

TRAPPING

Footloose Montana works to end trapping on Montana's public lands.

Footloose Montana formed in 2007 in response to a number of trapped pet incidents, several fatal. We soon realized that these tragedies not only represented many thousands more but that the cruel, hidden world of trapping takes a huge toll on our wildlife, sending at least six species into perilous decline. We come from all ages and walks of life and include hunters, anglers, hikers and outdoor enthusiasts.

What we share is a passion for the beauty and recreational bounty of Montana's public lands and waterways, and a growing awareness of the dangers posed by traps on our citizen-owned landscape. We are ordinary Montanans on an extraordinary mission. And we welcome you to join us.

What We Do:

We educate the public with the goal of achieving citizen-backed, trap-free public lands. We offer Trapped-Pet Release Workshops, educational presentations, trap displays at public events, Facebook newsbreaks, and an informative website with a map of known trap locations as they are reported to us.



Montana's rich, diverse wildlife is everyone's heritage. Help us save it.

Some facts about trapping in Montana:

- Furbearers are beaver, otter, muskrat, mink, marten, fisher, wolverine, bobcat, lynx and swift fox. More than half are almost trapped to extinction.
- Fur-bearer traps may be 30 feet from road centerline, 50 feet from public trails and 300 feet from trailheads.
- Trapping for predators (coyotes, weasels and skunks) and nongame species (badger, raccoon and red fox) occurs year-round with no restrictions, no license necessary.
- Montana is a last refuge for many rare, sensitive species. Wildlife watching is the second largest income-producer in the state. Traps steal our wildlife, drain our economy and make our public lands unsafe for recreation.
- Trapping diminishes aquifer levels crucial to Montana's communities and agriculture. Unlimited beaver trapping has lowered water tables and dried up nourishing wetlands.
- Seeding unlimited lethal traps across our lands is classified as recreation.
- Traps are indiscriminate. They kill and maim species such as lynx, grizzlies, eagles, owls—a felony in any other case. No other sport can take wildlife—unlicensed, unmonitored—and give nothing back.
- Due to trapping, lynx are listed threatened. Yet traps are thick in lynx core habitat. Otter and marten are struggling. Swift fox, trapped out, are currently being reintroduced while trapping continues for these tiny, 5-pound foxes. Wolverine and fisher are in peril, having been almost trapped out—for the second time. Traps waste life and taxpayer dollars.

Be Part of the Trap-Free Public Lands Campaign – Get Involved Today!

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FOOTLOOSE MONTANA



ENDING



Public Lands Trapping is More Than Deadly... It's Costly. It's Cruel

Every year a recorded 50,000 wild animals suffer and die in traps. No record is kept of the real number, including endangered species, owls and songbirds. An average of two animals are discarded for each one kept. Montana is losing its treasured wildlife for the sport of .04% of the population. Killing that is illegal for anyone else is 'incidental' for trappers.

Trappers say they are lucky to break even, they do it for "the passion." Yet Montana's rare and sensitive species are losing the fight for survival—for sport and export to China. Reintroductions, not always successful, cost millions of dollars.

For a \$29 license, a trapper can set unlimited traps and kill unlimited numbers of animals. Many wait until spring to check their traps, long after animals have suffered for days in panic and agony. Tens of thousands of baited traps catch any creature happening by. Many trappers don't bother to release or collect cheap snares, adding to the unrecorded death toll.

Trapping puts the public in danger, tortures our wildlife and threatens conservation.



Montana's public land should be enjoyed safely by all, but concealed traps and snares cause fear, trauma, injury and death for scores of family pets each year. People suffer too—from toes that must be amputated to loss of nerve and motor movement and broken bones. Citizens should not have to surrender peace of mind or children's and pet's safety on public lands.

Trapping violates the Sportsmen's Code of Ethics:

- Trapping is not fair chase, trappers do not know their target—they aren't present when animals are trapped.
- Traps cause painful, slow death, not quick and humane dispatch.
- Traps cause wanton waste; for every target animal kept, an average of two are discarded.
- Traps do not treat animals with respect. Trapping tortures animals.
- Traps kill animals during reproduction and nurturing time, thus killing nursing offspring too.
- Trapping gives nothing back and does not sustain species.

Trapping is NOT wildlife management.

Traps are non-selective and kill lynx, eagles, grizzlies and other endangered and threatened species—a felony in every case but trapping. Fish, Wildlife & Parks keeps no record of trapped endangered species or migratory birds.

Traps hidden over thousands of square miles are impossible to monitor. Reporting is voluntary. No reliable data exists on species and numbers of trapped animals. Healthy, not sick, animals are attracted to traps. Trapping does not control disease and undermines wildlife management. FWP considers it solely recreation.

Trapping is unlimited for all but five species—otter, bobcat, swift fox, fisher and wolverine. Quotas for these are set without reliable scientific data.



Cool, Clear Water

Unlimited trapping of beaver has drained our wetlands, run creeks dry, lowered water tables and dried up habitat for cattle and wildlife. Allowed to survive, beavers will restore millions acre-feet of water along the 60,000 miles of creeks for towns, ranches, farms, fish and wildlife. This can happen—at no cost to taxpayers—just by ending trapping on public lands.

"It is scarcely possible to exaggerate the suffering thus endured from fear, from acute pain, maddened by thirst, and by vain attempts to escape."

from "Trapping Agony," by Charles Darwin, 1863

Animals in traps endure panic, hunger and exposure to extreme temperatures. Trapped animals dislocate joints, chew off paws and twist whole limbs off attempting to free themselves (trappers call this "wringing").

Animals still alive are strangled, clubbed, stomped to death, or shot. Offspring die of starvation when their nursing mothers are trapped, further increasing unrecorded suffering and loss.

From a letter to The Missoulian, Jan. 5, 2012:

It's been 65 years since the morning I found a broad-striped skunk caught by my trap. It had snapped shut on her last good paw. She had been hobbling around on three stumps, all nicely healed, if one can describe them so, and her sole forepaw. Animals, you see, will chew or twist their paws off to escape. I had lost many traps by animals who desperately pulled trap stakes to escape. Some I later found dead, some hanging by their entangled traps and chain high up in a tree where they had died.

The cold indifference trappers still display... is deplorable. I've regretted to this

day having been so cruel—having tormented and destroyed those animals so long ago.

But I can never undo that. Not ever.

We shouldn't allow steel traps anywhere in the wild.

~ Leonard Stastny,
former trapper



JOIN
Footloose!

Make our public
lands Trap-free!

Help us raise awareness and make trap-free public lands a reality. Together, we will end this shameful 'sport.' Along with your membership you will receive our informative e-Newsletter.

Footloose Montana is a 501(c)(3) organization. Donations are 100% tax-free.

Name (please print clearly)

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

E-mail _____

Phone _____

Membership Levels:

- | | |
|--------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$25 Beaver | <input type="checkbox"/> \$1,000 Wolf |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$50 Fox | <input type="checkbox"/> \$5,000 Fisher |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$100 Bobcat | <input type="checkbox"/> \$10,000 Wolverine |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$500 Pine Marten | <input type="checkbox"/> \$15,000+ Lynx |

☐ Add me to your volunteer list

Please make checks to:

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Trappers claim their sport is tradition. It's time this tradition, like slavery, is consigned to history.