

SUMMARY OF WHAT'S NEW for TRAPPING 2018 and 2019 License Years

There are new trapping regulations regarding **1) Mandatory Trapper Education** and **2) Use of Swivels in Ground-set Foothold Traps** that will begin taking effect in 2018 and be phased-in through 2019. These rules apply to furbearers, wolves, coyote, weasel, skunk, fox, badger, and raccoon. Persons trapping species that do not require a license (predators or non-game*) for purposes of livestock or property protection are exempt from both requirements.

1) Mandatory Trapper Education

For the **2018** license year, trappers will be required to have passed a state or provincial-sanctioned Trapper Education Course prior to purchasing a license if they are:

- Purchasing a Montana trapping license for the first time.

For the **2019** license year and beyond, trappers will be required to have passed a state or provincial-sanctioned Trapper Education Course prior to purchasing a license if they are:

- Born after January 1, 1985, or
- Purchasing a Montana trapping license for the first time, or
- Convicted of violating FWP trapping regulations after Aug 10, 2017.

This will apply to all people trapping furbearers or wolves, and to anyone trapping coyote, weasel, skunk, fox, badger or raccoon for recreational purposes. Pelts of coyote, weasel, skunk, fox, badger or raccoon legally obtained while trapping for livestock or property protection can still be sold. It should be noted that furbearers and wolves cannot be legally trapped without a general trapping license.

State-sanctioned trapper education courses from other states and provinces will meet the education requirement. However, Montana's wolf trapping certification does not cover the full-breadth of information that will be covered in the trapper education course and therefore does not fulfill the trapper education requirement. To trap wolves in Montana during the 2017-18 season, a person must have attended and completed either the Idaho or Montana wolf trapping certification class. Beginning in 2018, Montana's new trapper education course will also cover wolf trapping, and there will not be a separate wolf trapping course.

Houndsmen and others hunting bobcats, who will not otherwise be trapping, although required to buy a trapping license, are not required to attend mandatory trapper education.

2) Minimum of two (2) Swivels in Ground-set Foothold Traps

Beginning with the 2019 trapping season, all ground-set foothold traps set for furbearers or wolves, and traps set by recreational trappers for coyote, weasel, skunk, fox, badger or raccoon will be required to have a near-center swivel and an additional chain swivel.

**Classification of Species by Montana Statute:*

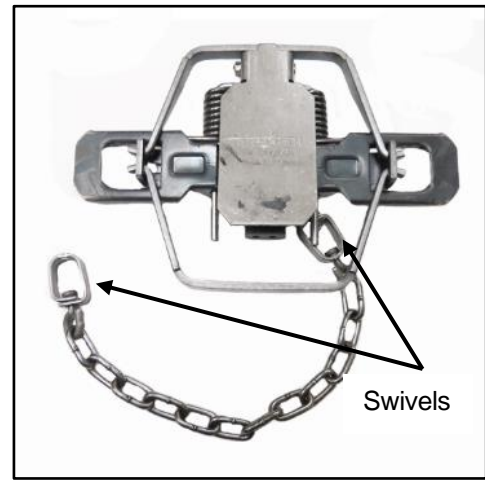
- *Furbearers – beaver, muskrat, bobcat, lynx, wolverine, fisher, marten, otter, mink, and swift fox.*
- *Predators – coyote, weasel, skunks.*
- *Non-game – Any wild animal not otherwise legally classified by statute or regulation in Montana. Examples are red fox, badger, raccoon, squirrels, porcupines, marmots, hares, and rabbits.*

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Swivels for Ground-set Foothold Traps

Minimum of Two Swivels

Swivels allow rotation and greatly enhance freedom of movement thereby reducing injury and increasing comfort of trapped animals. Swivels also reduce damage to fur and equipment. At minimum, a trap must be equipped with at least two swivels: 1) a center or base-plate swivel located on the underside of the trap as close to the center as the trap design reasonably allows, and 2) another swivel located near the opposite end of the chain. Quality swivels capable of holding the largest species that might be captured are critical.



General Structure of Montana's Trapper Education Course

Goal: To field ethical trappers who are well-prepared to trap safely, humanely, and effectively.

Timing of Implementation

First-time purchasers of a Montana trapping license will be required to have passed a state or provincial-sanctioned trapper education course prior to purchasing a license beginning with the 2018 season. Persons born after January 1, 1985 or who are convicted of trapping violations after Aug. 10, 2017 will be required to have passed a state or provincial-sanctioned trapper education course prior to purchasing a license beginning with the 2019 season.

Delivery

The course will be delivered in two stages, 1) a "Basics Course" and 2) a "Field Day Course" that focuses on active, hands-on participation and peer-to-peer interactions. Ethics will be emphasized in both stages. The Basics Course will be available either online or hard copy. The Basics Course will require students to read materials and pass a test, and must be completed prior to participating in the Field Day Course. The Basics Course will provide students with a general understanding of all topics so that the instructor's time and hands-on expertise during the field course can be used more efficiently. The Basics Course could be completed at home at the student's convenience.

A one-day Field Course will be offered in each FWP region annually, and require the student to travel to a specific location on a weekend. July and August are the targeted dates for field courses, but willing and certified volunteer instructors could offer classes at any time of year. Field Day Courses will be team-taught by at least two Certified Volunteer Instructors. Course sign-up will be administered by FWP using

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an online system. A paper hard copy registration option will be available. Certificates of completion will be issued upon successful completion of the Field Day Course.

Volunteer Instructor Certification Requirements

- Submission of the Trapping Instructor Application Form.
- Adult instructors must be at least 18-years-old; Junior instructors at least 14-years-old.
- Successfully pass a background check (Junior instructors excepted)
- Verification that the applicant has reviewed Trapper Education Program Policy and Procedures Manual.
- Complete an online training course designed to help new instructors learn effective teaching styles and methods. This course typically takes 3-5 hours and can be completed incrementally at the person's own pace. The online course is meant to establish a base knowledge for the volunteer instructor to build instructional skills. Each Instructor will develop a personal teaching style while incorporating the skills and methods from the online training.
- Applicants have one year to complete the online training. However, we recommend this be completed as soon as possible after receiving the initial acceptance letter.
- Complete a trapper education course, apprentice-teach with a certified instructor for at least 2 full trapper education courses and be recommended for certification by that instructor.
- Once certified and to remain so, an instructor must teach or assist in at least one class during any consecutive two-year time period.
- Attend the annual spring workshop like those for hunter/bowhunter instructors hosted by FWP in the area.

Volunteer Instructors

We expect enough qualified volunteer trapper instructors will be available within each FWP region each year (minimum of 14, with 2 from within each FWP region). If at some point there are not enough volunteer instructors, FWP would be obligated to provide classes. This could necessitate FWP personnel be certified with appropriate training, certification, and budget. If faced with an instructor shortage, FWP could be forced to an online-only course.

Trapping Basics Course Elements

The Basics Course and Test will be available on-line or by hard copy and can be completed at the student's convenience.

- Trapping Ethics and Responsibility
- History and Benefits of Trapping
- The Trapper's Role in Wildlife Conservation
- Trapping Equipment
- Montana's Furbearers
- Trapping Sets (Land and Water)

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- Humane Treatment of Animals
- Running a Trapline
- Diseases, Parasites, and Safety
- Caring for Fur
- Trapping Regulations
- Trapping Legislation and FWP Commission Processes
- Representing Trappers to the Public

Field Day Course Elements

The Field Day Course will be approximately 8 hours and will be conducted in-person.

- Trapping Ethics and Responsibility
- Furbearer Habitats, Sign and Behaviors
- Trapping Equipment and Use, Humane Standards, Anchors
- Trapping Sets (Land and Water)
- Avoiding Non-target Catches, including dogs
- Checking Traps in a Timely Manner
- Caring for Fur and Fur Sales
- Representing Trappers to the Public