

TRAPPING ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Recommended Mandatory Trapping Education Program
February 1, 2019

Who should be required to attend the Montana Mandatory Trapping Education Program?

- While all individuals who trap in Montana are encouraged to complete Montana's Trapper Education Program, the following individuals are required to complete the Program in order to purchase a Montana trapping license:
 - Individuals under the age of 18, unless they have completed three years of the Montana Trapper Association Youth Trapper Camp Program.
 - Individuals over the age of 18 and who have not purchased at least 3 Montana Trapping licenses since 2002.
- Additionally, it is recommended that FWP:
 - Explore incentives for encouraging individuals to attend the Program.
 - Evaluate whether/which Department personnel would benefit from completing or participating in the Program.

What is recommended in terms of Program design and implementation?

- The Trapper Education Program should occur with FWP oversight and should be separate from Hunter or Bow Education Programs. Wolf trapping certification could be included or offered in addition to/or separate from regular trapping certification.
- The Trapper Education Program must include field components and not be online only.
- Instructors should be vetted with background checks by FWP.
- Participation by other interest groups in curriculum development and in teaching components of the class is recommended and encouraged. (Explore ways to compensate instructors – look at Hunter and Bow Education Programs).
- The Trapper Education Program should be offered within each FWP Region at least annually depending on numbers of interested students.
- Provide adequate funding/resources to implement the Program.

What is recommended to be included in Program content?

- The educational goals are to reduce conflict both within and outside the trapping community; encourage a sense of pride as a wildlife sentinel and citizen "scientist"; encourage ethical behavior and trapper safety; and reduce non-target captures.
- Curriculum content should include (not in rank order):
 - Information on current laws and regulations pertaining to trapping in Montana; regulatory structure (agencies, jurisdiction and authorities; role of wardens and FWP personnel; general public framework to assist, facilitate, inform on trap modifications)
 - What is considered ethical behavior; how to identify/call out poor behavior
 - Considerations of animal welfare (e.g., reducing risk of animal injury; safe releases; dispatch methods)
 - General safety practices; disease
 - Discussion about a full range of considerations a trapper might think about to determine a trap-check interval (e.g., species, location, potential for conflict; weather; waste, safety, etc.)
- The Program should apply clear, consistent, simple concepts in each component including an ecological component.