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**PHYSICAL ADDRESS:**  
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January 30, 2015

Lisa Robertson, President  
Wyoming Untrapped  
Jackson, Wyoming

RE: An Overview of Trapping in Wyoming

Dear Lisa:

There are many important factors to be considered by Wyoming Game and Fish and Federal authorities on the need for more area restrictions and other limitations on trapping in Wyoming. Here are some:

a. Respect for Wildlife. Winter is the normal time for trapping because the coats of furbearing animals are in their prime condition. I have particular respect for these hardy target species--bobcats, lynx, wolverines, red squirrels, ermine, raccoons, fishers, pine martens, mink, foxes. Food is hard to come by in the winter, so they are particularly active, hungry and vulnerable to bait and traps.

Many people love to see these creatures when visiting their forest environs, their homes. But it is also a matter of RESPECT for these incredibly hardy and admirable critters. They do not have large body size for warmth, like elk, deer, bison and other big game animals. Even a Grizzly hibernates in the winter, but these critters do not hibernate. They are not shielded with down feathers, and they do not fly South. Unlike us humans, they do not have heated homes and vehicles; they do not have apparel, with comfortable down, fleece, wool, etc. They do not head for Florida in the winter.

Yet these are precisely the same animals targeted for unusually cruel treatment by trapping, with no real "need" anymore. All 50 states have laws prohibiting animal cruelty, but that seems to be forgotten when it comes to leg traps and snares which maim and kill these target species. Not much fun trying to chew off a trapped limb, or suffocating in a snare.

And as noted in (c) below, there is no good, balanced economic reason for these trapping activities in modern times.

b. Endangered and Protected Species. Unlike hunting activity, traps do not discriminate when it comes to many non-target species. Not just dogs caught in traps, but also endangered

wolverines and lynx. And additional animals supposedly protected under our Wyoming statutes: fishers, otters, pikas, etc. There is an active market for all of these furs, and many skins are shipped abroad to Russia and Communist China for sale.

It is **NOT** enough for Federal and Wyoming authorities to simply pay lip service to “protection” under current rules--just please let us know, and please release the animal if it is still alive. Instead the habitats of endangered and protected species should be **CLOSED** to trapping!

Among other considerations, this would reduce potential Endangered Species Act listings, which can have extensive adverse economic consequences in Wyoming.

c. Economic Considerations. There are many locals and visitors who treasure Wyoming’s great wildlife species on our extensive public lands: pine martens, beavers, ermine, badgers, otters, bobcats, lynx, mink, red squirrels, etc. By contrast, there are not many people who need to trap and kill these esteemed wildlife resources outside of carefully defined areas. Nor is there a significant benefit to our economy--trapping produces very little local revenue, visitor income, retail trade, outfitting work, licensing income, table fare, or conservation support. **Unlike hunting and fishing activities, which are and should be widely supported throughout Wyoming.**

Moreover, there is no longer a pressing need for beaver top hats in Europe, or wild animal fur coats in New York. And, much of the wild animal fur market is located in Russia and Communist China. Many target species are an important part of our ecological balance, whether preying on vermin or creating valuable natural riparian habitat (beavers).

Very broad trapping setbacks away from hiking areas, and other area trapping restrictions on our public lands, simply make sense. It is not just concern for dogs and other “non-target species” killed or maimed in traps, where trapping is far more indiscriminate than hunting aimed at specific target species. Absent broad setbacks and area restrictions, wildlife resources should not be compromised in our magnificent public surroundings just so a very limited group of people can trap and kill. It is nice to have the critters around, and nice to have ecological balance. It is public land, where there should be fair and proper Federal and State management balance considering the nature and relative importance of different uses.

d. Public Land Values. Much of the land in Wyoming with furbearing animals is Federal--Forest Service, BLM and Park Service. And, much of the State land is held in trust for our schoolchildren. Trapping detracts from the public values of those lands, with very few offsetting benefits, unless trapping on public land is very carefully controlled and limited through responsible public stewardship.

Best regards,



Peter F. Moyer

PFM:md

cc: Governor Matt Mead  
Scott Talbott, Wyoming Game and Fish  
Brian Olsen, Casper regional wildlife supervisor  
Interested Parties