



# THE REGULATION AND CONTROL OF TRAPPING IN THE UNITED STATES

## State Fish and Wildlife Agencies

In the U.S., the conservation of wildlife is the responsibility of the individual states. Each state has a “fish and wildlife agency” where professional wildlife biologists and law enforcement personnel work to understand the status of all wildlife; to develop and enforce laws and regulations to protect wildlife; and to provide opportunities to allow the legal taking of animals that are abundant.

The hunting and trapping of wild animals requires licensing, and trappers and hunters complete special training courses where they are taught about safe and responsible hunting and trapping practices.

Law enforcement officials enforce all hunting and trapping laws and regulations. Wildlife biologists ensure that animal populations are studied and that their population status is secure.

## Principles of Sustainable Use

State fish and wildlife agencies ensure that principles of sustainable use are in place when setting hunting and trapping regulations. As “public trust” resources, state fish and wildlife agencies are required to use sustainable use principles when conserving animal populations that are hunted or trapped.

These sustainable use principles are enforced by addressing methods of taking wildlife; reporting requirements to ensure accurate estimates of take; strict seasons for trapping and hunting; and restrictions on number of animals that may be taken.

## Best Management Practices

State fish and wildlife agencies have developed best management practices (BMPs) for animal traps used in the U.S. These methods provide for good animal welfare; high selectivity to ensure that only specified animals are caught; and efficiency. Trappers in the U.S. are taught how to use BMPs in trapper education courses, and in advanced trapping education seminars.

To date, BMPs have been developed for all of the important furbearing animals in international trade, and over \$10 million has been spent to date on research to test traps, and state fish and wildlife agencies intend to continue this advanced research program in perpetuity.

Access the BMPs at:<https://www.fishwildlife.org/afwa-inspires/furbearer-management>

## International Fur Trade

As a Party to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), the U.S. regulates the trade of certain species of furbearing animals that enter the international fur trade (e.g., river otter and bobcat).

While these two species are widespread and abundant in the United States, they are listed in the CITES appendices because of their similarity of appearance to other species. State fish and wildlife agencies have active programs to ensure that these two species of furbearers involved in international trade are managed using sustainable use principles.