Public Comments

01. Archery Deer Hunting Season

/201		

Kurt Rahlf

Mobridge SD starky069@yahoo.com

Comment:

I think starting sept 1 is a great idea

5/7/2018

Daniel Amen

Rapid City SD dakotainc@gmail.com

Comment:

I do think this is a good idea and support this proposal.

5/7/2018

Dylan Marsh

Sioux Falls SD mmarshalldylan@aol.com

Comment:

I highly agree with the state date of Sept 1st. Gives you a chance to harvest a velvet buck and hunt a buck without pheasant hunters running them all over.

Roger Heintzman

Aberdeen SD r_heintzman@hotmail.com

Comment:

I support the changes or all above listed proposals to be finalized June 7th.

5/7/2018

Andrew Erickson

Centerville SD andrew_erickson_23@hotmail.com

Comment:

No comment text provided.

5/7/2018

Josiah Christoffer

Sioux Falls SD josiahchristoffer@gmail.com

Comment:

I would love to see this change. I am surely not abreast of the potential drawbacks of a start date move, but I do feel it would greatly increase my chance of success. I would much rather hu

James Cantalope

Eureka SD cantajam@yahoo.com

Comment:

I support a start date of Sept 15, which would be the start date every year, just due to the youth and resident pheasant seasons kicking in earlier on public ground then the reg season opener, gives a few more days to hunt before pheasant hunters take to the field. Thank you!!!

5/7/2018

Timothy Moore

SD

Comment:

No comment text provided.

5/7/2018

Dan Kavanaugh

Pillager MN Dan@dankavanaugh.com

Comment:

I am very supportive or at Archery opener sept 1st \dots I spend money in ND every year to hunt early season deer and Now would go to SD

Joseph Kavanaugh

Denver CO jkavanaugh@skybridgeresources.c om

Comment:

Another great way to generate license fees for outdoors man and women who would like a chance to harvest a velvet buck.

5/7/2018

Jeremiah Johnson

Sioux Falls SD Jeremiah_j77@hotmail.com

Comment:

This would be a great change, especially as it pertains mule deer hunting.

5/7/2018

Andy Viet

Sioux Falls SD Aviet88@hotmail.com

Comment:

No comment text provided.

5/7/2018
Neil Hylla
Gregory SD neilhylla@hotmail.com
Comment:
I really can not see a reason not to allow archery season to open sept 1st. Our neighboring states are doing this and having some success bringing in hunters for an opportunity to harvest a velvet deer. The early season will also give archery hunters more time to spend archery hunting and still enjoy all of the other hunting seasons that the fall offers.
5/7/2018
Damon Brueggemen
Miller SD
Comment:
I think it would be great!

Aaron Glasford

Aberdeen SD aglasford@hotmail.com

Comment:

Would put us like States around us.definitely a good idea.

Lee Nelson

Rapid City SD leemnelson@hotmail.com

Comment:

No comment text provided.

5/7/2018

Dave Kavanaugh

East Gull Lake MN Dave@kavanaughs.com

Comment:

No comment text provided.

5/7/2018

Bryan Vyhlidal

Harrisburg SD bvyhlidal@yahoo.com

Comment:

- -Lengthen the season 3 weeks.
- -This would no longer combine Archery Deer Opener with either Youth Duck Opener -or- Duck Opener in some zones.
- -Nebraska and North Dakota open on September 1. This opening date would give Archery hunters the possible opportunity at harvesting a velvet buck. Thank you for your time! BryanV

Collin Rhine

Philip SD Collin.rhine@state.sd.us

Comment:

I would like to strongly encourage the commission to allow archery season to begin on September 1. I was very opposed to ending the deer seasons on January 1, so this would make up for some of the time that was lost. I think this could possibly create more opportunity for people to hunt before it gets cold and to allow for a different hunting experience a few weeks earlier than in the past. I Strongly encourage the commission to allow this.

5/8/2018

Robert Wright

Sioux Falls SD robert.wright@augie.edu

Comment:

This is a fantastic idea. I would just remind y'all to think about other dates, like the start and take down dates for putting up blinds and stands. Maybe Aug. 15 to Jan. 15? This change also might suggest moving up the dove dates from Aug. 15 to say the start of pheasant season. Many doves flee the prairie in early Sept. it seems, if we get cold nights, which we often do that time of year. There would be less friction between dovers and archers starting on the same morning.

5/8/2018

Guy Bennett

Rapid City SD guy.bennett@rcgov.org

Comment:

I think this is a great idea. It will bring us closer to the other western states on season openers. It will also be a chance to get new hunters out hunting in very enjoyable weather conditions.

Kevin Bruzelius

Pierre SD kevin.bruzelius@state.sd.us

Comment:

Would also like to see it go thru the end of Jan.

5/8/2018

Matthew Werpy

Rapid City SD Mattwerpy@gmail.com

Comment:

This change would allow for increased opportunity for archery hunters across the state. It will also help to get new hunters involved as weather is more favorable this time of year as opposed to late season opportunities allowing for more positive hunting experiences for these new hunters.

5/8/2018

Adam Newman

Rapid City SD Adampaulnewman@me.com

Comment:

I would actually support starting it earlier on the last Saturday of August because out of state hunters that also hunt surrounding states that All start sept 1 would start in SD bringing more revenue to SD.

Stephanie Newman
Rapid City SD Stephnewman@me.com
Comment:
No comment text provided.
5/8/2018
Adam Newman
Rapid City SD Jerrynewman@ymail.com

Comment:

5/8/2018

Chad Mccreight

Lincoln NE Cmccreight@neb.rr.com

No comment text provided.

Comment:

I would come to SD every year and hunt deer if I could pursue them in the velvet.

Brett Johnson
Rapid City SD Brett_mjohnson@yahoo.com
Comment:
I support the Sept 1 opener for archery deer.
5/8/2018
Zach Hawkins
Zacii Hawkiiis
Sioux Falls SD
Comment:
Earlier archery season makes sense and is inline with other neighboring states.
5/8/2018
Rusty Lytle
Wall SD
Comment:
We already have a lot of pressure from hunters driving down our roads and we are still irrigating until the middle of October and our pivots cross the road. No trespassing and road closed signs seem not to make a difference. We don't need to have to patrol for another month.

Rapid City SD
Comment: This is important because of the early start date of youth seasons.
5/9/2018
Quintin Biermann Rapid City SD Quintin.biermann@hotmail.com
Comment: September 1 opener would be great. Please institute draw for nonresidents.
5/9/2018
Brian Barnes
Rapid City SD brianbarnes1996@gmail.com
Comment:
Sept 1 is an optimum time to open the Archery Deer Season, it opens up a very congested fall hunting season. Allows a completely different hunting experience for even seasoned archery hunters. The more opportunities the state can create to get people hunting the better. Our neighbor to the North have been cashing in on this early archery season for years. Drawing in hunters nation wide to get a jump start to the fall Warm weather and velvet clad bucks lure hunters by the 100s.

Larry Hannan

5/9/2018

Justin Allen

Pierre SD

Comment:

Dear Commissioners.

I'm writing today with comments, concerns and statistics on archery season dates, license allocation and harvest. First off I do not support an earlier archery season opener and believe the opening day should remain as is. The season is long enough as is if not too long already. As a bow hunter for over 20 years I have become very concerned with archery harvest and pressure over the last 10 years plus in many portions of the state. I believe many GFP staff members realized this but ultimately it is the commission that finalizes these changes. Looking at harvest stats several counties in SD have higher archery buck harvest then by firearm. Counties would include Minnehaha, Codington, Brookings (within 10%), Yankton, Lake. In my opinion mule deer harvest by archery in counties in West Sully, Stanley, Custer National Forest and Black Hills is a huge concern as well. Firearm deer harvest in last 10 years has decreased by 60%, in the same time archery harvest has only decreased by roughly 15%. Modern bows have more hunters in the field for more days while being able to take longer more accurate shots which in turn have increased harvest and harvest success rates dramatically. There has been a large decrease in firearm deer licenses and ultimately hunting opportunity in the last 10 years, however, at the same time archery hunters have had to make little to no sacrifice to lower deer numbers. I hate to say it but maybe archery hunters have had it way too good for way too long? Opening the bow season any earlier will only increase harvest by bow and increase licenses sales for NR hunters that already flood SD to bow hunt as is. I'm guessing the only reason some want to open the season earlier is the chance they can shoot a velvet buck. Personally that seems like a bad management reason to increase the season length. 4 months to bow hunt is crazy IMO. Many are concerned there is too much pressure of deer overall but we are talking about one of the most liberal bow seasons in the country? Trying to increase deer numbers across SD but going to have 4 month bow season? Trying to manage mule deer harvest and everyone is talking to many NR bow hunters but we are talking about a 4 month bow season? Overhunted public lands but a 4 month bow season? Please do not move the bow season any earlier than it already is to please a few that just want to kill a velvet buck. Archery hunting is/has become too popular and hunters have become too efficient at killing deer not to be regulated basically at all in South Dakota.

Additionally, I believe several changes need to be made when it comes to archery licenses allocations. Counties along the Missouri River have extreme pressure by NRs and residents on public land for 3 straight months (hopefully not 4 months). Judging by harvest stats I can assume many other counties are the same. Many of these counties in question are extremely tough to draw any deer firearm licenses taking 3-4 plus years to draw. I find it tough to swallow waiting 3-5 years for a tag when archery licenses and harvest is totally unregulated in the same unit as those extremely tough to draw firearm units. In turn I would support some limited draw bow areas throughout the state. You can't call a unit limited access for firearm season when it isn't limited to all type of deer hunting. I would also support an overall 8% license allocation (8% of previous year resident archery license sales) for limited draw Non-resident archery tags; these would be statewide tags except the limited access units. I support only allowing one statewide any deer license, eliminating allowing residents to obtain both an east and west river any deer licenses. Counties across the state have slashed buck tag licenses but archery hunters are still living in the glory years, I really think certain portions of the state need have some reduction in pressure and harvest by archery hunters.

Thank you for time, Justin Allen Pierre, SD

5.0.25.15
Randy Routier
Buffalo SD
Comment:
It would not only create more archery deer hunting opportunities but also combo archery deer and archery antelope hunting. More income for the state and mor
5/9/2018
Andrew Ward
MN
Comment:
More opportunity, travel, tourism that flows through to the local/state economies and harvest rate is low enough during archery seasons that it won't meaningfully impact game populations
5/9/2018
Scott Guffey
Rapid City SD guffeyscott@gmail.com
Comment:
I am opposed to moving the archery deer start to September 1st. If you do move forward with this change, I would encourage the commission to keep the start date the same or move it to October 1st for the Black Hills

National Forest and Custer National Forest, because of the archery/firearm elk hunters. Most of the elk hunters have waited a long time to finally draw a SD elk tag and most will draw maybe two in there lifetime. With elk tags being such a coveted tag, there is no need to have archery deer hunters on the national forests

5/9/2018

conflicting with the elk hunters.

5/9/2018

Meghan Biermann

Rapid City SD Meghan_2012@hotmail.com

Comment:

I support moving the bow opener up to September 1st. I also support limiting non resident bow tags with a lottery option.

5/10/2018

Marc Moore

Custer SD Carrieknows02@goldenwest.net

Comment:

Current archery deer season starting in the third week in September is sufficient. The question I would ask is what would be the impact of changing that season to an earlier date on deer populations?

5/13/2018

Eric Stiefvater

Belle Fourche SD edshusker@yahoo.com

Comment:

I strongly support an archery deer start date of September 1st. Thanks

Cody Ruml

Letcher SD codyruml1998@gmail.com

Comment:

Would be awesome to be given the chance to hunt early season velvet bucks with archery equipment. I feel it will be very popular and bring more people into the sport.

5/14/2018

Andrew Krier

Harrisburg SD andrewckrier@gmail.com

Comment:

I fully support changing the archery opening date to September 1st. It gives hunters a better opportunity at filling their tag with a velvet buck, a deer many hunters dream of shooting. With this change I also propose closing all deer seasons not to re-open after December 31st. If the opening date is changed, please consider adding a restriction for bucks only until a certain date to prevent does with fawns getting shot. Thank you for your consideration.

5/14/2018

Sean Newberg

Parker SD newbergsean92@gmail.con

Comment:

I believe changing the deer archery opening date to Sept 1 would not only provide hunters with more time to harvest deer but would allow youth/new hunters a more enjoyable experience as well without having to sit in the extreme cold. By allowing more time to harvest deer it would also help balance the herd letting hunters pass on immature deer to harvest a mature deer creating a more enjoyable experience and a healthier Deer herd in the process by making a better structure.

Mark Smedsrud

Sioux Falls SD Maksmedsrud@msn.com

Comment:

I would support this proposal on one condition. We need to have a limited draw for non-residents. We are starting to see an influx of nonresidents because of our liberal archery season license draw. I compete every year with NR on public ground in spot and stalk situations. Every year I seem to encounter more. With our liberal tags and numerous hunting shows advertising this fact I'm afraid it will limit resident opportunities, especially for the chance at shooting bucks in velvet. Please reconsider the early date in regards to the increase in nonresident licenses.

5/14/2018

Chris Medill

Aberdeen SD chrismedill@yahoo.com

Comment:

I would really like to see the start date changed to Sept. 1. I am primarily a archery hunter, and I would love to see SD start the same time as a lot of the other western states. I also see this as an advantage as I would now be able to hunt deer during their summer patterns.

5/14/2018

Wade Harkema

Volga SD Wharkema68@gmail.com

Comment:

Please do not move the archery deer season to September 1st. As an archery and rifle hunter I don't think it is right to keep expanding archery hunting while limited draw rifle deer licenses are getting harder to get.

Brian Hansen

Bath SD

Bhansen@northernelectric.coop

Comment:

I would love to see the season start earlier. Many of the Western States have their season start the 1st of the month and allows archers a better chance for early season deer.

5/14/2018

Lester Roggenbauer

Elk Point SD roggenbauer@gmail.com

Comment:

Open Sep. 1st for Resident Only, this would provide SD residents greater opportunity to harvest a "velvet" buck and hunt public ground before the non-resident migration. I would also support capping NR tags.

5/14/2018

Jamea Nelson

Rapid City SD James.nelson1@coldwellbanker.co m

Comment:

This is great for Sd residents to have a chance at a velvet buck. But this could bring problems with more non residents coming in and over hunting our public ground. The non resident tags should have a draw or their season should stay the same as it is now and give residents first chance at harvesting deer and hunting our public ground.

Nate Baumgarn

Webster SD natin02@hotmail.com

Comment:

I'd like to comment saying I would support a Sept. 1 archery opener. I believe in rewarding SoDak citizens by giving them a unique opportunity in their home state. For me, that opportunity is having a chance to harvest a mature velvet buck. A coworker and mine are currently looking to spend thousands of dollars on a Nebraska outfitter for the chance at a velvet mule deer. If South Dakota opened earlier, we would gladly spend that \$4,000 in state. However, I do believe the Non Resident tags would increase, and cause more pressure. I would love the idea of September 1 Opener, and hope it works out. Thanks for your time!

5/14/2018

Christian Mchugh

Mobridge SD cmchugh@jacks.sdstate.edu

Comment:

I am in favor of a September 1st archery opener to give those who are true archery hunters an opportunity to chase a deer in velvet. However, Some of the precautions that worry me are the amount of both residents and nonresidents that will be hammering away at mulies when they are very vulnerable in velvet. A suggestion would be to flirt with the idea of maybe a permit that one can acquire every 4 years maybe...put some form of a cap on it. Could keep archery season the same dates...then a free application for a permit to have one month earlier dates. It could be acquired the same way that the Custer State Park lion permits are. Free, but it is a way to regulate the access. Also, odds are there will be more people, especially nonresidents that will pursue velvet deer, so will an earlier success on one tag give them more reason or incentive to shoot another in a different location (ie, East River Archery and West River Archery). As always, we want to increase opportunity without it having a negative impact on the wildlife.

Branden West

SD

tbwest@gwtc.net

Comment:

Season dates for deer should coincide with better management practice for the purpose of herd health. As in (all) doe seasons should be in October. Why you may ask? This is when they will wean their young and be prior to being breed. Next rifle deer season should not start before 12/1. Why? Because this gives your healthy mature bucks the opportunity to breed the majority of the does. Mostly all common sense!

5/14/2018

Nick Welch

Mccook Lake SD Vmax508502@aol.com

Comment:

I am supporting the archery deer September 1st start proposal. I have kids and getting them out in the warmer nicer weather really helps with getting them involved. I would like to thank you very much for the consideration.

5/14/2018

Matt Fonder

Aberdeen SD mfondu@yahoo.com

Comment:

I believe our archery season is sufficient the way it is. I have been archery hunting South Dakota for decades, and am concerned that this proposal, if implemented, could have unintended consequences that would affect the future of archery hunting and deer hunting overall in SD. I might consider supporting it if there were non-resident license caps and "no public land" (like the Special Buck tags) attached to these early tags. At least for the month of September. Thank you for your time and consideration!

5/15/2018

Rick Hanger

Sioux Falls SD hangfire49@sio.midco.net

Comment:

I probably wouldn't hunt so early in the year due to heat and mosquitoes. I am not opposed to it for those that may like or need the early season. I do however think there should be some restrictions. Perhaps resident only for the first three weeks of the season. Similar to the resident only early hunts for pheasant. I also feel the non resident tags should be a limited draw and higher priced. Unlimited non residents chasing velvet bucks could be a detriment to the quality and quantity of opportunities for residents.

5/15/2018

Andrew Krier

Harrisburg SD Andrewckrier@gmail.com

Comment:

I fully oppose allowing archery hunters to carry firearms while archery hunting. As much as I would love to trust the honor system, this would only make it much easier for "hunters" or "poachers" in my opinion to fill two tags with their rifle. I encourage you to keep the law as is!

5/15/2018

Conner Mesman

Sioux Falls SD

Comment:

No comment text provided.

5/15/2018

Jim Bjoekmann

Howard SD

Comment:

Please oppose this change. Starting the archery season earlier will only increase NR pressure and lead to more conflict. The Commission just took away days at the end of the season because landowners felt that hunting seasons were too long. Now you guys and gals are trying to add more days on the front? Doesn't make any sense! Please keep the current start date and oppose this change. Thank you for your time.

5/16/2018

Nathan Lukkes

Pierre SD lukkesn@hotmail.com

Comment:

It would be nice to have an opportunity at a velvet buck in my home state as opposed to having to travel out of state where they have earlier season dates.

5/16/2018

Craig Niemann

Volga SD craigniemann2018@gmail.com

Comment:

I fully support moving Statewide Archery Tag to September 1st. Leaving the East and West river archery tags the 4th Saturday of September.

Reasons I support this:

- 1. Opportunity to chase a velvet buck
- I say opportunity because while I would like to chase a big mule deer in velvet; I have a real problem only buying one tag for the year. I most likely would wait till the 4th Saturday an get an east and west river tag. Others only get a statewide tag and would probably choose to hunt Sept. 1st.
- 2. Makes the person wanting to hunt earlier choose to have 1 state wide archery tag or 2 tags; one each for east and west river.
- 3. Not many people will get out and hunt September 1st because it is still hot, humid, and full of mosquitoes.
- 4. Gives archery hunters an opportunity to hunt before duck opener. Duck opener is the 4th Saturday of September. Good public deer hunting lands become not good deer hunting because the shotguns start banging the same morning we have first crack with the bow.
- 5. Just another way to improve the deer hunting opportunity in the best state to deer hunt in the USA.

Thank you for hearing my comments. Thank you also for the supreme deer management in the state, In my opinion South Dakota is the best state for consistent deer hunting opportunity. The variety of seasons and dates. The abundance of left over tags and specialty preference point draw tags. The states aggressive reaction to disease kills; buying back licenses or not issuing any. The habitat of both public and private land. All of this is why I continue to take pride in this state.

Thank you,

Craig Niemann

5/17/2018

Nicholas Renemans

Fort Pierre SD

Comment:

I completely support moving the archery season to start Sept 1st. There are several surrounding states that already go by these season start dates. I think it's fine to end it earlier. It would be fine to end it before Jan 1.

5/17/2018

Clint Barber

SD

Clint.barber@jacks.sdstate.edu

Comment:

I'm in support of the proposed earlier archery season date change, of September 1st. I feel it would be a unique opportunity to create a more competitive balance between rifle hunters and bow hunters in South Dakota. The earlier date would give more time to bow hunters, and in return give them better opportunities to harvest a quality buck, rather than just any buck, later on in the season. A lot of bow hunters struggle having early season success, and by the time the most opportune time (the rut) comes, both West river & East river rifle seasons are underway. Also, a lot of other states have looser regulations, example; crossbow hunting for all individuals during archery only, and baiting. I'm not in favor of looser regulations equipment wise, or baiting, just citing other states, and how I feel just a date change wouldn't hurt our quality or quantity of the deer herd. With all that said I love the opportunities South Dakota Deer hunting brings to the table, and only want this change if it doesn't impact other resident tag regulations in the state. Would also like if this was open for resident only, for the September 1st opening, at least for the trial run of the earlier date. This opinion is due to a possible larger number of out of state interest, and added pressure on public lands. Thank you for the consideration.

5/22/2018

Mike Wilson

West Branch IA
Bison4me@icloud.com

Comment:

Fully support, provides an opportunity for a velvet hunt. In fact, why not make it easy and open it concurrently with archery antelope season?

Rapid City SD
Comment:
As an avid bow hunter I'm 100% against opening the bow season earlier. The season is plenty long already if not too long. Deer in SD already get enough hunting pressure lets not increase it. Leave the opening date as is.
5/25/2018
Renee Allen

I oppose the earlier start date for bow. Already to much pressure on public lands around the Missouri River by resident and NR bow hunters. To add more days, pressure and harvest by bow hunters while at the same time gun tags/licenses have been slashed over the last 5 years seems a bit greedy and like bad

5/23/2018

Pierre SD

Comment:

management. Leave start date as is.

Paul Johnson

5/30/2018

Brian Hansen

Bath SD bhansen@northernelectric.coop

Comment:

I agree with the proposed date change for the archery season to become September 1st. I think we should take a strong look at making this a residents only archery season. Other hunters like myself like to hunt west river or east river but I know in most areas which are public hunting are filled with many out of staters. I like many other hunters do not have access to much if any private ground and it can be very overwhelming to see all the out of state pickups in some of my favorite spots. I think the rule change would be a big positive for South Dakota hunting but I would personally like to see this become a residents only season as well. This would give the in staters, taxpayers and also sportsmen that hold multiple licenses in this state an ample opportunity to hunt some unpressured deer.

Thanks for taking time to hear the voices of south dakota sportsmen, Brian Hansen

5/30/2018

Curtis Kline

Aberdeen SD cjkline2870@gmail.com

Comment:

Dear Commission,

I support changing the start of the Archery Deer Season to Sept 1st. I feel there are two very legitimate reasons for making this change.

The first reason is the expanded opportunity that it gives SD hunters. South Dakota has fantastic opportunities for hunters. Big game, upland birds, and waterfowl are on many hunters to do list in the fall. The downside is that many times the best and most productive time for each of these seasons overlap each other. Forcing the hunter to choose one species and forego other hunting opportunity.

By starting the Archery Deer season Sept. 1st hunters will have ample time to spread out their hunting seasons. Thus giving more time later in the fall to enjoy other pursuits as well.

The second reason I support starting the Archery Deer Season Sept. 1st is it will improve the quality of archery hunts on public land. As stated above some of best archery hunting occurs when waterfowl and pheasant seasons overlap. It is highly unlikely that an archery deer hunter is going to negatively impact another parties waterfowl or pheasant hunt who may be hunting the same piece of public property. However, a party of pheasant hunters or waterfowler's can easily diminish an archery deer hunters chance of a quality hunt very quickly if hunting the same piece of public property.

The way the season structure is set up now many times archery season and duck season open the same weekend. By opening the archery deer season Sept. 1 it gives archery deer hunters time to enjoy public land hunts with less interference from waterfowl and pheasant hunters.

Thank you for the consideration,

Curtis Kline Aberdeen SD

5/30/2018

Joshua Hagemann

Mission Hill SD Jghagemann@hotmail.com

Comment:

I have been in support of this change for a long time. It's hard to pattern a deer as more crops start coming out of the fields and as more of the other firearm seasons (duck, youth deer, pheasant, etc) get underway. This would give archers a chance to use all of the information we have gathered from scouting all summer long before the harvest and shotgun blasts change the deer's routine.

Thank you, Josh Hagemann

5/31/2018

Daniel Morrison

Britton SD

Comment:

I believe this is a wonderful proposal for deer hunters in South Dakota. Opportunity for hunters is always welcomed by sportsmen, the opening date proposed would also allow archers to have a slight chance at harvesting a buck still sporting it's velvet. I believe this proposal has no consequence on the deer population in this state and not adopting this proposal would be a mistake.

6/1/2018

William Schwarz

Brookings SD schwarz.billy@gmail.com

Comment:

Archery deer starting on sept 1 would be awesome. Scientifically it has been proven to not be a negative on populations and gives hunters more opportunity.

6/1/2018

Tom Jensen

Harrisburg SD Tom.I.Jensen@wellsfargo.com

Comment:

Please forward as appropriate, this message in support of approving a change in SD archery season to open earlier, such as Sept 1st.

Strongly support this measure, feel it is a great move to keep hunters in the state of SD during that time, versus surrounding states with similar opening dates.

6/3/2018

Julie Anderson

Rapid City SD signsofhope@rap.midco.net

Comment:

Archery season in South Dakota does not need to be extended. People who oppose hunting are being excluded in this amendment. It is cruel enough without adding 2 weeks.

Russ Roberts

St Onge SD wgo@mato.com

Comment:

I was on the deer working group and this was brought up a couple different times. Not much time was spent on it and there were several good reasons explained why it was not a good idea and most people in the room were not in favor. The South Dakota archery deer season is already over 3 months long with no quota and there is absolutely no reason to make it longer. It has been said that other states open that early so why not South Dakota.

Those states either have an early archery season or a later one during the rut but not both. Part of the reason the January season was shut down was landowner and conservation officer fatigue, opening September 1st does not help this. Also it would incorporate every one of the most vulnerable times of the year for our buck deer population. Last year there were 7,814 archery deer harvested in South Dakota (preliminary estimate), of those

5859 were buck deer. At a time when we should be looking at quotas for archery I don't understand why we are looking to make our archery season the most lengthy any state has with no quotas. Please do not pass this.

Matt Rippentrop

Hot Springs SD mattrippentrop@hotmail.com

Comment:

In April of 2014, this same early archery deer season was proposed starting Sept 1st and was voted down by the SD GFP Commissioners. In 2018, please again repeat your vote of no.

The potential new archery deer season date of Sept 1st will be detrimental to South Dakota's mule deer population, because they are on their summer range during early September and become much easier to pattern during this time. With the mule deer numbers so low across Western South Dakota right now, why should we want to find another way to decrease their population even further by allowing another month to hunt them in Sept?

Some Western States allow the Sept 1st archery season date, but they don't allow hunting during the rut (November). Typically, other Western States allow their archery season to either start early (Sept 1st) or go late (Dec), not both times are allowed to be hunted like this proposal. They also have quotas on their archery seasons and are not unlimited tags like SD.

In 2017, just over 7,800 deer were harvested in SD with archery tags and almost 5,900 of those deer were bucks. With unlimited tags and no quotas for SD's archery seasons, we can't allow more deer to be harvested on SD's archery tags.

Please consider not approving the Sept 1st archery season. Thank you for your time and consideration.

6/5/2018

Jon Faulks

Fremont WI jfaulks@waupacasand.com

Comment:

I am writing in support of the proposal to move the opening date of the South Dakota archery deer season to September 1st. This will bring South Dakota into alignment with the neighboring states of Nebraska, North Dakota, and Wyoming. There is also no biological evidence that suggests the earlier opening date will result in any detrimental effect on herd health or increase archery success rates. The longer season will provide more opportunity and will space out pressure from resident and non-resident archers over a longer season. I respectfully request that you approve the proposal at the commission meeting on June 7th. Thank you for your consideration.

Justin Broughton

Sioux Falls SD Justin.Broughton@premierbankcar d.com

Comment:

I'm writing regarding the two archery proposals before the commission during the June meeting. I strongly support moving the archery opening date to September 1st. This matches the opening dates of our neighboring states and helps to spread out the pressure on public lands during the warmer weather months. There is no sound biological reason for not moving the date to September 1. The additional opportunity for resident archers would be much appreciated!

6/5/2018

Ross Swedeen

Rapid City SD reswedeen@yahoo.com

Comment:

Please do not approve the proposal to move the archery deer season date to September 1st. Deer are on their summer range that time of year, and they are much easier to pattern. I believe this proposed earlier season could be detrimental to our mule deer in particular. I believe this will increase the hunting pressure on public land as more people try to pursue velvet antlered mule deer bucks. Especially since archery licenses are unlimited and technically have no hunting units. Archery hunting in South Dakota is getting more popular with each passing year it seems. Thank you for your time. Enjoy the weekend!

Dana Rogers

Hill City SD dana.rogers.1@hotmail.com

Comment:

I am e-mailing in regard to the previous commission discussion tabled after SDGFP Staff brought forward a proposal to limit Non-Resident and Resident archery limited access unit permits on our larger limited access unit public land units. Non-Resident bowhunting pressure is quite high in several areas around the state. Custer National Forest, National Grasslands, Black Hills, along the Missouri River cooridor and several GPA's east river.

Now we have a proposal to open the SD archery season on September 1. Though I am against that and would prefer to open on September 15 or 3rd Saturday, I wanted to point out the unintended consequence. If nothing is done to limit non-resident archery pressure for deer and antelope (particularly on public lands) AND the deer season is moved up to Sept 1, we will likely see a significant increase in NR pressure from what we already have. The over the counter (unlimited) permits for both deer and antelope and access to public land will become extremely attractive for more bowhunters to come to SD.

Our resident opportunities should be held above non-residents. After protection of the resource, protecting the resident opportunities should be next on the list...not the amount of revenue our public trust resources can bring in.

02. Mentored Hunter Restrictions

5/7/2018

Jim Dale

Watertown SD dales120@wat.midco.net

Comment:

I am an avid hunter of birds and big game in SD and support the mentored hunting program as a way to get our youth involved. I have participated in this program with my Son with success and have peaked his interest in hunting. I am strongly opposed to the consideration of removing the minimum age for mentored hunting as I believe age 10 is honestly as young as any youth are ready for this experience. While there are probably exceptions, I think the majority of young hunters are not ready for the experience of safely shooting and taking any type of game animal before age 10 and will be more likely to have negative reactions to the experience in addition to potential serious safety issues. I support leaving the minimum age at 10 years old.

Selena Spring

Custer SD selenann@hotmail.com

Comment:

I am unsure what the purpose of this is or why this needs to change? I am very concerned about children operating firearms at an age under 10 yrs old. I think handing a firearm to anyone under 10 is a huge responsibility and I know that responsibility lies with the mentor too but I just have a hard time believing there are that many kids under the age of 10 that "truly" have an interest to go hunting or will it be another tag for adults to fill?! I honestly believe you will see more adults registering younger children when they actually are the ones pulling the trigger (Wisconsin has this issue just last year when they did away with the age restrictions). I also believe there are not a lot of firearms out there that have the power to bring down an animal and not cause injury to the child. Gun safety and hunting ethics are a huge part of hunting and I do not believe there are many children under 10 that understand both of those topics! I have a 13 year old and no way would I have wanted him to hunt at an even younger age. I guess my only hope would be that you still require the youth to take a hunter safety course prior to obtaining a license because hopefully this would weed out the kids much younger than 9 applying for tags.

5/7/2018

Bryan Vyhlidal

Harrisburg SD bvyhlidal@yahoo.com

Comment:

No comment text provided.

Collin Rhine

Philip SD collin.rhine@state.sd.us

Comment:

I strongly encourage the commission to remove the minimum age for hunting. I think that this rule is foolish to begin with. I have a daughter that is more than capable of hunting big game but is not allowed to do so because of this rule. It should be up to the parent(s) to decide when a child is ready to hunt. Please remove this rule so that my kids and I can make the decision when they will start hunting.

5/8/2018

Kelan Lechner

Aberdeen SD kelan@nrctv.com

Comment:

As a Huntsafe instructor, I can't begin to tell you how wrong this. Too young to hold a gun, too young to hunt!

5/8/2018

Kevin Bruzelius

Pierre SD

kevin.bruzelius@state.sd.us

Comment:

It will be tough to not go with the legislators on this, but I think we will see more hunting accidents, and more abuse of mentor tags. There are numerous videos of younger people shooting guns they can't control.

5/9/2018

Mike Karcz

Huntley IL michaeljkarcz@yahoo.com

Comment:

I am not a resident of SD. I am NOT well versed in ALL of the terms of SD's mentored hunt program. I HAVE hunted in SD. I AM in favor of mentored hunts. I DO see a potential for fraud/misuse/abuse of the mentored hunt program, &/or exposure of children to unsafe/unhealthy/dangerous situations. With no restrictions, a hunter w/o scruples could bring a six (6) month old baby along under the guise of "mentoring" just to gain another & unfair opportunity to hunt for themself, possibly exposing the child to loud noises, bad weather, dangerous geographical conditions & situations

I AM VERY MUCH IN FAVOR OF GETTING KIDS INVOLVED IN THE OUTDOORS?? But "we" are responsible to ensure their safety.

Thank you, Mike Karcz

5/14/2018

Jessr Hartman

Lennox SD jesserhartmann@gmail.com

Comment:

So everyone is already complaining about deer numbers being down and I can't hardly get a doe tag anymore so now let's add more kids to the mix and lower the numbers some more. I am also a firm believer in having to take the hunter safety course before applying for a tag no matter what age. Pure laziness if kids don't have to take the course. I had to take the course and wait till I was 12 and not to mention only had a 3 week youth season. I honestly think the way things are going in South Dakota it's time to start spending my money in other states to hunt! So disappointed in the direction things are going.

5/19/2018

Curtis Bossert

Aberdeen SD sdsmt78@gmail.com

Comment:

I believe 10 is too young and this is from a father of two sons who have been hunting for as long as possible. As the number of available tags dwindle on a yearly basis, it seems that this is another method bof adding an additional animal to the freezer. I support youth hunting but 10 is too early in my humble opinion.

5/23/2018

Steve Chilson

Florence SD

Comment:

The Grass Lake Conservation Club, as its last meeting, discussed the possible age change being considered to the mentored hunting season. We, as a club, feel the minimum age of 10 years should be left AS IS. Our club has helped sponsor and run the Watertown area Youth Sportsfest for more than 20 years. Kids age 8 to 14 can attend. Having witnessed the youth for the last 20 years, we feel that kids 8 and 9 years of age area, for the most part, not ready for the mentored hunt. Thank you for taking our clubs opinion into consideration as you make your decision on this issue.

03. Maximum Size of Hunting Groups

5/7/2018

Eric Ristau

St Paul MN rista001@umn.edu

Comment:

The current party size restriction (20) is too small for family groups, during especially opening week. On the other hand, outfitted hunt group sizes should be held at the current 20 but even smaller would be better.

5/7/2018

Micahel Gebes

Philip SD mmgebes@gwtc.net

Comment:

I would oppose this on public hunting grounds not on private ground.

5/8/2018

Robert Wright

Sioux Falls SD robert.wright@augie.edu

Comment:

First off, I assume that this claim contains an error: "Hunters would still not be able to carry archery equipment, crossbows, muzzleloaders or firearms during small game hunts." Shotguns are firearms, right? So is the typo including firearms in this list or is it including "not"? In any event, the 20 limit has always seemed arbitrary and it is a real sore spot to pay money to hunt and have to sit out because 21 guys happen to show up. It's like getting bumped from an overbooked airplane with no compensation! Groups will naturally grow or shrink to match the field, in some of which 200 hunters could safely shoot birds.

5/10/2018
Marc Moore
Custer SD Carrieknows02@goldenwest.net
Comment:
I do not support eliminating or changing the 20 person or less hunting group size restrictions currently in place. Basis for this is hunter safety. Even with the current law of a 20 person group, it can be very difficult to monitor individual positions of hunters in the field. Eliminating that requirement just increases the risk of accident that much higher.
6/2/2018
Jeff Clow
SD
Comment:
No comment text provided.
6/3/2018
Julie Anderson
Rapid City SD signsofhope@rap.midco.net

To repeal the size of hunting parties with this amendment is not ethical. More hunters will increase the guarantee of a kill and will only encourage outfitters and their trophy hunting clientele.

Comment:

04. Accompaniment While Hunting

5/7/2018

Leon Ewert

Piedmont SD cw5lhewert@gmail.com

Comment:

I really can not believe it has taken this long to bring these forward. It has always seemed to me ridicules not to allow this. With the lack of actual permits available for the number of hunters that want to go hunting it will really help family's and groups to hunt again! I remember we always had family members come in for hills hunting when everyone could get a license, now you never know who will get to hunt when or you only get to hunt every three to four years together. With these proposals When my grandsons draw tags for whatever season I can get an archery tag to cover it and join the party or vs. With the ability to mix the hunting methods we get to spend more time in the field together!!!!

5/7/2018

Leon Ewert

Piedmont SD cw5lhewert@gmail.com

Comment:

I do not understand this?? how else would you have a small game hunt if you can't carry archery equipment, muzzleloader, crossbow or firearm??

5/8/2018

Dustin Thill

Mitchell SD glimmerman151@hotmail.com

Comment:

I think this should be allowed, due to the fact that some of the public hunting areas are large and not everyone in our party always draws a rifle tag, but usually will purchase an archery tag. This adds revenue for the state and local area we will hunt and gives the other members in the group the possibility of harvesting an animal and or helping pack out an animal a different member may have harvested. If they spent the money and have a tag, I see no reason why they shouldn't be able to do this. If someone is a poor sportsman and intends on breaking the law with an illegal harvest, they will do it anyways, so let's not penalize the majority of us who like to hunt for the commeraderie and obey the rules.

5/9/2018

Sam Sommers

Sioux Falls SD AKSam1953@gmail.com

Comment:

No Firearms? Why can't we hunt with crossbows, shotguns & bow & arrows? What's left Spears & nets & falcons. I already told my relatives to go to Nebraska. And, why no more limits on the number of hunters in a group? Pheasant hunting gets more difficult every year and letting conercial outfits go to 100 hunters or more in a group to limit out is ridiculous. I am ok with upping the number of hunters in a group but then small group hunters of less than 5 should get higher bag limits.

5/10/2018
Marc Moore
Custer SD Carrieknows02@goldenwest.net
Comment:
I oppose this rule change. Current law is sufficient.
5/14/2018
Chet Barney
Vermillion SD chet@byu.net
Comment:
I have long thought that if a person has both a rifle deer tag and an archery deer tag for the same area at the same time, that hunter should be able to carry both weapons. Dr. Chet Barney

6/1/2018

Roger Heintzman

Aberdeen SD r_heintzman@hotmail.com

Comment:

Do away with extened rifle season for doe only.

06. Muzzleloading Rifle and Pistol Requirements

5/7/2018
Scott Miles
Colman SD scottmiles674@gmail.com
Comment:
If you want to regulate the amount of powder used, state the least amount that can be used.
5/8/2018
Matthew Luebke
Matthew Edebite
SD
Comment:
I don't oppose using muzzleloading handguns. However my earlier comments on using handguns during muzzloader season was meant for centerfire / traditional handgun useage. Non- rifle cartridge capable. Similar to Montana's season.
5/8/2018
Robert Wright
Sioux Falls SD robert.wright@augie.edu
Comment:
Yeah, why not?! It should get more people interested in the sport. But the biggest problem in So. Dak. is the

fact that the ML season comes AFTER the gun season and is mostly anterless. If you want more interest, have an October ML season with buck tags, like lots of states do. Then have December antlerless conversion

tag season.

5/10/2018

Marc Moore

Custer SD

Carrieknows02@goldenwest.net

Comment:

Personally, I do not favor this proposal...although I understand the sporting intent. Typically muzzle-loading handguns (cap & ball, as well as single-shot) are much weaker in foot-lbs delivered than modern handguns, as well as regular muzzle-loading rifles. The propensity to wound a big game animals is high. And with few exceptions, most commercial muzzle-loading hand-gun sights are of poor quality.

5/14/2018

Chet Barney

Vermillion SD chet@byu.net

Comment:

No comment text provided.

07. Bowhunter Education Requirement

5/23/2018

Jim Twamley

Parker SD

Comment:

Secretary Hepler and Commissioners,

I am writing you to voice my disagreement with the decision to eliminate the Bow Hunter Education Requirement (regulation) in our State. History Please allow me to give a brief history of the program and my involvement with it since its inception. The Bow Hunter Education" requirement was brought to the Department in 1992 by the bow hunters of the state through the South Dakota Bowhunters Inc (SDBI) in order to expand the bow hunting opportunities in our state, especially with the Elk seasons. SDBI, through this agreement, was to provide the management of the program while the Department was to provide logistical support and maintain the student registration records. The National Bowhunter Education Foundation Course was selected to be the course as they had the materials and support logistics needed and several founding members of SDBI were already Certified Instructors. (SD archery legend, Charlie Bledsoe of Sioux Falls,

being one of the first.) However, to become an Instructor there was never a requirement that they belong to SDBI The State and SDBI sent out letters and posted notices to existing bowhunters recruiting them to become Certified Instructors. In March, 1993, the first Instructor Program was held in Pierre. I was a member of that original group of 60 individuals who became Instructors. Through the years of being involved in the NBEF Program, I was selected as "Instructor of the Yea/" in 1995, became a Regional Master Instructor, and for my last 10 years, I was the State Coordinator of the Program. During this time I have seen many changes within the program. When I first started teaching the Program, the classroom supplies were furnished but all the teaching aids were provided by the Instructors. Instructor teams used their own hunting equipment, purchased shot placement 3D targets, overhead projectors, treestands and ground blinds. Over the years, the Instructors used the money that was provided to them from the State in the form of \$3.00 per student per team to purchase additional materials and supplies. After the program had been in place for a few years and the teams were well established the State started providing the Teams with training materials, such as the "pin cushion" deer and bear shot placement table top targets.

Program and Requirements

Instructor Requirements - Prior to becoming a Certified Instructor, the Individual had to be a bow hunter with at least 3 years experience (this was waived by NBEF for the first class), have taken the NBEF course, attend an Instructor training course which was provided by either one of the Master Regional Instructors or the State Coordinator, and then the potential instructor must aid an established team in actually teaching 3 courses before becoming "certified". once they were certified, they could either join an existing team or start a new Instructor Team, the Team approach is a mandatory requirement of the program- In order to maintain certification the teams had to teach at least one course every 2 years, but most teams did at least 2 courses per year with some doing as many as 5. All Instructors were to be evaluated by either the Regional Master Instructors or the State Coordinator every 2 years. All Instructors were strictly volunteers. Master Instructors - The Regional Master Instructors were appointed by the State Coordinator to serve as the Supervisor of the Program in their Regions which was set up in alignment with the Departments Regions. Each Region had at least Master but could have as many as Masters whose functions included Instructor Certification, Regional Program coordination, and Instructor Evaluation. They reported directly to the State Coordinator and also to the

Department Coordinator as needed. In addition to their Masterr Instructor duties they still were expected to teach the required courses to remain certified. State Coordinator- The administration of the program fell directly on the State Coordinator. He was the person in charge of making sure that the Instructor Teams were in place, that they had the material support they needed, make sure that the Instructors were meeting the Course requirements, and was the person responsible for reporting to GF&P staff, GF&P Commissioners and SDB|to the Program goals, progress, and achievements. He also had direct access to the National NBEF Program Administrator. In addition, to the above duties and afier the Elk Drawwas held, it fell upon the State Coordinator to contact each successful drawn hunter that had not taken his NBEF Certification Course to make sure that he got into a course and that a course was available to him even if a team had to drive to a close location to provide the training. Most years, the number of successful applicants who still required a course ranged from 10 to 16 persons and to my knowledge, no one was ever not provided training. Course Requirements and Changes

The Student Requirement was originally meant for the First Time Bowhunter and all bow hunters between the ages of 12-16. Also any hunter who drew/ an elk tag must have completed an approved bow hunter education course. The Elk Hunter requirement has varied over the years, but it is in its original form now.

The Original Basic Course is designed to be a minimum of 8 hours of direct training by a certified team of 3 or more Instructors cove ng the mandatory requirements of the NBEF Program. Due to the length of the course the "Team Approach" is a mandatory requirement to provide the students with the best instruction possible as each instructor within the team had the experience to aid in the training. Every course had the same class materials and provided the NBEF Certified training requirements but Instructor teams set up their individual class schedule that best met their students needs. The training model is largely composed of Instructor- Student participation and hands on training with shot placement, blood trailing, and treestand placement and safety being provided. Over the years, Instructors led between 50 -60 Courses each year yielding approximately 100G1300 certified students. Online (distance learning) course Field Days were implemented to hopefully satisfy the

Department's wish to provide additional courses to students who could not attend a full 8 hour course- These courses were designed to allow the student to take an online portion of the course which covered materials and information typically covered in the classroom setting. After successfully completing the online course and printing out the Completion Certificate (which was valid for one year), the student was required to attend a 4 hour Field Day. Field Days were usually held on a Saturday afternoon at a local Outdoor Achery Range. Field Days were conducted in all regions depending on pre registration. These courses were set up to do the outdoor curriculum with a more hands on approach than was available in the normal classroom setting. During a Field Day, topics covered were range estimation, shot placement, blood trailing, and a large focus on

treestand safety. Students would first provide proof of their online Completion and upon completion of the four hour training the students would became certified. Over 5 years, 30-40 students per year took advantage of this type of training. However, on average, 50-100 students per year who took the on-line portion never registered nor completed the course via a Field Day. To replace the Distance Learning Course which was followed by a Field Day, the Total Online Course was implemented in 2014. i. was implemented by the Department to make bowhunter education more convenient and accessible for people to get certified. As the name implies, it is a 100% online course that totally eliminates hands on education. Most existing instructors at the time felt the total online course could not meet the goals of the program particularly in reference to treestand safety, shot placement and game recovery. At the time the total online course was implemented, Instructors voiced their concerns about eliminating the hands-on style of learning. They did not feel they were listened to and therefore, most instructor teams dissolved after this option became available. Originally, the total online course was

implemented as an "option' for students. From the numbers I have heard since leaving as State Coordinator the on line program has averaged between 1600 and 2000 certifications annually. One of the concerns with the distance learning program is the absence of methodology to tell us if the training provided is adequate, especially in regard to treestand safety, shot placement, and blood kailing and game recovery. To my knorledge there were possibly +10 traditional

classroom style courses held in 2017; mainly in Pierre, Rapid City, and possibly Watertown. Obstacles to inclusion of Bowhunter Education into Hunt Safe Program (from someone who also taught the South Dakota Hunt Safe course.) 1. Hunting with a bow is uniquely unlike hunting with any other piece of equipment. Bow hunters can be good firearm hunters, but firearm hunters are, by their choice of equipment and method, are not necessarily knowledgeable for bow hunting. Two examples of this would be distance from the quarry and shot placement. This is why NBEF Instructors were required to have a minimum of 3 years bow hunting experience prior to becoming an Instructor. 2. To teach treestand safety, you should have had treestand experience and

hunters lack this knowledge as their methods of hunting differ greatly. The additional time to sufficiently teach this portion of the course would be extremely limited in the typical Hunt Safe class. 3. Proper shot placement, timing of the shot, and proper equipment to insure an ethical

harvest with a bow and arrow, particularity on an animal as large as an elk, requires more in depth training than time allows in the normal Hunt Safe class. This training is critical to ensure 'marginal' shots are not taken and leave a bad mark on both bowhunting and the bowhunter. many times young hunters or inexperienced hunters who without this

training, make a marginal shot, may give up hunting entirely. I say this not only as an experienced Instructor but as a Father and Grandfather who has had all his children and their children take the courses! In conclusion, while I recognize that the Department Staff may see the Bowhunter Education Requirement as a deterrent to people becoming bowhunters and now their wish for more face to face training, expanding the Hunt Safe Program is not relevant to providing the new or inexperienced bowhunter the education they deserve. The concems ofthe Department, in my opinion, have not changed from the first year I started teaching four NBEF courses per year in Sioux Falls in 1993. Until the Department is willing to put the responsibility of taking a course on the individual instead of the Instructors, some people will complain- In the 25 years since its inception, the Bow Hunter education program has had over 25,000 successful graduates in the state of South Dakota and by any measurable means I feel the program has been a success. To discontinue the program would be a great disservice to those 25,000 plus students and the Instructors who volunteered their time and resources to teach, As with any program over time, there are changes that can be made but dissolving the program (and regulation) is not one of them. In fairness to the Hunt Safe Instructors, it is not reasonable to expect them to adequately teach a topic about which they have little or no knowledge.

5/30/2018

Marilyn Bentz

Rapid City SD mbentz@nbef.org

Comment:

As I mentioned when you and I spoke last week, my schedule may preclude me from attending the upcoming South Dakota Game Commission meeting at Custer State Park. So please bear with me as I share some random thoughts I have had since our conversation.

The collective 2017 age data from all of our online students supports the belief that bowhunting appears to be an activity taken up later in life as a hunter matures and desires the greater challenge of bowhunting. Younger age data does occur but only in states where bowhunter education has been mandated for many years previous (e.g. Nebraska). Nationally significant age groups taking bowhunter education online: a. 9% are <16 years of age. b. 33% are 26-35 years of age. c. 21% are 19-25 years of age. d. 16% are 36-45 years of age. With the current age requirements for hunter education in SD, I am wondering if it is possible bowhunters may not have taken any form of hunter safety education if bowhunting is begun at a later age? The generational knowledge acquired since bow ed's 1992 beginnings may be lost without continual bowhunter education efforts.

Bowhunter education can indeed expose and educate youth to a different form of hunting (bow vs. firearm). And bowhunter education may well be what today's parents are looking for as an activity for their children. That is, a safe activity with structure and qualifies as a next step to an activity they are already engaged in....NASP. I know of one state that offers a combo course (online) hunter ed and bowhunter ed which exposes youth to bowhunting. Course completion requires a short 3-hour field day after which both certificates are received. I would also suggest that you look at ways of offering a bowhunter education certificate with other activities. Perhaps a next step BOW class. Most archery classes are very popular and many times are repeated by participants. Another activity at the outdoor centers could be a structured "how to hunt" utilizing staff over several days during the summer keeping in mind the new facilities which will be offered for archers in Rapid City. I would be interested in knowing the department's response to the following questions: 1. Have statewide bowhunter numbers gone down (or up?) since 1992? 2. What are the specific department goals for increasing bowhunter numbers and why? 3. Are other methods of hunting being explored for increasing hunter numbers? 4. What role do you foresee bowhunters having in the long range SD hunting model (5 years, 10 years)? 5. As a learning tool, why would bowhunter education be an impediment to new or existing bowhunters? In addition, please know that the NBEF would be willing to assist with whatever methods you may choose to promote bowhunting and bowhunter education. Please don't hesitate to call upon us.

6/5/2018

Russ Roberts

St Onge SD wgo@mato.com

Comment:

I have been involved in teaching hunter safety courses in some manner for almost 20 years so I know how important these courses are and how much they can educate hunters on many levels. I ask that you continue the bowhunter education requirement for archery licenses. Sending archers in the field less prepared and educated benefits nobody and is not good for the sport.

6/5/2018

Matt Rippentrop

Hot Springs SD mattrippentrop@hotmail.com

Comment:

The archery hunter education is worth having that currently SD GFP requires. Archery shot placement should be continued to be taught to new archers. If this requirement is removed, shot placement will get worse over time with more animals being wounded.

A similar comparison could be if the Highway's speed limits were removed. Would the vehicle accidents increase with no speed limit?

Will wounded animals from bad shot placement increase with no archery hunter education required anymore? If you do decide to get rid of the archery education requirement, for a potential compromise could you please at least require the Hunt Safe Card as a replacement requirement for archery hunting?

Please consider not approving the removal of the archery hunter education. Thank you for your time and consideration.

6/5/2018

Justin Broughton

Sioux Falls SD Justin.Broughton@premierbankcar d.com

Comment:

I'm writing regarding the two archery proposals before the commission during the June meeting. I strongly oppose the removal of the bowhunter education requirements for SD bowhunters. Especially first time bowhunters and potential elk hunters. The NBEF courses provide an excellent foundation for new bowhunters to learn from mentors who have bowhunting experience and to learn bowhunting specific concerns that are not taught in the HuntSafe classes. Education specifically for archers can help reduce wounding loss and increase recovery rates and improve treestand safety in all participants. We currently have no issues with hunter participation levels based upon archery tag numbers issued, there is no sound reason for removing this requirement.

08. Retention of Accrued Preference Points

5/7/2018

Daniel John Amen

Rapid City SD dakotainc@gmail.com

Comment:

I do support the Elimination!

5/7/2018

Kelly Koistinen

Spearfish SD kkoistinen@fs.fed.us

Comment:

The purpose of the Preference Point system is to give those who apply with preference points more chances to receive certain elk, deer, antelope, bighorn sheep, turkey and mountain goat tags over others. If you eliminate the 5 year time limit for those who don't apply with their preference, you are in fact, eliminating the advantage of the system. Do these people really need their preference points at all? They are sacrificing that right to having preference by not using it within 5 years. Tough break for being lazy!! Now then, the other folks who do have preference points during that same time period, and use it when applying for tags no longer have an advantage over others! Because you will be rewarding those too lazy to utilize their preferences within 5 years. What sense does this make? You would then be taking away that preference over other applicants by eliminating the 5 year limit. This is not fair to those of us who want to apply with preference. These are the things that the commission doesn't even think about when making all their proposals.

5/8/2018

Kevin Bruzelius

Pierre SD kevin.bruzelius@state.sd.us

Comment:

I agree that after five years, you have to wonder why they are even applying, and that would bring some sensibility to the hunter's that truly want to hunt.

09. Potential Adjustments to Snaring and Snare/Trap Marking Proposal from April Meeting

5/7/2018

Russell Cambern

Sioux Falls SD russell.cambern@gmail.com

Comment:

I'm a pheasant hunter and never had any problems with this. We need the trappers out there for population control or there will be even less pheasants.

5/7/2018

Lee Nelson

Rapid City SD leemnelson@hotmail.com

Comment:

No comment text provided.

09. Snaring and Snare/Trap Marking Proposal from April Meeting

5/12/2018

Kevin Thibodeau

Onida SD tibs196@yahoo.com

Comment:

I believe this is an unfair resolution. We as trappers also fund the purchase and development of public lands. We have as much right to utilize this land as anybody else. A more reasonable solution could be the requirement to use relaxing locks. I personally have released pets from my snares with no harm done due to the use of relaxing locks. In my opinion the preservation of pheasant populations should be considered by a trappers removal of predators. Thank you.

5/12/2018

Kevin Thibodeau

Onida SD tibs196@yahoo.com

Comment:

There seems to be no reason for this requirement. They only thing it may cause is the possible persecution of trappers by people who oppose our passion of predator control. Also, I have communicated with people who live in states that currently require trap tags. They greatly express their disgust with this law because of the added cost and difficulty keeping tags legible. Thank you

5/12/2018

Steve Alverson

Chester SD stevealverson@hotmail.com

Comment:

I am in opposition to the public land and right of way snaring restrictions proposed. I have trapped in eastern SD for 50 years and have seen many changes. Farming practices have changed to the point where it has taken away habitat and snaring locations. Many fences are eliminated, ditches are filled in and crops are planted within a few feet of the road. Wetlands are burned and drained with the use of tile, thus no more habitat. The ditches that are left, and public hunting areas have been a big part of a trappers set location for many years. The proposal to shut down snaring in these locations until after pheasant season would eliminate a valuble tool in a raccoon and predator trappers arsenal. There is a very short window for a prime coon harvest. From mid november to usually the first week in december. This proposal would effect many trappers who pursue not only raccoon, but other predators like fox and coyote. And mink trappers who also use snares. These proposals have been considered due to a few hunting dogs being caught in a snare. Snares can easily be taken off a dog by the owner. Educating hunters is the key. Signs at public areas and few words in the hunting hand book to explain that snares may be set in these public areas is the solution. Not to take away the rights of hundreds of trappers, because of complaints by a few.

5/13/2018

Steve Cherkas

Edgemont TN sacherkas@msn.com

Comment:

I oppose making trapping more restrictive. From snaring perspective the fur is best Nov and Dec. Do NOT take this away. Nov 13 already too late. Move pheasant season up instead.

I oppose requiring trap tags. Name gives activists ability to track you down and do things to harm you.

Personal ID forces trapper to remove tags if trapping in other states.

5/13/2018

Larry- Rossum

Rapid City SD larry4609@gmail.com

Comment:

Dear commissioners,

I am writing in response to some recent proposals to our current snaring and trapping regulations. I have over 45 years experience of fur harvesting beginning with my first trapline run on a bicycle to creeks and ponds around Rapid City and progressing to long lines run all over many west river counties.

While we all regret the accidental catch of a hunters dog, the runaway emotional train always wants to put the regulations on the trapper even though these are isolated incidents. Essentially eliminating two months of snare use during the peak and prime fur time of fur harvesting is in my view an over reaction and not acceptable. The snare is an incredibly useful tool that we use and prohibiting its use would be like not allowing hunters to use to use their dogs while pheasant hunting. That would drastically change the pheasant hunt in the same way our fur harvesting would be greatly handicapped.

I believe some common sense education could go a long way on an issue like this one. Most dogs are trained to a leash and do not fight hard against a snare and simple manipulation of the locking device opens the snare right up for easy removal.

it also seem that these hunting dog incidents take place east river where the pheasant habitat is. There are several trapping regulations that vary from east river to west river and while I do not think the east river fur harvesters should lose their snaring opportunities during the pheasant season, I certainly do not think it is fair or logical to apply this restriction statewide where pheasant hunting is very limited or non existent such as the Black Hills and National Grasslands. Personally I would like to see our snaring opportunities on public lands west river return to year round like it used to be.

I've spent a lifetime pursuing South Dakotas fur bearers and it has taught me about hard work and responsibility as well as great memories and fun. My grandkids are now tagging along on the trapline and I see the excitement in their eyes as well. Please don't let the full burden and more restrictions fall to one group that will hinder their outdoor pursuits in order to solve an unfortunate isolated incident.

Thanks for your time!

Larry Rossum Rapid City

5/14/2018

Tim Larson

Centerville SD Beaverskinner484@gmail.com

Comment:

I've been trapping for over 40 years most of my trapping is right a way trapping as I still have to work a full time job. I set up a trapline to check on the way to work and one on the way home, I do this for the limited time I have, im usually checking before 4am until usually 7 before work then 2 to 3 hours after, I do this because if I had to get permission and drive in every field I wouldn't be checking many sets with the time it takes. So if the public land snaring is banned until after pheasant season it would not be worth snaring, most coyotes will be rubbed most coons will be hibernating or rubbed it would mean the end of my trapping. A better solution would be to educate everybody that uses public land that their could be trappers right along with pheasant hunters, trapping most certainly helps the pheasant population. As far as trap tags I see no need for them as it's going to open up a whole new can of worms,anybody that's breaking the law will not have trap tags, but could steal a law abiding trappers trap or tag and set it illegally who's gonna get the blame, the name on the tag will I'll bet, so we don't need them. We need to educate people

5/15/2018

Shane Simon

Nemo SD kingofwildfrontier@msn.com

Comment:

I am writing to express that I am opposed to the prohibition of snaring on public grounds until the end of pheasant season. I am also opposed to the requirement of placing name tags on traps as this accomplishes nothing toward public safety and is yet another unnecessary restriction and expense on trappers. I am also opposed to the unnecessary requirement to restrict the use of spring powered snares on game production areas and waterfowl production areas. It is my opinion that imposing such a restrictive set of proposals will have devastating results to the trapping community. Prime fur exists during these critical times and further restriction will not accomplish any reasonable safety to hunting dogs. As a hunter and trapper, should the unlikely event happen that a dog is caught in a snare you are right on the spot to see that your dog is caught up and you can release it safely before injury occurs. South Dakota is one of the last great outdoor places and restricting the trapping community is a step that is hard to reverse once it is in place and I do not support the idea that pheasant hunting should "take priority" over trapping or any other outdoor activity. As a disabled vet, I have served my country to ensure that all rights exist to law abiding, outdoor enthusiasts and hope that many generations to follow will be able to enjoy the same outdoor experiences that I participate in today. Thanks for your consideration and I hope you do the right thing and choose not to further restrict the trapping community! Shane Simon

5/15/2018

Tim Larson

Centerville SD Beaverskinner484@gmail.com

Comment:

I oppose the use of trap tags and restrictions on snares I added comments earlier but it said other instead of opposing

5/20/2018

Tracy Kaiser

Sioux Falls SD tracyk39@outlook.com

Comment:

My son Jared and our lab, Piper were hunting pheasants last fall on public land, when Piper walked into a snare trap. Jared could not go for help because Piper would have tried to follow him, and would've choked to death. He did not have his phone on him, so was prepared to stay with his faithful hunting dog in freezing temperatures. How could you just leave your dog you love to die? I have no doubt Jared could have possibly lost his life if a passerby wouldn't have heard him yelling for help, and stopped to help them. I can't believe these traps which are dangerous and easily walked into, are allowed on public land during pheasant hunting season. As a very concerned wife, mother of three sons and two Labradors that are all avid hunters, I ask that these proposed changes are enacted.

5/20/2018

Dan Kaiser

Sioux Falls SD kaiser39@msn.com

Comment:

Based on the risk to those who hunt these public lands I believe this is a fair compromise to the trapping ensnaring regulations

5/22/2018

Trevor Janssen

Sioux Falls SD trevjanssen@hotmail.com

Comment:

Let me start off by saying that I am a strong supporter of all aspects of outdoorsman rights, and am a huge supporter of trapping While I don't participate myself, I reap the positive benefits while hunting multiple small game species. I also completely understand that in the grand scheme of things, we're in this fight together - we all need to work together to promote hunting, trapping, and fishing for future generations, and be good stewards of the public land that affords most of us the right to execute this privilege. That being said, I'd like to show my support for the new proposed amendments to the current trapping season with regards to public lands. It's only logical in my eyes to eliminate the overlapping seasons - safety always needs to come first, and we need to stand by that as outdoorsmen regardless of the issue. It does not make sense to allow unposted trapping of public lands for furbearing species, including coyotes, at the same time that pheasant hunters - and specifically their canine companions - are taking to the field. It's an accident waiting to happen, and already has - probably more so than any of us realize. While the proposed amendment may or may not be a perfect resolution, it's a positive step to protect both interests.

5/22/2018

David Otten

Tea SD davidotten999@gmail.com

Comment:

We have more than just pheasant hunters in this state, we have deer, waterfowl and upland bird trappers. We all pay for this public land. Who gets the biggest share of it. Pheasant hunting brings in a lot of money.

Predator control is big in this state, we pay a lot of money controlling coyote. If we have to wait until pheasant hunters are done, what does that leave trappers? Picking up scraps. It's hard to to trap or snare in the snow. Our pheasant hunters got to know they are not the only people out there. People got to realize they're not the only ones out there.

I know it only takes a few incidents to have things go bad from fishing to hunting, trapping etc. You only have to ask a land owner and hear what pheasant hunters have, too. Two wrongs don't make a right. Some other fixes I like could be requiring a sign or a flag to tell others that traps or snares are being used at the gate or within 100 yards. Trap tags work too.

5/22/2018

David Otten

Tea SD davidotten999@gmail.com

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5/23/2018

Steve Chilson

Florence SD

Comment:

The Grass Lake Conservation Club at its last meeting discussed the possible changes being considered to the trapping regulations. We are in favor of requiring ID tags to all traps being placed on public lands and road right-of-ways. Thank you for taking our opinion into consideration as you make your decision.

Jerry Riedel

Watertown SD

Comment:

I have been trapping approximately 70 years of my 76 ears of life, including 37 years with the Game. Fish and Parks as an Animal Damage Control Specialist at Watertown. I am in opposition to trap and snare tagging, as I want to avoid situations where one individual can steal tagging traps or snares, or just the tags, and then use them illegally, thus framing an innocent trapper. I am also aware that trapped animals will remove tags from traps and snares, thus giving the set the appearance of being illegal. I would also like to avoid situations where traps or snares are tampered with or disturbed by Conservation Officers or the general public when checking for tags on traps or snares. "IF" tags are approved please use a registered numbering systems and not names to avoid situations of confrontations. In reference to trapping and snaring on Public Lands I would favor leaving the regulations as is, with Public Land closed only to snaring until the 2nd Saturday of November. However, I would favor the prohibiting of snares with locks that are spring powered on all Public Land year round. I would favor allowing the use of dog proof traps, live traps, 4 inch body grip traps (110 conibear style traps) and colony traps during the entire trapping season. I would favor a regulations that would restrict larger traps and snare loop sizes for larger predators but would still allow for the harvesting of skunk, raccoon, fox, mink, muskrat, and weasel on all Public Land for the entire trapping season. I am sure the Commission and Staff will also take into consideration when setting any trapping regulations the amount of free predator and nuisance animal control the state receives from the private trapper. I feel the solution to the current trapping issue problems is EDUCATION! The trapper must be educated when making his trapping sets, his choice of equipment and time of year of placement of said set of respect dogs and dog owners and their right to use Public Land. Perhaps mandatory trapper education will be needed just as hunter safety courses are taught. The hunter must be educated to the fact there may be trapping equipment present on Public Land. The hunter should be taught how to release a trapped or snared dog without injury to the dog or hunter. The hunter should also be reminded of all the free predator and nuisance animal control the trapper provide. Various forms of education and are available that could be provided by the Game, Fish and Parks, South Dakota Trappers Association, Pheasants Unlimited, Ducks Unlimited and numerous Sportsman's Clubs through the use of internet contact, news media, Game, Fish and Parks Hunting and Trapping Guides, signs on Public Land, videos, public meetings and classes. Thank you for your time and considerations on these comments.

Dan Krogman

White River SD

Comment:

For starters, I don't feel like I have a horse in this race, as all my trapping and snaring are done on private ground. I do feel like I need to support my fellow trappers that aren't as fortunate. As a long time trapper and snareman I think all three of your proposals are unwarranted. As for proposal one. Anyone that has caught and marketed many coyote knows that by Jan 15 coyotes are past prime and fur is breaking down. Trappers should have 85% of their coyotes taken by this date. How many pheasants and deer are saved by trappers taking the surplus of animals with snares and traps? A question not easily answered. Traps and snares are tools that unpaid trappers use to keep predators in check. It's hard enough for unpaid trappers to break even without putting a time restriction on doing what they love to do. Let alone the fact that covotes and coon are nearly worthless by then. Also the fact that there are few pheasant hunters in the Black Hills and plains of SD. I feel education is the key answer here with dog hunters and trappers. Proposal #2 Tags on traps does absolutely nothing to protect any dogs or catch more coyotes. The trappers that use public land havealong with the dog hunters have paid their fees. The trapper East River do not need anti hunter - trapper wacos knocking on their door harassing them. It's just an accessory trappers here don't need. Proposal #3 I am a member of WSDFHA. Out Accoc. may back this proposal but I can't. It's taken decades to get snares and traps the tools they are today. Why would you go backwards with non dispatch locks? Kill springs and locking locks are a giant step forward in killing coyotes not dogs. Any dog thats ben tied and broke to lead will not be killed by a dispatch snare. Break away devices and locking locks area huge advancement over the old locks that acted like a saw on a coyotes neck. I want my coyotes quickly and humanely killed if at all possible. Again any dog that has been lead broke or tied will be there wagging their tail. With any hunting and trapping things can and will go wrong. Hunters do get in hunting accidents. Young and inexperienced trappers and hunters are gonna make mistakes. I did. I've trapped and snared for over 50 years and try to keep my mistakes to the very minimum. It's all we can do. I once had a young turkey hunter shoot an Angus calf in the high weeds. Had a cousin get a horse shot and killed in place of a deer. You know they never did it intentionally. I believe hunters and trapper education is your best proposal.

5/23/2018

Kenneth Lipp

Rapid City SD

Comment:

The 1st I believe are unnecessary I'm 68 years old and have trapped for years and have never seen a hunter with a bird dog. We do not have many game birds in Western South Dakota or the Black Hills. I should clarify not seeing bird dogs, in the areas that I trap. If we could catch all the coyotes we might have a few birds but that will never happen!

Kenneth Lipp

Rapid City SD

Comment:

The second I believe are unnecessary I'm 68 years old and have trapped for years and have never seen a hunter with a bird dog. We do not have many game birds in Western South Dakota or the Black Hills. I should clarify not seeing bird dogs, in the areas that I trap. If we could catch all the coyotes we might have a few birds but that will never happen!

5/23/2018

Kenneth Lipp

Rapid City SD

Comment:

I'm writing in regard to the possilbe loss of trapping in South Dakota with snares and a requirement to have all traps marked with personal ID and unique numbers. I just read the commissions three proposals and i agree with proposal #3 but am opposed to numbers 1 and 2. The first and second I believe are unnecessary I'm 68 years old and have trapped for years and have never seen a hunter with a bird dog. We do not have many game birds in Western South Dakota or the Black Hills. I should clarify not seeing bird dogs, in the areas that I trap. If we could catch all the coyotes we might have a few birds but that will never happen!

5/23/2018

Darci Adams

Hartford SD dadams@humanesociety.org

Comment:

May 23, 2018

South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks Commission 523 East Capitol Ave Pierre, SD 57501

Dear Commissioners:

We oppose the trapping and killing of animals for fur pelts and trophies. Such exploitation causes needless and unjustifiable death and is, therefore, inconsistent with the aims of a humane society. Considering that, we urge you to support the proposal amending the trapping prohibitions in Chapter 41:08:02. These proposals offer commonsense updates to South Dakota's trapping regulations. These changes are necessary to reduce animal suffering, to protect unintended victims, and to provide accountability to citizens who have a public interest in healthy wild animal populations and a personal concern for the safety of their companion animals.

This proposed action would require traps and snares placed on public land and improved rights-of-way to be marked with information identifying the trap owner. South Dakota is one of only a few states that fail to require traps to bear information identifying the trap owner or the person using it. This lack of identification information makes it nearly impossible for law enforcement agencies to identify those who may be using traps illegally. Traps used exclusively on private property would be exempt from this identification requirement.

This proposal would rightly limit the use of inhumane snares and powered snares. All snares use a wire or cable loop that tightens around an animal's neck, body, or limb and causes extreme suffering, asphyxia, and even death. Killing snares are designed to kill by strangulation as the animal struggles against the tightening wire, often causing grotesque swelling and hemorrhaging of the head. Studies have shown that killing snares are ineffective at consistently capturing canids at the optimal neck location in order to ensure to quickest death possible. Less than 50% of canids captured by the neck in killing snares lose consciousness within 5 minutes of being captured; most suffer longer. Animals captured around the abdomen by killing snares may suffer from disembowelment. Restraining snares are intended to only hold the animal, but they often cause the animal pain, injury, and death when they malfunction. Some animals are hanged to death in these devices if they jump over a fence or branch in an attempt to escape. Animals caught in snares can die from exposure, dehydration, or starvation.

Snares capture "non-target" animals, such as imperiled species and pets. We don't know how many non-target animals suffer or die because trappers are not required to report these captures. However, in field studies, snares have caught non-target wildlife, birds, and dogs. In some studies, snares have been up to only 50% selective, meaning that one non-target animal was captured for each target animal captured. Snares are cheap and easy to make. Easily set in large numbers, these inconspicuousness "land mines" may be abandoned on the landscape, leaving all animals vulnerable.

For the foregoing reasons we request your support for the amendments to Chapter 41:08:02 to update South Dakota's trapping regulations.

Sincerely,
Darci Adams
South Dakota State Director
The Humane Society of the United States
PO Box 733, Hartford, SD 57033

dadams@humanesociety.org P 605-595-4860 humanesociety.org

Papouchis, C.M. (2004). A critical review of trap research. In Fox, C.H. and Papouchis, C.M. (eds) Cull of the Wild. A Contemporary Analysis of Wildlife Trapping in the United States. Animal Protection Institute. Sacramento, California pp 41-55. Bang Publishing: Brainerd, Minnesota, USA.

Proulx, G., & Rodtka, D. (2017). Steel-Jawed Leghold Traps and Killing Neck Snares: Similar Injuries Command Change to Agreement on International Humane Trapping Standards. Journal of Applied Animal Welfare Science, 20(2), 198-203.

Proulx, G., Rodtka, D., Barrett, M. W., Cattet, M., Dekker, D., Moffatt, E., & Powell, R. A. (2015). Humaneness and selectivity of killing neck snares used to capture canids in Canada: A review. Canadian Wildlife Biology & Management, 4(1), 55-65.

Papouchis, supra note 1.

Iossa, G., Soulsbury, C. D., & Harris, S. (2007). Mammal trapping: a review of animal welfare standards of killing and restraining traps. Animal Welfare, 16(3), 335-352.

Jessica Betts

Oacoma SD Jessinne@yahoo.com

Comment:

My dads dog was caught in a trap while hunting public land. Thankfully he knew how to release him. If this were me, with any of my dogs, I would not have known how to release trap. Traps should be marked with owners info

5/23/2018

Lori Lockman

Sioux Falls SD Lolo2379@gmail.com

Comment:

I fully support this effort and urge GF&P to do so also. Since SD is only one of a few remaining states that dont require trap id's, how can we expect law enforcement to know who is using them illegally? Plus this will protect animals who may fall victim to these traps. It's a win/win.

Jerome Eckrich

Spearfish SD

Comment:

The proposal strikes me as reasonable, balanced and fair. I grew up in Aberdeen spending much of my time outdoors hunting a lot and trapping some. Theses days most of my hunting is on West River public lands. Times have changed since I was a kid. Private hunting land is now a luxury for many, including myself. Knowing which lands I share with traps and trappers is a safety issue for me and a simple courtesy. I respect the interests of trappers-many of whom I suspect appreciate the dollars earned off our public lands. The GFP proposal reasonably accommodates the interests of all who love tramping our public sloughs and gullies. Thank you.

5/24/2018

Melissa John

Sioux Falls SD

Comment:

I urge the SDGFP commission to support the proposal because South Dakota is one of only a few states that fail to require traps to bear information identifying the trap owner/user. This lack of identification makes it nearly impossible for law enforcement agencies to identify those who may be using traps illegally and it will protect unintended victims of trapping.

Sara Parker

Sioux Falls SD sara.parker@perceptivemedia.net

Comment:

I urge the SDGFP commission to support the proposal because South Dakota is one of only a few states that fail to require traps to bear information identifying the trap owner/user.

This lack of identification makes it nearly impossible for law enforcement agencies to identify those who may be using traps illegally and it will protect unintended victims of trapping.

5/24/2018

Brenda Manning

Pierre SD buzz_brenda@yahoo.com

Comment:

SDGFP Commission, please support the proposal as SD is a rarity when it comes to requiring traps to bear identifying information such as the trap owner/user. This lack of identification hinders law enforcement to be able to identify people who may be using traps illegally and this will greatly help protect unintended victims of trapping.

5/24/2018

Janine Betts

Oacoma SD janineinsd@yahoo.com

Comment:

I urge SDGFP Commission to support the proposal because South Dakota is one of only a few states that fail to require traps to bear information identifying the trap owner and user . This lack of identification makes it nearly impossible for law enforcement agencies to identify those who may be using traps illegally and it will protect unintended victims of trapping.

Barry Betts

Oacoma SD bioserve@midstatesd.net

Comment:

I urge SDGFP to support the proposal as SD is one of just a few that does not require identity.

5/24/2018

Sara Mart

Vermillion SD sara.mart@usd.edu

Comment:

I beg you to please support this proposal. I live near Clay County Park. My dog, Rex, went missing for 7 days this winter, during a week of extreme cold, snow & wind. He is never away from home overnight, so we assumed he had died. After 7 days, he returned home on his own, badly wounded by a snare trap. His entire neck was cut all the way around, with the worst part being his throat which was sliced 1" deep from ear to ear. The vet said the wound appeared to be 6-7 days old. We assume he was caught in the trap all week and released by the trapper who finally checked that trap after 1 week. His tracks in the snow came from the direction of the park, so we assume the trap was at or near the park. Please make trappers more accountable for their traps. I do not want this to happen to another pet, nor do I want a wild animal to suffer in a similar way. Makes me sick. Thank you for your consideration.

Sarah Taggart

Vermillion SD sarahtaggart@outlook.com

Comment:

"I urge the SDGFP commission to support the proposal because South Dakota is one of only a few states that fail to require traps to bear information identifying the trap owner/user. This lack of identification makes it nearly impossible for law enforcement agencies to identify those who may be using traps illegally and it will protect unintended victims of trapping."

5. Click I'm not a robot, follow instructions and hit SUBMIT - that's it & you will be on the record with the SDGFP Commission.

5/24/2018

Terry Krsnak

Rapid City SD tjkpj@msn.com

Comment:

The proposed snare restrictions are an over reaction to the hunting dog incident. If the restrictions are enacted, they will curtail predator control because fur quality will not be worth the effort after pheasant season ends; and in the era of diminished habitat predator control becomes more important. Also, what has the additional regulations of name tags on each snare or trap got to do with any of this?

5/24/2018

Roberta Rotherham

SD

Comment:

No comment text provided.

Becky Jensen

Meckling SD rkjensen@usd.edu

Comment:

I urge the SDGFP commission to support the proposal because South Dakota is one of only a few states that fail to require traps to bear information identifying the trap owner/user. This lack of identification makes it nearly impossible for law enforcement agencies to identify those who may be using traps illegally and it will protect unintended victims of trapping.

5/24/2018

Casey Mart

Vermillion SD Casey.mart3@gmail.com

Comment:

I urge the SDGFP commission to support the proposal

5/24/2018

Abby Protzman

Norfolk NE nebraska.rose@gmail.com

Comment:

No comment text provided.

5/24/2018		
Kelly Saunders		
Vermillion SD		
Comment:		

sd is one of the only state that does not make trappers identify their traps.

5/24/2018

Gina Mairose

Vermillion SD gina.mairose@usd.edu

Comment:

I urge the SDGFP commission to support the proposal because South Dakota is one of only a few states that fail to require traps to bear information identifying the trap owner/user. This lack of identification makes it nearly impossible for law enforcement agencies to identify those who may be using traps illegally and it will protect unintended victims of trapping

5/24/2018

Colleen Evans

Vermillion SD hupiper82@gmail.com

Comment:

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Kristine Brady

Vermillion SD klbrady71@yahoo.com

Comment:

I urge the SDGFP commission to support the proposal because South Dakota is one of only a few states that fail to require traps to bear information identifying the trap owner/user. This lack of identification makes it nearly impossible for law enforcement agencies to identify those who may be using traps illegally and it will protect unintended victims of trapping.

5/24/2018

Holly Haddad

Vermillion SD holly.haddad@usd.edu

Comment:

I urge the SDGFP commission to support the proposal because South Dakota is one of only a few states that fail to require traps to bear information identifying the trap owner/user. This lack of identification makes it nearly impossible for law enforcement agencies to identify those who may be using traps illegally and it will protect unintended victims of trapping.

5/24/2018

John Kidney

Vermillion SD Jake.kidney@gmail.com

Comment:

Hours or days of suffering for animals domesticated or wild is cruel and should not be practiced.

Robin Talsma
Sioux Falls SD Bubaloo2@hotmail.com
Comment:
No comment text provided.
5/24/2018
Judy Zwolak
Vermillion SD judithzwolak@gmail.com
Comment:
South Dakota is one of only a few states that fail to require traps to bear information identifying the trap owner/user. This lack of identification makes it nearly impossible for law enforcement agencies to identify those who may be using traps illegally and it will protect unintended victims of trapping
5/24/2018
Deborah Dodge

Comment:

SD

5/24/2018

I urge the SDGFP commission to support the proposal because South Dakota is one of only a few states that fail to require traps to bear information identifying the trap owner/user. This lack of identification makes it nearly impossible for law enforcement agencies to identify those who may be using traps illegally and it will protect unintended victims of trapping.

Morgan Hower

North Sioux City SD Morgan.hower@yahoo.com

Comment:

No comment text provided.

5/25/2018

Maggie Peterson

Vermillion SD Maggie.r.peterson@gmail.com

Comment:

My dog is a victim of illegal trapping and was in a trap for a week unnoticed by the trapper

5/25/2018

Brenda Moss

Vermillion SD 1blmoss@gmail.com

Comment:

I run the "Vermillion-Southeast South Dakota Lost and Found Pets" group on Facebook. During the last trapping season, two dogs near Vermillion were caught in snare traps. In one case, the trapper checked his trap as required by law, and the dog was released without serious injury. However, in another case, the trapper did not check the trap as required by law, and the dog remained in the trap for approximately 7 days (Clay County Park). This dog suffered severe neck wounds and required extensive veterinary care.

I urge the SDGFP commission to support the proposal because South Dakota is one of only a few states that fail to require traps to bear information identifying the trap owner/user. This lack of identification makes it nearly impossible for law enforcement agencies to identify those who may be using traps illegally and it will protect unintended victims of trapping.

5/27/2018

Jared Kaiser

Sioux Falls SD pipersd15@gmail.com

Comment:

I fully support the updated trapping regulations. A hunting dog's life should never be in jeopardy over the slim possibility of trapping a coyote. I support trapping, but not on public land during pheasant season. This is a common sense update to the regulations and if not passed many dogs lives remain in jeopardy.

5/28/2018

Cheryl Bowden

Hot Springs SD bowdens@gwtc.net

Comment:

I oppose the first and second proposed changes to our trapping regulations. I want the snaring on public lands starting date to remain Nov. 13th. I oppose trap tags as it is a burden on trappers and serves no useful purpose what so ever.

5/28/2018

Jim Sparks

Spearfish SD Jjsparks@rushmore.com

Comment:

Prefer the law stays as it currently is.

5/29/2018

Dennis Morton

Rapid City SD bayushisoshu@gmail.com

Comment:

I do not support the proposed restrictions on the use of snares on public land. Pheasant hunters should not be shown preference in regard to public land use. Thank you for considering my input.

5/29/2018

Vincent Logue

Oelrichs SD vilogue@outlook.com

Comment:

Proposal #1: I oppose the proposal to extend the prohibition on use of snares on public lands and improved rights of way. It would take almost 2 months away from snaring time away and would end about the time that furs are losing their prime. Public land should be shared by all taxpayers and not just one group. This proposal would include areas in South Dakota that have no pheasant hunting such as forest service, BLM and Buffalo Gap Grasslands. There is no consideration for pheasant hunters to take precautions for their animals. If in fact the hunter is in control of the dog it should only be a few minutes that the animal may be in a snare. A simple pair of inexpensive cable cutters, such as trappers use, in the hands of a pheasant hunter can insure safe, stress free removal of the animal from any snare that it may get entangled in.

Proposal #2: I oppose the creation of a new administrative rule requiring all traps and snares placed on public lands and improved rights of way be marked with owner's name and address or personal identification number. This rule would solve no problems and would incur extra expense for the trappers of South Dakota. This rule could be used as a means to harass a trapper if anyone was so inclined. A identification tag on the snare would not have kept the dog from getting caught or assisted in removing the dog from the snare. Once again a pair of cable cutters, which are easily carried in a pocket, would have made removing the dog from the snare a lot easier and less stressful for both dog and owner.

Proposal #3: I support the proposal banning the use of springs or other powering devices that hold a snare closed on snares used on the game production and waterfowl production areas above water yearround. I believe it is in the best interest of both trappers and hunters sharing public lands. It is notable that the snare that the dog was caught in last December was not equipped with a dispatch spring.

Larry Bowden

Hot Springs SD bowdens@gwtc.net

Comment:

I strongly oppose items one and two in the current proposal. To restrict snaring on all public lands thru the end of pheasant season is to much. Trappers have the right to use public land just as much as hunters. Lots of west river public land doesn't even have pheasant populations. The term public land is to broad. Trap tags serve no purpose and are just an added expense and headache for the trapper. Trappers provide free predator control which enhances game and bird populations. Why doesnt GF&P acknowledge this and support the trapping community instead introducing unnessary regulations that will increase predator populations? Increased predator populations which will consume more of our already dwindling pheasant population. Trappers provide a valuable service, why not work with us instead of against us?

5/30/2018

Charles Kelsey

Hot Springs SD ctkelsey@earthlink.net

Comment:

I strongly oppose the current, seemingly useless but certainly impossibly restrictive proposals #1 (prohibition on snares through pheasant season) & 2 (marking traps with owners ID), that will eliminate or severely restrict trapping on PUBLIC LANDS during a large portion of the season that fur-bearers are in prime condition, and impose additional useless, and cumbersome trap tagging regulation. PLEASE DO NOT LET THESE TWO PROPSALS PASS! THANK YOU. SINCERELY, CHARLES KELSEY

Michael Morris

Henley MO ufc.moose@yahoo.com

Comment:

Your trappers pay taxes too and have just as much right to trap as the bird hunters have to hunt birds.

5/30/2018

Daniel Turbak

Revillo SD turbakda@hotmail.com

Comment:

It is my understanding that in the last 15 years there are no instances of a dog being killed in a snare in South Dakota. Why try to regulate something that isn't a problem? Dog owners should simply be made aware that traps and snares are potentially on public land and they should prepare themselves. If a dog bites somebody on public hunting land are we going to ban dogs from being on the public land?

Lesel Reuwsaat

Creighton SD leereuwsaat@yahoo.com

Comment:

I strongly oppose any change to the current regulations in place. Restricting the use of these PUBLIC LANDS through the end of pheasant season has only one party in mind. These grounds are for all sportsman to use and use equally. As far as trap tags go, these do not do anything to solve any of the issues at hand. The SD Game and Fish pays a wage and benefits to the state trappers to help with damage control. The SD recreational and professional trapper provides this service to the state and other sportsman at no cost. We help protect and facilitate healthy wildlife opportunities for all sportsman. Don't regulate us more than we already are!

5/30/2018

Mandi Reuwsaat

Creighton SD mandireuwsaat@yahoo.com

Comment:

No comment text provided.

Tanner Opetize

Watertown SD

Comment:

Who's idea was this? The is the perfect example of liberals making laws that do nothing more but create additional laws that are unneeded. South Dakotans are better than this, if anything we should be allowing more trapping and snaring to occur, not take it away. I spoke to 37 pheasant hunters and none of them are in support of any of these proposed changes. When anti-hunting groups support a commission rule, commissioners should be asking themselves if they are making a decision with the best interest of sportsmen in mind. I urge you to revoke this entire proposal. Thank you.

5/31/2018

James Hanley

Cresbard SD jphcar5@hotmail.com

Comment:

This Comes about because of a hunters dog being caught in a snare / said animal turned out fine . the 3 proposals would not solve a problem that real does not exist.. A. because a K9 can be release from a snare with no harm to k9.. By implementing these restriction I feel it would cost the state a lot of money first to implement it and second to the money coming into the state from pheasant hunting. If the predators are not kept in check . In part by snaring the pheasant Hatch will be down and then the pheasant number thus less hunters coming to spend there dollars THIS would TOTALLY affect the states economy ..so I wish the law to remain as is on snaring ...

5/31/2018

Jason Kleist

Highland WI kleist.jason1991@gmail.com

Comment:

I strongly oppose changes 1, 2, and 3. Restricting snaring on public lands through the end of pheasant season is to long. Not all public lands have pheasants. Restricting snaring on public lands could cause an increase in predator populations.

5/31/2018

Dale Halling

Bryant SD aaapurewater@yahoo.com

Comment:

I have been a life long trapper and a member of the South Dakota Trapping Association.

I oppose the changes you are wanting to make for snaring in the road right away and public hunting and trapping areas. Also, I would not like to have to put name tags on any traps or snares.

Trappers catch many animals that consume the eggs of pheasants, ducks and geese. By doing this I feel all trappers are doing a service for the SD wildlife.

5/31/2018

Marvin Halls

Hot Springs SD tuffhalls@outlook.com

Comment:

I oppose any changes to trapping regulations concerning public land.

5/31/2018

Travis Hymans

Lake Norden SD tkhymans@itctel.com

Comment:

In regards to the proposed trapping regulations, I don't agree with them. The trapping tag proposed is an unnecessary expense and easy for thieves to steal traps and reset illegally to knock out competition. It also makes it possible for anti-trapping advocates to get a trappers address and harass them. It does nothing to promote legal sets, a person making an illegal set won't put a tag on anyways. And the proposed ban on snaring until the end of pheasant season basically cuts out snaring for raccoon's of which are one of the hardest on pheasant eggs. With low pheasant numbers, will the season for pheasants be shortened?

5/31/2018

Enoch Pashby

Box Elder SD enoch_pa@yahoo.com

Comment:

Public ground should be available for the use of all legal outdoor recreation. Sportsmen who devote their lives to trapping or snaring should not be regulated out of the public grounds because of the big money that pheasant hunting brings to the state. The bottom line is this, it is the responsibility of the hunter to ensure the safety of his dog. We should not be punished so that pheasant hunters don't have to watch their dogs.

Tyler Kari

Bison SD relyt1996@hotmail.com

Comment:

I am strongly opposed to all of the proposed changes to trapping and snaring in our state. The problems they claim to be addressing are literally non-existent. No dogs have been killed in the state by being caught in a snare and identification adds another set of hoops for the law abiding citizen to jump through. Trappers should have the same opportunity to use public land as everyone else! One complaint should not affect all of South Dakota's trappers. I strongly urge the commission to properly educate themselves about trapping and snaring as any intelligent individual could see that these proposed changes are unnecessary.

6/1/2018

Todd Chamley

Trent SD karla-todd@goldenwest.net

Comment:

These proposed changes, shows how one sided the commission looks at its constituents. How is it fair to cater to one group of sportsman, while throwing another group's privileges aside. If you want to address rule violations, I would love to see the number of ROW violations committed by "road hunters" vs trappers, I can assure you it is not even a contest who violates more laws. But there is no way would our state even mumble the notion of restricting the hunting of ditch parrots rights. By no means would I ever want to see hunting regs changed, I'm simply pointing out the contrast of thoughts. Once we allow some of our rights to be taken, from that point forward others see a weakness and we will be expected to cater to every whim that is brought forward from that day on. Give an inch, they will always try for a mile next, you can count on that!

John Hauge

Deadwood SD jdhauge44@gmail.com

Comment:

I am writing in support of the proposed rule to require all traps to be labeled with the owners ID. This is an idea that needs to be implemented and I thank you for proposing it. Please implement it.

6/1/2018

Mark Steck

Canton SD dakotalinemark@yahoo.com

Comment:

Dear Commissioners and Secretary Heppler, Reason: Snaring regulations

I am opposed to the proposal (#1) banning snares from all public lands during pheasant season. It is far too broad regarding public lands. I see this as an anti-trapping bill that pits sportsman against sportsman. Furthermore I find it odd in the way this proposal has been championed. It is not a grass roots effort by bird hunters, nor is it a recommendation by the division of wildlife.

As for the tagging of traps on public lands (#2), I am opposed. Again I find this perplexing in its genesis and rational.

Mark Steck

Canton SD dakotalinemark@yahoo

Comment:

Proposal #3 which prohibits dispatch type snares on GPA and WPA's a decent rule and should be common sense among trappers. I can support this rule yet find myself wondering if this compromising with what appears to be an assault on South Dakota freedoms. Despite these thoughts I can support #3. Thank you for allowing me to bring my dog Sadie to the last commission meeting. I do feel education is key to these issues. I also think there should be a mandatory trapper certification course.

Mark Smedsrud

Hartford SD smedsrud@unitelsd.com

Comment:

I am writing in opposition to the current proposal to change snaring regulations on public land in South Dakota.

Coyote, Fox and raccoon are at their peak fur quality from early November to mid December. The current proposal prohibits the effective harvest of these animals when the fur is at it's best quality.

Predators need to be harvested/managed in South Dakota to keep populations in balance. This proposal greatly hinders that effort.

I am a retired Conservation Officer/Supervisor and worked 26 years in wildlife law enforcement for GF&P. I also worked for the GF&P as a Animal Damage Control trapper. I am a life-long trapper and have used snares for many years. I know for a fact that the incidents of dogs caught in snares is minimal every year. This restrictive proposal is not a fair or competent solution to a relatively small problem. Education is the key to this issue. Pheasant hunters who use dogs need to be educated that snares are used on public lands. Then, they need to carry a quality cable cutter which can be purchased for \$10. In the remote chance that their dog is caught in a snare they can simply cut it off and be on their way. Veterinarians always recommend that dog owners carry a basic first aid kit for their dog in case they are cut or injured while hunting. A cable cutter is just another basic part of that kit to be carried during a hunt.

I have had two hunting dogs injured fairly seriously in the past while hunting pheasants on public land. Both dogs were cut by old abandoned barb wire fences through cattail sloughs. Both required stitches and veterinary care. I did not blame GF&P or demand that all abandoned fence be removed from public land. I accepted it as a possible risk while hunting.

If hunters are aware of the existence of snares they can be prepared in the remote chance their dog encounters one and handle it as a minor inconvenience and not an issue to cause panic.

I am neutral on the trap tag issue. As a lawful trapper I have nothing to hide. There are still a number of states that do not require trap tags. South Dakota has always been a state where Government regulation is kept to a minimum. I would like to see it stay that way.

Charlie Bode

Scotland SD

Comment:

At my age 67 I have saw and heard things but "common sense" is not common any more. I vote no on trap tags, because other folks take your taps and put them where they shouldn't be. Most of my snares are on public lands ect. That's where the coyotes live when the crops are gone or being taken out. Without these tools i think the cattlemen of SD would suffer to put more restrictions is not need. As for dispatch snares on GPA grounds not needed. Pheasant season runs long. I feel we have got a long good and with common sense take there dog out of snare. Keep on hunting. I have caught lots of dogs in snares there happy to see me. Thanks for reading give it some thought.

6/1/2018

Marlin Ramse

Custer SD

Comment:

Concerning your latest proposal on snaring! How can you justify closing off so much land for so long a period for the complaint of one or a few bird hunters? Trappers should have as much right as the bird hunters. I'm sure you are catering to the side with the money. What has snare springs and traps tags got to do with the hunters complaint? The trappers do a good service to the bird hunters by killing a lot of predators that feed on the birds then young and nests, you are just taking the sport and livelihood away from a large group of sportsman. The Black Hills and a lot of the National Grasslands has no pheasants for hunting, but you wish to penalize them too. All these regulations are unnecessary it's just more rules to ad to your already over regulated regulation book. Please think about all the sportsmen not just the few! I am an 82 year old trapper that to see new ready and regulations that are trying to shut down our sport!

Gregory Pettersen

Madison SD Oldgreg82@gmail.com

Comment:

This would be Devistating to my type of trapping. I don't trap much on public lands but road right of ways and ditches are 90% of my trapping out of respect for pheasant hunters with dogs I usually stay out of public land until after January 1 but I do trap the ditches around them which are usually my most productive areas and I believe it does help the hunters in the public lands I think some form of education for young trappers would not be a bad idea because people with experience usually place snares or traps to avoid these situations at all costs

6/1/2018

Mike Mcgillivray

Madison SD mightymac1515@gmail.com

Comment:

Hello everyone, I would just like you to think about the topic of the road trapping restrictions, I trap hundred miles of road ditches through the heart of prime pheasant hunting country, and have zero issues with accidental catches. Don't let a few uneducated trappers ruin it for the guys that do things correct. Reducing the number of predators increase pheasant numbers and putting road trapping restrictions will decrease the harvest of the predators that prey on pheasant and nesting upland game birds. I have several land owners that run pheasant hunting operations request that I use snares on their land to reduce predators. Non lethal snares set correctly without entanglement are non harmful. Pheasant hunters need to share the land resources with trappers to help build bird populations back to what they use to be. If this purposed laws are passed, I'm going to consider selling my equipment and taking a new hobby up in my life. Please vote against the proposed regulations. Look at some interests other than the pheasant hunters. Make pheasant season end December 1 if you want to install new regulations on road trapping. I understand some people need to be educated about the do and don'ts of road trapping. I would volunteer my time to be an instructor for this class, if we didn't put more regulations on trapping public right of ways.

In closing please don't forget about the little guy that doesn't bring millions of dollars into the state. One dog snared on a public shooting area that had that snare shot off it, shouldn't make laws change. Lets keep South Dakota great and vote against additional regulations on road trapping!!!!

Thank you

Bill Wick

Sioux Falls SD

Comment:

I'm writing today on behalf of my pheasant hunting party of 13 gentleman that have hunted public lands for pheasants with dogs for the past 23 years. It has been an amazing ride and we have hunted all across eastern South Dakota almost exclusively on public land. We have only encountered traps a handful of times and when we did, never had any issues and respect the men that choose to enjoy that outdoor activity and that we share the public lands with. Honestly, our group wishes there was more trappers out there. We all paid to open these lands for outdoor pursuits and our group of 13 ask s you to reject this proposal. We do not want a commission that makes rules due to one isolated incident. We want to keep trappers on our public lands so we can continue to enjoy South Dakota bird hunting. We respectfully request the commission to cancel this proposal and listen to the sportsmen that pay the bills, not some dog walker or anti-hunters that want to take away this important managment tool.

6/2/2018

Jerry Herbst

Pukwana SD philotto@midstatesd.net

Comment:

This was brought about by a dog owner who's dog was caught in a snare and was not hurt so what is the point then? Educate yourself on what a snare is and how they work, in the past I have talked with people that should know how they work but had no interest in learning about them. Talk with your State trappers they are the Pros they use this equipment every day!

6/2/2018

William Winslett

Pierre SD 195Pilot@gmail.com

Comment:

Regarding the proposed rule changes to trapping of public land in South Dakota

proposed rule change on snaring on public land after pheasant season

- 1. Millions of acres of non pheasant habitat
- 2. After January 1st many parts of state are covered in snow making access impossible
- 3. Relative small trapping community, restriction would discourage trapping in the State

requiring trap ID tags would cause undue paperwork and added equipment

6/2/2018

Shirley Winslett

Pierre SD sdgirl42 @gmail.com

Comment:

millions of acres restricted not pheasant habit

trap tags undue equipment

6/2/2018

Cory Ferguson

Rapid City SD hplainsd1@aol.com

Comment:

I support the proposed rule to require owner IDs on traps/snares placed on public land and improved road right-of-ways.

I want the Game, Fish, & Parks Department to know who owns the traps/snares. 43 other states require trap IDs.

Why should trapping happen, without regulators knowing who owns and set the traps on our public lands? How can the laws be enforced without some type of identification?

I also support extending the time for prohibition on snares on east and west river public land and public improved road right-of-ways by a few months in the late fall/winter. Currently it is prohibited May to November. This change is to prevent accidental snaring of hunting dogs during pheasant season. I also support the ban forbidding certain types of snares that forcibly hold snares closed on Game Production and Waterfowl Production Areas.

South Dakota's current snaring restrictions inadequately reduce harm to snared animals. Animals can be slowly strangled or choked, hung, or other body parts such as abdomen can be encircled.

I am in favor of increasing the time-of-year restrictions on snaring animals.

Trapping/snaring reform is about reducing cruelty to target and non-target wildlife or pets accidentally snared. Animals can be left in snares/traps for too long. Animals are without water or food, perhaps exposed to extreme weather, perhaps injured by trap/snare devise, while in stress and pain or harassed by predators for many days. They may die in the trap/snare. Non-target animals may not survive if released. Many states require a 24 hour trap check time, but not in SD.

Thank you proposing these changes and I hope that there are favorable outcome concerning these crucial issues.

Thank you,

Cory Ferguson

6/3/2018

Roger Auch

Brandon SD auchden@alliancecom.net

Comment:

Many types of public land across the USA have to balance multiple use by various groups. Sometimes these uses may appear to be in conflict with each other thus requiring wise management of said land that don't favor one group over another. Bird hunters with dogs should not be the only voices heard in the management of public land in SD. Trapping can and has for a long time co-existed with hunting on public land. Snares are not lethal to hunting dogs or any more injurious than barbed wire fences. When trappers pay for a trapping license in SD, some of our money goes to buying and maintaining public land. My trapping license fee shouldn't be used to block me from effectively taking furbearing animals at the peak of fur quality just because an occasional bird hunter maybe have to get his dog out of a snare (really not that hard). Snaring is one of the most effective ways to catch coyotes and I suspect that predator numbers will increase on public land without snaring and thus negatively impact game bird numbers. Same is true with public ROW. The current snare regulations is that a snare can't be attached to a fence without the owner's permission and well as trapping with 1/8 mile of occupied dwellings and such without permission. These current regulations are good enough, how many problems do you really have with dogs in snares...? State-wide law shouldn't be created just because of a handful of bird hunters with dogs get upset once and a while. You, as the commission, are supposed to represent the entire state outdoor users, not one specific sub-group. Perhaps hunters need to educate themselves on trapping. Snares are not the enemy...

6/3/2018

John Almquist

Watertown SD jcalmquist@aol.com

Comment:

Dear commissioners,

South Dakota public lands were purchased and managed by sportsman's dollars. Therefore, the management of these public lands should include all user groups including trappers. The incident of the snared dog on public land is a reminder that accidents do and will occur with any outdoor activity. Whether it be hunting, trapping boating, hiking, snowmobiling, camping, cross-country skiing or any number of activities it is inevitable that accidents do and will occur. It is something that we all must realize when engaging in outdoor activities, and when accidents do occur we need to do our best to minimize in the future the problem in realistic ways. The proposal to eliminate snares on public lands and public right of ways is not a viable solution. Trappers play an important role in eliminating predators that prey on small game birds. Snares are a very effective method of harvesting fox and coyotes. Restricting trappers in the use of snares on public lands would have an adverse effect in trying to reduce predator populations while at the same time trying to maintain healthy bird populations for hunters. However, I would be in favor of possibly restricting the use of the dispatch snares on east river public lands until after the close of the pheasant hunting season. But allow the use of snares with deer locks on all public lands and right of ways beginning on a designated date similar to would we have had in the past few years.

Most hunters are very unaware that trapping activities take place on public lands in SD. The GFP needs to do more to educate hunters about trapping. The present GFP Hunting and Trapping manual does not mention that trapping as an activity on public shooting areas. Also, no word mentioning trapping is written on public signs to inform hunters that trapping is allowed on the public land.

In regard to trap tags. I personally would not want anyone including a SDGFP CO to be inspecting my trap to see who the owner of the trap is. In my opinion that is trap tampering- a regulation that we currently have in rule book. Trap tags would also be just another cost burden to many trappers. Traps, baits, lures, equipment today are very expensive. Adding trap tags would just add another expense factor especially to younger trappers wanting to get started. Trap tags would encourage the so called bad apples in the bunch to remove tags from legal sets or steal the traps and relocate the trap in another area. This would only create another law enforcement problem that we do not need. Trap tags would serve no purpose in law enforcement, preventing illegal trapping

or preventing non-target catches. Simply said they would only be a burden to trappers who obey the rules and regulations.

Thank you
John Almquist

6/3/2018

Kenneth Mcdonald

Elk Point SD traci.holmquist.briarcliff.edu

Comment:

No comment text provided.

6/3/2018

Julie Anderson

Rapid City SD signsofhope@rap.midco.net

Comment:

I would respectfully request as a resident of South Dakota to ban all trapping, as this practice is extremely cruel and kills or maims any animal that get ensnared. To make this practice an acceptable form of income and/or predator control is unethical and needs to be abolished. No animal deserves this tragic fate and every commission member should be required to watch the death that a trapped animal succumbs to before dismissing this request. I support this amendment only because there is no other choice available to me.

6/3/2018

Dave Skeide

Webster SD Cloey@itctel.com

Comment:

The public land is for everyone to enjoy,hunters trappers,fisherman. We as trapper,s already have restriction,s on when we can set snares on public land.and now you want to restrict us even more? We the trappers assn, and the state trappers can show the people who hunt with dog,s how to remove a snare from a dogs body. Thank you for listening.

6/4/2018

Craig Parkhurst

Armour SD goodforgoose@yahoo.com

Comment:

I am opposed to the requirement of trap tags on traps and snares. I believe that they constitute an unnecessary expense and provide addition opportunity for trappers to be harassed or entrapped by problems such as tags falling off traps, etc.

I am also opposed to any restriction of snares on public lands.

6/5/2018

David Love

Custer SD djlove@gwtc.net

Comment:

We believe that your proposal to require owner identification on traps is a step in the right direction. It makes no sense to enact laws regulating the use of traps unless those laws can be enforced. And if you have no way of learning who is trapping illegally you cannot enforce the laws. Thank you for your dedication to duty.

Teah Homsey-Pray

Sturgis SD teahhomsey@yahoo.com

Comment:

I support the measure of identifying traps thus making trappers hopefully more responsible. In a society as sophisticated as ours I truly question the use of this barbaric means of killing. Many other countries have banned the use of inhumane traps and leg holds. I urge you to look at this "sport"

and really question what we are promoting in our state amongst our youth and our treasured wildlife. Certainly our wildlife deserves better than this pain and suffering.

6/5/2018

Wendy Luedke

Lead SD wendymluedke@gmail.com

Comment:

I am righting to declare that I agree that name tags should be placed on all traps. Trappers, like any other business, have to be held accountable for their actions. I read where one trapper admitted that 76% of the animals he caught in traps were not his intended game. How is this OK? Why are we allowing trappers' rights but not the animals or the environment/ecological system? Tradition? Are we actually calling severe cruelty to animals tradition? We have a history of traditions that were done away with or changed when found cruel and unnecessary. The percentage of trappers in the US has diminished greatly. There are no longer the valid reasons of the past to trap. It is inhumane.

Trapping needs to be regulated and traps tagged with the owner's name. Trappers have to be held accountable for snaring and causing harm to unintended animals. Animals have rights and they depend on humans to be their voice.

Frank Dicesare

Rapid City SD fdic917@outlook.com

Comment:

On behalf of the Rapid City Chapter of the Izaak Walton League of America we wish to express our support for these proposed rule changes.

We feel that mandatory identification tags on traps and snares is essential so that conservation officers can quickly identify and remove illegal traps. The majority of other states require trapper identification tags. We feel that ethical trappers would have no problem complying with these proposed rules.

We also support the ban on snares during the pheasant season, both east and west River. Such a ban would protect hunting dogs and help to reduce the capture of non-targeted animals. Additionally we support the proposed year round ban on snares, that use springs or other powering devices that hold the snare closed, on Game Production Areas and Waterfowl Production Areas above water

Rory Halverson

Custer SD ibowhunt298@yahoo.com

Comment:

. I strongly oppose the proposals in regards to trapping and snaring. By not allowing snaring until after pheasant season is closed is absolutely ridiculous. It would take away nearly 2 months from a trapper when most fur, especially coyotes is at it's prime. Every fur buyer I've ever talked to has told me the time to harvest coyotes is in November and December. This is fact! After that the quality starts to degrade from rubbing and etc. It would not be right to cater one special interest group and take away from others to use public land. Also there are not pheasants in all parts of the state. It makes no sense at all especially to those us us who snare in the Black Hills.

The proposal that would require all traps and snares to be marked with the owners name and address is also ridiculous. It would create an unwarranted expense to the trapper and serve no purpose other than letting a trap thief know who they are stealing from. I personally don't want some anti crazy person knowing my name and address, especially for the sake of safety for me and my family. Also what happens if I do have someone stealing my equipment with my identification on it and the they go make illegal sets and do stupid things, I would most likely be targeted because it had my name on it. Also a trap tag would not keep a pheasant hunters dog out of a snare or trap.

The proposal that would not allow the use of springs on snares is also ridiculous. The purpose of a snare is capture an animal and dispatch it. The use of a spring helps to do this more efficiently and humanly. I thought the idea to dispatch or release a trapped animal as soon as possible was the goal. The idea that a snare kills instantly is just not true. Have you ever heard of a chew out? Why let that coyote be alive longer than needed. A domestic dog usually won't fight a snare they will just sit down and wait. A good pheasant hunter/dog owner will be aware if their dog doesn't come out of the brush and will go see what's going on. There will be plenty of time to release it from a snare.

Again, I strongly disagree with all 3 proposals to trapping and snaring. All 3 of them will cause a financial burden to a trapper. It's not just the price of trap tags, it also will include lost fur in the shed from chew outs and having to modify existing equipment with springs or purchase new snares without them that don't work as well. It would also hurt many trappers income possibly by several thousands of dollars by not being able to harvest big numbers of coyotes that they normally do by the use of snares for nearly 2 months when the fur is prime and worth the most. I also feel that if you start talking things away now, what's next? The anti trapping people are out there and never give up. Trappers are truly sportsmen and conservationists that play a huge part in wildlife conservation and population control. Please don't take away from us, and cater to big money pheasant hunters. It's our public land too!

Darci Adams

Hartford SD dadams@humanesociety.org

Comment:

I'm unable to attend your June 7-8 meeting in Aberdeen, please accept the attached written comment on the rule finalization of trapping prohibitions.

I'm a South Dakota native, an advocate for animal protection, and for the past 8 years I have served as The Humane Society of the United States South Dakota State Director. We urge your support of the proposal amending the trapping prohibitions in Chapter 41:08:02 for reasons outlined in the attached letter.

6/5/2018

Evan Anderson

Wasta SD eandersonwasta@gmail.com

Comment:

I'm a South Dakota landowner and a livestock producer. Please do not change any of the snaring/ trapping regulations! Less coyotes means more calves and more wildlife. Thanks

Bill Kurtenbach

Groton SD

Comment:

Members of the Game, Fish, and Parks Commission:

Please consider the following thoughts I have regarding the issue to change the regulations for the use of snares on WPA's and GPA's in South Dakota. I've been hunting on GPA's, WPA's and private land in South Dakota with a bird dog for over 30 years. In my hunting vest I have always carried two things just in case I would need them. The first is a bottle of water for my dog, and the second is a cable cutter. Both are very inexpensive and could save a dog's life. I've used the water many times, and have never had to use the cable cutter. I understand that two dogs were caught in snares last year and neither was fatal. I'm not trying two minimize that traumatic event but, that is a very small percentage when you consider how many dogs were on WPA's and GPA's last year. Also one must consider the much higher number of sporting dogs that are killed or injured each year while hunting, caused by accidental shooting, being hit by vehicles, or die from dehydration due to the dog owner's neglect. These public lands were purchased with money generated by licenses purchased by sportsmen, including hunters, anglers, and trappers. I feel they all have the same rights when it comes to recreating on that public land. Banning snaring until after pheasant season is as effective as a total ban, because a very small percentage of snaring on GPA's/WPA's occurs after that date. I think we need to be very careful not to make changes based on emotion rather that facts. There are many special interest groups lying in wait to add fuel to that fire to take more and more rights from future sportsmen and sportswomen. In closing I would like to state that I am opposed to any changes in the current trapping and snaring regulations in South Dakota. Information could be included in the Hunting and Trapping Handbook to inform bird hunters of snare use and dog safety.

Hunting Requirement – Mandatory CWD Testing

5/7/2018

Daniel John Amen

Rapid City SD dakotainc@gmail.com

Comment:

I do support this testing and would also like to see it implemented in the State of SD.

5/23/2018

Heather Nearman

SD

nearheat@gmail.com

Comment:

I urge the SDGFP commission to support the proposal because South Dakota is one of only a few states that fail to require traps to bear information identifying the trap owner/user. This lack of identification makes it nearly impossible for law enforcement agencies to identify those who may be using traps illegally and it will protect unintended victims of trapping.

Nancy Hilding President Prairie Hills Audubon Society P.O. Box 788 Black Hawk, SD 57718 June 3rd, 2018

SD Game, Fish and Parks Commission Joe Foss Building 523 East Capitol Ave Pierre, SD 57501

Dear Commission,

Comments on proposed rule on unlimited hunting party size.

Prairie Hills Audubon Society (PHAS) is opposed to the proposal to remove limits on the size of hunting parties, <u>as written</u>. We believe this will be unsafe and result in shootings of people. We believe that the 20-person limit was enacted decades ago due to shootings of people associated with group hunting of rabbits, which was done in large and constricting circles.

We offer an alternate suggestion, although this letter is not a petition for rulemaking.

We suggest you start a program like the general permits the EPA/DENR uses to streamline permitting of various pollution release actions. A general permit reduces the bureaucratic hassle for both sides: general permits are simple to get. Individual permits are more of a hassle. The EPA/DENR writes the conditions of a general permit and if the permittee can agree to meet those terms, they send in a notice letter to the agency 48 hours before they start the activity. They don't need to wait to hear back from EPA/DENR. If they can't agree to those terms, they need to apply for an individual permit.

We suggest that SD GFP continue this issue to the next commission meeting and have staff write a "general permit" that lists the qualifications needed for a safe hunt involving many people. Such conditions might be: give a name of responsible party who is organizing the hunt, limits on the type of prey, limits on seasons of hunt, limits on type of guns and ammunition allowed, limits on direction of shooting (such as into the air), limits on formation of the hunters (will they be in a line or on opposing sides?), limits on height of the vegetation relative to height of hunters (how obstructed is the view?), directions on the amount of and placement of orange worn by hunters, restrictions on hunting in deep snow and requiring parental permission for anyone under 18.

We also express concern for potential impacts to "at risk "wildlife and the possibility that large hunts could impact habitat security for any "at risk" species. We believe that turkey season is in the spring, perhaps April and a goose season is also in the spring, perhaps March. We believe that predator/varmint seasons are year round. We thus see the possibility of a large hunt targeting

varmints (such as rabbits or prairie dogs) or predators (such as coyotes), occurring during breeding season, especially of sage grouse, or ground nesting raptors and other birds. We thus suggest that staff communicate with the Wildlife Diversity Program to see if such hunts, could inadvertently impact any state or federal listed species or wildlife species of "greatest conservation need". We ask specifically about the northern long eared bat, the greater sage grouse, interior least tern, piping plover, ferruginous hawk, burrowing owl, and the whooping crane. If there are such concerns, then restrictions that limit access to areas of their critical habitat could be added to the general permit. We also suggest that group hunting during deep snow, might stress out wildlife that SDGFP prizes as a hunting resource. Thus if the Wildlife Diversity Program agrees, perhaps a general permit needs some conditions relative to non-target wildlife.

The GFP could offer an "individual" permit for any hunting group that can't meet the terms of the general permit. It could delegate the approval of "individual permits" to particular staff member(s) and provide general guidelines listing the issues to be addressed - such as hunter formations, view shed, limits on ammunition and guns and unintended yet adverse impacts to "at risk' wildlife.

If you don't use the "general permit" idea, we still suggest you continue the matter & incorporate some of the above limits into your new rule.

Sincerely,

Nancy Hilding President

Prairie Hills Audubon Society

Hanny Held P

Nancy Hilding
President
Prairie Hills Audubon Society
P.O. Box 788
Black Hawk, SD 57718
June 3rd, 2018

SD Game, Fish and Parks Commission, Joe Foss Building 523 East Capitol Ave. Pierre, SD 57501

Dear Commission,

Comments on proposed changes to trapping/snaring rules.

In this letter we indicate support for the proposed changes offered by the Commission, but if you scroll down to page 3, we offer more related and suggested changes.

TRAPPER ID

We thank the Commission for proposing a rule to **require owner IDs on traps/snares** placed on public land and improved road right-of-ways. This means if there is illegal trapping/snaring going on, GFP will know who owns the traps/snares. PHAS has been asking for this for a long time. 43 other states already require trap IDs.

Many trappers oppose the change; some alleging enemies will mess with their traps and frame them. Today there are trail cameras, small video cameras or cell phones that date stamp photos...modern technology provides these businesses, with defenses against trappers being framed. Also, if tampering occurred, the trappers can argue that, before GFP staff and/or the court as a defense. Please remember trapping is mostly a commercial enterprise. Trappers may sell furs for profit or act to kill animals that bother ranchers/farmers & thus increase ranch/farm profit (both are business actions). They need to be held to commercial standards for behavior.

Why should trapping happen, without regulators knowing who owns and set the traps

on our public lands -- how can GFP staff enforce the law? We thank GFP for proposing the change.

TIME OF YEAR PROHIBITIONS

The Commission is proposing extending the time for prohibition on snares on East and West River public land and public improved road right-of-ways by a few months in the late fall/winter. Currently it is prohibited May to November. This change is to prevent accidental snaring of hunting dogs during pheasant season. We support this change.

However we wonder why the Commission and staff are just concerned about dogs owned by hunters, while engaged in hunting. Don't you have an equal obligation to all pet owners & an equal fiduciary duty to watch over all domestic animals that could be harmed by activities that you permit, such as snaring?

POWERED SNARE DEVICES

Also proposed is a ban **forbidding certain types of snares that forcibly hold snares closed on Game Production and Waterfowl Production Areas;** the rule change would forbid "using springs or other powering devices that hold the snare closed". We also support this proposed change. We don't know why it is just proposed for GPA and WPA and not all public land and public right-of-ways.

OTHER CHANGES ARE NEEDED - ARGUMENT.

We are appreciative of any positive change to make SD's trapping/snaring rule or law more "humane". SD's snaring restrictions inadequately reduce harm to snared animals. Other states may out-law snares entirely or more heavily regulate snaring. Use of snares under SD current rule permits in our opinion, cruelty to animals, that many other states don't allow. Animals can be slowly strangled or choked, hung, or other body parts such as abdomen can be encircled

In SD's East River animals can be left in snares/traps for 2 and a partial day. West River they can be left in traps/snare for 3 and a partial day. Animals are likely without water or food, perhaps exposed to extreme weather, perhaps injured by trap/snare devise, in stress and/or pain or harassed by predators for many days. If they have dependent young, they may be separated from those. They may die in the trap/snare. Non-target

animals, including endangered species & pets, may not survive if released. Many states require a 24-hour trap check time but not SD. If SD GFP reduced the trap check time, pets in snares, would live longer with less damage.

Born Free USA gives SD an "F" on our trapping regulations. Look at the card and compare our state with others for many values.

Link to Born Free's Scorecard:

http://7a1eb59c2270eb1d8b3da9354ca433cea7ae96304b2a57fdc8a0.r60.cf1.rackcdn.c om/BFUSA Trapping Extended Report Card.pdf

http://www.bornfreeusa.org/a10_trapping_reportcard.php

OTHER CHANGES SUGGESTED

We suggest that the Commission continue this matter and investigate & consider the below options. This is not a petition for rulemaking. When we submit a petition for rulemaking, we will label it as such.

- 1. That the restriction on use of spring powered choking snares be for all public land and right-of-ways, not just GPA and WMA. We also request that the trappers be required to use the release "relaxing lock snares" on all public land and public right-of-ways. This is a lock that allows the snare loop to loosen slightly when an animal stops pulling against it. (see Michigan Fox and Coyote Non-lethal Snaring Guide, which is attached).
- 2. That they use a smaller pounds of pressure for breakaway force 285 instead of 350 pounds, (see Michigan Fox and Coyote Non-lethal Snaring Guide, which is attached) We ask that the break occur at the loop, not at the ground tie, so the animal does not drag the severed cable around with them, continuing the constriction and possibly getting hung up on other objects.
- 3. That GFP consider a larger diameter snare loop stop, at least for some target species. SD has a 2.5-inch diameter restriction on the snare loop stop, but Michigan for hunting coyotes/fox has a 4.5-inch diameter (see Michigan Fox and Coyote Non-lethal Snaring Guide, which is attached)

- 4. 24-hour trap/snare check time on public land or public-right-of ways, with an up to 24-hour time extension option available, for special emergencies, if the extension permission is granted in advance or as acceptance after the fact, by SDGFP staff.
- 5. For traps/snares that have a potential to damage or kill domestic animals, we request that you place a "no trap/snare buffer" from edge of houses, public buildings and any identified public hiking trails, picnic areas or camp grounds, unless land/building owner gives permission. We suggest a furlong (660 feet), because GFP uses that distance for other setback limits, although we are not sure what the limit should be.
- 6. Trappers must report to SDGFP all domestic animals caught in traps/snares and photograph the trapped/snared domestic animals and GPS their location, which they share with SD GFP and local animal welfare organization (if such exists). The trappers have a duty to provide water/food to such animals, if the animal permits it. If the animal is judged to be severely injured/sick and unlikely to limp home, they have a duty to ask a nearby local landowner about ownership and to take the severely injured domestic animal, to either the domestic animal's owner's dwelling, a vet, an animal welfare organization or other responsible care giver. Such intervention can provide a variance on the required trap check time interval if needed.

We attach

- 1. The Born Free Extended Score Card,
- 2. The Michigan Fox and Coyote Non-lethal Snaring Guide
- 3. Relaxing Snare Requirement for Bobcat Sets 2013
- 4. Modern Snares for Capturing Mammals Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies

Here are links to some References:

SD Trapping regulations

http://sdlegislature.gov/Rules/DisplayRule.aspx?Rule=41:08:02

SD's Furbearer Seasons

http://sdlegislature.gov/Rules/DisplayRule.aspx?Rule=41:08:01

Modern Snares for Capturing Mammals - Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies https://www.fishwildlife.org/application/files/5515/2002/6134/Modern_Snares_final.pdf

Sincerely,

Nancy Hilding

President

Prairie Hills Audubon Society

Relaxing Snare Requirement for Bobcat Sets in Trapping Districts 1, 2 and Portions of 3, 4, and 5

This regulation is specific to bobcat sets on public land to minimize the incidental capture of lynx: Non-relaxing (lethal) snares are prohibited in all bobcat sets. This regulation is designed to avoid the incidental take of federally threatened lynx by snares in a bobcat set and will now cover occupied lynx habitat and the two federally designated critical lynx habitat areas in Montana. In addition, the current breakaway snare lock requirement still applies for all snares.

What is a relaxing snare?

A relaxing snare actually means that the locking device on the snare cable operates both ways allowing the snare cable to move back and forth to some degree. A relaxing snare should be defined as having a lock which allows the snare loop to loosen slightly when an animal stops pulling against it. This is to reduce the possibility of strangulation, particularly in the case of lynx. Locks that only close or that use springs or other powering devices to hold them closed are not considered relaxing snares. The Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies (AFWA) defines a relaxing snare as having a snare lock that allows the snare loop to release constriction pressure on the captured animal when the cable is not taut (e.g., when the animal stops pulling it will loosen).

As per this "non-relaxing snare prohibited" regulation (terminology referring directly to relaxing locks as defined above), deer stops do not meet the requirement to the definition of a relaxing snare. Stops are not a snare lock device.

Listed below is a partial list of locks that are commercially available through snare and trap dealers and are considered as relaxing locks by Fish, Wildlife & Parks, if they are not modified and are assembled with the appropriate snare cable diameter. Any alteration of a lock from its manufactured condition may affect performance and again, the cable size must match the lock to avoid the cable from being bound up at the lock.

- Relax-A-Lock
- Dakota Line's Low Pro
- Relaxing Washer Lock
- Quarter Washer Lock
- Berkshire Washer Lock

BORN FREE USA - EXTENDED TRAPPING REPORT CARD

State	Born Free's 2017 Grade	Trap Types and Killing						Trapper Requirements					Trap Check Times		Species Restrictions			
		Leghold Trap Prohibited	d Trap Conibear Trap Prohibited bited Full Ban Only on Land		Snares Prohibited	Bait Prohibited	Restrictions on How Trapped Animal can be Killed	Trapper License Required	Trapper Report Required	Trap ID Required	Trapper Education Required	Restriction on Number of Traps	24-Hour or Daily Trap Check Time – Landsets	Trap Check Time –	Are Non-Target Animals Reported?	Bobcat Trapping Prohibited	Bear Trapping Prohibited	Otter Trapping Prohibited
Alabama	B-	No ^{1,2}	No	No ²	Yes	No ³	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No ⁸	Yes	No ⁹	Yes	No ⁹
Alaska	F	No ²		No ²		No	No	Yes	No⁴	No	Yes	No	No	No	No ⁵	Yes	Yes	No ⁹
Arizona	B+	No ^{1,2}	No ²	No ²		No ³	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	No ^{9,10}	Yes	Yes
Arkansas	F	No ^{1,2}	No ²	No ²	_	No ³	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	2	No	No ⁹	Yes	No ⁹
California	A+	Yes	Yes	N/A		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No ⁵	Yes	Yes	Yes
Colorado	A-	Yes	Yes	N/A		No ³	No	Yes	No⁴	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	No ⁹	Yes	Yes
Connecticut	B-	No ^{1,2}	No ²	Yes		No	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No ^{9,11}
Delaware	B-	No ^{1,2}	No ²	No ²		No ³	Yes	Yes	No ⁵	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No ⁹
Florida	D-	Yes	Yes	N/A		No	No	Yes	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	No ⁹	Yes	No ⁹
	D	No ²	No	No ²		No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	No ⁹	Yes	No ⁹
Georgia Hawaii	A+			ional Trapping Al			162	162	162	162	INU	INU	162	162	INO	INO	162	INO
Idaho	F	No ²	No	No		No ³	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No ⁸	No ⁸	Yes	No ⁹	Yes	No ^{9,11}
Illinois	В	No ^{1,2}		No ²		No ³	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	No ^{9,10,11}	Yes	No ^{9,10,11}
Indiana	D+	No ^{1,2}	No	No ²	-	No	No	Yes	No ⁵	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	No ⁵	Yes	Yes	No ^{9,11}
Iowa	F.	No ^{1,2}	No	No ²		No ³	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	No	No ^{9,11}	Yes	No ^{9,11}
	D+	No ^{1,2}	No	No ²		No		Yes	No			No	Yes	Yes	No	No ⁹		No ¹¹
Kansas	C-	No ²	No	No ²		No	Yes		No ⁵	Yes	Yes	No		Yes	No ⁵	No ^{9,11}	Yes	No ^{9,11}
Kentucky	F	No ¹	No	No		No	No No	Yes	No	Yes No	Yes	No	Yes		No	No ⁹	Yes Yes	No ⁹
Louisiana	D-	No ¹	No	No ²		No ³	No	Yes	No ⁵	Yes	No Yes	No	Yes	Yes No ⁸	No ⁵	No ⁹	No ^{10,11}	No ⁹
Maine	D+	No ^{1,2}	No	Yes		No	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	No ⁷	No	Yes	Yes	No ⁹
Maryland	B-			N/A		No			No ⁵							No ⁹		No ⁹
Massachusetts	D+	Yes No ^{1,2}	Yes				No	Yes	No ⁵	Yes	Yes	No No	Yes	Yes	No	No ^{9,11}	Yes	No ^{9,11}
Michigan	D+	No ²	No ²	No No ²		No No ³	Yes No	Yes	No	Yes Yes	No Yes	No	Yes	Yes No ⁸	No No ⁵	No ^{9,11}	Yes Yes	No ^{9,11}
Minnesota	D-	No		No ²		No ³	No		Yes		No	No	No ⁶	No ⁶	No	No ⁹		No ⁹
Mississippi	F	No ¹	No No	No ²				Yes	No	Yes		No		No ⁷		No ⁹	Yes	No ⁹
Missouri	F			1		No No ³	No	Yes	No ⁵	Yes	No		Yes No ⁷	No ⁷	No No ⁵	No ^{9,11}	Yes	No ⁹
Montana	D-	No No ¹	No	No No ²		No ³	No	Yes		Yes	No	No		No ⁷		No ⁹	Yes	
Nebraska	F		No			No ³	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	Yes Ne ⁸		No	No ⁹	Yes	Yes
Nevada		No No ^{1,2}	No	No ²		No ³	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No ⁸	No ⁸	Yes No⁵		Yes	No No ⁹
New Hampshire	В		No No ²				No Val	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No			No ⁵	Yes	Yes	No ^{9,10,11}
New Jersey	C+	Yes No ^{1,2}		Yes No ²		No ³	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes		No ⁵	Yes No ⁹	Yes	
New Mexico		No ^{1,2}					No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes		No ^{9,10}	Yes	Yes
New York	C+ F	No ^{1,2}		No ²		No ³	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No		Yes No ⁸	No ⁵	No ⁹		No ⁹
North Carolina	F			No ²		No ³	No	Yes	No No⁵	Yes	No	No			No No⁵	No ⁹		
North Dakota	В	No No ^{1,2}		No ²		No ³	No			Yes	No	No		No				Yes No ^{9,11}
Ohio	С	No ^{1,2}					No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No ⁵	Yes No ^{9,11}		No ^{9,11}
Oklahoma			Yes	N/A		No	No		No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes		No	No ^{9,10}		No ^{9,10}
Oregon	D+	No ^{1,2}		No ²		No ³	No		Yes	Yes	Yes	No			No No	No ^{9,10,11}		
Pennsylvania	C	No ^{1,2}	No	Yes		No ³	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No		No ⁶	No ⁵			No ^{9,10,11}
Rhode Island	B+ D	Yes No ^{1,2}	No	Yes		No No ³	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No		Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes No ⁹
South Carolina	F		No	Yes		No ³	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No			No No ⁵	No ⁹		
South Dakota	D	No No ²		No ²	_		No		No ⁴	No	No	No	No ⁷	No No		No ⁹	Yes	Yes
Tennessee	F	No ²		No ²		Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	No		No ⁶	No	No ⁹		No ⁹
Texas		No No-2		No ²		No	No	Yes	No	No	No	No			No No	No ⁹ No ^{9,10,11}		No ⁹
Utah	D+	No ²		No ²		No ³	Yes	Yes	No ⁴	Yes	Yes	No		No	No ⁵		Yes	Yes
Vermont	D	No ¹		No ²		No	No		No⁴	Yes	Yes	No			No	No ⁹		No ⁹
Virginia	F	No ^{1,2}	No	No ²		No ³	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	No ⁸	No	No ⁹		No ^{9,11}
Washington	A	Yes		N/A		No ³	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes		Yes	No ⁹		No ⁹
West Virginia	С	No ^{1,2}	No	No ²		No ³	No	Yes	No ⁴	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	No ^{9,11}		No ^{9,11}
Wisconsin	D	No ²		No ²	_	No ³	No	Yes	No⁵	Yes	Yes	No		No 8	No	No ^{9,10,11}	Yes	No ^{9,10,11}
Wyoming	F	No	No	No ²	No ²	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	No ⁸	No ⁸	No	No ⁹	Yes	Yes

FOOTNOTES:

- 1 No teeth/serrated edges allowed
- 2 Size restrictions (at least on land)
- 3 Restrictions on bait type, placement, whether or not the bait is covered, and/or what type of trap it can be used with
- 4 Voluntary survey
- 5 Only for certain species
- 6 36 hours trap check time
- 7 48 hours trap check time
- 8 72 hours rap check time
- 9 Must get pelt tagged/ sealed
- 10 Must have special permit
- 11 Bag limit or quota

Michigan Fox & Coyote Non-Lethal Snaring Guide



MICHIGAN FOX & COYOTE SNARING GUIDE

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The sponsoring organizations gratefully acknowledge and thank the Ohio State Trappers Association and the Ohio Department of Natural Resources for permission to print this guide.

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Snares Past & Present

When you mention snares or snaring to most people, they think of a bent over pole with a noose fastened to the end of it. They imagine an animal sticks its head through the noose, the pole springs free, and the animal is jerked off its feet and hung. The fact is that in days-gone-by, this is how snaring was practiced, and this is the image that remains with many people today.

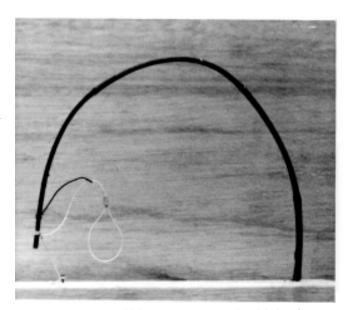
Obviously, a snare like this would be lethal to any animal that got in it. However, there are a couple of reasons why our forefathers constructed and used snares in this manner. First, the only thing available for making snares was cord or fine wire. Neither of these materials is exceptionally strong and an animal could easily bite the snare in two or break it. Also, they had no means for holding the noose closed to keep it cinched around the animal. For these reasons, they employed the spring pole. The pole pulled the noose closed, and ultimately dispatched the animal so it could not break the snare and escape.

Although this outdated misconception of snaring still exists, modern snares and modern snaring methods are significantly different from those of the past. Modern snares are made of stranded steel cable. This cable is extremely strong and resistant to abuse, yet it is flexible enough to form easily into a loop. An animal can't easily break this cable or bite it in two. The modern cable snare also has a locking device to keep the loop from opening back up once it starts to close.

With these two features, it is no longer necessary to use a powering device to keep a snare closed, and animals can be held alive because the cable can withstand their efforts to escape. This gives the potential for the modern cable snare to be used as a non-lethal trapping device.

Because old-fashioned snares only functioned in a lethal manner, snaring was banned in Michigan. But with the modern cable snare and its potential for holding animals alive and unharmed, the snare has been reinstituted as a legal device for Michigan's trappers taking fox and coyote.

This guide has been prepared to help familiarize you with the modern cable snare. It is designed to give you the basic knowledge you need to use snares safely and efficiently to take fox and coyote.





When most people think of snaring, this is what they visualize. This may be how snaring was practiced in daysgone-by, but today's modern cable snares are not used in this manner.

The Modern Cable Snare

The modern cable snare is made of stranded steel cable. This cable comes in two basic configurations known as 7 x 7 and 7 x 19. The 7 x 7 cable consists of 7 strands of small diameter wire wound into a larger strand. Then, 7 of these larger strands are wound together to make the finished cable. The 7 x 19 cable uses 19 very small wires wound into a strand with 7 of these strands making up the cable. Michigan regulations specify that snares shall be made of 1 / 16 inch or larger cable.

This cable comes in several different sizes that designate the diameter of the cable. Cable measuring 3/32 of an inch in diameter is the most popular size for snaring.

Another integral part of the modern cable snare is a sliding mechanical snare lock. As the snare loop is pulled closed, the lock slides down the cable. Although it may loosen slightly, the lock will not slide easily in the opposite direction. This is what keeps the animal from backing out of the snare or shaking the snare off.

Locks come in a wide variety of shapes, forms, and configurations. Michigan law requires a relaxing lock which is defined as a lock that allows the snare loop to loosen slightly when an animal stops pulling against it. This is to reduce the possibility of strangulation. Locks that use springs or other powering devices to hold them closed are not legal for use in Michigan. Modern cable

snares also have some device on the end of the snare for fastening it in place. The simplest form of this is a loop fashioned in the end of the cable. However, most snares utilize a swivel as an end fastening device. Anchor swivels are required in Michigan because they allow the animal some freedom of movement while it is detained in the snare. Two swivels are required, one of which must be at the anchor point. Swivels help keep the cable from getting badly kinked and twisted as the animal is detained in the snare which could possibly lead to breakage of the cable.

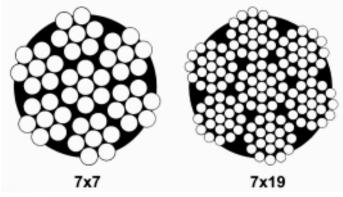
Ferrules are used to hold the lock and fastener in place on the snare. These ferrules are hammered or crimped into place on the snare cable. There are three basic types of ferrules: aluminum, coiled steel wire, and annealed steel nuts.

Another component that may be found on a snare is a stop crimped on the cable that prevents the snare loop from closing past a minimum diameter. These are commonly known as deer stops because they allow a deer to shake a snare off its foot should the deer get its foot in the snare. Deer stops that keep the snare loop from closing past a 4 1/4 inch diameter are required on a Michigan snare.

Snare Cable

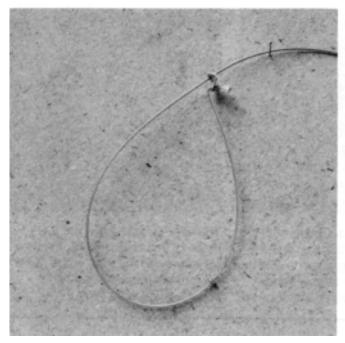


Modern snares are made of multi-strand steel cable. It is sometimes called aircraft cable. This cable is very strong and can hold an animal alive over an extended period of time. This eliminates the need to construct the snare as a lethal device. This piece of cable has been unraveled to show the individual strands

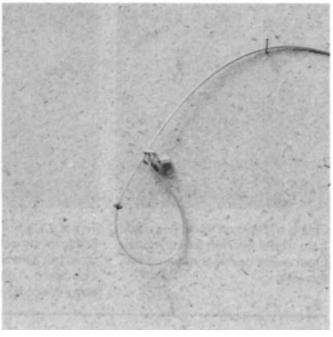


There are two basic types of cable. 7x7 cable has seven large strands of cable each made of seven small wires. 7x19 cable has seven large strands each made of nineteen small wires

How the Lock Works



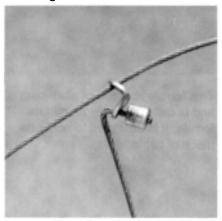
The lock is a very important part of the snare. The snare is set with an open loop so the animal can enter the snare.



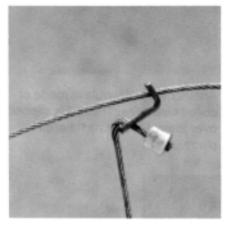
The lock is a very important part of the snare. The snare is set with an open loop so the animal can enter the snare.

Locks

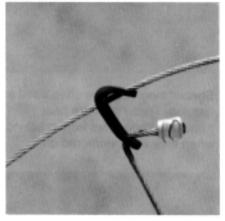
A wide variety of snare locks are available. The following are some of the more common types of snare locks. A deer stop <u>and</u> a break away device of 285 pounds or less is required with all types of locks on a Michigan snare.



This is one of the more commonly used snare locks. It is called a washer lock. A deer stop and 285 pounds or less breakaway device is required with this lock on a Michigan snare.

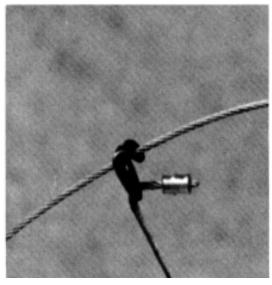


This is an "L" lock. It functions in the same manner as a washer lock. A deer stop and 285 pounds or less breakaway device is required with this lock.



This is a "Thompson" style lock. This lock was one of the earliest locks developed for use with multi- strand steel cable. There are several other brandname locks that follow this design. This lock also requires a deer stop and break-away device.

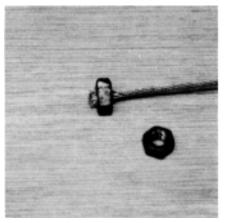
Locks (continued)



This is a "Reichart" lock. It is made from a bent washer. A deer stop and break-away device is required with this lock.

Ferrules

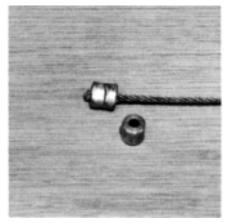
Ferrules are used to hold the lock on a snare. They are also used to hold the swivel on a snare or form an end fastener on the snare. The ferrules are hammered or crimped onto the snare cable.



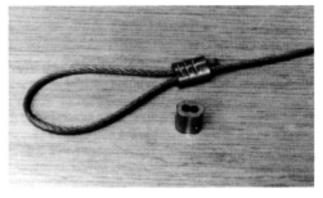
Special steel nuts are often used as ferrules. These nuts are heat treated to keep them from cracking when they are hammered on.



Another type of ferrule is made of coiled steel wire. The coil is slipped over the cable and hammered in place.



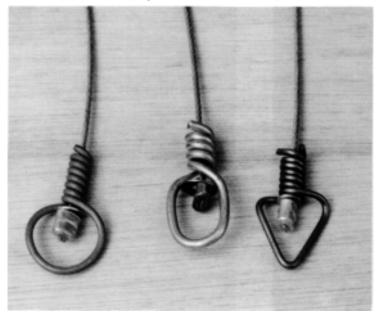
This ferrule is made of aluminum and is called a single aluminum ferrule. It is designed to hold one piece of cable.



This is a double aluminum ferrule. It is used to form a loop on the end of a snare cable.

Swivels

It is required in Michigan that a snare be equipped with at least two swivels, one of which must be at the anchor point. The swivel provides a means for fastening the snare in place and also provides some comfort to the animal. Swivels also help keep the snare cable from getting too badly kinked and twisted while the animal is detained in the snare. If a cable gets badly kinked and twisted, there is a possibility it could break allowing the animal to escape.



Swivels for snares are most commonly made out of wire. These are some typical examples of wire snare swivels. A small washer is placed on the cable to keep the swivel from binding against the end ferrule.



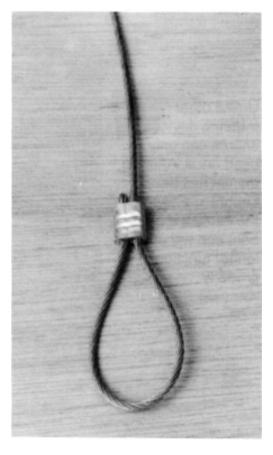
Swivels for snares are most commonly made out of wire. These are some typical examples of wire snare swivels.



A small washer is placed on the cable to keep the swivel from binding against the end ferrule.

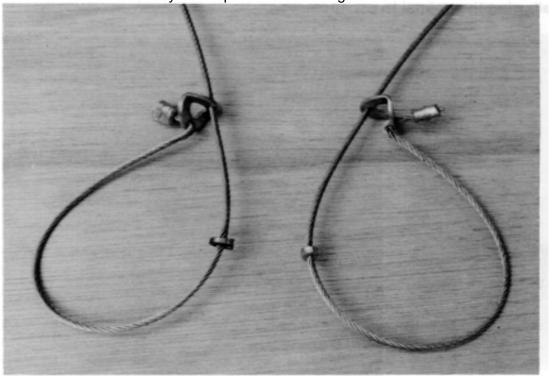
This snare swivel is made of stamped metal. Any type of swiveling device can be used for a snare swivel.

(Right) Some snares are equipped with simple loops on the end for fastening, however this is not recommended. You could, however, fasten a box-type swivel to the loop to provide for swiveling.



Deer Stops

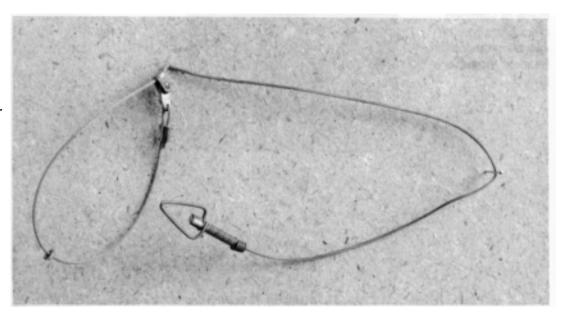
Deer stops are installed on snares to prevent the loop from closing past a minimum 4 1/4 inch diameter in Michigan. This will prevent the snare from closing around a deer's foot if one of these animals should accidently encounter the snare. They are required on all Michigan snares.



Deer stops are installed by crimping the stop onto the cable. At the left is a type of stop that can be added after the snare is assembled. At the right is a small nut used as a stop. It must be placed on the cable as the snare is assembled. The deer stop keeps the lock from going past a certain point and keeps the snare from closing down completely.

A Used Snare

Unlike other trapping devices, snares can only be used once. After an animal has been caught in a snare, the cable will be bent and will no longer function properly.



Michigan Fox & Coyote Snaring Regulations

It is important to remember that all the Michigan regulations which apply to trapping also apply to using snares. Snares must have a metal tag showing the name and address of the user or Michigan driver license number. Snares are considered to be restraining type traps and must be checked once each day in Zones 2 and 3 and once within each 48-hour period in Zone 1.

You should always check the "Michigan Hunting and Trapping Guide" for current information concerning the use of snares and traps. Besides the general trapping regulations, there are some specific regulations that apply to using terrestrial snares in Michigan. They are as follows:

- 1. You may only use terrestrial snares on private land from January 1 to March 1 to take fox and coyotes. Snares may not be set on publicly owned land or commercial forest lands.
- 2. A snare must be constructed of 1 / 16 inch or larger cable.
- 3. A snare may not be set with a loop size greater than 15 inches in diameter.
- 4. The top of a snare loop cannot be set more than 24 inches above the ground. When the ground is snow covered, the top of the loop may not be set more than 24 inches above the compacted snow, which is established by your footprint, placed beneath the snare, with your full body weight.

All the general regulations that apply to trapping apply to snares as well. For example, all snares must have a metal tag bearing the user's name and address or Michigan driver license number. Also, snares, like other restraining type traps, must be checked once each day in zones 2 and 3 and once within each 48 hour period in Zone 1.



All the general regulations that apply to trapping apply to snares as well. For example, all snares must have a metal tag bearing the user's name and address or Michigan driver license number.

5. A snare must have:

a relaxing lock, defined as a mechanical snare lock that allows the snare loop to loosen slightly in order to reduced the possibility of strangulation.;

a deer stop to prevent the loop from closing to a diameter less than 4 ¼ inches; and

the snare must have a breakaway devise that breaks away at a force of 285 pounds or less. Breakaway devises must be attached to the relaxing lock.

- 6. A snare must be affixed to an immovable object or stake. Snares cannot be used on a drag.
- 7. Snares may be anchored to woody vegetation provided that the stem is free of branches and stubs to a height of 5 feet above the ground or compacted snow. Branches and stubs must be cut flush with the outer bark of the stem.
- 8. A snare must be equipped with two swivels, one of which is an anchor swivel.
- 9. A snare cannot use any type of spring pole, counter balance weight, spring or other device to assist in its closing. 10. Snares may not be attached to a fence or set in a manner where an animal in the snare can become entangled in a fence. 11. Snares may not be set in a manner that would allow a snared animal to be suspended with 2 or more feet off the ground.

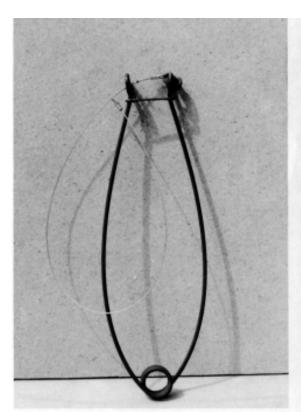


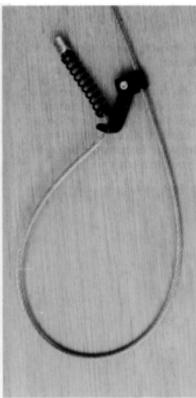
Landowner
permission is
required to trap on
fenced or posted
lands or farm
property and
wooded areas
connected to farm
property.

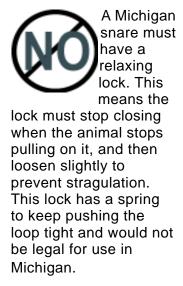


A Michigan snare cannot have any kind of powering device to pull the loop closed. It is not legal to attach the snare to a spring pole or any other power source. spring pole or any other power source.







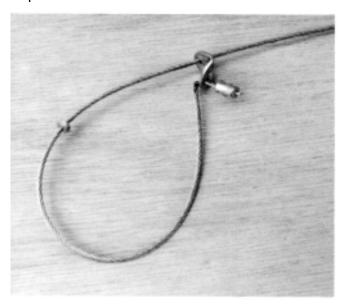




This is a spring powered snare. It would not be legal for use in Michigan.

Deer Stops and Break Away Locks

A Michigan snare must have a stop that keeps the loop from closing down any smaller than 4 1/4 inches in diameter. In addition, the snare must have a lock system that breaks away at a force of 285 pounds or less.

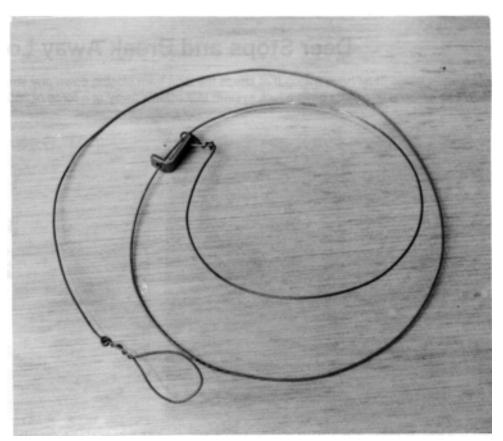


This is a typical snare with a deer stop installed. A lock system that breaks at a force of 285 pounds or less would also be required for this snare to be legal in Michigan.



Michigan snares must be made of steel cable 1/16 inch

diameter or greater. This snare is made of wire and is not legal for Michigan use.







Snares must be fastened to an ummovable object. This snare is fastened to a drag. This is not legal in Michigan.

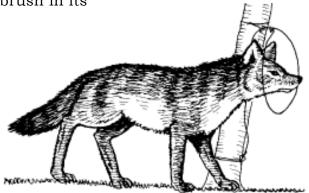
How A Snare Works

There may be some questions as to how a snare works if there is no powering device to close the snare loop. The fact is, the animal itself provides the power to close the snare.

In use, the snare loop is suspended above a trail or path the animal is expected to take. The animal, walking along, enters the snare loop and continues its forward progress pulling the snare down on itself.

On the surface, this may sound odd, but if you take into consideration how an animal travels through its environment and the conditions it meets there, this becomes more understandable.

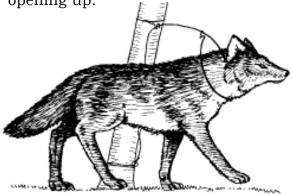
As an animal travels along, it regularly encounters weeds, vines, and small pieces of brush in its



The snare loop is positioned over a trail the animal is expected to take. The animal is not alarmed by the snare because it resembles a vine. The animal enters the snare with its nose guiding it through the loop.

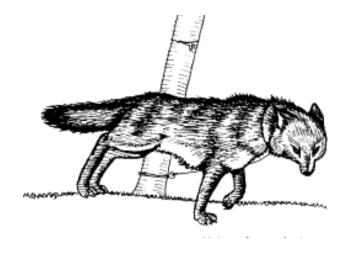
path. An animal does not make a detour every time it encounters one of these objects. Instead, it simply pushes its way through the obstruction. If by some chance the animal cannot muscle its way through, it will then back up and make a detour.

An animal perceives a snare in the same manner that it perceives a vine or weed. It does not recognize the snare as a danger. On encountering the snare, the animal behaves as if the snare were just another vine or weed and tries to push its way on through. When it finds it cannot break free of the "vine" the animal will try to back out. However at this point, the snare is cinched down on the animal, and the lock keeps the snare from opening up.



The animal continues its forward progress. The snare loop strikes its chest and starts to close.

The animal pushes forward tightening the snare down on itself. The lock holds the loop closed, and the animal cannot escape.



Fastening and Stabilizing Snares

Like any other trapping device, a snare must be fastened in place to hold the animal while it is detained in the snare. Michigan regulations require that a snare be fastened to a solid, immovable object or that it be staked.

One easy way to fasten a snare is to stake it in place as you would a foothold trap. Make sure the stake is long enough and strong enough to hold any animal that might get in the snare. Wood stakes can be used for snares, but many trappers prefer to use steel stakes because they are more durable.

Michigan regulations require that a snare be equipped with two swivels including an anchor swivel that provides swiveling at the stake as you would for a foothold trap. With a wood stake, the anchore swivel itself may provide the swiveling action you need. Some snare swivels are designed to accept a steel stake right through the swivel. You also have the option of fastening a regular stake swivel or s-hook to the end of the snare to provide for use with a steel stake.

For coyotes, you may want to consider using a cross-stake system to hold the snare. The same devices used to cross stake foothold traps can be used to cross stake a snare.

The other option for fastening a snare is to anchor it to an immovable object. Usually this comes in the form of a tree or a large log that the animal cannot move. If the anticipated path of the target animal comes close to a tree or a log, this would be a good place to construct a set.

To fasten a snare to a tree or log use a piece of heavy gauge wire to completely encircle the trunk. Pass the wire through the snare swivel and twist it closed. If you anchor your snare to woody vegetation, you must ensure that all branches and stubs are removed up to 5 feet above the ground or compacted snow. Cut the branches and stubs flush with the outer bark of the stem.

Snares in Michigan are limited to a length of 60 inches. Sometimes a snare is not quite long enough to reach the object that you want to fasten it to. In this case, you should use a cable anchoring extension made of snare cable to lengthen the snare. This extension may be up to 36 inches in length. You can purchase these or make them using a length of cable and forming a loop in each end. NEVER use wire to extend a snare. A wire

snare extension could easily kink and break as the animal struggles in the snare.

Another aspect of getting a snare in place is stabilizing the snare so it hangs in the proper position. A snare must be supported so that the loop hangs vertically and will be in the proper position to intercept the animal.

The best way to do this is with a piece of wire. One end of the wire is fastened to the snare cable and the other end of the wire is anchored solidly. Bending the wire allows you to position the snare. In attaching the wire to the snare, there are several options. You can bend a small hook in the wire and crimp this onto the snare cable. However, crimping the wire to the snare may interfere with the action of the swivel. Another way to attach the wire to the snare is to bend the end of the wire into the shape of an "N" and thread the snare cable into it. Some snares are equipped with coiled wire support collars that will accept a certain size wire. Here the wire is slid under the support collar where it pinches against the cable.

For the anchored end of the stabilizer wire, you can wrap the wire around a stake or wrap it around a tree or log, especially if you have fastened your snare to this object. One option is to leave a long tail on the fastening wire and use this tail to support the snare. You can also anchor the end of the support wire by spearing it into the ground.

Wire in size 11 or 12 gauge, or larger, is best for fastening and stabilizing snares. It is illegal to use wire to extend the length of a snare. When an animal is detained in a snare, it has the use of all four feet and can pull hard against the fastening. If wire gets kinked and bent, it can readily break. If you need to extend the length of a snare, use a piece of snare cable with a loop formed in each end. The cable is designed to hold up under the struggles of the animal.

Fastening Snares

Snares must be solidly anchored to hold the captured animal. Michigan law requires that snares be fastened to a solid, immovable object; or the snare may be staked.



Using a stake is a good way to fasten a snare. Steel stakes often serve better for land trapping because they are more durable. This snare has a swivel that will fit on the stake.



If the snare swivel does not fit well on the stake, you can use a regular stake swivel and fasten it to the snare. Here a box swivel is used. An s-hook would also work.



Snares can also be fastened to solid, immobable objects. This snare is fastened to a log.



The stake system must be strong enough to hold the largest animal that can get in the snare. In poor soil conditions it may be necessary to use a cross-stake system.

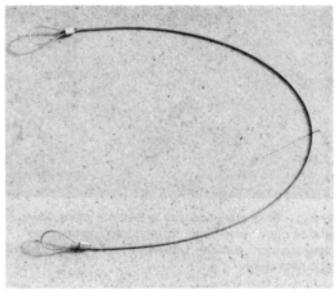


A large tree makes a good, solid anchor for a snare. The tree must be clear of branches or stubs up to 5 feet above the ground or compacted snow.

Fastening Snares (continued)



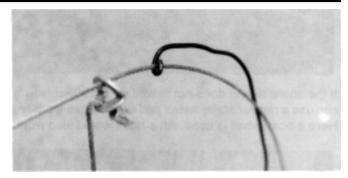
Use a length of heavy gauge wire wrapped around the object to fasten the snare. Pass the wire through the snare swivel.



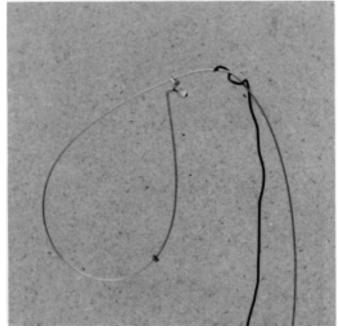
If you need to extend the length of a snare, use an extension made of snare cable. NEVER use wire for extending a snare. Cable extensions may be up to 36" in length

Stabilizing Snares

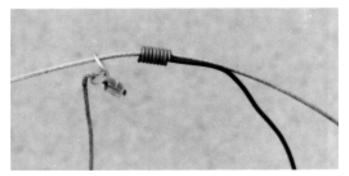
To function properly, the snare loop must be held in a fixed position to intercept the animal. Heavy gauge wire works bext for stabilibzing snares. One end of the wire is affixed to the snare, and the other end of the wire is anchored to make it stable.



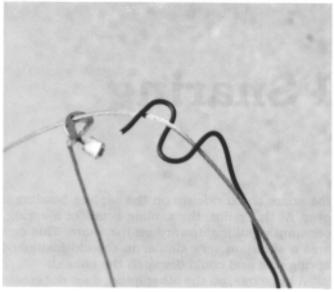
One method for fastening the wire to the cable is to make a small bend in the end of the wire and crimp it onto the snare. However, this wire may interfere with the swivel because it is crimped on the cable.



A support, or stabilizer, wire is used to hold the snare loop in position.



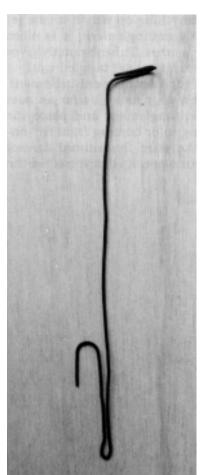
Some snares are equipped with wire collars. The stabilizer wire is inserted inside the support collar. However, these support collars are designed to take only a certain size wire.. Usually they are made to use 9 gauge wire.



This is another way to fasten a stabilizer wire to a snare. The end of the wire is bent into the shape of an "N" and the snare cable is threaded into it.



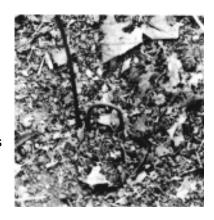
One way to anchor the support wire is to fasten it to a small stake as in this example. The wire could also be fastened to the stake you use to hold the snare.



Another way to anchor the support wire is to tie it around the object to which you have fastened the snare. Here, a long tail was left on the fastening wire to make the snare support wire.

(Left) You can make a support wire that is self standing by doubling the end of the wire then bending a short hook at the tip.

(Right) The doubled end of the wire is pushed into the ground. The hook catches in the ground to keep the wire from spinning around.



12/05 Michigan Non-Lethal Snaring Guide- 15

Non-lethal Snaring

The old fashioned spring pole snare was intentionally designed and rigged to dispatch any animal that got in it. The modern cable snare does not have to be used in this manner because it is made of better and stronger materials. It can be used as a non-lethal capture device. If an animal detained in a snare is given some freedom of movement, it is very unlikely that the animal can or will pull hard enough on the snare to asphyxiate itself. Here, the animal behaves much in the same manner as a pet dog that is leashed with a choker chain. However, under certain conditions and in certain situations, a cable snare can become a lethal device.

Whether or not a snare is lethal is not so much a function of the snare itself, but it is more a matter of where the snare is placed. If an animal captured in a snare gets itself in a position where its feet cannot touch the ground, the results would be much the same as if it were pulled up by a spring pole. It could succumb to asphyxiation.

This can happen if an animal gets tangled up in something at a set and cannot get its feet back on the ground. This situation is commonly known as entanglement. By avoiding entanglement situations, you can be relatively certain that your snares will function in a non-lethal manner. It is illegal to set snares in a manner where the snared animal could become entangled in a fence, or could become entangled in woody vegetation so that it is suspended with two or more legs off the ground.

A classic entanglement situation can be found where a snare is set under a fence. An animal captured in this snare could possibly climb through or jump over the fence and become entangled. In Michigan, a snare may not be set attached to a fence or in such a manner that an animal could become entangled in a fence. A similar situation exists where a snare is set in a patch of brush. An animal could get the snare tangled up in the brush, be suspended, and asphyxiate.

Another, less obvious entanglement situation can occur if there is a very small sapling tree in the vicinity of the snare. An animal could get tangled around the sapling, and as the animal struggles the snare could ride up on the sapling bending it over. At this point, the sapling acts like a spring, constantly pulling upward on the snare. This creates a situation very similar to the old-fashioned spring pole and could dispatch the animal.

A large tree, on the other hand, usually does not create an entanglement situation. An animal cannot bend over a large tree, and in most instances the animal will not get tangled up on the tree because it cannot circle the tree with the snare any more than once or twice. Make sure that the tree is free of branches or stubs that the animal could be hung from. The tree should be free of branches or stubs up to a height of 5 feet above the ground or compacted snow.

The chance of encountering a domestic animal is always present. For this reason, you should always avoid entanglement with your snares.

When you get ready to place a snare, examine the area for entanglement. It is a good idea to extend the snare in its closed position and circle it around from its fastening point to make sure an animal cannot reach anything on which it can get tangled up. In avoiding entanglement, it is often helpful to use shorter snares. This obviously gives the animal less opportunity to get tangled up.

If you encounter a good set near entanglement, such as a fence, fasten your snare as far as possible away from the entanglement and place the loop in the trail leading to or coming from the entanglement. Just make sure the animal cannot reach the entanglement when it is captured in the snare.

Entanglement Situations

Snares placed in entanglement situations can be lethal. Avoid entanglement situations. Dogs or other domestic animals caught in snares should be reported to the DNR Rap Hotline 1-800-292-7800.



Fences are very likely to create entanglement for a snare. An animal captured in the snare may climb over and through the fence wire and be suspended off the ground. This type of set is illegal in Michigan.



Brush can create an entanglement situation for an animal almost in the same manner as a fence. If an animal climbs into the brush it could get the snare tangled up and not be able to get its feet back on the ground.



A small tree or sapling within reach of the snare can also create a lethal situation. If an animal gets the snare around the sapling and bends it over, the sapling will pull up on the snare cable and could asphyxiate the animal. You can see that this is almost like the old fashioned spring pole snare.

Avoiding Entanglement

It is easy to avoid entanglement. Simply place your snares in clear areas where there is nothing substantial for the animal to tangle up in.



A large tree does not create an entanglement situation. The animal can hardly make more than one revolution around the tree and does not get tangled up. When fastening to trees, keep the wire low on the tree. This helps ensure that the animal can keep its feet on the ground. Any branches or stubs on the anchor tree should be cut flush with the outer bark up to 5' above the ground or compacted snow



When placing a snare where entanglement is nearby, stake or fasten the snare away from the entanglement. Then reach out with the closed snare and circle it around the fastener to make sure the animal cannot reach the entanglement.

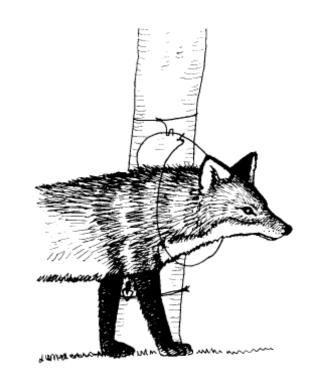
Setting Snares

To set a snare, the looped end of the snare is suspended over a trail or path that the animal is expected to use. The animal enters the snare, sticking its head through the loop, and through its forward progress draws the snare down on itself. Fox and coyotes have a long tapered head that is very wide just behind their ears. When a snare closes on their neck it is very unlikely they will be able to slip out of it or remove it. In this case, it is better to snare these animals by the neck.

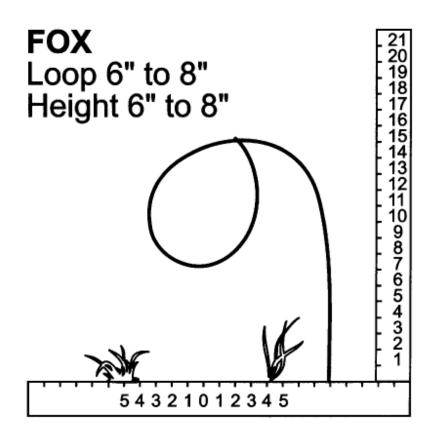
There are two major considerations in setting a snare to target a specific animal - the size of the loop and the distance from the bottom of the loop to the ground. In making these determinations you must consider the size of the animal, the height of the animal's head above the ground (generally determined by the length of its legs) and whether it is best to catch the animal by the neck or by the body.

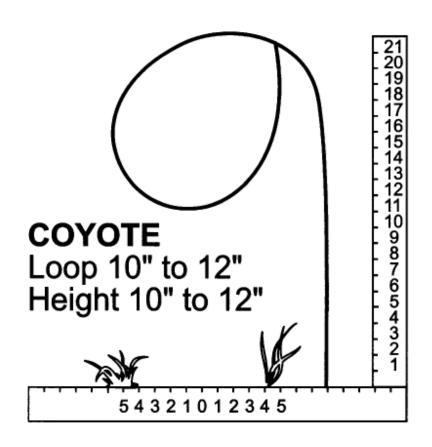
For an animal you want to snare by the neck, the snare loop should be just large enough to admit the animal's head. The snare should be positioned so that the bottom of the loop strikes the animal's chest at the base of the neck after its head goes through the loop.

To snare an animal by the body, you need a loop big enough to admit the front portion of the animal's body. The loop must be low enough to the ground so that the animal can step through it, but high enough to strike the animal's chest after the animal steps through the snare.



In snaring fox and coyotes the snare is positioned to catch the animal around the neck. The loop should be large enough to comfortably admit the animal's head. It should be positioned low enough to clear the animal's chin, but high enough so the animal does not step through it.





Avoiding Deer and Livestock

While your snares will be set to take furbearing animals, the possibility exists that larger animals like deer or livestock could get tangled up in your snare. This usually happens when the animal is walking along and gets its foot through the snare loop.

Some of the Michigan regulations are designed to deal with this problem. In regards to deer, Michigan snares must employ two features. The first is a stop on the cable that prevents the loop from closing past a diameter of 4 1/4 inches. This would allow a deer to shake the snare off its foot. The second feature is to use a lock or lock system that will break away from the snare cable at 285 pounds or less. This would allow a deer to break the lock as it pulls against the snare.

These regulations are designed to minimize the potential for detaining a large animal in your snare. Still the best way to avoid deer and livestock is to avoid setting your snares where these animals are likely to be encountered.

You should not set snares within the confines of a pasture where livestock is present. Deer are free roaming, wild animals, but you can take measures to avoid catching them in your snares. Do not set snares on trails that show frequent or heavy use by deer.

There are other instances when you may want to set a snare on a trail that is not regularly used by deer, but still the possibility exists that a deer might take that trail. In this case, you can construct the set to make the deer avoid your snare. The best way to

do this is to place a pole over your snare. The pole should be about the size of your wrist or larger. You can place the pole horizontally over your snare and support it on each end. This gives the appearance of the goal posts on a football field. With the pole just above the snare, the deer will jump or step over the pole, while the target animal will go under the pole and into the snare.

Another option is to use a "leaning" pole to steer the deer away from your snare. This is best accomplished where the trail passes close to a tree and the snare is fastened to the tree. Here, you can lean a pole against the tree at an angle with the snare between the pole and the tree. A deer will walk around the outside of the pole and avoid the snare. Make sure there is room on the outside of the pole for the deer to detour around it.

In each of these cases, the pole should be propped up so that it will not fall down easily. However, the pole should not be wired or permanently fastened in place because it could create an entanglement situation for the animal. The animal should be able to knock the pole over if it gets the snare around it.



Do not set snares in the confines of a pasture where livestock is present.



Avoid setting snares in trails that show heavy use by deer. In trails that do not show deer activity but might be used by deer at some time, you can set up objects that will guide the deer away from your snare. Here a pole is leaned against the tree to make the deer step off to one side. In using this method, make sure there is room on the outside of the pole for the deer to pass.

Here a pole is laid horizontally over the snare. If a deer encounters this pole, it will jump ove the pole and miss the snare. This is sometimes called a "jump pole". Do not fasten these poles in place too solidly, or they may create an entanglement situation. An animal caught in the snare should be able to knock these poles down.



Sets with Snares

Snaring requires a minimum amount of equipment for constructing sets. You need snares, wire with which to fasten and stabilize the snares, and pliers for cutting and twisting the wire. You will also need stakes and a hammer if you are going to fasten your snares this way. Another tool that you may need is a set of cable cutters. These cutters are specially designed to cut steel cable. It is nearly impossible to cut this cable with any type of regular pliers.

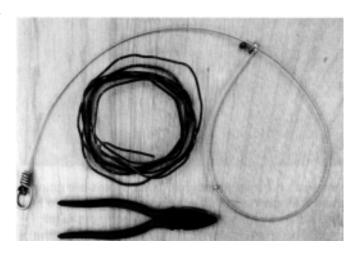
While other trapping devices, like foothold and body-grip traps, can be used over and over again to catch animals, snares can be used only once. After an animal has been held in the snare, the cable will be bent and twisted, and the snare will no longer function properly. It is possible to use the hardware from the snare, like the lock and swivel, and make another snare using a new piece of cable, ferrules, and deer stop if necessary. Snares and snare components are available from trapping supply dealers.

The principles for constructing a set with a snare are somewhat different than those often applied with other trapping devices. Often trappers use bait or lure to get an animal to stop where the trap is set. Snares depend on an animal's continued forward progress to tighten down the snare loop. A set with a snare is basically a trail or blind set. You should not use lure or bait in close proximity of your snare or use anything else that would make an animal stop or hesitate as it approaches and enters the snare.

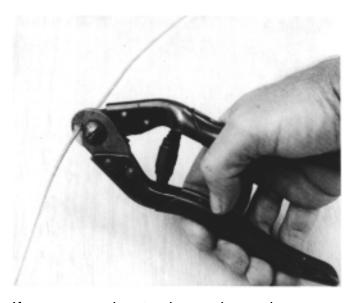
The following are examples of sets that can be made with snares. For these depictions, the snares have been painted white to make them easier for you to see. In actual practice, you would not use a white snare unless you were trapping in snow. To remove the shine from new snares and make them less visible, boil the snares for about a half-hour in a baking soda solution.

Snaring does not require a lot of equipment. You need snares, a roll of wire for fastening and stabilizing your snares, and pliers for cutting and bending the wire.

If you are going to do much snaring, you should invest in a set of cable cutters. These will cut snare cable quickly and cleanly. It is very difficult to cut snare cable with regular pliers.



Snaring does not require a lot of equipment. You need snares, a roll of wire for fastening and stabilizing your snares, and pliers for cutting and bending the wire.



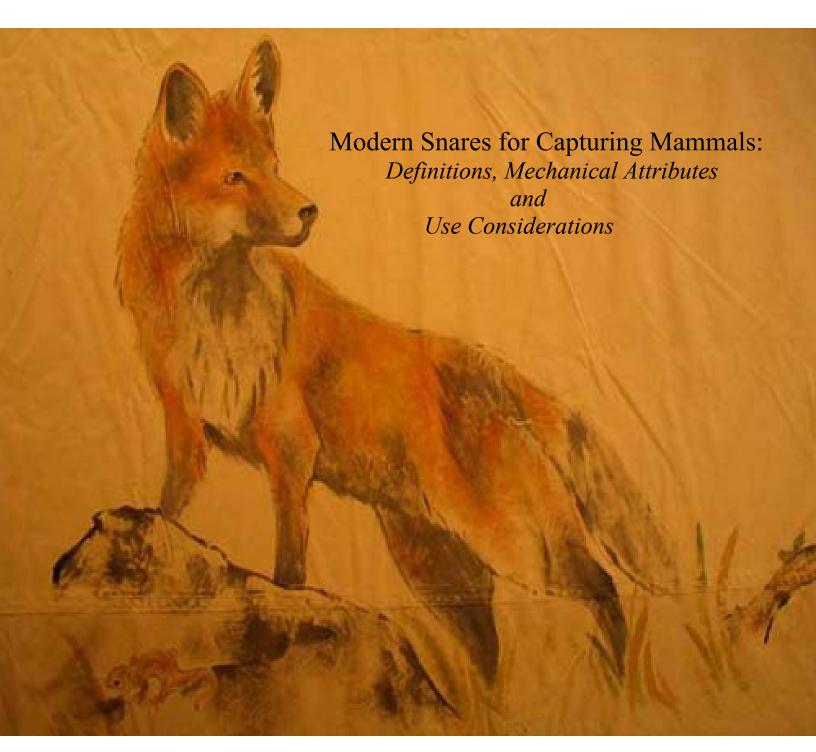
If you are going to do much snaring, you should invest in a set of cable cutters. These will cut snare cable quickly and cleanly. It is very difficult to cut snare cable with regular pliers.



Here is a snare set for coyote. The coyotes are going under a fence that is in the background. The snare has been set away from the fence at the edge of the tall grass. The snare is staked far enough waway from the fence that any animal caught in it will not be able to reach the fence.



Here is a set for fox made in the woods on a trail. A pole has been leaned over the snare in case a deer comes down the trail. There is nothing within reach of the snare for the animal to tangle up on.





Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies Furbearer Conservation Technical Work Group

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This document was produced by the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (AFWA) Furbearer Conservation Technical Work Group, in consultation with representatives from trapping organizations and snare manufacturers. We especially acknowledge Dr. John Erb of the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, Forest Wildlife Populations and Research Group for serving as primary author on this document. We acknowledge Alan Huot for providing numerous photos. Cover illustration used by permission of Nomadics Tipi Makers.

The Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies was founded in 1902. It is an organization of public agencies charged with the protection and management of North America's fish and wildlife resources. The 50 state fish and wildlife agencies, as well as provincial and territorial governments in Canada are members. Federal fish and wildlife and natural resource agencies in Canada and the United States are also members. The Association has been a key organization in promoting sound resource management and strengthening state, provincial, federal, and private cooperation in protecting and managing fish and wildlife and their habitats in public interest.

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FORWARD

"Modern Snares for Capturing Mammals" is primarily intended as a reference document for resource professionals, but may have utility in various educational forums. Our goals are to offer definitions of snares and snare components, describe the various types of and uses for snares, and discuss various factors that may influence important snare performance attributes. While some discussion focuses on user-controlled variables, this document is NOT intended as a snaring 'How To' guide, nor does it recommend specific snares or snare components. The appropriate design and use for a snare will vary depending on species, time and location, and multiple designs may accomplish the same objective. Furthermore, additional scientific data on snare performance is necessary before wide-ranging comparisons of different snare designs can be made. As such, we hope this document stimulates continued research and development of snaring systems. Depiction of, or reference to, specific snares or snare components does not constitute a recommendation or endorsement by AFWA. This document may be updated updates posted at the furbearer periodically and will be AFWA (www.fishwildlife.org/furbearer.html).

Modern Snares for Capturing Mammals:
Definitions, Mechanical Attributes, and Use
Considerations

INTRODUCTION

Snares represent one of the oldest devices used for capturing animals. Their use dates back thousands of years, as evidenced by their depiction in cave drawings. While some snares are concealed under dirt or snow, snares are most commonly placed along existing animal travel routes, or along the anticipated path of travel an animal may use when approaching bait or other attractant. They can be, and historically were, designed or deployed to capture animals by the neck, torso, leg, or foot. While the basic principles behind snare use have changed little through time, the physical and mechanical options for snare design have greatly expanded, and snares remain a popular capture device among licensed fur trappers, animal damage control professionals, and increasingly among wildlife biologists.

Historically, snares were constructed of various plant or animal fibers, and lacked reliable mechanisms (i.e., locks) that not only allowed loop formation and smooth loop closure, but also prevented the snare loop from easily re-opening once the animal stopped applying pressure. As a result, snares either had to be tended with great frequency in order to dispatch captured animals shortly after capture, or set in a manner that would facilitate rapid death (e.g., use of 'spring poles'). Otherwise, live-restrained animals would frequently be able to break or chew through the snare and escape. With the advent of metal snare components (wire, locks, swivels, etc), both the efficiency and versatility of modern snares have improved. Users now have greater flexibility to use snares as either live-restraining or killing devices, and a variety of options are available that can influence various performance attributes (injury reduction, rapidity of death, capture efficiency, selectivity, etc.).

In spite of numerous improvements, laws and regulations in some states still prohibit use of snares, often dating back 50 - 100 years. Past concerns were frequently based on the belief that snares were highly effective but indiscriminate capture devices that allowed little user control of the capture outcome (e.g., live-restraint versus death). This led to concerns that snares could

facilitate over-harvest of furbearer populations, and could negatively impact other game populations (e.g., deer). While the goals of harvest selectivity and population conservation certainly remain important in modern wildlife management, many of the premises underlying past concerns are either less relevant today, or new options exist for minimizing those concerns.

Recently, there has been renewed interest by natural resource agencies to better understand snares as a device for capturing mammals. This interest has arisen for several reasons, including continued development of new designs or mechanical options for snares, evolving state regulations governing snare use, the development of Best Management Practices for trapping, and increased potential for use in wildlife research. While these developments have highlighted the potential versatility and humaneness of snares, they have also highlighted the need for increased awareness of modern snares amongst resource professionals, and the need to standardize terminology used for describing snares and snare components. The lack of familiarity and language consistency has produced confusion among the various constituents and ultimately hindered efforts to increase awareness of modern snares.

SNARE COMPONENTS

Before offering descriptions and definitions of snare components, we first offer a basic definition of a snare. While our definition of a snare emphasizes wire as the primary material used in the construction of modern snares, we acknowledge that more 'primitive' materials (e.g., plant or animal fibers) may still be used in some situations or locations, and that alternative modern materials could be developed or used in the future.

Snare - a type of capture device that uses a loop of wire, stranded wire, or wire rope designed and set to close around the neck, torso, foot or leg of an animal.

While we are unaware of any official standard for describing or defining snare components, where possible we have adopted definitions that are generally consistent with industry language. We recognize our definitions do not supplant any current language used in individual state policies or laws. Nevertheless, we encourage states to adopt consistent language to minimize confusion amongst snare manufacturers, snare users, and natural resource agencies.

Snare Cable

The material that forms the loop of a snare and extends to the point at which the snare is anchored is frequently referred to as the snare 'cable'. Modern snare cable is typically constructed with some type of wire (e.g., galvanized or stainless steel). The cable forms the primary component to which most other components are attached. We offer the following definitions to clarify both the material and design of modern snare cable.

Wire - a continual span of metal that has been produced by compression and elongation of larger diameter metal rods.

Strand - an assembly of multiple wires that are helically wound around an axis, fiber, or wire center.

While single-wire snare designs have been used in the past, and are still commonly used for snaring snowshoe hares, most current snare designs employ multi-wire construction. The common convention for labeling these multi-wire designs is: # of strands times the # of wires per strand. For example, 7 X 7 means the design is composed of 7 strands, with 7 wires per strand, yielding a total of 49 wires. Such material is often categorized by the number of strands:

Single-Strand construction - composed of a single strand; often referred to as '**stranded wire**'. Examples most familiar to trappers include 1X19, and 1X7. We emphasize that "single-strand" does NOT equate with "single-wire".

Multi-Strand construction - composed of multiple strands; often referred to as 'wire rope' or 'cable'. Examples familiar to trappers include 7X7, and 7X19.

Note: Within the trapping community, both single-strand and multi-strand material is generically referred to as 'cable'. Hereafter, we use the term 'cable' to denote any *multi-wire* design.

The above strand definitions describe differences in overall cable construction. However, it is also important to understand differences in construction of an individual strand.

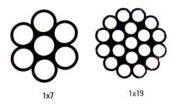
Single-Layer Strand – strand with only 1 layer of wires helically wound around the axis, fiber, or wire center.

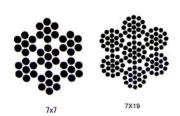
This strand construction is used, for example, in 1X7 stranded wire and in each individual strand for 7X7 wire rope. In 1X7 and 7X7, the 7-wired strand(s) are constructed with a '1-6 single-layer' design, meaning 6 wires helically wound around 1 center wire.

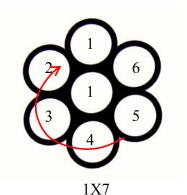
Two-Layer Strand – strand with 2 separate layers of wires helically wound in opposite directions around the axis, fiber, or wire center.

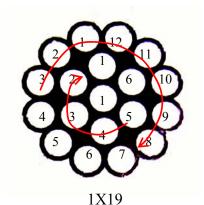
This construction is used, for example, in 1X19 stranded wire and in each of the seven strands of 7X19 wire rope (not shown here). In both, the 19-wired strand(s) are constructed with a '1-6-12 two-layer' design, meaning a center wire with 6 wires wound around it one direction, and 12 more wires wound in the opposite direction.

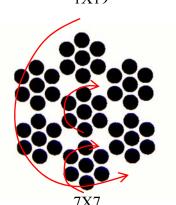
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In either single-strand designs with 2-layer construction (e.g., 1X19) or multi-strand designs (e.g., 7X7, 7X19), it is possible for the 'lay' of the wires to occur in both clockwise and counterclockwise directions. Lay can include both the direction wires are helically wound within a strand and the direction individual strands are helically wound in multi-strand cable.

Lang lay - design where all the strands or wires are helically wound in the same direction. An example includes 1X7 (single-strand, single-layer construction).

Regular or alternate lay - design where the strands or wires are helically wound in both directions. Examples include 7X7, 1X19, and 7X19.

Lang lay cable is typically *not* recommended in applications that involve excessive rotation because individual wires may be more apt to separate during twisting, or may separate easier if an animal bites on the cable. Wire separation predisposes the cable to breakage. Thus, it may not be as suited to snaring applications where the intent is to live-restrain an animal, or if used in such situations, might require larger diameter cable or appropriate swiveling. This highlights the importance of understanding the cable design – design can influence various functional attributes. To further illustrate how design can influence potential performance, and for comparative purposes only, the table below shows approximate breaking strength for 24 examples.

	Breaking Strength (lbs)				
DIAMETER	1X19	7X19	1X7	7X7	
3/16"	4700	4200	3990	3700	
5/32"	3300	2800	2940	2600	
1/8"	2100	2000	2100	1700	
3/32"	1200	1000	1200	920	
5/64"	800	?	800	650	
1/16"	500	480	500	480	

Note: these are approximations for <u>galvanized</u> wire designs based on static load testing. Breaking strength for stainless steel is typically comparable, or slightly less. Numbers will vary depending on manufacturer or grade.

While there will be some minimum breaking strength necessary for a given species or application (live-restraining versus killing), final choice of design may be most driven by other performance attributes or user preference. For example, cable design also influences attributes such as flexibility and surface smoothness. For a given diameter, the more wires, the more flexible the material, and the more strands, the 'rougher' the outer surface. These in turn can affect snare loop shape (e.g., oval versus round), speed of initial loop closure, resistance to loop closure as the loop gets smaller, abrasion-resistance, fatigue resistance, etc. *Overall, the physical options users may consider in a 'cable' include the diameter, design (e.g., 7X7, 1X19), and material (e.g., galvanized, stainless steel)*.

The material used to form the snare loop is only 1 component of a snare. Other components for which definitions are warranted include snare locks, loop stops, swivels, and breakaway devices.

Snare Locks

Snare locks are used for 2 purposes: 1) to create and maintain a loop; and 2) to prevent the loop, after closure upon an animal, from re-opening to a diameter that allows the desired animal to escape. The type of snare lock used may also be an important feature in determining the lethality of a snare. We note that a snare does not have to have a mechanically separate lock incorporated into the design to constitute a snare. In some locations or situations (e.g., rabbit snares, under-ice beaver snares), the snare loop may be formed and held in place by simply threading the cable through a small loop or knot in the end of the cable. While such 'lock-less' snares may have reduced holding efficiency, they are successfully used in some situations.

There are a multitude of snare locks currently available, and undoubtedly many more to be developed. Numerous examples are shown in the adjacent figure. For snares incorporating a locking device, we offer the following definitions to more specifically classify the array of existing snare locks:

Relaxing Lock – a snare lock that allows the snare loop to release constriction pressure on the captured animal when the cable is not taut (e.g., when the animal stops pulling).



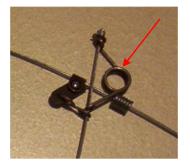
Positive Lock – a snare lock that **neither** allows the snare loop to release constriction pressure on the captured animal, **nor** is capable of applying additional closing force, when the cable is *not* taut.

Power-Assisted Lock – a snare lock that uses a built-in or external feature or mechanical device that continues to provide a closing force when the cable is not taut (i.e., after the animal stops pulling).

Lock Definition Caveats

- ➤ With the exception of locks that are power-assisted, it is not always possible to classify a lock based on visual appearance. Locks that appear similar may perform differently, and locks that appear different may perform similarly.
- ➤ The actual performance of a lock is based not only on the design of the lock itself, but on the size or design of the cable to which it is attached. For example, depending on lock design, a lock may perform as a relaxing lock on a 1/16" cable, but as a positive lock on a larger diameter cable (such as 3/32"). Some locks may be designed or intended for use with specific cable sizes and/or designs.
- Some locks (e.g., traditional washer locks) may be placed on the 'cable' in different configurations, possibly yielding different performance.
- Any alteration of a lock from its manufactured condition may affect performance. Examples include changing the angle of any bends in the lock, the size or shape of the holes or slots through which the cable passes, or filing 'teeth' into the binding surface of a lock.
- Under normal field application, numerous external factors may affect the ability of a lock to perform as designed. For example, if a significant bend or kink forms in the cable just outside the lock position, if the lock becomes bound in the animal's hair, or if the animal cannot release tension on the cable due to 'entanglement', a relaxing lock may not be able to 'relax' as designed.

Most snare locks currently available would be considered positive locks, though many locks can be converted to power-assisted locks by the addition of a spring or other powering device. Three examples of power-assisted locks are shown below.







Breakaway Devices

Breakaway devices are used to improve the selectivity of a snare, and can be designed in many ways. They can be incorporated into the snare lock (as a component or as the structural material itself), or as an attachment to the snare lock or cable. Breakaway devices are typically rated based on the amount of force necessary to cause the loop to 'break' or release (e.g., a 285 lb. Shook). The desired rating is based on both the minimum rating necessary to hold the desired animal, and the maximum rating allowable for release of other animals. As such, the need for breakaway devices, and the desired rating if used, will vary in different areas of the country, and may involve trade-offs between achieving desired selectivity and maintaining acceptable efficiency for the intended species.

We illustrate breakaway devices with several examples below, but discuss applications and issues later (see pp. 21-22). *Importantly, presence of some breakaways cannot be determined visually (e.g., slide-off ferrules or some shear pins).*

Breakaway Device – any device incorporated into a snare or snare component that allows the loop to break open, and an animal to escape completely free of the snare, when a specified amount of force is applied.



Shear Pin



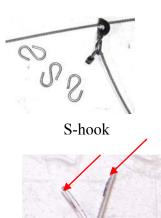
Shear Pin



J-hook



Ferrule that slides off



Lock material that shears

Issues and Concerns with Measuring or Recommending Breakaway Force

We note that more research data is necessary to determine the minimum poundage rating necessary to hold different animals of interest, and the maximum rating allowable to release any animals that are to be avoided. There are 2 additional concerns about breakaway measurements:

- Currently there is no standardized methodology for measuring breakaway force. Because snares, or snare parts, are manufactured, used, and sold by numerous individuals and companies, a standardized methodology for measuring breakaway tension would minimize the inconsistencies that currently exist.
- When breakaways are required by law, or advertised by manufacturers, the protocol used to rate the breakaway is often not specified. Specifying a number without a protocol for how it's measured may not be useful, and if required by law, is difficult to enforce. The same exact device measured in two distinct ways could yield substantially different breakaway ratings.

We believe a standardized protocol is desirable, considering 3 important features:

- To be accessible to the greatest number of potential users, the testing approach should be as mechanically simple and inexpensive as possible.
- ➤ The protocol must not only specify the measuring apparatus, but also any important snare specifics during testing such as loop size or the material to which the loop is attached during testing (e.g., a steel pipe).
- The measuring apparatus and testing protocol should not contribute to significant variability in results. When testing multiple devices of identical design, observed variation in results should be attributable primarily to variability or inconsistency in the breakaway device itself.

Considering the factors above, we recommend the use of a static load test for rating breakaway devices. A static load test uses non-moving weight or non-jolting force applied to the snare.

There are numerous ways to design a static load test. Provided the principle of a static non-jolting force is maintained, most testing designs should provide acceptably comparable results. However, there may still be some trade-offs between the sophistication or cost of a testing system and the resulting precision. Because the acceptable cost and desired precision will vary depending on the situation or entity involved in the testing, herein we do not recommend a specific testing apparatus, with 1 exception: some research has shown that the diameter of the snare loop during testing will influence breakaway ratings. Hence, for standardization, we recommend the snare loop be cinched around a 2-inch steel pipe during testing. We note that a "2-inch pipe" has an actual outside diameter of ~ 2.4 inches, while the inside diameter varies depending on wall thickness of the pipe.

We do not believe, for a static load test, that the length of the snare will have any appreciable influence on breakaway ratings. While snare cable can stretch when tension is applied, the potential is quite low that any stretching will occur for the typical snare lengths used and loads applied, and any stretching that may occur is not likely to be a noteworthy component of breakaway variability. We acknowledge, however, that after a breakaway device is rated, subsequent field testing to evaluate efficiency and selectivity for a specific application (e.g., capture wolves but release moose) should always report the length of snare tested, as snare length will have an impact on efficiency and selectivity.

Although we only recommend one component of the static load test (i.e., cinch the loop around a 2-inch steel pipe), we do discuss 2 possible testing methods as a way to illustrate possible approaches.

- 1) <u>Use of weights</u> the snare is suspended from a rigid anchoring point, with the snare loop cinched around a 2" steel pipe. Attached to and hanging below the steel pipe is a 'load tray' upon which weights of the desired increment are sequentially placed until the breakaway device releases. The breakaway poundage rating is the sum of the load tray weights, the weight of the tray, and the weight of the steel pipe. In such a design, it is important to ensure that weights are gently placed, not dropped, on the load tray. Upon release, the weight tray will drop, requiring careful safety considerations.
- 2) <u>Use of slow-pull devices and load scales</u> in this type of design, the testing apparatus could be positioned vertically or horizontally. On 1 end is a stationary device used to generate tension on the snare. Examples include a hydraulic cylinder, an electric winch, or a ratcheting pulley. Attached to this force-generating mechanism is a device to quantify the amount of force being exerted. Examples include a heavy-duty spring scale or more sophisticated digital strain gauge or load cell. The anchor end of the snare is then attached to the measuring scale, while the snare loop is cinched around a 2" steel pipe (with pipe attached to a fixed point). As tension is **slowly** increased, the measuring scale should preferably record the maximum force upon breaking, rather than requiring a person to read it during the test. Because there will be tension on the snare upon release, appropriate safety is warranted.

We note that there will be some amount of breakaway variability attributable to quality control during breakaway manufacturing. Manufacturers or researchers involved in determining a rating for a particular breakaway device should consider an appropriate sample size for quantifying variability, and if applicable, those involved with determining compliance with breakaway recommendations or laws must consider how much variation is acceptable.

Loop Stops

A loop stop is a device that is attached to the snare cable to prevent the loop from either opening or closing beyond a specified point. They can be placed either inside or outside the loop, thereby determining either a minimum or maximum loop circumference. Loop stops are considered optional snare components, and while used most commonly to influence selectivity, they can also influence snare lethality and efficiency (see pp. 17, 20, 21, and 22).

Minimum Loop Stop – a device incorporated *inside* the snare loop that prevents the loop from *closing* beyond a specified circumference.

The term "deer stop", commonly used by many, should be considered a specific application for a minimum loop stop (i.e., a stop that prevents loop closure smaller than the diameter of a deer's leg).

Maximum Loop Stop - a device incorporated *outside* the snare loop that prevents the loop from *opening* beyond a specified circumference.

Swivels

Swivels are often incorporated into a snare to prevent the wires or strands in a cable from kinking or separating, and ultimately breaking, if an animal twists or rolls. While they are primarily intended to improve capture efficiency of snares (see p. 22), they may play a role in other snare performance measures (see p. 18).

In-line swivels may be used instead of, or in conjunction with, end swivels, and may be particularly useful in situations where there is concern that the anchoring system, or vegetation between the anchor and the animal, could cause the end swivel to become effectively inoperable. The closer the in-line swivel is to the animal, the more likely it will retain its intended effectiveness.

End Swivel - a device incorporated at the point where the snare is attached to a stake, tree, or other anchoring point that allows the snare to freely rotate if the animal twists or rolls.

In-line Swivel – a device incorporated *between the anchoring point and the opened snare loop* that allows the snare to freely rotate if the animal twists or rolls.

Many swivel designs are currently available, and a few examples are shown below.



End swivel In-line swivel In-line swivel End and In-line swivel

SNARING SYSTEM COMPONENTS

In addition to the components that make up the actual snare, some *snaring systems* utilize additional components designed to achieve specific performance goals (e.g., targeting a specific capture area on the animal, improving killing power, improving efficiency, etc). Many, but not all, of these designs have been developed for specialty purposes in wildlife research or animal damage control settings. In particular, components have been developed to power-activate loop closure or directionally-propel snares onto an animal or a specific part of an animal's body.

Snare-Activation

The vast majority of snares in use today are 'activated' simply by the animal moving through the snare. However, some specialty snaring systems now rely on power-activation, typically to increase the speed of loop closure or to directionally propel the snare onto an animal's body. We differentiate snare activation based on whether loop closure utilizes only the movement of the animal, or whether it also utilizes a powering mechanism.

Power-Activated Snare – a snare on which the loop closure (speed or direction) is initiated or augmented by some type of powering device (e.g., a spring).

For power-activated snares, some type of pushing or pulling force applied by the animal typically serves to trigger the powering mechanism. Four examples are shown below.







RAM Power Snare



Fremont foot snare



Collarum®

Passively-Activated Snare – a snare on which the initial loop closure is solely a function of the animal's movement.

While the 4 examples shown above all incorporate power-activation, the snaring systems differ significantly in their intended use and performance (e.g., intended capture location, killing versus live-restraint). We emphasize the important distinction between a power-activated snare and a power-assisted snare lock. Power-activation is used only to control the speed and/or direction in which the snare loop is initially propelled or closed on the animal. A power-assisted lock is intended to increase killing power of a snare by applying constriction pressure on the loop when the cable is not taut. Snares may have power activation, power-assisted locks, neither, or both. For at least one snaring system – the RAM power snare - the same mechanism used to power-activate the snare also serves as the power-assisted lock (i.e., it is intended as a 'killing snare'). In other cases the power-activation components may 'fall free' from the snare, relying on a snare

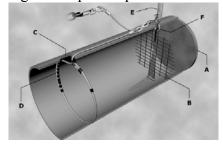
lock to maintain loop closure - examples include the Belisle, Aldrich, or Fremont foot snares, or the Collarum® neck snare.

Capture Area

With respect to capture location, we reiterate that snares can be designed or deployed to capture animals by the neck, torso, leg, or foot. The most commonly used snares have no specific mechanical features designed to facilitate capture of an animal by only one specific body portion. Depending on user-controlled deployment details, the snare could be used to capture the desired animal by the foot, leg, neck, or torso. For example, a snare set above, but close to, the ground may facilitate leg or foot capture as an animal walks through, while the same snare set suspended higher off the ground over a trail may facilitate capture of an animal by the neck or torso. The appropriate or possible catch location (foot, leg, torso or neck) may vary by species, location, intended outcome (killing versus restraining), injury-potential during live-restraint, or concerns over fur damage (torso captures may result in more fur damage). Users can influence the likelihood of catching an animal by a specific body portion by considering such factors as: 1) loop size; 2) height of the loop off the ground or compacted snow; 3) loop orientation; and 4) natural or unnatural 'guides' to direct animal movement. In addition, some specialized snaring systems are now available that rely on additional mechanical components or other features specifically designed to facilitate capture of an animal by a particular body area.

Specialty foot snares are typically designed with power activation and are often concealed under the dirt or snow. When an animal pushes or pulls a trigger with its foot, a throwing arm or other mechanism raises or closes the snare over the animal's foot or leg. Examples of power-activated

foot snares include the Aldrich, Belisle, M15, and Fremont foot snares (some shown on previous page). At least one *passively-activated* 'reach-in' type of foot snare has also been developed for bears (RL04, shown at right). In order to reach bait, the animal must pull on a mechanism that manually closes the snare loop. The design could likely be modified for use on other species.



Another specialty snaring system (Collarum®; shown on previous page) has been developed with the intent of ensuring restraint of an animal, specifically a canid, by the neck. It operates similar to many foot snares, using power activation and concealment under dirt or snow. It relies on an exposed bite and pull trigger with scent or bait applied to it. The trigger serves both to provide power-activation and center the animal's head over the concealed snare. When pulled, it releases a 'throwing' mechanism that propels and closes the cable over the animal's neck. The mechanically separate power-activation mechanism then falls away from the snare.

DESCRIBING MODERN SNARES

With the development of new technology and awareness of the varied designs and intended uses for snares has come an increase in the desire to classify or characterize snares. A snare or

snaring system can be characterized by its mechanical attributes or some performance attribute. For purposes of describing a snare or snaring system, it is easier to differentiate devices based on mechanical definitions or features.

Relying on the definitions and discussion above, we suggest describing a snare or snaring system based on the method of activation (power versus passive), lock type (but see caveats on p. 5), and any additional specialized features designed for a specific purpose (e.g., for capture by the leg). For example, a basic snare might be described as a "passively-activated snare with a relaxing lock", while a specialized snare or snaring system might be described as a "power-activated snare, with a positive lock, specifically designed for live-capturing a bear by the foot".

Recently, the terms 'killing snare' and 'cable restraint' have arisen to differentiate snares, or more appropriately, snare performance. The latter term is used to denote snares intended to liverestrain animals. Both have utility depending on the situation or location, and clearly there is value in being able to differentiate snares based on this performance criterion. Nevertheless, there are two challenges with pre-defining a snare according to this field performance criterion: 1) additional scientific data is needed in order to reliably evaluate whether, based only on knowledge of design features, a given snare will kill or live-restrain an animal; and 2) the killing potential of a snare is likely determined by multiple factors, including its mechanical attributes, the manner and conditions under which it is deployed, and the species captured. For example, a passively-activated snare with a relaxing lock could be used to kill or live-restrain an animal depending on the species, and how, where, or when it is deployed. Hence, establishing useful definitions of a 'killing snare' and 'cable restraint' requires incorporation of all these factors. We instead focus on discussing all factors, both mechanical and user-determined, that may influence whether a snare kills or live-restrains an animal. We also discuss factors that may influence selectivity and efficiency.

Our discussion is intended to highlight which factors may be important, and many statements are, by necessity, speculative and comparative only. Hopefully, additional data on performance will be collected in the future, thereby improving our understanding of, and ability to predict, overall snare performance. We also emphasize that one must consider multiple performance attributes (killing potential, selectivity, and efficiency) in the selection of a snare.

SNARE PERFORMANCE

Killing versus Live-Restraining Animals

With modern snares, users now have more ability to control whether animals are live-restrained or killed. However, performance in this context is not based solely on *whether* a device kills or live-restrains an animal. As part of the process to develop Best Management Practices (BMPs) for trapping in the United States, the welfare of animals captured in killing devices of any type is based on 'time-to-death', while the welfare of animals captured in live-restraining devices is evaluated based on injury scores. While animal welfare data has been collected for some snare designs, we believe additional data is needed before reliable generalizations can be drawn. For a review of the BMP process and data collected to date, we refer the reader to the BMP documents

available at www.fishwildlife.org/furbearer.html. Following is a list of factors that may affect the probability that a snare will kill or live-restrain an animal. For each variable discussed, comparative statements are based on the assumption that "all other variables are equal."

- ➤ Cable design while there are numerous cable designs manufactured, there are 4 currently used most commonly for constructing snares (1X19, 7X7, 7X19, and 1X7), with 1X19 (19 wires) and 7X7 (49 wires) most common. As a general rule, for cables of the same diameter, the fewer the number of total wires in the cable the stiffer the cable will be. While some trappers believe that stiffer cable may have greater killing potential, others disagree, and there is currently insufficient data to substantiate the importance of cable design on killing potential.
- ➤ Capture area killing potential is greater for neck-snared animals than for animals captured by the leg, foot, or torso. However, as BMP data has shown, by no means does neck-capture prevent humane live-restraint of animals.
- ➤ Cable diameter for a given amount of force, thinner cables will concentrate this force into a smaller area (i.e., thinner cables will have higher constriction pressure per unit area), thereby increasing killing power. For animals live-restrained, thinner cables may increase the risk of injury.
- ➤ Lock size for the same reason discussed under cable diameter, locks that have less surface area in contact with the animal may have greater killing potential. One should consider both cable diameter and lock size when evaluating the amount of snare surface area in contact with the animal more total surface area in contact should reduce killing potential.
- ➤ Lock type Relaxing locks have the least killing potential, while power-assisted locks have the greatest killing potential. While additional research is needed to quantify the difference in killing potential between positive locks and power-assisted locks, power-assisted locks should not be used if the intent is to live-restrain an animal, and relaxing locks should not be used if the intent is to kill an animal. Readers should also review the lock categorization caveats on p. 9.
- Minimum loop stops killing potential, particularly for neck-snared animals, can be reduced by incorporating minimum loop stops that prohibit the loop from constricting enough to restrict air or blood flow. We urge careful thought in determining the appropriate position to place a minimum loop stop when the goal is to live-restrain an animal. *Inappropriately* positioned minimum loop stops could be ineffective (i.e., not live-restrain), or could cause excessive injury in live-restrained animals. An excessively loose cable might repeatedly slide or turn on the animal causing abrasions or cuts, or a cable tight enough to partially restrict circulation, but not tight enough to kill, could cause extensive edema.
- ➤ Entanglement While not a mechanical component of a snare, entanglement is believed to be a key variable influencing killing potential. Entanglement refers to situations where

the animal is able wrap the snare cable around objects that do not easily bend or break (e.g., larger trees and shrubs, fences, or sturdy ground objects). Entanglement increases killing potential in two ways. First, it may allow an animal to use the object to gain greater leverage when pulling, thereby allowing it to tighten the snare loop more. Secondly, it may reduce the animal's ability to release tension on the snare (e.g., if all or part of the animal becomes suspended off the ground).

- > Snare length longer snares have a greater potential to kill. As cable length increases, a moving animal will generate more force when the cable becomes taut, and this force will be transferred to loop constriction. Longer cables may also increase the potential of entanglement.
- Anchoring method snares anchored to rigid and immovable objects may have greater killing potential. As an animal lunges against the solid anchor, more force will be transferred to loop constriction. However, BMP research has shown that rigid anchoring methods can work fine when the goal is to humanely live-restrain animals. Furthermore, movable anchoring points (i.e., drags) may effectively become rigid and immovable if they become wrapped around a fixed object, or may allow the animal to reach an area of entanglement. Hence, it is not always possible to predict whether a certain anchoring method will consistently influence the killing potential of a snare.
- Anchoring height some research data suggests that the height at which the snare is anchored above ground could affect killing potential. Higher anchoring points may increase killing potential by causing the snare loop to tighten closer to the anterior portion of the neck, near the base of the skull, where blood vessels and the trachea may be less embedded in body tissue. However, the effect of anchoring height may be influenced by snare length. For a given anchoring height, a longer snare will reduce the angle between the animal and the anchor point, potentially reducing killing potential as compared to a shorter snare anchored at the same height.
- > Shock springs while shock springs are not commonly used on snares, they may reduce killing potential or injury during live-restraint. When an animal lunges, a shock spring may reduce the amount of force transferred to loop constriction, though no data exists to quantify this possible effect.
- > Swivels while some trappers believe swivels may reduce killing potential, there does not appear to be any consensus, and we are not aware of any data to further evaluate. Similar to foothold traps, swivels on snares may also play a role in reducing injury to live-restrained animals, but data is currently lacking to reach any conclusion.
- Animal species here, we simply note that animal species differ in terms of morphology, physiology, and capture behavior. Independent of snare design, some species may be more or less prone to being killed in a snare.

Both killing and live-restraining devices have merit depending on circumstances. The multiple factors that can influence killing potential illustrate both the versatility of snares, and the fact that

multiple variables must be considered when deploying a snare or designing a snare regulation for a particular outcome. Because one snare has a feature with greater killing potential than another does not mean that one will kill an animal and the other will live-restrain. Considering both snare design and the manner in which the snare is deployed, multiple features may be necessary to achieve the desired outcome, and there are likely multiple configurations that may be used to achieve the same outcome. Appropriate configurations vary depending on desired outcome, species of interest, location, user preference, and selectivity concerns.

Selectivity

Selectivity can be defined in different contexts. First, one can consider single-species selectivity as the ability of a snare to capture only one species. Secondly, one can consider selectivity for a suite of species that may be legally captured at a given time and place. The most important aspect of ensuring desired selectivity is to remain vigilant for the presence of animals in the area that are to be avoided. **One should always consider potential selectivity when deciding whether to increase or decrease the killing potential of a snare.** Following is a list of factors that may be useful for influencing selectivity.

- ➤ Loop size while many trappers have preferred loop sizes for capturing a particular species, there is likely a range of loop sizes that may work equally as well for a given species. Modifying loop size may still allow a desired animal to be captured, while minimizing unintended capture. Loop size may be useful for minimizing capture of animals either larger or smaller than the intended species. For example, using the smallest loop size necessary to capture a fox or coyote may reduce the risk of capturing a wolf. Conversely, using the largest loop size possible to capture a beaver may minimize the risk of capturing an otter. The greater the difference in size of animals, the greater the ability to be selective.
- ➤ Height of the loop from the ground as with loop size, there is likely a range of acceptable distances the loop can be positioned above the ground and still capture a particular species. Within this acceptable range, the snare loop should be positioned at a level most apt to minimize risk of capture for other animals to be avoided. Loop height may be useful for minimizing capture of animals either larger or smaller than the desired species. Raising a loop may allow smaller animals to pass under, while lowering it may allow a larger animal to step over, or the loop may simply 'brush' off the chest or leg of a larger animal. Lowering it too much, however, could result in capture of a larger animal by the leg if the animal does not jump over.
- 'Guide sticks' various natural or unnatural material may help guide the desired animal through the snare, and/or guide another animal over, under, or around the snare. The placement AND size or rigidity of the guide can influence animal behavior, and should both be considered. For example, a large 'jump stick' placed too high, with the snare underneath, may allow or encourage a deer to go under the stick and get caught, rather than jumping over the stick. Conversely, if the guide stick were small enough and not rigid (or if no guide stick was used), a fox or coyote may go through the snare and get

caught, but a deer may simply walk through it and brush the snare away with its chest or legs. 'Diverter wires' attached or placed perpendicular to, and over the top of, the snare loop have also been shown to reduce moose capture in wolf snares. While not as common, guide sticks can also be placed under a snare. For example, a *small diameter* stick placed under a snare might cause a fox or coyote to raise its chin and go through the snare, but may encourage a slightly smaller animal (e.g., fisher) to duck under. Knowledge of the species present and their behavior is critical in deciding whether to use a guide stick, and if so, the appropriate placement and size.

- ➤ Bait and lures while effective snare use does not require use of baits or lures, they are often used to attract animals to a given area. As with all capture devices, choice of whether to use baits or lures, and if so, which one, can influence the types of animals that are attracted to a given area. Selectivity can either increase or decrease depending on bait or lure choice, and one must consider not only whether the intended species will be attracted, but also what other animals will be attracted.
- ▶ Minimum loop stops by controlling minimum loop diameter, minimum loop stops can be used to selectively allow escape by animals smaller than the intended species, or allow escape of animals captured in a specific body area (e.g., leg). For example, a minimum loop stop might be used to: 1) allow for beaver capture, but an otter to escape; 2) allow for fox capture, but a fisher to escape; 3) allow for coyote capture, but a deer caught by the leg to escape. Once again, we urge careful thought in determining the appropriate position to place a minimum loop stop. One must consider not only the appropriate loop size that will allow a particular animal to typically escape, but also any potential effects of a loop stop on the captured animal (abrasions or cuts could occur if an excessively loose loop repeatedly slides or turns on the animal, and extensive edema could occur if the cable is tight enough to partially restrict circulation, but not tight enough to kill).
- ➤ Maximum loop stops maximum loop stops are not necessary to control maximum loop diameter. Users can effectively control maximum loop diameter by how far they open the loop during deployment. If for any reason there is a desire to mechanically restrict the maximum loop circumference, then maximum loop stops are the primary method for doing so. For example, a maximum loop stop, by preventing the loop from being large enough to capture a deer, could be used as an alternative to "deer stops" in situations where mink snaring is of interest. In general, maximum loop stops minimize the capture of animals larger than the intended animal.
- → 'Pan-tension' pan-, or more generally, trigger-tension, is commonly employed with foothold traps, and occasionally with body-gripping traps, to increase selectivity. Its primary application with snares is with power-activated snares. Power-activated snares often rely on a trigger, typically foot-depressed or mouth-pulled, that activates the snare. Increasing the amount of force required for activation can improve selectivity by minimizing the risk of capturing smaller or less 'forceful' animals.
- > Snare 'loading' and lock positioning Snare 'loading' refers to the process of altering the curvature of a portion of the snare loop in a manner that causes the snare loop to close

more rapidly once an animal's movement initiates loop closure. Snare loading, often done to improve capture efficiency, may NOT be wise in situations where there is a desire to allow smaller animals, which may still bump the snare, to pass through a snare set for another species (e.g., to allow an otter to pass through a beaver snare). The sensitivity to loop closure for passively-activated snares can also be influenced by the position the lock is placed on the loop during deployment (e.g., "11 o'clock", "12 o'clock", or "2-o'clock"). Reducing sensitivity may prevent a loop from closing if a smaller animal to be avoided goes through and bumps the snare.

➤ Breakaway devices — Breakaway devices can be designed in many ways, and numerous examples were illustrated previously. Basically, they allow the snare loop to break open and an animal to escape completely free of the snare when a specified amount of force is applied. Hence, they are used to prevent restraint of animals capable of generating more force than the animal of interest.

As with killing potential, there are multiple snare component configurations or setting methods that may be used to accomplish a particular selectivity objective. We illustrate this point with an issue that has arisen in some states. "Deer stops", often recommended to minimize capture of deer by the leg, make it impractical to use snares to capture smaller furbearers like mink or muskrats. Alternative options that may be just as effective at reducing deer capture, without effectively prohibiting mink or muskrat capture, include the use of breakaway devices or use of a maximum loop stop that mechanically prevents loops that are large enough to have a realistic probability of capturing a deer. Whether there is a need for any special selectivity features, and the appropriate configuration if so, may vary depending on location, species present, other performance needs (e.g., killing potential, efficiency), and user preference.

Snare Efficiency

As with selectivity, efficiency can be defined or computed in different ways. Similar to the definition utilized in the development of Best Management Practices for trapping, we define efficiency as the proportion of times the device captures and holds the intended animal that has activated the device. This is distinct from 'captures/trap night', a measure that is highly influenced by variations in animal population density. Because many snares are passively-activated, activation in this context means the snare has been altered by the animal from its set position. As with all capture devices, the manner in which a snare is deployed can greatly influence efficiency. In contrast to selectivity, we felt the influence of some user-controlled variables (e.g., loop size, loop height, etc) on snare efficiency is more appropriately left for specific snaring "How To" books. We acknowledge the importance of those factors, but focus more on the role that various mechanical features may play in efficiency. Again, comparative statements are based on the assumption that "all other variables are equal".

➤ Cable diameter – cable diameter can influence efficiency in two ways: 1) when an animal is live-restrained, by intent or otherwise, smaller-diameter cables have reduced breaking strengths, and may be more prone to breaking if excessive force is applied or if the live animal chews on the cable; 2) while animal sensory capabilities vary by species, some

animals may be more apt to see larger diameter cable and avoid or step through the snare, or feel it and back out of the snare prior to loop closure. Of the two concerns, preventing cable breakage should be the first priority since cable breakage often leaves the snare attached to the animal.

- ➤ Cable design cable design could influence efficiency in several ways: 1) smoother, stiffer cable may facilitate more rapid *initial* closure of the snare, making it harder for the animal to sense and back out of a snare. However, stiffer cable also creates more resistance to loop closure as the loop diameter gets smaller; 2) cables with lang lay, particularly if used without swivels, will be more prone to wire separation during rotation or biting, increasing the potential for breakage; 3) for a given diameter, cables with more wires have greater fatigue resistance (more flexible), but cables with more wires may be less abrasion resistant (small wires will wear faster).
- ➤ Lock type locks that slide more freely on a cable will close faster, minimizing the opportunity for an animal to back out of the snare. How freely the lock slides will depend not only on the lock type, but also on cable design (see above). Also, some lock types may not be appropriate for certain types of snares. For example, a relaxing lock is not recommended for a leg snare, as any opening of the loop will allow the snare to slide off the leg.
- > Swivels snare swivels may help minimize wire stress, wire separation, or wire kinking if an animal twists or rolls, thereby minimizing risk of cable breakage. Swivels are more apt to be beneficial in situations where animals are live-restrained.
- ➤ Breakaway devices and minimum loop stops breakaway devices and minimum loop stops, often used to increase selectivity, can also influence efficiency. Complete separation of species based on breakaway strength or minimum loop size may not always be possible. Hence, there may be tradeoffs between selectivity (allowing escape of some species) and efficiency (preventing escape of desired species) when incorporating these devices.
- ➤ Snare 'loading' and lock positioning Snare 'loading' and lock positioning were previously discussed under selectivity on p.21. They may also influence capture efficiency. Provided the animal is correctly 'positioned' when the loop begins to close, a more rapidly closing loop (i.e., via snare loading) may minimize the opportunity for an animal to back out of or pass completely or partially through a snare before it is appropriately restrained. By reducing the amount of animal pressure necessary to cause loop closure, positioning a snare lock in a more 'sensitive' position may also result in higher capture efficiency, provided the animal is correctly 'positioned' when the loop begins to close.
- ➤ Passive- versus powered-activation power-activated snares could minimize the opportunity an animal has to back out of a snare prior to complete loop closure.

The appropriate deployment specifications (e.g., loop size, loop height, lock position, 'loading' snares, etc) for maximizing snare efficiency are best learned through snaring "How To" books and field experience. With respect to mechanical attributes that influence efficiency, one should focus on three issues: 1) particularly when live-restraining animals, use designs that minimize the chance the desired animal will break or bite through the cable; 2) use designs that facilitate smooth rapid closure when activated by the desired animal; and 3) when incorporating devices to improve selectivity, consider potential tradeoffs with efficiency. In some cases, there may be little tradeoff (i.e., there will be little loss of efficiency). In cases where a selectivity feature does reduce efficiency, the acceptable level of tradeoff may be influenced by factors such as whether animals unintentionally captured can be released alive, and the legal or biological 'status' of those animals

CONCLUSIONS

Snares represent one of the oldest forms of animal capture devices, and the principles of snare deployment have not changed substantially. However, the mechanical attributes and options for snares have changed significantly in recent years, and will likely continue to expand. Unfortunately, the public, many resource professionals, and some trappers are not familiar with all the features and variations of modern snares. Various snare designs have been used to capture wildlife species for reintroductions or research, including such species as bears, wolves, lynx, fox, coyote, and beaver. As with any capture device, achieving the desired performance requires both experience and an understanding of mechanical attributes and options.

While much is known about *whether* specific snare features can influence a given performance criterion, there is a need for additional scientific data to better understand the *degree* to which they may do so. While additional data would allow us to refine our ability to predict snare performance, there are likely three things that won't change:

- Trappers and resource professionals need to consider all performance criteria (killing versus live-restraint, animal welfare, selectivity, and efficiency) when selecting snare designs. Changing design to influence one performance attribute may alter (positively or negatively) other performance.
- For a single performance criterion, biologists and trappers must consider *multiple* variables when striving for a desired outcome. Ignoring one variable may yield unintended results.
- There are likely multiple configurations that will accomplish the same objective. When a specific outcome is necessary or desired, biologists (and trappers) should not only familiarize themselves with any current data that exist, but should recognize where multiple configurations may be acceptable. Restricting to only one specific configuration may not be necessary, and may even be counterproductive if it limits the options users have to adapt to specific situations or locations.

There will always be a need to describe snares or snare components, and we encourage use of the terms and definitions herein. As additional performance data are collected, it may be possible to refine or strengthen conclusions regarding the influence of design on performance, which may then suggest the need to include additional definitions or categories for specific components. As with the Best Management Practices for trapping, this document may be updated periodically. Updates will be posted at the AFWA furbearer website (www.fishwildlife.org/furbearer.html).