



# STATE TRAPPING REPORT CARD



State	Leghold Traps Prohibited	Conibear Traps Prohibited	Snares Prohibited	Trapper Report Required	24 Hr/Daily Trap Check Land sets	24 Hr/Daily Trap Check Water Sets	Trap ID Required	Trapper Education Required	Non-target Animals Recorded	Bobcat Trapping Prohibited	Otter trapping prohibited	Grade
AL	X	X	X	+	+	X	+	+	X	X	X	C-
AK	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	F
AZ*	X*	X*	+	+	+	+	+	+	X	X	+	B
AR	X	X	X	X	+	X	+	X	X	X	X	D
CA*	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	X	X	+	B+
CO*	+	+	+	X	+	+	X	X	X	X	+	C+
CT	X	X	+	X	+	+	+	+	X	+	X	C+
DE	X	X	+	X	+	+	+	X*	X	+	X	C
FL*	+	+	X	X	+	+	X	X	X	X	X	C-
GA	X	X	X	+	+	+	+	X	X	X	X	C-
HI	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	A-
ID	X	X	X	+	X	X	+	X	X*	X	X	D
IL	X	X	X	X	+	+	+	+	X	+	X	C
IN	X	X	X	X	+	+	X	X	X	+	+	C-
IA	X	X	X	X	+	X	+	X	X	X	X	D
KS	X	X	X	X	+	+	+	+	X	X	+	C
KY	X	X	X	X	+	+	+	X	X	X	X	D+
LA	X	X	X	X	+	+	X	X	X	X	X	D
ME	X	X	X	X	+	X	+	+	X	X	X	D+
MD	X	X	X	X	+	X	X	+	X	+	X	D+
MA*	+	+	+	X	+	+	+	+	X	X	X	B
MI	X	X	X	X	X	X	+	X	X	X	X	D-
MN	X	X	X	X	X	X	+	X	X	X	X	D-
MS	X	X	X	+	X	X	+	X	X	X	X	D
MO	X	X	X	X	+	+	+	X	X	X	X	D+
MT	X	X	X	X	X	X	+	X	X	X	X	D-
NE	X	X	X	X	+	X	+	X	X	X	+	D+
NV	X	X	X	+	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	D-
NH	X	X	X	+	+	+	+	+	X	X	X	C
NJ	+	X	X	X	+	+	+	+	X	+	X	C+
NM	X	X	X	+	+	+	+	X	X	X	+	C
NY	X	X	+	X	+	+	+	+	X	X	X	C-
NC	X	X	X*	X	+	X	+	X	X	X	X	D
ND	X	X	X	X	X	X	+	X	X	X	+	D
OH	X	X	X	X	+	+	+	+	X	+	X	C
OK	X	X*	+	X	+	+	+	X	X	X	X	C-
OR	X	X	X	+	X	X	+	+	X*	X	X	D+
PA	X	X	X	X	X	X	+	+	X	X	+	D+
RI	+	X	+	+	+	+	+	X	X	+	+	B-
SC	X	X	+	+	+	+	+	X	X	X	X	C-
SD	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	+	D-
TN	X	X	X	X	X	X	+	X	X	X	X	D-
TX	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	F
UT	X	X	X	X	X	X	+	+	X	X	+	D+

<b>VT</b>	X	X	+	+	+	+*	+	+	X	X	X	<b>C+</b>
<b>VA</b>	X	X	X	X	+	+	+	X	X	X	X	<b>D+</b>
<b>WA*</b>	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	X	X	X	<b>B</b>
<b>WV</b>	X	X	X	X	+	+	+	+	X	X	+	<b>C</b>
<b>WI</b>	X	X	X	+	+	X	+	+	+	X	X	<b>C</b>
<b>WY</b>	X	X	X	X	X	X	+	X	+	X	+	<b>D+</b>

**Key:** + “yes” or positive policy      X “no” or negative policy

**Leghold Traps:** The most commonly used trap in the United States by commercial and recreational fur trappers, these traps are inherently indiscriminate and will trap any unsuspecting animal who steps into the trap jaws, including companion animals, threatened and endangered species, and even humans. Animals captured in leghold traps endure fractures, ripped tendons, edema, blood loss, amputations, tooth and mouth damage (from chewing and biting at the trap), and starvation. Some animals will even chew or twist their limbs off in order to escape.

**Snares:** Simple in design and vicious in action, a snare is generally made of light wire cable looped through a locking device or of small nylon cord tied so that it will tighten as the animal pulls against it. The more a snared animal struggles, the tighter the noose becomes; the tighter the noose, the greater the animal's struggle and suffering. The body snare also may be used as an underwater drowning set for capturing and killing beavers and other aquatic animals. The body snare is designed to kill the animal by strangulation, drowning and/or crushing of vital organs. However, snares do not discriminate among victims and will capture any animal around any body part.

**Conibear Traps:** Consisting of two metal rectangles hinged together midway on the long side to open and close like scissors, the Conibear trap poses a serious hazard to companion animals and non-targeted wildlife, including threatened and endangered species. Despite years of research, there have been no significant advances in reducing non-targeted captures. Because they frequently are used in water, one of the primary causes of death for animals trapped in water such as beaver or otter is via drowning. The American Veterinary Medical Association has deemed drowning as an unacceptable method of euthanasia.

**Trapper Report:** Very few states tightly monitor the number of animals trapped each year and most do not require trappers to report the number or species of animals they kill, but may conduct voluntary surveys that tend to have very low response rates from which state wildlife agencies then “guess estimate” the total numbers of animals trapped each year. Mandatory trapper reports can provide a more accurate estimate of the number and type of species killed annually. It is important to point out, however, that no matter how accurate kill data or “harvest reports” are, they do not reflect population trends. Regardless, wildlife agencies frequently use harvest reports to estimate populations and to set annual bag limits and trapping seasons in lieu of conducting scientifically valid population assessments.

In addition, some states rely on voluntary or mandatory “fur dealer/buyer reports” to estimate annual trap kill totals. These reports have little correlation to the actual number of animals trapped since these reports only record the number of pelts purchased within the state. Out-of-state sales and pelts unsold are not recorded.

**24 Hour /Daily Trap Check:** Animals caught in traps for several days may starve, dehydrate, be attacked by other animals, or mangle their mouths and limbs in futile efforts to free themselves. Trappers also catch non-

targeted animals including deer, birds, squirrels, endangered species, cats and dogs; these animals have a much better chance of survival if traps are checked at least once every 24 hours.

**Trap ID:** While most state agencies lack the enforcement personnel necessary to ensure compliance with state trapping regulations, requiring that traps are affixed with owner identification helps law enforcement identify individuals who are setting traps in violation of state regulations. Trap IDs also aid in identifying individuals responsible for setting traps that have killed or injured companion animals, people or protected wildlife.

**Trapper Education:** Mandatory trapper education courses can help ensure that trappers understand and are aware of trapping regulations. Education courses can also provide instruction for avoiding and dealing with non-targeted catches, including companion animals and threatened and endangered species. In addition, education courses can provide information on less-cruel methods of killing trapped animals. However, few states require or offer trapper education courses. As a result, most trappers learn “in the field” by “trial and error” at the expense of the animals.

**Non-targeted Animals:** Most states do not require trappers to report non-targeted animals trapped, thereby cloaking the cumulative impacts and danger of trapping on wildlife, companion animals and communities. In lieu of available state collected data, Born Free USA maintains a database tracking incidents across the country that involve companion animals and threatened and endangered species. This data is collected via news reports or submitted directly to Born Free USA by veterinarians, wildlife rehabilitators and residents who have encountered a trapping situation firsthand. Reports are submitted at [www.bornfreeusa.org/trappingreport](http://www.bornfreeusa.org/trappingreport)

**Bobcat and Otter Trapping:** Otter and bobcat are listed on Appendix II of CITES (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species), a category designating species who are threatened or at risk of becoming so if traded heavily. Trapping can severely impact species who cannot naturally compensate for externally caused population reductions. Sensitive species include bobcat, river otter, wolverine, lynx, fisher, marten and kit fox.

Wildlife management practiced by state agencies is strongly dictated by economics. When pelt prices rise, pressure on furbearers increases and, in some situations, the size of the furbearer population can fluctuate depending on its perceived economic worth. Historically, basing management on economics rather than science has depleted populations of some species and created unnatural increases in others. Otter and bobcat trapping was specifically included in this evaluation because these species are native to most states, are sensitive species whose trade is of international concern, and are trapped primarily or solely for recreational or commercial purposes.

Notes:

WA\* Leghold traps, Conibear traps and snares are prohibited for the capture of mammals for recreation or commerce in fur. Conibear traps in water, padded leghold traps or a non-strangling type of foot snare can be used with a special permit for protecting human health and safety and wildlife conflicts (not to exceed 30 days, and a non-lethal control tool must be attempted first), protection of threatened and endangered species, and for use in “legitimate wildlife research” (excluding Conibear traps).

SC\* The Department may issue special depredation permits to allow the use of snares in water to target beavers.

RI\* Leghold traps are allowed with a special permit from the director of the Department of Environmental Management.

OR\* The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife estimated that it would take 140 hours of field staff time to search 24 offices for records and compile data, at a cost of \$3,920.00. This indicates that, while data may be collected, it is not readily available for evaluation or consideration by the Department or the public. For comparison, Wisconsin was able to provide non-targeted trapping data at no cost and Wyoming was able to provide the information for just \$10.

OK\* Trappers can obtain a 30-day permit to use Conibear traps in water targeting beavers.

NC\* Snares may be used in water to target beavers.

NY\* Traps must be checked every 24 hours; however, there are several area and species exceptions that allow traps to be checked every 48 hours.

MA\* A state ballot initiative in 1996 banned body-gripping traps. Special permits may be issued to use Conibear traps for certain types of wildlife damage.

ID\* Trappers are required to report only dead, non-targeted species (non-targeted species found alive are to be released, but need not be reported).

HI\* There is no recreational trapping in Hawaii. However, traps and snares have been used for certain types of wildlife damage.

FL\* Leghold traps may be used only by permit from the executive director of the commission.

DE\* Persons born after Jan. 1, 1978, are required to take a trapper education course prior to obtaining a trapping permit. Persons over age 65 and residents who live on more than 20 acres do not need a permit to trap nor are they required to take, a trapper education course.

CO\* A state ballot initiative in 1996 banned body-gripping traps. The ban effectively covers recreational and commercial fur trapping. Exemptions exist for control of wildlife damage to commercial crops and livestock on private land, to protect public health and safety, and for bona fide scientific research. Leghold traps used for these purposes must be padded when set on land.

CA\* A state ballot initiative in 1998 banned the use of body-gripping traps for commercial and recreational trapping. Leghold traps, Conibear traps and snares can be used for nuisance wildlife control and human health and safety.

AZ\* All body-gripping traps and snares are prohibited on public land as a result of a ballot initiative passed in 1994. Body-gripping traps are allowed on private land. Snares are not permitted, except those not designed to kill for purpose of scientific research, sport falconry or relocation.

VT\* Body-gripping traps set under ice need only be checked once every three days.