department of Transportation (DOT) has a policy that trapping is not allowed on DOT-owned roads. Some DOT retention ponds may be open to trapping. Contact DOT for details.

Trapping Navigable Waterways: Trapping on private land in Wisconsin, including on the beds of navigable waters, may constitute a trespass (enforced by the county sheriff’s department). *Trappers need to obtain permission before trapping on any private land, even if entry is by public waterways and the trap is placed or staked in the water.*

WILDLIFE VIOLATOR COMPACT

The State of Wisconsin is a participating member of the Wildlife Violator Compact. This is an agreement between participating states that prohibits a person whose hunting, fishing or trapping privileges are suspended in one state from obtaining licenses or permits or from participating in those activities in another participating state. For more information, visit dnr.wi.gov and search “[wildlife violator compact](#).”

Warden Authority

Conservation wardens performing their duties may enter private lands at any time. Wardens may also seize as evidence all game taken or possessed in violation of the law and any equipment used in connection with a violation. Wardens do not have the authority to enforce trespass laws.

LICENSE AND PERMIT INFORMATION

1. **Resident:** \$20; **Resident Youth trapping** (15 and under): free; **Resident trapping with certified mentor:** \$10 (see page 26); **Nonresident** \$150. Reduced rates are available for **first-time license buyers**. Visit dnr.wi.gov and search “[license](#)” for more information.
 - **License and Tagging:** The Go Wild licensing system (gowild.wi.gov) offers trappers greater flexibility in purchasing and displaying licenses. Acceptable forms of proof of a trapping license include a Conservation Card, valid Wisconsin driver’s license, a department-generated PDF file displayed on an electronic device or the physical hard copy license. Please note that trappers must carry hard copies of department-issued bobcat permits while trapping or hunting.
 - Wisconsin allows trapping by non-resident U.S. citizens from those states that allow Wisconsin residents to purchase nonresident licenses and trap in those states. This includes all states **except HI, MN and Washington, D.C.** Nonresident licenses require the successful completion of the Wisconsin trapper education course (see pages 28–31). Nonresident trappers are subject to all seasons and regulations that pertain to the State of Wisconsin. **Trapping licenses for the 2023–24 license year expire on March 1, 2024.**
2. **Age:** No age restrictions apply to trapping, but age and mentoring or accompaniment requirements apply if a firearm is to be used while trapping. For more information, visit dnr.wi.gov and search “[mentored hunting](#).” All trappers must obtain a trapping license with the exception of trappers

younger than 16 years of age working with a supervising trapper. A minimum age of 10 years is recommended for successful completion of a trapper education program. All trappers must complete the Wisconsin trapper education course (see page 28) prior to purchasing a license, unless trapping under youth supervised or mentored trapping program rules (see page 26). **A certificate of successful completion of the Wisconsin trapper education course may be used by a resident in place of a trapping license for the trapping license year in which the certificate is issued. The certificate is valid until April 30, 2024. A bobcat permit and tag are still required, and only holders of a regular license, youth license or youth under 16 with a supervisor may be issued these permits and tags.**

You may not:

- Transfer your license, permit, harvest authorization or tag or allow its use by anyone else except as provided on page 14;
- Carry any trapping license, permit, harvest authorization or tag issued to anyone else; or
- Obtain a trapping license, permit, harvest authorization or tag for someone else except that a parent may purchase a license for their minor child/children.

3. Landowner Provisions: The owner or occupant of any land and any family members* who live with them do not need a license to:

- Trap coyote, beaver, fox, muskrat, raccoon, woodchuck, rabbit and squirrel on the land year-round (see “beaver damage control” on page 20 for more information); or
- Live trap with cage or box traps for beaver, coyote, fox, woodchuck, rabbit, raccoon and squirrel on their land at any time in cities, villages or other areas where the discharge of firearms is unlawful. Live-trapped animals must either be humanely killed or be released on unenclosed private land with the landowner’s permission within 24 hours.

Note: Live-trapped animals cannot be

released on DNR-owned and -managed lands.

**Family members who do not live with the owner or occupant of the land but who are siblings and/or children of the owner and are under the age of 18 may also hunt or trap these species on that property without a license.*

- 4. Reprints and Duplicates:** Reprints of licenses can be obtained free of charge by visiting a DNR service center and through the Go Wild licensing website at gowild.wi.gov. License agents also provide reprints for a \$2 processing fee. Permit duplicates must be reprinted through the DNR by calling 608-228-0765.
- 5. Purchasing Fur:** You must possess a fur dealers license or a taxidermist permit to purchase raw fur (defined on page 13). **Except:** You may obtain written authorization from the DNR to purchase raw fur without the need to purchase a license if only for the purpose of making garments for yourself or a member of your family.
- 6. Animals Causing Damage:** During the closed season, a DNR permit may be required to remove nuisance animals. Visit dnr.wi.gov and search “[nuisance wildlife](#)” for more information.
- 7. Horicon National Wildlife Refuge and Horicon Marsh State Wildlife Area:** Trapping at these locations is authorized on a permit system only and special regulations apply. Permit details are available through:

Horicon National Wildlife Refuge
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
Refuge Manager
W4279 Headquarters Rd.
Mayville, WI 53050
920-387-2658

Horicon Marsh State Wildlife Area
Wisconsin DNR
Property Manager
N7725 Highway 28
Horicon, WI 53032
920-387-7860

- 8. Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge:** Special trapping permits are required. For more information, contact: Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge Headquarters, 51 E. 4th Street, Winona, MN 55987; 507- 452-4232.
- 9. Apostle Islands National Lakeshore:** Access permits are required for the Apostle Islands National Lakeshore. For information, call 715-779-3397 or write Park Superintendent, 415 Washington Avenue, Bayfield, WI 54814.

10. Trempealeau National Wildlife Refuge:

Trapping is authorized on a permit system only and special regulations apply. For more information, call 608-539-2311 ext. 16 or visit www.fws.gov/midwest/trempealeau or write Trempealeau National Wildlife Refuge, W28488 Refuge Road, Trempealeau, WI 54661.

11. Necedah National Wildlife Refuge:

Trapping is authorized on a permit system only and special regulations apply. For more information, call 608-565-2551 or write Necedah National Wildlife Refuge N11385 Headquarters Road, Necedah WI 54660.

12. St. Croix National Scenic Riverway:

Trapping is restricted in the St. Croix National Scenic Riverway. For more information: visit www.nps.gov/sacn/planyourvisit/trapping.htm. The National Park Service has specific regulations on these sites to inform the public of special federal regulations already in place.

MISSISSIPPI RIVER ZONE

On lands located within the Mississippi River Zone and managed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) as part of the Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge (UMRNWFR), the otter, raccoon, coyote and fox seasons open with the muskrat and mink seasons.

Trapping on federal lands within the Mississippi River Zone involves obtaining a Refuge Trapping Permit issued by the USFWS and restrictions on number of traps allowed, trap placement, time of the trapping opener and trap check hours. To obtain refuge trapping permits, contact the UMRNWFR (see page 6).

On private lands within the Mississippi River zone, the trapping seasons for raccoon, otter, coyote and fox are the same as the regular state season dates (see page 21 and 23).

The success of this season framework rests with the trapping and hunting community. If seasons overlap, trappers can minimize contact with waterfowl hunters by setting and checking traps on weekdays, checking traps during mid-day, pulling trap lines prior to the weekend, talking with hunters prior to checking traps in areas where hunters are set up and approaching areas with hunters only when ducks are not flying. Duck hunters can help by being aware of trapper presence and encouraging mid-day trap checks.

Trappers, please take special care when trapping on uplands. We recommend you consider refraining from placing upland sets until after the close of the duck season unless using sets that are totally dog-proof, such as enclosed trigger traps.

There are many who use and enjoy the amazing resources of the Mississippi River. Please remain courteous and accommodate each other's needs and concerns.

TRAPPING HOURS

It is legal to set, place, check and operate traps from 12 a.m. to 11:59 p.m. (24 hours a day) when the appropriate season is open. State park trapping hour restrictions are in place. See page 25 for trapping hour restrictions in state parks.

TRAP CHECKING REQUIREMENTS

Non-submersion (dry) Set: Non-submersion sets must be attended and checked in person at least once each day, and any captured animals must be removed from the set.

Weasel boxes may be checked every four days given that:

1. The entrance hole is no greater than $1\frac{3}{8}$ inches in diameter;
2. The enclosure set must use a body-grip trap (for weasels this includes a foothold trap and rat snap trap); and
3. The enclosure is securely anchored to an immovable object.

Water Set: Water sets, except submersion sets, must be attended and checked in person at least once each day, and any captured animals must be removed from the set.

Submersion Set: Any trap set capable of capturing an animal and capable of submersing the captured animal. Slide wires or poles, locking devices, slip chains, weighted traps and traps staked in deep water are commonly used in submersion sets. **A body-grip trap is not a submersion set when more than one-half of the trap is located above water after the trap has been fired.**

Traps must be attended to and checked in person at least every four days. Any captured animals must be removed from the set unless it is an under-ice set. You must monitor water levels to ensure submersion sets are effective.

Under-ice Set: There are no mandated trap checking periods for sets made under the ice.

TRAP SIZE AND PLACEMENT RESTRICTIONS

You may not:

- Set, place or operate any water set traps with a jaw spread smaller than $5\frac{1}{2}$ inches for jaw traps or body-grip traps that are 60 square inches or less, except when the muskrat or mink season is open in the zone in which you are trapping;
- Set, place or operate more than 3 feet above the ground any trap or device designed or used to capture or kill birds;

- Operate trap sets that permit the trapped animal to reach water *except* when the muskrat, mink, beaver or otter trapping season is open in the zone you are trapping or unless using a commercially manufactured enclosed trigger trap;
- Set, place or operate any body-grip trap that is 75 square inches or larger unless $\frac{1}{2}$ of the trap is located underwater at all times.
- Set, place or operate any body-grip trap greater than 60 square inches or any snare or cable restraint, regardless of the size of the noose, in the following locations:
 - Within 3 feet of any federal, state or county road right-of-way culvert unless completely submerged in water;
 - Within 3 feet of any woven or welded wire fence; or
 - Within 100 yards of any building devoted to human occupancy without the owner's consent.
- Set, place or operate any jawed trap with teeth unless such traps are located completely underwater at all times;
- Set, place or operate any jawed trap with a jaw spread width of more than 7 inches from the opening of the trapping season until Nov. 30 unless it is a water set or with a jaw spread width of more than 8 inches at any other time or as a water set;
- Set, place or operate any snare, regardless of the noose size unless half of the snare noose is located underwater at all times.
- Set, place or operate any snare unless the noose cable and noose attachments conform to the following specifications:
 - The cable length may not exceed 5 feet;
 - The cable must be galvanized aircraft cable;
 - The cable or wire diameter may not exceed $\frac{1}{8}$ inch; and
 - The cable must be non-spring activated;
 - Must include a swivel.

METHODS

All live furbearing animals taken during the open season for such species shall be released unharmed or dispatched immediately and made part of the daily bag. It is unlawful to keep such animals alive after their capture unless you have first obtained a DNR permit, license or authorization to possess the animal alive.

Note: A trapping license does not allow the possession of live wild animals obtained by trapping, and a captive wild animal farm license does not allow trapping or possession of live animals trapped from the wild.

You may not:

- Place any set or sprung trap, snare or cable restraint for furbearing animals during the closed season, except for individuals conducting nuisance wildlife control work;
- Use sight-exposed bait consisting of feathers, animal flesh, fur, hide or entrails within 25 feet of any trap, snare or cable restraint, except for enclosed trigger traps and cage traps;
- Place bait or scent for furbearing animals during the closed season, except for efforts specific to nuisance wildlife control;
- Set any trap, which includes cable restraints and snares for which a trapping license is required, unless a metal tag is attached. The tag must be stamped or engraved legibly with the name and address of the operator or with their customer ID number. Heavy-duty stamped tags are recommended;
- Take or attempt to take beaver, fisher, mink, muskrat or otter by any means other than trapping or snaring. It is illegal to dispatch a fisher, mink, muskrat or otter by means of a firearm or spear. Beaver may be dispatched by firearm only if held in a trap or snare;

Note: Landowners, occupants or their family members who live with the landowner or occupant may take beaver by firearm on their land. (Hunting mentorship program rules apply. Visit dnr.wi.gov and search “[mentored hunting](#)”).

- Possess any trap for the purpose of catching furbearing animals other than a jawed trap, cage/box trap, enclosed trigger trap, body-grip trap, cable restraint, foot-activated cable restraint, snare or colony trap. Cage or box traps shall be constructed so that no additional animals may enter the trap after an animal has been captured until that animal is removed and the trap has been reset;
- Physically damage or destroy any mink den, muskrat house, muskrat feeding house or beaver dam (see page 6 for landowner exception for beaver dams);
- Place on the ice any artificial house or den for the purpose of catching any furbearing animal; or
- Molest or take traps, cable restraints, snares or trapped animals that belong to someone else. See page 23 for more information.

Consider each set placement to avoid contact with humans and domestic animals.

When using body-grip traps on dry land, the use of enclosures and elevated sets is strongly encouraged. The ability to continue to use body-grip traps in the future depends on responsible use now!



BODY-GRIP TRAP REGULATIONS

No person may:

Set, place or operate any body-grip trap **greater than 60 but less than 75 square inches**, measured from the widest points on the outside of the jaws (Figure 1) as a:

Water set unless at least half of the set trap is located underwater at all times;

Elevated set unless the trap is placed at least 5 feet above the surface;*

Bottom entry enclosure set, unless the entire opening of the enclosure is no more than 7 inches above the surface;*

Baited and/or scented set in or on the ground, unless the trap trigger is within an enclosure with openings no greater than 50 square inches for a 7-inch recess or an opening of 8 inches high by 10 inches wide with a 10-inch minimum recess from the enclosure openings; or

Unbaited and/or unscented trail set, unless the trap is within an enclosure that provides openings no greater than 10 inches high and 10 inches wide and is recessed a minimum of 15 inches from the enclosure openings.

*Surface is the first surface that is ground, ice, crusted or packed snow or any other hard material beneath the trap or opening. For the purposes of this section, “enclosure” means any single-unit device that creates a barrier to the trap allowing entry only through designated openings.

To set, place or operate any body-grip trap that is 60 square inches or less in size, it must have a maximum vertical jaw measurement of 7½ inches when set. The vertical measurement is taken from the widest points on the trap in the set position (Figure 2).

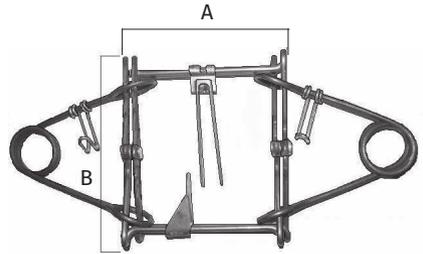


Figure 1. To determine the maximum square inches of an unset trap, multiply the maximum width of the trap jaws (A) by the height of the trap jaws (B). Body-grip trap designs vary.

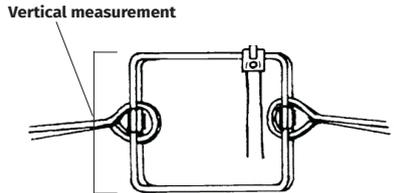


Figure 2. An example of how to measure the vertical height measurement of a trap when set.

| Body-Grip Trap Size | Dry Land | Water |
|--|---|-------|
| Less than or equal to 60 square inches | Legal | Legal |
| Between 60 and 75 square inches | Legal if enclosed or at least 5 feet off the ground | Legal |
| 75 square inches or greater | NOT legal | Legal |

Square Inches of Commonly Available Round Body-Grip Traps:
(square inch of a circle is calculated by $\pi \times r^2$ where r is radius)

| Diameter (in) | Total Square Inches |
|---------------|---------------------|
| 6 | 28 |
| 7 | 38 |
| 8 | 50 |
| 10 | 79 |
| 12 | 113 |



Figure 3. The diameter of a trap is the measurement from one side of the round trap to the other side.

CABLE RESTRAINT REGULATIONS

You may not:

- Set, place or operate cable restraints for any species other than fox, coyote and bobcat;
- Cable restraints may only be placed, set or sprung during the open trapping seasons for the previously listed species;
- Use cable restraints for removal of nuisance wildlife except for during the open seasons for coyote and fox;
- Stake a cable restraint in a manner that allows the restraint device to reach any part of a fence, rooted woody vegetation greater than ½ inch diameter or any other immovable object or stake that could cause entanglement;
- Set, place or operate any cable restraint with the bottom of the loop less than 6 inches or greater than 12 inches above the first surface beneath the bottom of the set cable restraint loop (Figure 4), where the surface is ground, ice, crusted or packed snow or any other hard surface; or
- Set, place or operate any cable restraint unless the noose cable and noose attachments conform to the following specifications (Figure 5):
 - The cable length may not exceed 7 feet;
 - The cable must be galvanized aircraft cable and include a swivel;
 - The set must be non-spring activated with the exception of the foot-activated cable restraint;
 - The cable must be made of multiple strands of wire, with a diameter of $\frac{3}{32}$ inches or larger;
 - The set must include a breakaway device or be stop-rated at 350 pounds or less;
 - The set must include a relaxing reverse-bend washer with a minimum outside diameter of $1\frac{1}{4}$ inches; and
 - The set must include cable stops affixed to the cable to ensure that the portion of the cable that makes up the noose loop may not be longer than 38 inches or less than 8 inches.

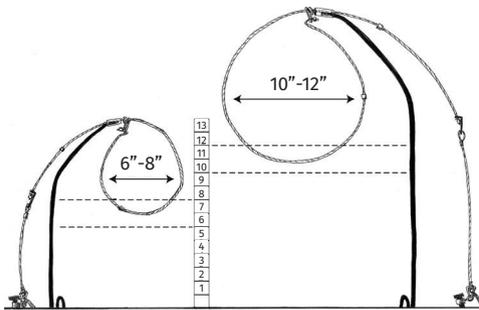


Figure 4. Loop heights and size vary depending on the intended species: coyote, bobcat or fox. Multiple swivels are recommended on a cable restraint. However, only a single swivel is required.

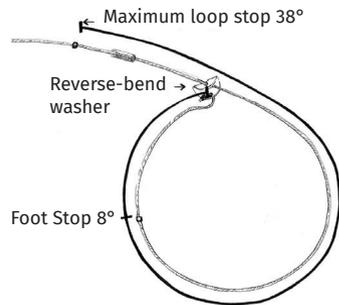


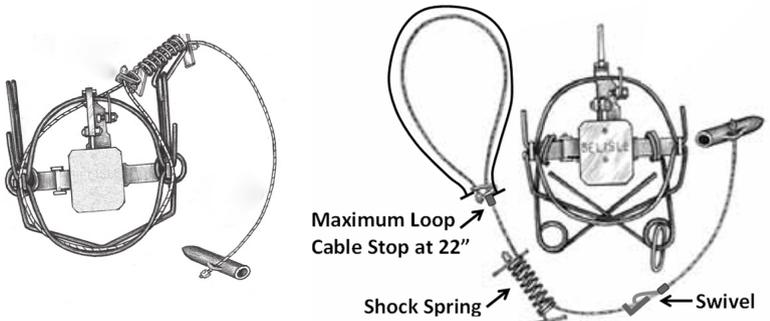
Figure 5. The maximum and minimum loop size for cable restraints is easily measured by circumference. The minimum loop stop is set at 8 inches and the maximum loop stop is set at 38 inches from the reverse-bend washer end of the cable. This results in a loop no smaller than $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches in diameter and no larger than 12 inches in diameter.

FOOT-ACTIVATED CABLE RESTRAINTS

You may not:

- Set, place or operate foot-activated cable restraints for any species other than fox, coyote and bobcat;
- Set out or place a cable restraint, whether set or sprung, on public or private land, except during the following dates:
 - Dec. 1, 2023–Jan. 31, 2024 for bobcat; and
 - Dec. 1, 2023–Feb. 15, 2024 for coyote and fox.
- Use foot-activated cable restraints for removal of nuisance wildlife except for coyote and fox during the dates listed above;
- Stake a cable restraint in a manner that allows the restraint device to reach any part of a fence, rooted woody vegetation greater than ½ inch diameter or any other immovable object or stake that could cause entanglement;
- Set, place or operate any foot-activated cable restraint unless the noose cable and attachments conform to the following specifications:
 - The cable length may not exceed 7 feet, must be $\frac{3}{32}$ inch or larger and consist of multiple wires;
 - The set must include a breakaway device or stop rated at 350 lbs. or less;
 - The set must include a roller or barrel in-line swivel that ensures that the portion of the cable that makes up the noose loop may not be longer than 22 inches; and
 - The set must include an in-line shock spring.

Figure 6. Foot-activated cable restraint. The maximum loop stop is set at 22 inches from lock.



Finding Land Open To Trapping

The DNR website provides detailed information about public and public access lands in your area. Visit dnr.wi.gov and search “trap.” Click on the “where to trap” link under the “during your season” subheading.

Voluntary Public Access (VPA) is a voluntary program that provides financial incentives to private landowners who open their property to public hunting, fishing, trapping and wildlife observation. Properties open to public access through the VPA program and information on enrolling can be found by visiting dnr.wi.gov keyword “VPA” or by calling 888-936-7463.



Credit: DNR

COLONY TRAPS

Colony Traps: Mink that are incidentally captured in colony traps placed for muskrats can be retained. Enclosure-type devices that allow for the capture of one or more animals in a single set are only legal to use for trapping muskrat.

You may not:

- Set, place or operate a colony trap with a length exceeding 36 ½ inches or with a height or width exceeding 6 ½ inches. If using a round (tube-shaped) trap, the diameter cannot exceed 6 ½ inches;
- Set, place or operate a colony trap within 3 feet of any culvert;
- Place bait, including scent, in the trap or at the set location;
- Set, place or operate a colony trap that is not completely underwater; or
- Use a colony trap in conjunction with any fencing, netting or other material placed in the water (including other colony traps) that create an underwater obstruction designed to force or channel any wild animal into the trap.

POSSESSION RESTRICTIONS

DEFINITIONS

Raw Fur: the undressed or untanned skins or pelts of any furbearing animal, including ones that have been stretched and dried.

Green Pelts: a skin that has not been removed from the carcass or the pelt of any

furbearing animal that has been removed, but has not been tanned or fleshed, stretched and dried.

You may not:

- Possess the green pelts of any bobcat or otter beginning longer than 7 days after the month of harvest unless the pelt has a valid certification tag attached;
- Possess any mink, muskrat, fisher or otter pelt that has been shot or speared;
- Possess any raw fisher, mink, muskrat or otter pelt at any time without a current trapping or fur dealer's license or other appropriate special license or permit issued by the DNR;
- Ship fur unless the outside of the container is marked with the number and type of species being shipped and the name, address and trapping license number of the shipper;
- Transfer to another, give, trade, sell or purchase a raw pelt or unskinned carcass of any bobcat or otter without a certification tag being attached and locked to the head portion of the pelt; or
- Purchase any raw fur without a fur dealer's license. However, you may obtain written authorization from the DNR to purchase raw fur without the need to purchase a license if only for the purpose of making garments for yourself or a member of your family.

SPECIAL REGULATIONS: BOBCAT AND FISHER

PERMIT APPLICATIONS AND PREFERENCE POINTS

Permit applications can be submitted at gowild.wi.gov, at DNR service centers or at license agents. Trappers can submit their application choices for bobcat and fisher at the same time they pay the application fee for each species.

Applicants have the option of applying for a preference point only or may enter into the drawing for a permit(s). If an applicant makes the choice to be entered into the drawing and is selected for a permit the applicant will lose all preference points, even if the permit is not used.

Applicants who fail to apply for either a preference point or a permit at least once during any 3 consecutive years will lose all previously accumulated preference points.

Note: Conservation Patron license holders who did not submit application choices for fisher with the purchase of a license must apply online or at a DNR service center. The annual deadline to submit application choices for bobcat and fisher permits for the upcoming season is **Aug. 1**. Applicants who apply for a bobcat permit must choose a zone and period of preference.

PERMITS AND TAGS

| Species | Patron License Holders | Trapping License Holders |
|---------|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| Bobcat | \$6.00 | \$6.00 |
| Fisher | Included in license cost* | \$3.00 |

*Conservation Patron license holders still need to register their application choices.

You may not:

- Possess or have under control any bobcat carcass unless you immediately validate, attach and seal your pelt tag through the opening of the animal's mouth to the opening of its eye, immediately beneath the skin. (See instructions printed on the pelt tag for further details). The pelt tag and certification seal shall remain attached to the pelt until removed by a fur dresser or taxidermist at the time of preparation;
- Possess, loan or borrow a license, harvest authorization or pelt tag belonging to another; or
- Place your tag on or register a bobcat, fisher or otter that has been caught, trapped or killed by another person (includes those caught in traps set by another person);

Note: A person is not allowed to tag or register a bobcat, fisher or otter that was intentionally or accidentally caught in a trap set by another person. A person who tags or registers a trapped bobcat, fisher or otter must be the person who made the trap set.

- Transfer, give, trade, sell or purchase any bobcat or otter pelt unless a certification seal has been legally attached to the pelt; or
- Possess a bobcat pelt longer than 7 days after the month of harvest without certifying the pelt with an authorized DNR representative.

TRAPPING ON DNR-OWNED AND -MANAGED LANDS

No person may destroy, molest, deface, remove or attempt to remove any natural growth or natural or archaeological feature except that edible fruits, edible nuts, wild mushrooms, wild asparagus and watercress may be removed by hand without a permit only for the purpose of personal consumption by the collector.

Generally, it is not permissible to cut willow stems.

However, you may cut willow stems with a diameter of 2 ½ inches or smaller from species that are not endangered or threatened if you intend them for personal, non-commercial use such as for trap stakes. You must first obtain the property manager's approval before harvesting.

Bobcat, Fisher And Otter Zone Closure Hotline

While unlikely, bobcat, fisher and otter zones may close before the season ends. To verify which zones are open for trapping, call the bobcat, fisher and otter trapping hotline at 855-299-9653 (608-261-0748 local) or visit dnr.wi.gov, and search "trap."

TRANSFER OF BOBCAT OR FISHER PERMITS TO YOUTH AND DISABLED PERMIT HOLDERS

A person who has been awarded a bobcat permit or fisher harvest authorization may apply to transfer that permit or authorization to a youth under the age of 18 or a person holding a valid Class A, B, C or D disabled permit no later than 15 days before the open season. The person receiving the permit will retain their accumulated preference points. A youth or disabled permit holder may only be the recipient of each type of transferred permit once. If you wish to transfer your permit, please visit dnr.wi.gov and search "[permit transfer](#)" for more information and to download a permit transfer application (Form 9400-607).

FURBEARER REGISTRATION AND CERTIFICATION

River Otter

- An otter application or pelt tag is no longer required. Two otter harvest authorizations per trapping license will be issued for the 2023-24 season. These authorizations can be used in either zone.
- Harvested river otter must be registered via GameReg by 5 p.m. the day following recovery. Register online at gamereg.wi.gov (fastest and easiest method) or by phone at 844-426-3734 (844-GAME-REG). Be prepared to indicate which game management unit (page 16) the animal was harvested in.
- Following successful registration of river otter via GameReg, a CITES tag will be sent to the trapper's address listed in Go Wild. Upon receiving the CITES tag in the mail, the trapper must immediately affix the CITES tag to the head portion of the otter pelt to certify that the animal was harvested legally.
- After the CITES tag has been attached, all registration and certification requirements are complete. The requirement for a trapper who has successfully trapped an otter to meet with a warden or other approved staff in person to have the pelt certified has been eliminated.

Fisher

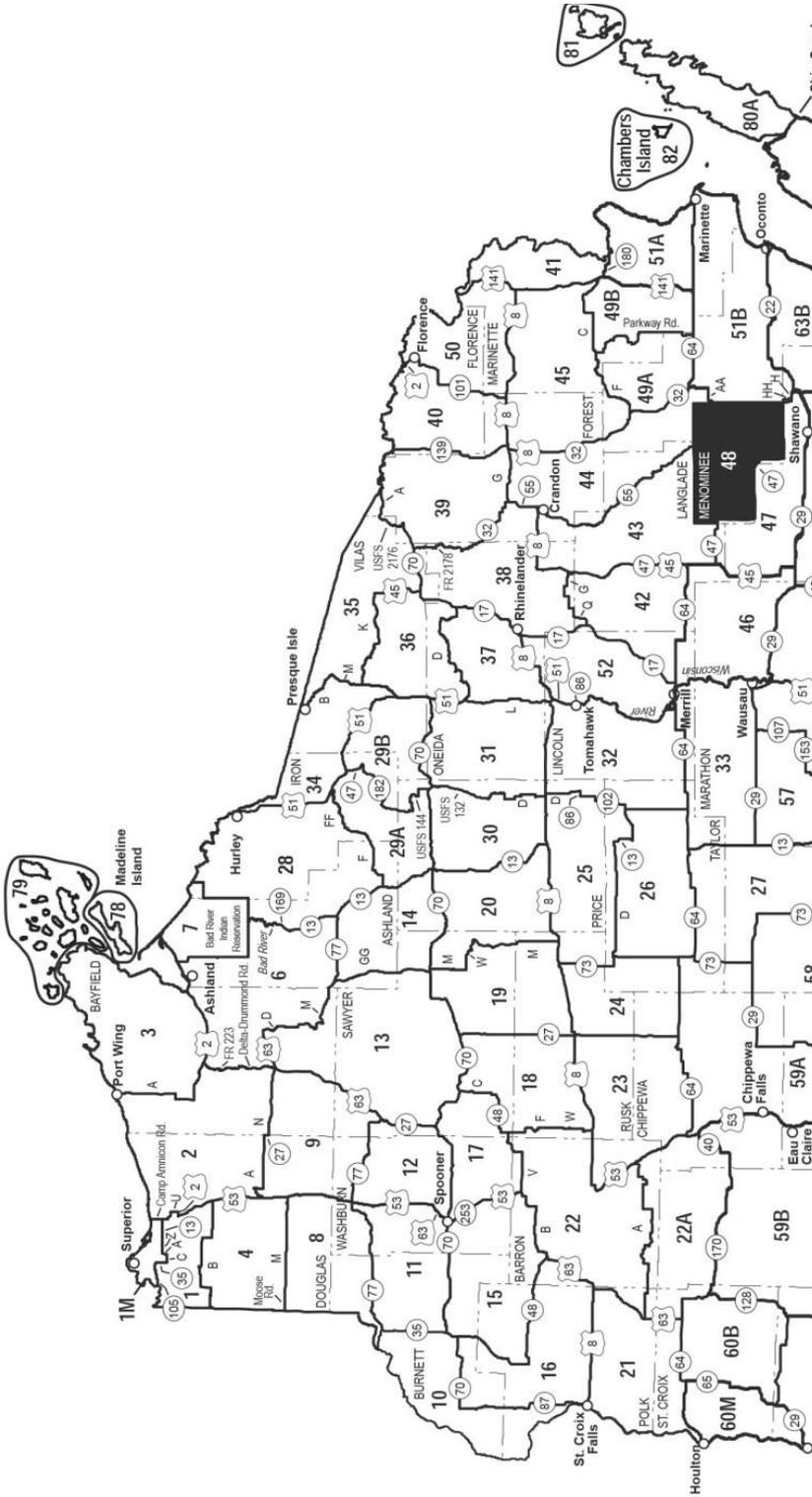
- A fisher application is still required and must be submitted by Aug. 1.
- Following the drawing for fisher, all successful applicants will receive a harvest authorization. A physical permit will no longer be sent to successful fisher applicants.
- Harvested fisher must be registered via GameReg by 5 p.m. the day following recovery. Register online at gamereg.wi.gov (fastest and easiest method) or by phone at 844-426-3734 (844-GAME-REG). Be prepared to indicate which game management unit (page 16) the animal was harvested in.
- The requirement for a trapper who has successfully trapped a fisher to meet with a warden or other approved staff to have the pelt certified has been eliminated.
- The requirement to seal a fisher pelt with a metal state tag has also been eliminated. Following registration of a fisher via GameReg, all registration requirements are complete.
- This year, the department will collect the lower jaw from a subset of harvested fisher. Those trappers randomly selected to provide a jaw sample will be contacted via mail prior to the season. Trappers selected to provide a sample will be supplied with a durable sample ID, envelopes and special instructions for preparing the sample for mailing.

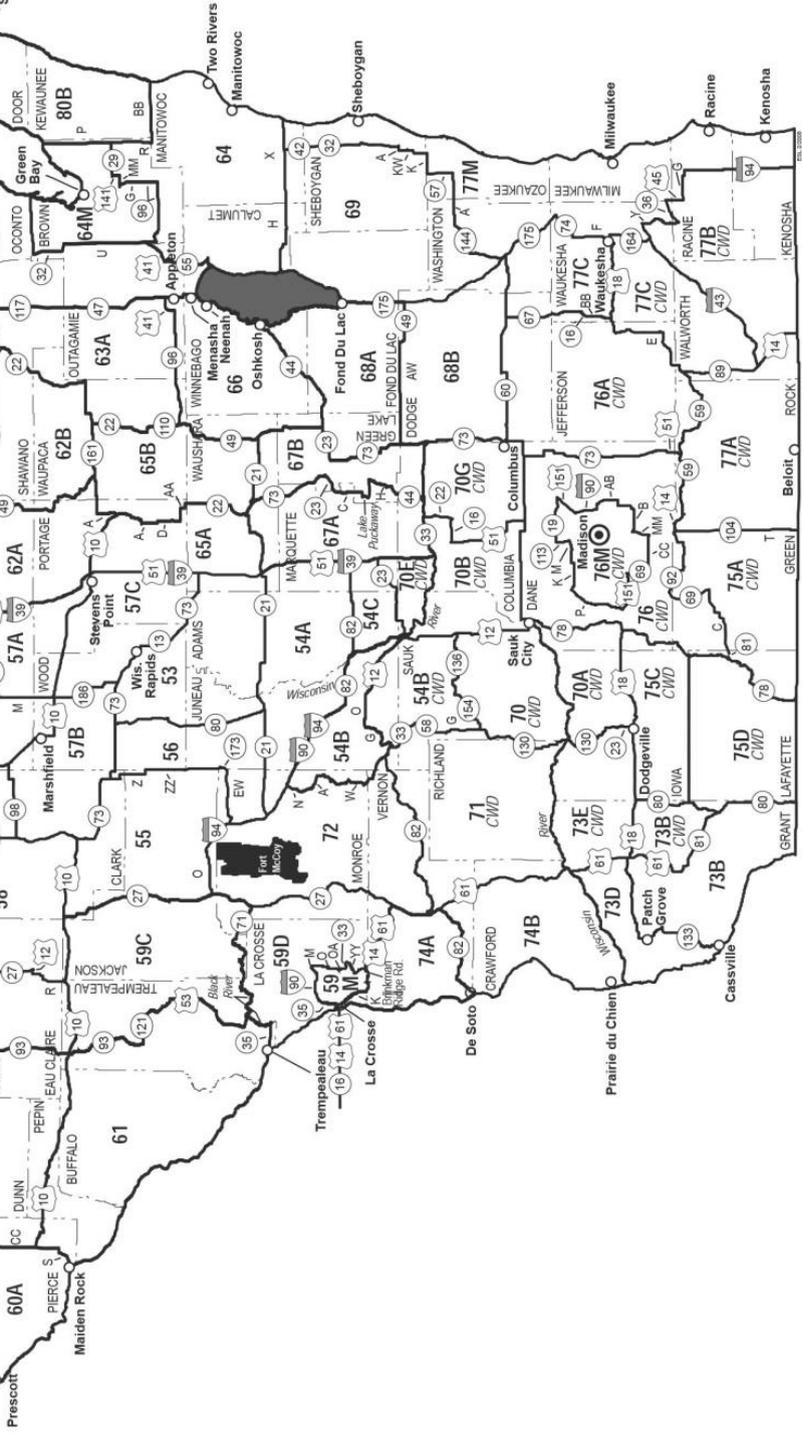
Bobcat

- A bobcat application is still required and must be submitted by Aug. 1.
- Following the drawing for bobcat, all successful applicants will receive a physical permit in the mail. The permit will include a pelt and jaw tag that must be affixed in accordance with instructions provided with the permit.
- You may not possess or have under control any bobcat carcass unless you immediately validate, attach and seal your pelt tag through the opening of the animal's mouth to the opening of its eye, immediately beneath the skin. See instructions on the pelt tag for further details. (Continued on page 18). The pelt and DNR registration tags shall remain attached to the pelt until removed by a fur dresser or taxidermist at time of preparation.

GAME MANAGEMENT UNITS

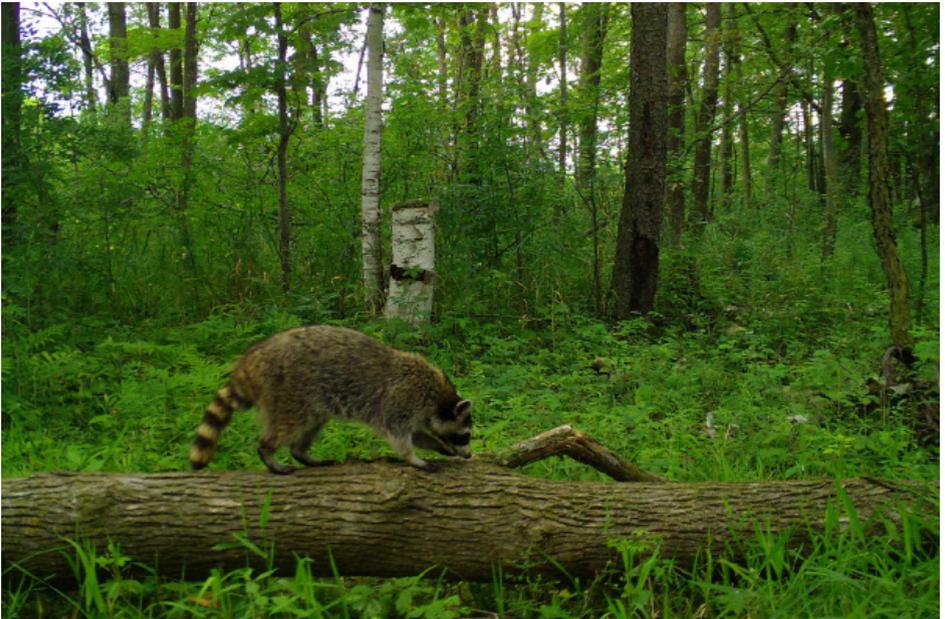
When reporting a bobcat, fisher or otter harvest, trappers and hunters will be asked to determine the game management unit (GMU) of harvest. GMUs are similar to previously-used deer management units and are outlined below. Visit dnr.wi.gov and search “trap” to download a PDF of Wisconsin’s GMUs.





- Harvested bobcat must be registered via GameReg by 5 p.m. the day following recovery. Register online at gamereg.wi.gov (fastest and easiest method) or by phone at 844-426-3734 (844-GAME-REG). Be prepared to indicate which game management unit (page 16) the animal was harvested in.
- In addition, harvested bobcat must be presented to a warden or other approved DNR staff within seven days after the month of harvest to have the pelt certified.
- Before presenting a bobcat pelt to a warden or other approved DNR staff, you must skin the animal and separate the pelt from the carcass. Be sure it is thawed out on the day of certification so that a certification tag can be attached. This does not need to be completed before certification for specimens going to a taxidermist, but you must retrieve the carcass from the taxidermist and deliver it to the DNR within 30 days of registration. **Note:** These animals must still be registered and certified prior to taxidermy. To certify your harvest, contact a conservation warden or other authorized DNR personnel. Visit dnr.wi.gov and search “trap” or call 888-936-7463.
- This year, the department will collect a section of the lower jaw from all bobcat harvested during time period 1.* The remainder of the carcass can be used for personal use or properly discarded. The lower jaw must be removed and placed in a plastic baggie, along with the jaw tag, prior to certification. Specific instructions for cutting the lower jaw and preparing the sample for submission have been mailed to all bobcat trappers and hunters who drew a time period 1 permit. If a full bobcat skull is submitted, it will not be returned by the DNR.

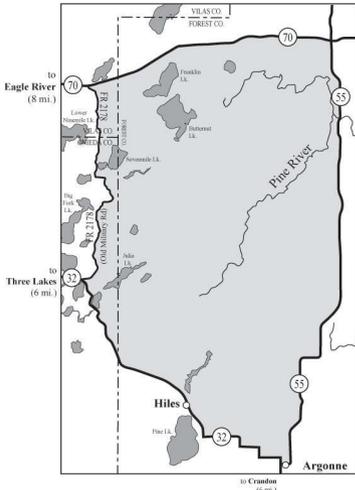
**The carcass and/or lower jaw of bobcat harvested in time period 2 will NOT be collected during the 2023-24 season. The carcass collection schedule will alternate for the 2024-25 season when the department will collect the lower jaws of all bobcat harvested during time period 2, and no lower jaws during time period 1.*



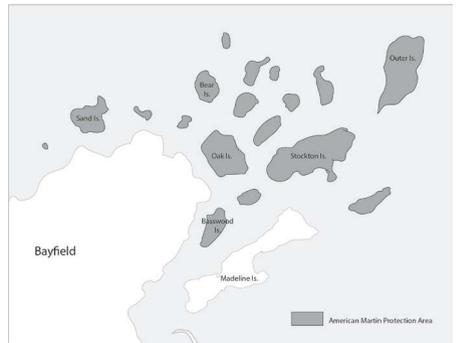
Credit: Snapshot Wisconsin

MARTEN RESTORATION AREAS OPEN TO FORMS OF DRYLAND TRAPPING

In the areas of the Pine River and Clam Lake marten restoration areas (indicated in gray below), cable restraints, cage or box-type traps, weasel boxes with an opening $1\frac{3}{8}$ inches or less and footholds with a pan tension device of four pounds or greater may be used on dryland for species that have an open season. No other traps on dryland are legal within the gray highlighted areas of the Pine River and Clam Lake marten restoration areas.



In the areas indicated in gray on the map of the Apostle Islands to the right, cable restraints and cage or box-type traps may be used on dryland for species that have an open season. No other traps on dryland are legal within the gray highlighted areas of the Apostle Islands marten restoration areas.



PLEASE CONTACT THE DNR ABOUT INCIDENTAL TAKE

The scientific use of these carcasses improves our understanding of these species and the use and/or sale of salvaged pelts improves our trapper education program.

If incidental catch of a protected species occurs, please contact your local conservation warden or call 800-TIP-WDNR (800-847-9367) as soon as possible for instructions on how to release an animal or, if dead, how to transport it to the department. A protected species is any species for which the season is closed, for which there is no open season or for which a person has no possession authority.

Note: American marten are a rare and a state-endangered species. Please call 800-847-9367 to report their restraint and release or incidental take as soon as possible. If you catch a marten in a cage trap, please call 715-365-8856 so that department staff can potentially obtain scientific information about that animal. If you intend to trap near a known marten population, please review the marten brochure. Visit dnr.wi.gov and search "[marten avoidance](#)."

BEAVER

SEASON LIMITS

No bag limit statewide.

SEASON DATES

Zone A: Nov. 4, 2023 – April 30, 2024

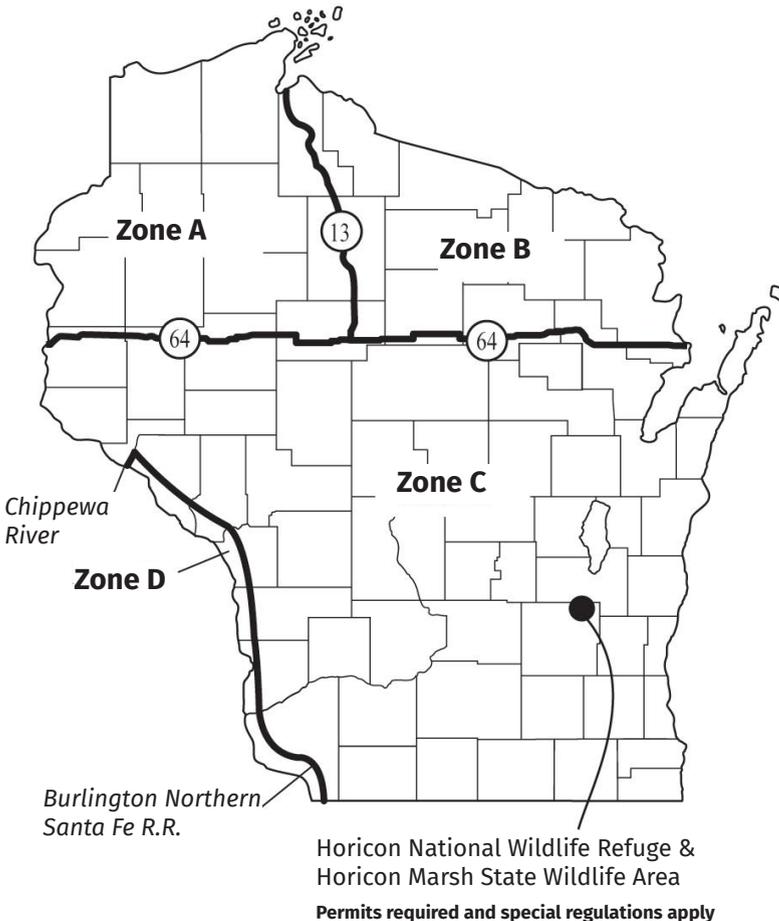
Zone B: Nov. 4, 2023 – April 30, 2024

Zone C: Nov. 4, 2023 – March 31, 2024

Zone D: Dec. 4, 2023 – March 15, 2024

BEAVER DAMAGE CONTROL

Landowners, occupants and family members living with them may hunt or trap beaver on their land at any time without a license and may remove beaver dams without a permit. If beaver are taken by firearm, the landowner, occupant or family member harvesting the beaver must comply with firearm possession and hunting mentorship program restrictions if applicable. See DNR publication WM-007 ([Beaver Damage Control Guidelines](#)), or contact the DNR call center at 888-936-7463 for more information.



FISHER AND OTTER

Fisher permit application deadline: Aug. 1
Otter application no longer required

FISHER

Season Limits

Special zones only by permit(s).

Season Limit: one fisher per permit.

Season Dates

All Zones: Oct. 14, 2023 – Jan. 7, 2024

CARCASS COLLECTION

This year, the department will collect the lower jaw from a subset of harvested fisher. Those trappers randomly selected to provide a jaw sample will be contacted via mail prior to the season. Trappers selected to provide a sample will be supplied with a durable sample ID, envelopes and special instructions for preparing the sample for mailing.

OTTER

Season Limits

One otter per harvest authorization.
Harvest authorizations are valid statewide.

Season Dates

North Zone: Nov. 4, 2023–April 30, 2024

South Zone: Nov. 4, 2023–March 31, 2024

Federal Lands: On federal lands within the Mississippi River Zone (see pages 7 and 24), the otter season does not open until the muskrat and mink seasons open. Federal rules do not allow trapping on federal refuge lands after March 15th.

Private Lands: On private lands within the Mississippi River Zone, the otter season opens and closes with the South Zone (see dates above).

FISHER AND OTTER MANAGEMENT ZONES

Note: Seasons may close early if the harvest quota for that zone is reached before the listed close dates. For zone status, please call the hotline at 855-299-9653 or visit dnr.wi.gov and search “trap.”



Permit application deadline: Aug. 1

Season Limits

Hunting and trapping only allowed by permit. One bobcat per permit.

Season Dates

Period 1: Oct. 14–Dec. 25, 2023

Period 2: Dec. 26, 2023–Jan. 31, 2024

CARCASS COLLECTION

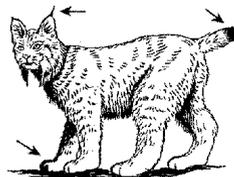
This year, the department will collect lower jaws from all bobcat harvested during time period 1. See page 18 for additional details.

Note: If the annual harvest quota for bobcat is reached before the respective season end date, the season may close early. It is the hunter or trapper's responsibility to determine the status of a bobcat season prior to attempting to hunt or trap in a particular zone. Call the hotline at 855-299-9653 or see dnr.wi.gov and search “[trap](#)” for updates.

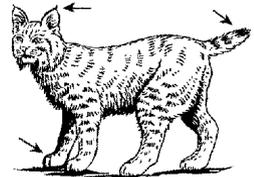


Canada lynx, a rare visitor to Wisconsin, are listed as a threatened species by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Please help us protect this unique animal through your careful observation. See illustrations below. If you observe a Canada lynx, report it immediately at dnr.wi.gov by searching “[Large Mammal Observation](#)” or by contacting the DNR call center at 1-888-936-7463.

Lynx are distinguished from bobcat primarily by the tips of their tails, which are completely black. Only the upper half of the tail tip is black on the bobcat. Lynx also have larger ear tufts, are lighter in coloration, have large, densely furred feet and have less distinct tracks than bobcat.



Lynx



Bobcat

COYOTE, RACCOON, RED AND GRAY FOX

Season Limits

No bag limit statewide.

Season Dates

The following season dates are valid statewide:

Resident Raccoon: Oct. 14, 2023–Feb. 15, 2024

Nonresident Raccoon: Oct. 28, 2023–Feb. 15, 2024

Red and Gray Fox: Oct. 14, 2023–Feb. 15, 2024

Coyote: Oct. 14, 2023–Feb. 15, 2024

Horicon National Wildlife Refuge and Horicon Marsh State Wildlife Area

Trapping at these locations is authorized on a permit system only and special regulations apply. See page 6 for more information.

Mississippi River Zone

See page 24 for a map of the Mississippi River Zone.

Federal Lands: On federal lands within the Mississippi River Zone (see page 7), the coyote, raccoon and fox seasons open when the muskrat and mink seasons open.

Private Lands: On private lands within the Mississippi River Zone, the coyote, raccoon and fox seasons open as listed in the “season dates” section above.

Interference With Trapping

No person may interfere with lawful trapping with the intent to prevent the taking of a wild animal. Harassing wild animals, impeding lawful trappers or disturbing lawfully placed traps, among other actions, may constitute unlawful interference.

Trap And Animal Theft

Stealing or molesting traps, cable restraints, snares, animals or the contents of any lawfully placed trap, cable restraint or snare is a criminal act and is punishable by fine (\$300-\$1,000), imprisonment (up to 90 days) or both and a mandatory 5-year revocation of license.



Credit: Snapshot Wisconsin

MINK AND MUSKRAT

Season Limits

No bag limit statewide.

Season Dates

Northern Zone: Oct. 21, 2023-April 15, 2024

Central Zone: Oct. 28, 2023-March 22, 2024

Southern Zone: Nov. 4, 2023-March 15, 2024

Mississippi River Zone:* Nov. 13, 2023-March 10, 2024

Note: During the closed season for muskrats, licensed trappers may retain for salvage any muskrats taken incidentally while trapping for beaver in the portions of the state open to beaver trapping. See rules listed under “trap size and placement restrictions” on page 8.

*Permits are required and special regulations apply. See page 7 for more information.

MINK AND MUSKRAT MANAGEMENT ZONES



CARCASS DATA COLLECTION

The frequency of carcass and jaw collection varies by furbearer based on the natural history of each species.

This year the DNR will collect a section of lower jaw from bobcats harvested during the first time period of the 2023-24 season at the time of in-person certification. The department collects bobcat tooth samples annually to gather age at harvest information. The DNR will also collect the lower jaws from a subsample of fisher harvested during the 2023-24 season. Trappers selected to provide a sample will be contacted via mail ahead of the season.

The DNR shares samples collected by trappers with cooperating research scientists to improve our understanding and management of furbearers in Wisconsin to ensure healthy populations for the future. Over the past decade, Wisconsin furbearer carcasses have provided crucial data for studies of diet, genetics, parasites, diseases and contaminants of furbearers in the state. We thank everyone who has assisted in this effort, especially hunters and trappers.

TRAPPING IN STATE PARKS

Trapping is allowed in all state parks except Copper Culture, Cross Plains, Governor Nelson, Heritage Hill, Lakeshore and Lost Dauphin state parks, Hank Aaron State Trail, Fischer Creek State Recreation Area, Havenwoods State Forest and Lapham Peak and Pike Lake units of the Kettle Moraine State Forest. A state park sticker or pass is required for all vehicles in any state park. Trappers may enter a state park or state trail property up to one hour prior to sunrise and remain on the property until 11 p.m.

Trapping in state parks is only allowed for species when their season is open and only during either of the following time periods: Nov. 15–Dec. 15, 2023 and April 1–April 30, 2024.

You may not:

- Use traps that are not placed completely under water unless the traps are enclosed trigger traps;
- Set, place or check traps past 11 p.m., remain on the property past 11 p.m. or enter the property prior to an hour before sunrise for the purpose of trapping;
 - Note:** Trappers who are registered campers staying in a designated campsite are not required to leave the campgrounds but may not use other areas of the park after 11 p.m.
- Set, place or check traps located within 100 yards of designated trails or designated use areas such as picnic areas, campgrounds and beaches or in any area in the park closed to trapping indicated on that park's trapping area map; or
- Trap during the closed season for any species.

For more information on regulations specific to state parks and maps of areas open to trapping within individual parks, visit dnr.wi.gov and search "[hunting state parks](#)."

YOUTH SUPERVISED TRAPPING

Youth under age 16 may trap without a license under the supervision of a licensed trapper, even if the youth has not completed trapper education.

Note: Youth who are trapping under supervision may apply for, purchase and use bobcat and fisher trapping permits.

All traps used must be tagged with supervisor's information.

Youths trapping without a license will need to add the otter harvest authorizations in Go Wild (gowild.wi.gov) in order to pursue this species.

Youths under age 16 who wish to trap alone must complete trapper education, purchase a trapping license and tag their traps with metal tags as described on page 26.

MENTORED TRAPPING PROGRAM

Mentored trapping license: \$10

Youth under age 16 do not need a license to trap with a mentor. See youth supervised trapping above.

Anyone age 16 years and older who wishes to trap in Wisconsin and who has not completed trapper education must possess a valid mentored trapping license and trap with a mentor, unless exempt from trapping license requirement. (See page 28 for exemptions).

A mentee may only receive **two mentored trapping licenses per lifetime**. Each trapping license is valid for one trapping season.

A mentee holding a mentored trapping license *may not* receive a fisher harvest tag but may assist the mentor in trapping this species.

A mentee holding a mentored trapping license may still apply for and receive a bobcat harvest tag *if hunting* bobcat, in which case a small game hunting license must also be purchased.

A mentee may apply for bobcat or fisher preference points while holding a mentored trapping license. However, if the mentee applies for the drawing for one of these species and is awarded a permit, the mentee must complete trapper education and purchase a regular trapping license prior to the start of the season before they may trap under the authority of the awarded permit.

If using the same traps, both the mentor and mentee must tag the traps with a metal tag stamped with the name/address or customer ID. This does not apply if the mentee is under age 16. If the mentee alone tags the traps, then the mentee and mentor shall operate the traps only when both mentor and mentee are present.

The mentor must be 18 or older and be the parent/guardian or authorized by the parent/guardian if the mentee is under 18. The mentor must remain in contact with the mentee and must hold a current valid trapping license or be exempt from this requirement.

The mentor can take more than one person trapping provided the mentor can safely and adequately serve as mentor for all mentees.

Regulated Trapping and Social Media

Sharing your enthusiasm for trapping in a positive light is a great way to spread the message that trapping is a fun and beneficial outdoor activity. However, it is important to be thoughtful and considerate when posting trapping-related photos and other content to social media sites. View our brochure on "Regulated Trapping and Social Media." Visit dnr.wi.gov and search "[trapper education course information](#)" for more information.

BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES (BMPS)

Trappers and state wildlife agencies continue to develop best management practices (BMPs) for trapping in the United States. Trapping BMPs are documents that identify techniques and traps that address the welfare of trapped animals and allow for the efficient, selective, safe and practical capture of furbearers. BMPs are methods to improve trapping by developing recommendations using sound science. They are developed through actual field tests and careful data collection. The information is provided to state agencies and trappers for voluntary use in their trapper education and furbearer management programs.

Wisconsin has been a leader in the BMP process since it began in 1997. BMPs are intended to inform people about traps and trapping systems considered to be state-of-the-art in animal welfare and efficiency also explain how some existing traps can be modified to enhance animal welfare. **To date, initial BMP studies and publications have been completed for all Wisconsin species and all furbearers in the lower 48 states.**

A 3-year study out of Wisconsin resulted in the publication **Cable Restraints in Wisconsin – A Guide to Responsible Use (WM-443)** and the legal use of cable restraints in Wisconsin.

PUBLIC IMPRESSIONS OF TRAPPING

In 2016, the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (AFWA), which led the BMP effort, surveyed residents of Connecticut, Indiana and Wisconsin to examine public perceptions of trapping. Not only did we learn that 79% of the Wisconsin public supports regulated trapping, we also discovered a number of messages important to the public. These key messages are:

- **Regulated trapping does not cause wildlife to become threatened or endangered;**
- **Trapping is managed through scientifically based regulations strictly enforced by Wisconsin conservation wardens;**
- **The Wisconsin DNR, with input from stakeholders, continually reviews and develops rules, regulations, education programs and capture methods that consider animal welfare; and**
- **Regulated trapping provides many benefits including reducing wildlife damage to crops and property and reducing threats to human health and safety.**

WHY ARE BMPS NEEDED?

BMPs are needed to:

- Ensure the continued responsible management of wildlife resources;
- Continue the process of improving traps and trapping methods to maintain and improve animal welfare;
- Maintain public acceptance of trapping through a reduction in real and perceived problems associated with trapping; and
- Sustain regulated trapping now and in the future and to maintain the integrity of furbearer management programs throughout the United States.

Regulated trapping will only prosper and continue if the trapping community and natural resource agencies work together to improve harvest systems and promote the humane treatment of animals. Thanks for your support!

TRAPPER EDUCATION COURSE

WISCONSIN COOPERATIVE TRAPPER EDUCATION PROGRAM (WCTEP)

Visit dnr.wi.gov, and search “[trapper ed](#)” for information on the Cooperative Trapper Education Program of the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources and Wisconsin Trappers Association.



WHY TRAPPER EDUCATION?

We believe that trappers create a good image when they engage in responsible and ethical pursuit of our furbearing resource. Trapper education teaches new or inexperienced trappers ethical trapping procedures, the most humane trapping methods, the history of trapping in Wisconsin and North America and basic wildlife management principles. It is also important for trappers to learn and understand the importance of maintaining good relationships with landowners, other outdoor enthusiasts and managers of our natural resources. The Wisconsin trapper education course provides a solid beginning to trapping education, an education you will use everyday on the trapline.

Help Support Trapper Education

The sale or use of fur from incidentally taken furbearers is used to support the trapper education program and educate new trappers. If you trap an animal for which you do not have a permit, please call 800-TIP-WDNR (800-847-9367) for instructions on how to transport the carcass to the DNR.

WHO MUST ATTEND?

All first-time trappers must complete the Wisconsin trapper education course prior to purchasing a trapping license. It is recommended that you be at least 10 years old to attend this class. Class size may be limited, so early registration is recommended. No late applications will be accepted.

Note: You must have a DNR customer ID number prior to the first class. Call 888-936-7463 or visit dnr.wi.gov and search “[Customer ID](#)” to obtain this number.

See youth supervised and mentored trapping details on page 26 for opportunities to trap without trapper education certification. Persons who purchased a Wisconsin trapping license on or before May 12, 1992 or who are actively engaged in farming in Wisconsin as defined by State Statute 102.04(3) and who are current Wisconsin residents are exempt from completing trapper education.

WHERE AND WHEN ARE THE CLASSES HELD?

Classes will be held in communities statewide with each instructor setting their own class schedule. Commonly the course requires 1-2 evening sessions and one weekend day or a full weekend. Class locations are available by searching gowild.wi.gov or by visiting dnr.wi.gov and searching “[trapper ed](#).” Students can register for classes online at instructor’s discretion. Classes are not provided in all counties and size is limited. To search statewide, do not choose a county when prompted to in the Go Wild system. Students can also contact WCTEP District Coordinators for information on classes in their area (see page 31).

WHAT DOES IT COST?

The fee for most courses is \$12. This includes all instructional materials. Some overnight workshops may have a higher fee if meals and lodging are provided.

THE COURSE INCLUDES:

- Trapping history and highlights in wildlife conservation;
- Trapping laws and ethics;
- Trap preparation, adjustment, setting and safety;
- Role of trapping today;
- Principles of wildlife management;
- Humane trapping methods;
- Wetland and upland values;
- Pelt preparation, skinning, grading and marketing;
- Furbearer management, biology and disease; and
- Practice setting dry land sets and water sets.

THE INSTRUCTORS:

Our team of volunteer trapper education instructors has passed background checks and completed our instructor training program. If you are interested in becoming a trapper education instructor, visit dnr.wi.gov and search “[trapper education instructor cubby](#).”

INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS PROVIDED:

A student manual, set of Wisconsin trapping regulations, arm patch and your first year’s trapping license (Wisconsin residents only) are provided to successful graduates of this course.

WHERE CAN YOU FIND MORE INFORMATION AND HOW DO YOU SIGN UP?

Visit dnr.wi.gov and search “[trapper ed](#)” for course dates, times and locations. You may also contact the statewide coordinator or DNR trapper education coordinator at 608-261-6452. Additionally, you can contact the district coordinator for the district in which you live to get details on course dates, times, locations and the name of the instructor nearest you (see map on page 31).

CORRESPONDENCE COURSE AND ONLINE COURSE

A five-week correspondence course is available for students who cannot attend the regular trapper education course. An online course is now also available at a fee of \$12 for residents and \$28 for non-residents.

Wisconsin Residents: The correspondence course is \$12, and there is a \$13 deposit for the NTA handbook. To get started, send a \$25 check or money order payable to WCTEP to: WCTEP, P.O. Box 26, Boscobel, WI 53805.

Nonresidents: The correspondence course is \$28, and there is a \$17 deposit for the NTA handbook. To get started, send a \$45 check or money order payable to WCTEP to: WCTEP, 108 Mary S., Boscobel, WI 53805.

*Fee is subject to change

MORE INFORMATION

Contact Mike Widner at the number or email address on page 30 for information on the correspondence and online course.

TRAPPER EDUCATION COORDINATORS

WCTEP Statewide Coordinator

Jim Binder
E8126 Church Rd.
New London, WI 54961
920-250-2515
wctep1@gmail.com

DNR Statewide Coordinator

Erinn Kiesow-Webb
473 Griffith Ave, Wisconsin Rapids
Wisconsin 54494
608-228-0765
erinn.kiesowwebb@wisconsin.gov

WCTEP Correspondence and Online Course Coordinator

Mike Widner
108 Mary St.
Boscobel, WI 53805
608-356-3621
trappereducation@yahoo.com

Please Note:

Many Trapper Education instructors and coordinators are volunteers and their availability varies. Please be patient when contacting them or trying to enroll in Trapper Education courses.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION FOR TRAPPERS

For more information on furbearer management and trapping issues, visit:

- Wisconsin DNR at dnr.wi.gov and search “[trap](#).”
- Wisconsin Trappers Association (WTA) at www.wistrap.org; and
- Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (AFWA) at www.fishwildlife.org. From the home page, select “furbearer management” under the

Credit: Casey Rustan



Wisconsin women's trap camp is paving the way! Wisconsin hosted the first all immersive trapping camp for women taught by women. Women's trap camp covered everything from water and dry land sets, skinning, tanning, sewing to ethics and ecology. Wisconsin has a rich history of dedicated trapper education instructors passing along their passion and knowledge for 30 years. Wisconsin is constantly innovating new ways to educate future trappers.

If you are considering becoming a trapper education instructor to help pass along the responsible and ethical trapping techniques for which the Wisconsin program is known, please find more information on becoming an instructor at dnr.wi.gov and search “[instructor cubby](#)”

WISCONSIN COOPERATIVE TRAPPER EDUCATION DISTRICTS

District 1

Vacant

District 2

Ed Dubuque
7602 CTY X
Chippewa Falls, WI 54729
715-559-6539
trappered39@gmail.com

District 3

Mike Kortenhof
4033 CTY D
Rhineland, WI 54501
715-272-1358 or
715-482-4447
mkfurshed@hotmail.com

District 4

Shawn Bazile
N11950 CTY E
Tigerton, WI 54486
715-535-2794
fattrapper67@gmail.com

District 5

Junior Prudlick
P.O. Box 505
Strum, WI 54770
715-695-3675
prudlickdj@triwest.net

District 6

Al Nickel
2663 Green Grove Lane
Nekoosa, WI 54457
715-570-8718
afivecents@yahoo.com

District 7

Dennis Halbach
N9202 CTY W
Malone, WI 53049
920-375-0781

Gary Alexander
N5419 HWY 22
Montello, WI 53949
608-369-2010

District 8

Bryce Larson
15816 Lincoln Ave.
Kiel, WI 53042
920-683-8734
brla@tds.net

District 9

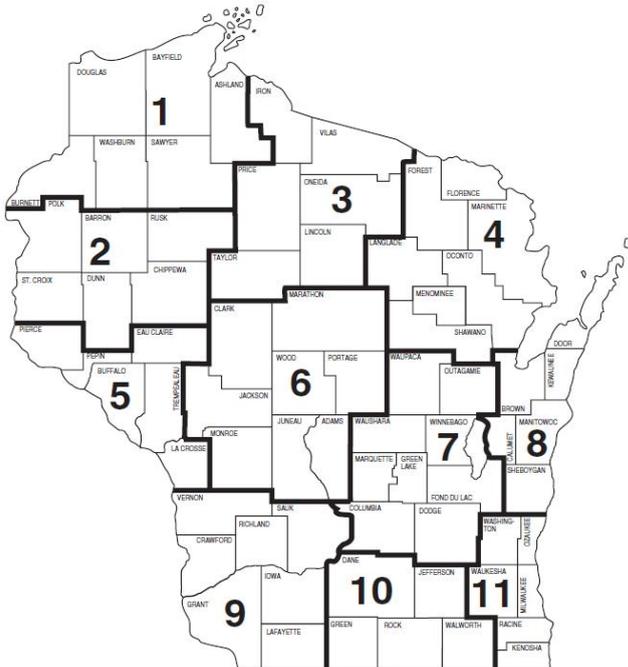
Vacant

District 10

Larry Meyer
11921 E Pioneer Rd
Whitewater, WI 53190
262-903-0798
larrypmeyer@msn.com

District 11

Scott Schoenike
1621 Drexel Blvd.
South Milwaukee, WI 53172
414-704-1596
sschoenike@wi.rr.com



Scan for more information
about trapper education

QUESTIONS?

Visit dnr.wi.gov and search “trap.”

Buy your licenses online at gowild.wi.gov.

Or buy from one of our license agents. To find an agent near you, visit the DNR website at dnr.wi.gov and search “[license agents](#)” or call 1-888-WDNR-INFO.

(1-888-936-7463)

TTY access via relay - 711

General mailing address:
Department of Natural Resources
P.O. Box 7921, Madison, WI 53707

The content of this pamphlet was prepared by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. Part of the printing costs were paid for by:



Wisconsin Trappers Association
P.O. Box 305
Oregon, WI 53575-0305
wistrap.org

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources provides equal opportunity in its employment, programs, services and functions under an Affirmative Action Plan. If you have any questions, please write to Chief, Public Civil Rights, Office of Civil Rights, U.S. Department of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 20240.

This publication is available in alternative format (large print, Braille, etc.) upon request. Please call the Accessibility Coordinator at 608-267-7490 for more information.