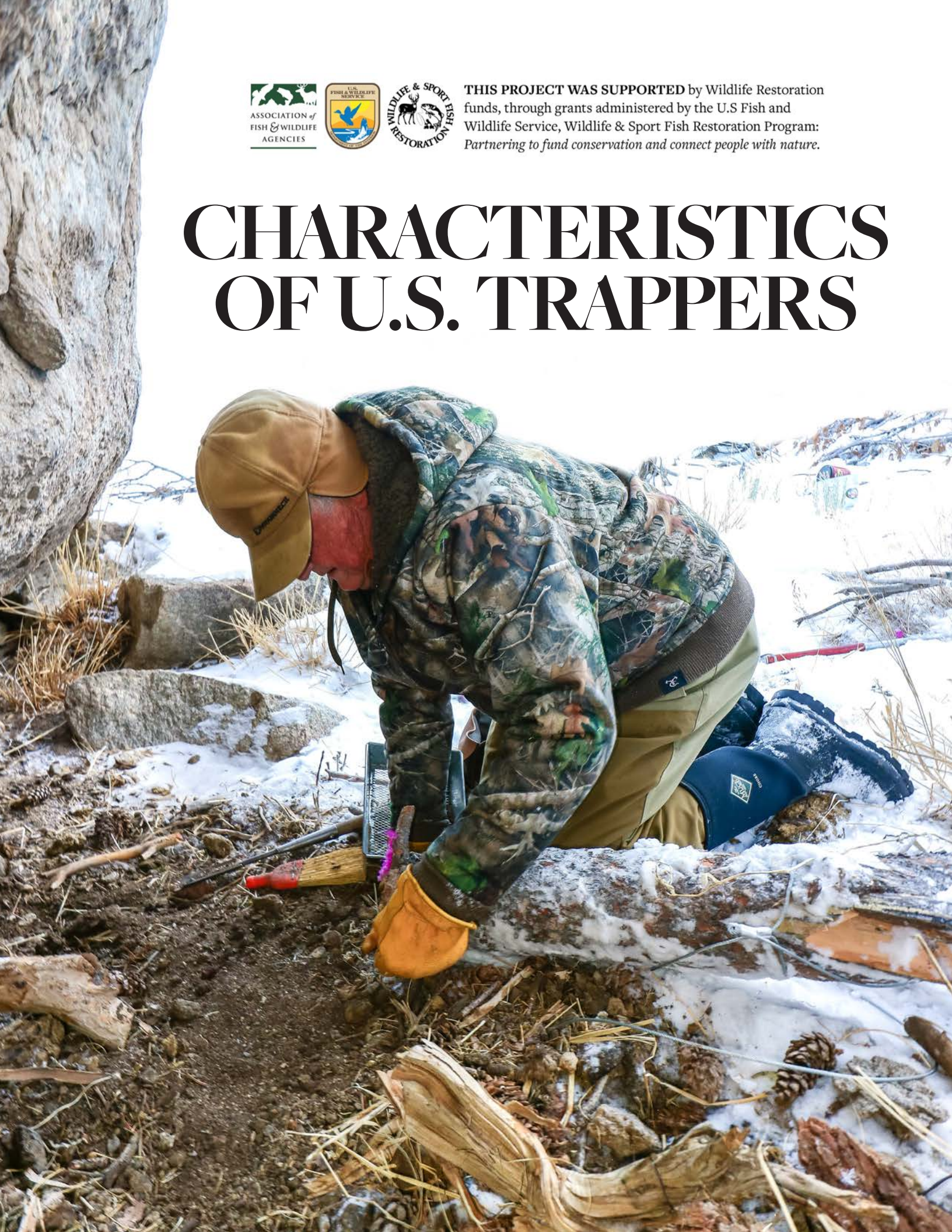




THIS PROJECT WAS SUPPORTED by Wildlife Restoration funds, through grants administered by the U.S Fish and Wildlife Service, Wildlife & Sport Fish Restoration Program: *Partnering to fund conservation and connect people with nature.*

# CHARACTERISTICS OF U.S. TRAPPERS





# Introduction

**REGULATED TRAPPING IN THE UNITED STATES IS AN IMPORTANT TOOL** for managing numerous wildlife species and habitats, protecting public and private property, protecting endangered and threatened wildlife, and restoring wildlife populations. In addition, as a state-sanctioned sustainable use of wildlife resources, regulated trapping provides opportunities for harvest of wildlife and “locavore” lifestyles. It is also important to individuals and families as a way of connecting with the outdoors and providing seasonal sustainable income.



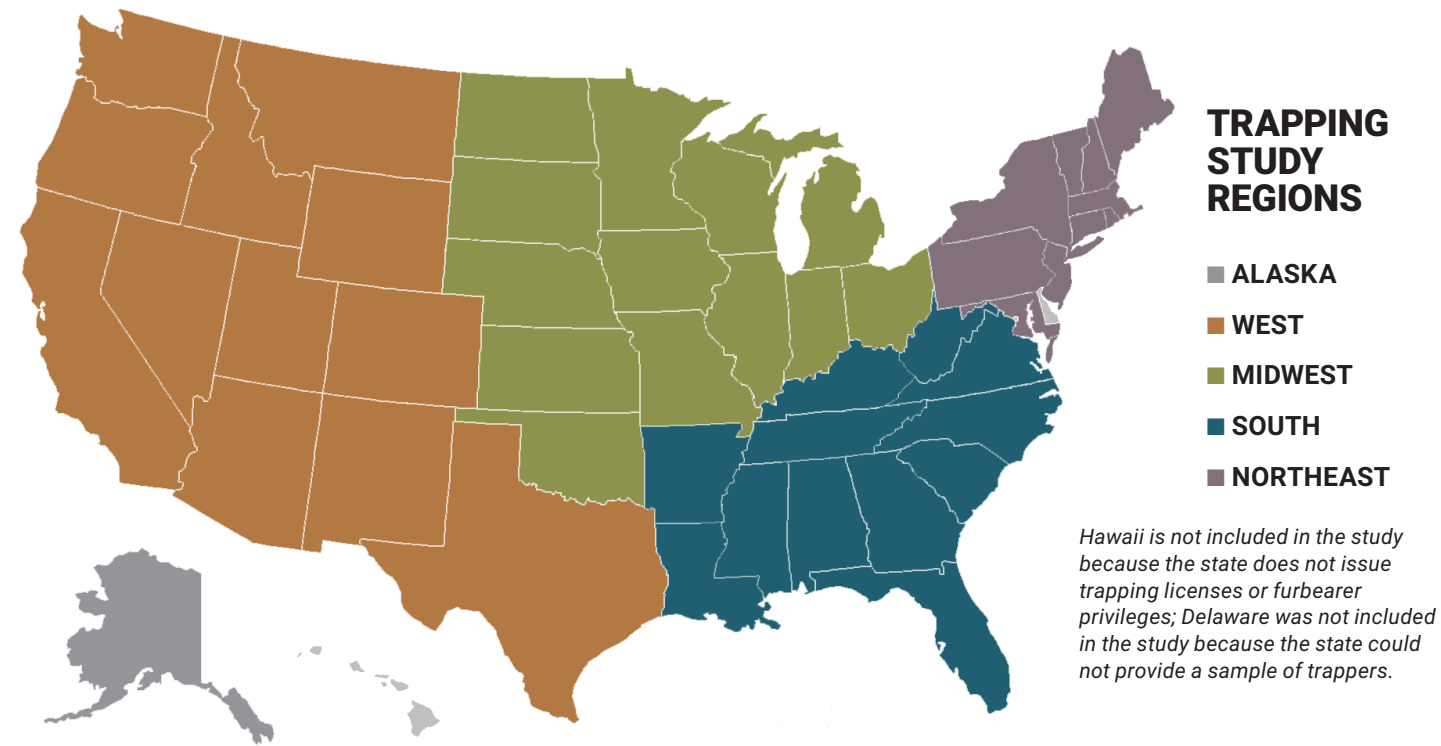
The survey discussed in this brochure was conducted by Responsive Management during 2015, for the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (AFWA). The goal of the survey was to collect updated information and trend data regarding the use of traps nationally, regionally, and by state. Trappers from 48 states participated in the survey. Because Hawaii does not issue trapping licenses or furbearer privileges and Delaware could not supply a sample of trappers, those states did not participate in the study.

Throughout this report, findings of the survey are reported at a 95% confidence interval. For the entire sample of 6,668 licensed trappers, the sampling error is at most plus or minus 1.18 percentage points.

## SAMPLING ERRORS, NATIONALLY AND BY REGION

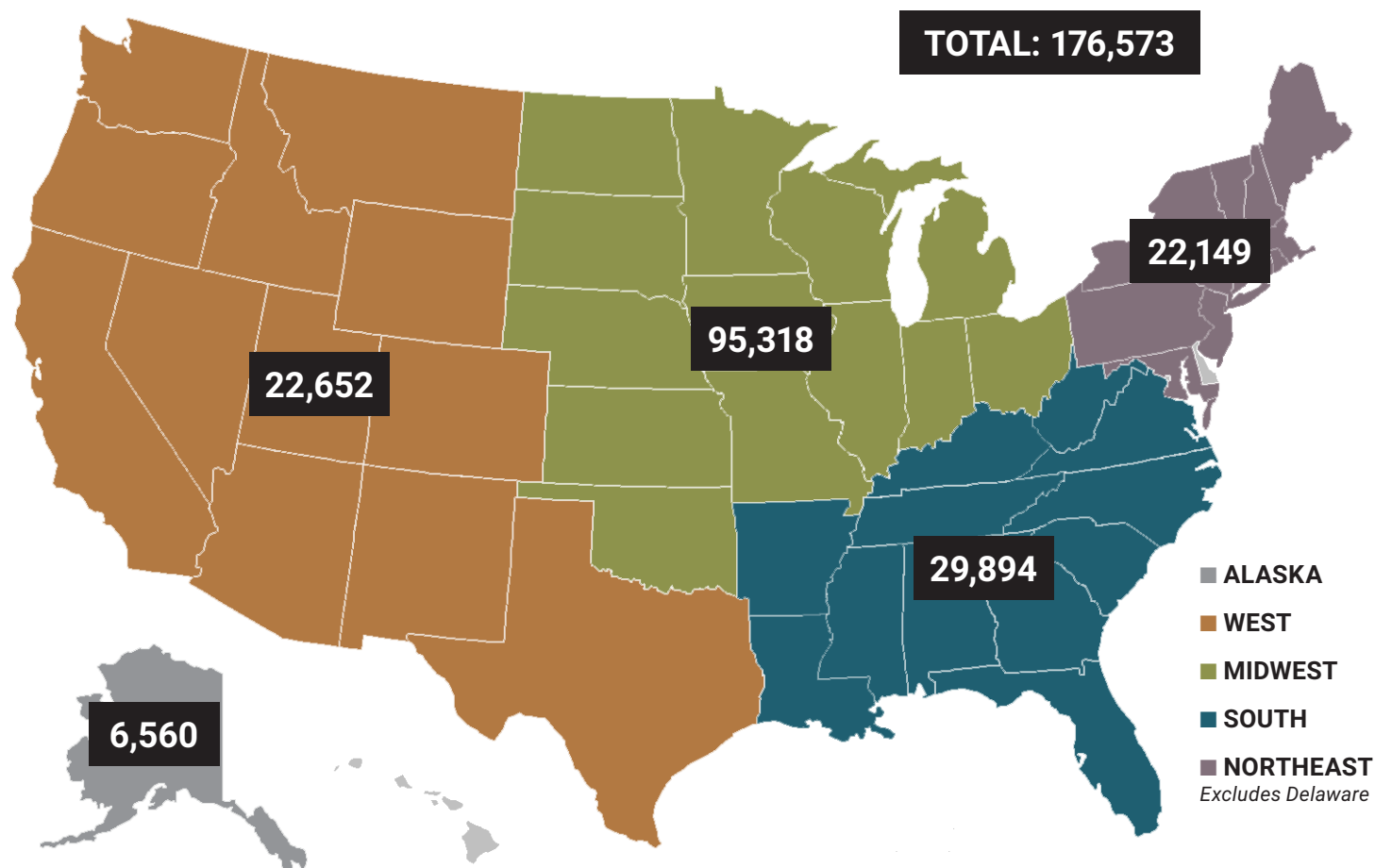
REGION	SAMPLE SIZE	POPULATION SIZE	SAMPLING ERROR
NATIONAL	*6,668	*172,407	1.18
Alaska (by itself)	105	6,560	9.49
West (AZ, CA, CO, ID, MT, NV, NM, OR, TX, UT, WA, WY)	1,563	18,486	2.37
Midwest (IL, IN, IA, KS, MI, MN, MO, NE, ND, OH, OK, SD, WI)	2,315	95,318	2.01
South (AL, AR, FL, GA, KY, LA, MS, NC, SC, TN, VA, WV)	1,544	29,894	2.43
Northeast (CT, DE, ME, MD, MA, NH, NJ, NY, PA, RI, VT)	1,141	22,149	2.83

*\*In the analyses, Texas was removed from national and regional results because it had too few respondents; thus, the total sample is 6,668 licensed trappers and the total population is 172,407 for the sampling error equation.*

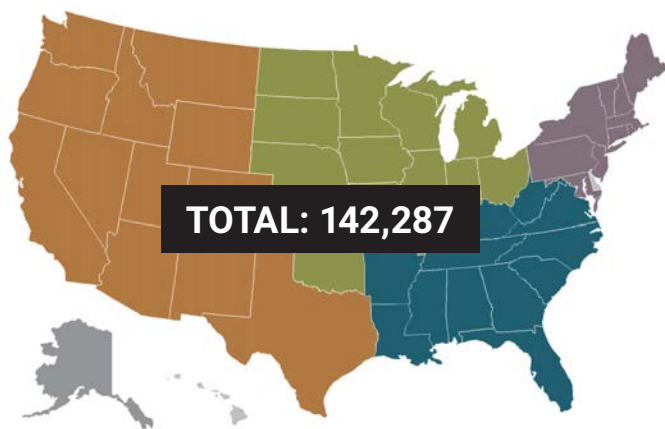


## ESTIMATED NUMBER OF LICENSED TRAPPERS (2014-2015)

Through a combination of data provided by the states and data provided by the survey, Responsive Management estimates that there were **176,573 LICENSED TRAPPERS** in the United States in the 2014-2015 seasons. The tabulation shows the estimates in the regions; the Midwest leads the nation in number of licensed trappers.

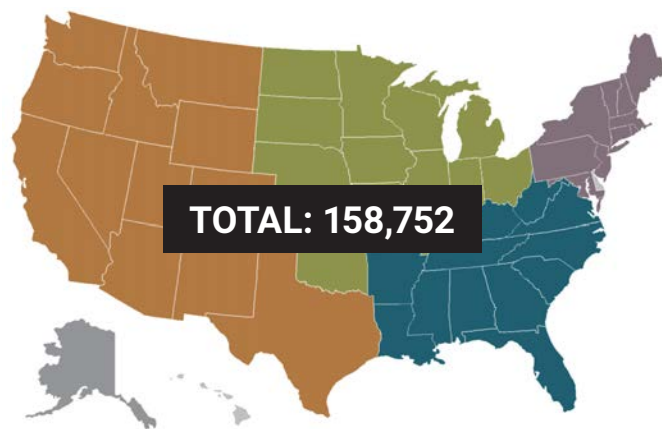


## ESTIMATED NUMBER OF LICENSED TRAPPERS (2003-2004)



In 2003-2004, over half of all U.S. trappers (75,685) were in the Midwest.

## ESTIMATED NUMBER OF LICENSED TRAPPERS (1989-1990)



In 1989-1990, about half of all U.S. trappers (78,919) were in the Midwest.

# Selected Findings

## GENERAL TRAPPING INFORMATION

### 36.7

The mean number of days participants trapped Trappers in the West and the South had the highest mean days of trapping (44.9 and 43.5 days, respectively).

### 49%

During the past 15 years, just under half of respondents trapped no more than 5 of the 15 years. The mean number of years trapped in the past 15 years is 7.4 years.

### 99.6%

Nearly all trappers responded that they trap in their home state during a typical trapping season. A small percentage of trappers trap outside their home state (3%).



ISTOCKPHOTO

### 60%

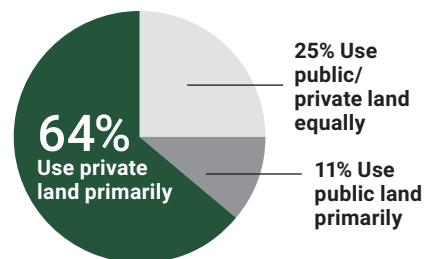
Trappers who had been contacted by a landowner to trap nuisance wildlife. For 70% of trappers, removal of nuisance wildlife plays some part in their trapping, although typically only about a quarter of their trapping involves nuisance wildlife removal.

### 30%

Percentage of Alaska trappers who say that removal of nuisance wildlife plays some part in their trapping, compared with 68%-74% in the regions in the lower 48 states.

## PRIVATE LAND PREDOMINATES IN TRAPPING OVERALL.

Conversely, in the Alaska region, public land predominates, with 61% using public land mostly and 94% using public land at least half the time.



## AVERAGE TRAPPING EXPENDITURES

For 2016, trappers were asked about their expenses in the previous 12 months. On average, trappers spend ...



### \$246.36

On traps and lures

### \$149.24

On other equipment, such as tools, skinning knives, etc.

### \$344.86

On travel

### \$730.85

On major trapping-related items, such as 4-wheelers, snowmobiles, boats, and motors

### \$1,694.24

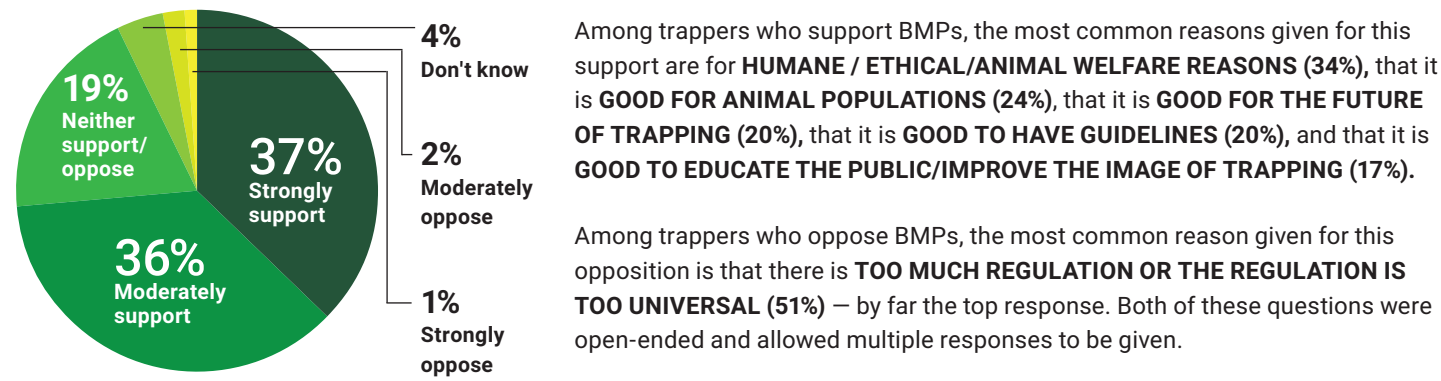
Overall expenditures

BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES (BMPS)

42% of trappers have heard of BMPS for trapping

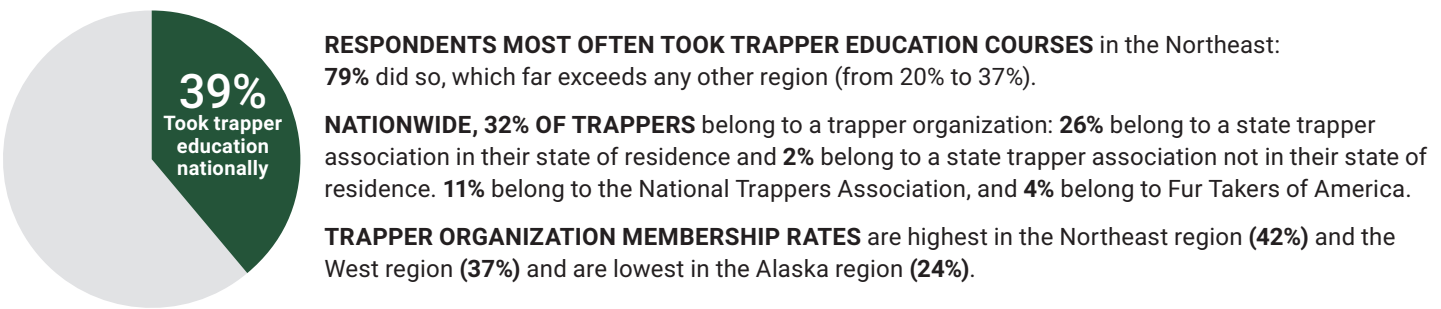
Of those who have heard of BMPS, 64% know a great deal or a moderate amount

OVERALL, DO YOU SUPPORT OR OPPOSE BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES?



Among trappers who have heard of BMPS, 66% currently use them and plan to continue

TRAPPER EDUCATION AND ORGANIZATION MEMBERSHIP



49% took a course sponsored by a state agency

35% took one sponsored by a state trapper association

9% other

7% AFWA



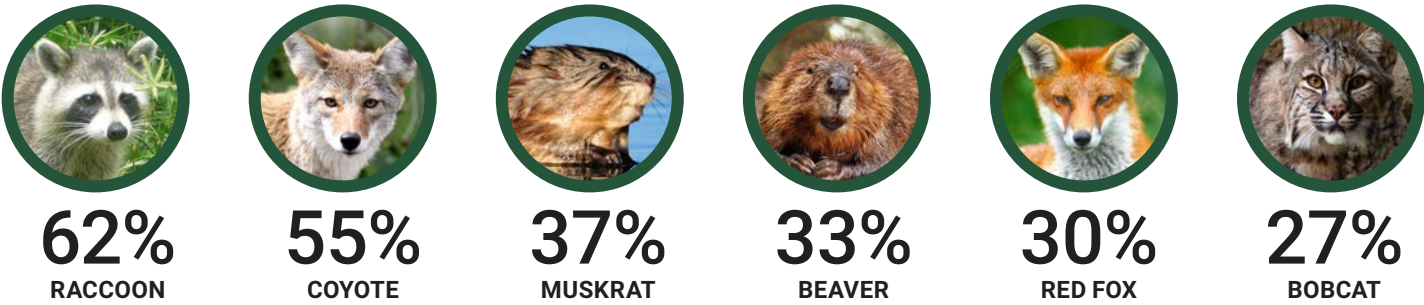
PHOTOS BY SAMARA TRUSSO, PENNSYLVANIA GAME COMMISSION

Wildlife Biologist Cory Mosby, of the Maine Department of Inland Fish and Wildlife, familiarizes workshop participants with regulated trapping methods used in and around lakes and streams for the capture of aquatic mammals.

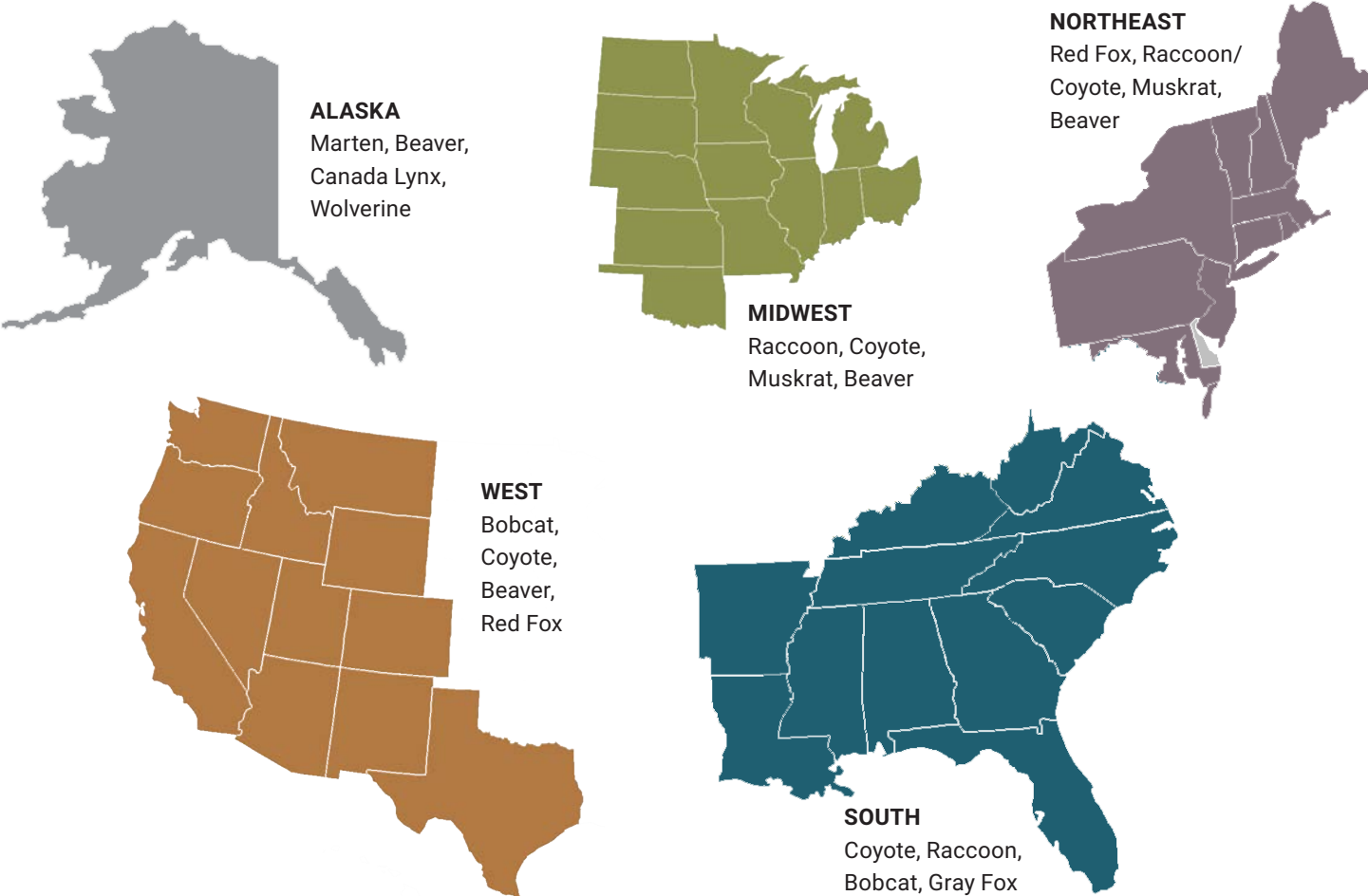


# PRIMARY TARGET SPECIES

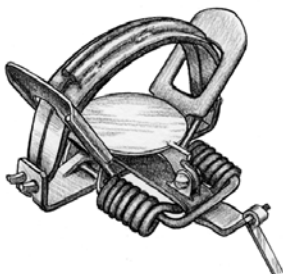
Nationally, when asked to name the top four species most important to their trapping, trappers most often selected:



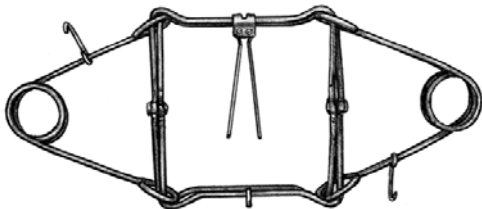
Regionally, the four most important species were:



# MOST COMMONLY USED TRAP TYPES (NATIONALLY)



**86%**  
of trappers use  
FOOTHOLD traps




**60%**  
of trappers use  
BODYGRIP traps


TRAP ILLUSTRATIONS BY JOE GOODMAN

## REGIONAL TRAP PREFERENCES FOR MOST COMMON SPECIES


### MIDWEST REGION: MOST COMMONLY USED TRAP TYPES

	SPECIES	NO. 1 TRAP	NO. 2 TRAP	NO. 3 TRAP	NO. 4 TRAP
	RACCOON (at left)	Dog proof*	1 coil-spring	220 bodygrip	Cage
	COYOTE	2 coil-spring	Snare or cable restraint	3 coil-spring	1.75 and MB-550
	MUSKRAT	110 bodygrip	Colony and 1 coil-spring	1 longspring	1 stop-loss or guard trap
	BEAVER	330 bodygrip	Snare or cable restraint	4 coil-spring	MB-750


### SOUTH REGION: MOST COMMONLY USED TRAP TYPES

	SPECIES	NO. 1 TRAP	NO. 2 TRAP	NO. 3 TRAP	NO. 4 TRAP
	COYOTE (at left)	2 coil-spring	3 coil-spring	MB-550	Snare or cable restraint
	RACCOON	Dog proof*	1.5 coil-spring	Cage	2 coil-spring
	BOBCAT	2 coil-spring	3 coil-spring	MB-550	1.75 coil-spring
	GRAY FOX	2 coil-spring	1.5 coil-spring	1.75 coil-spring	3 coil-spring


### WEST REGION: MOST COMMONLY USED TRAP TYPES

	SPECIES	NO. 1 TRAP	NO. 2 TRAP	NO. 3 TRAP	NO. 4 TRAP
	BOBCAT (at left)	3 coil-spring	2 coil-spring	Cage	3 longspring
	COYOTE	3 coil-spring	2 coil-spring	Snare/ Cable restraint	4 coil-spring
	BEAVER	330 bodygrip	3 coil-spring	4 coil-spring	Snare or cable restraint
	RED FOX	2 coil-spring	Snare or cable restraint	3 coil-spring	1.75 coil-spring

### NORTHEAST REGION: MOST COMMONLY USED TRAP TYPES

	SPECIES	NO. 1 TRAP	NO. 2 TRAP	NO. 3 TRAP	NO. 4 TRAP
	RED FOX (at left)	1.75 coil-spring	1.5 coil-spring	2 coil-spring	Snare or cable restraint
	RACCOON/ COYOTE	Dog proof*/ 2 coil-spring	1.5 coil-spring / 1.75 coil-spring	Cage / MB-550	220 bodygrip and 2 coil-spring / 3 coil-spring
	MUSKRAT	110 bodygrip	1 longspring	1.5 coil-spring	1 coil-spring
	BEAVER	330 bodygrip	MB750 and 3 coil-spring	4 coil-spring	n/a

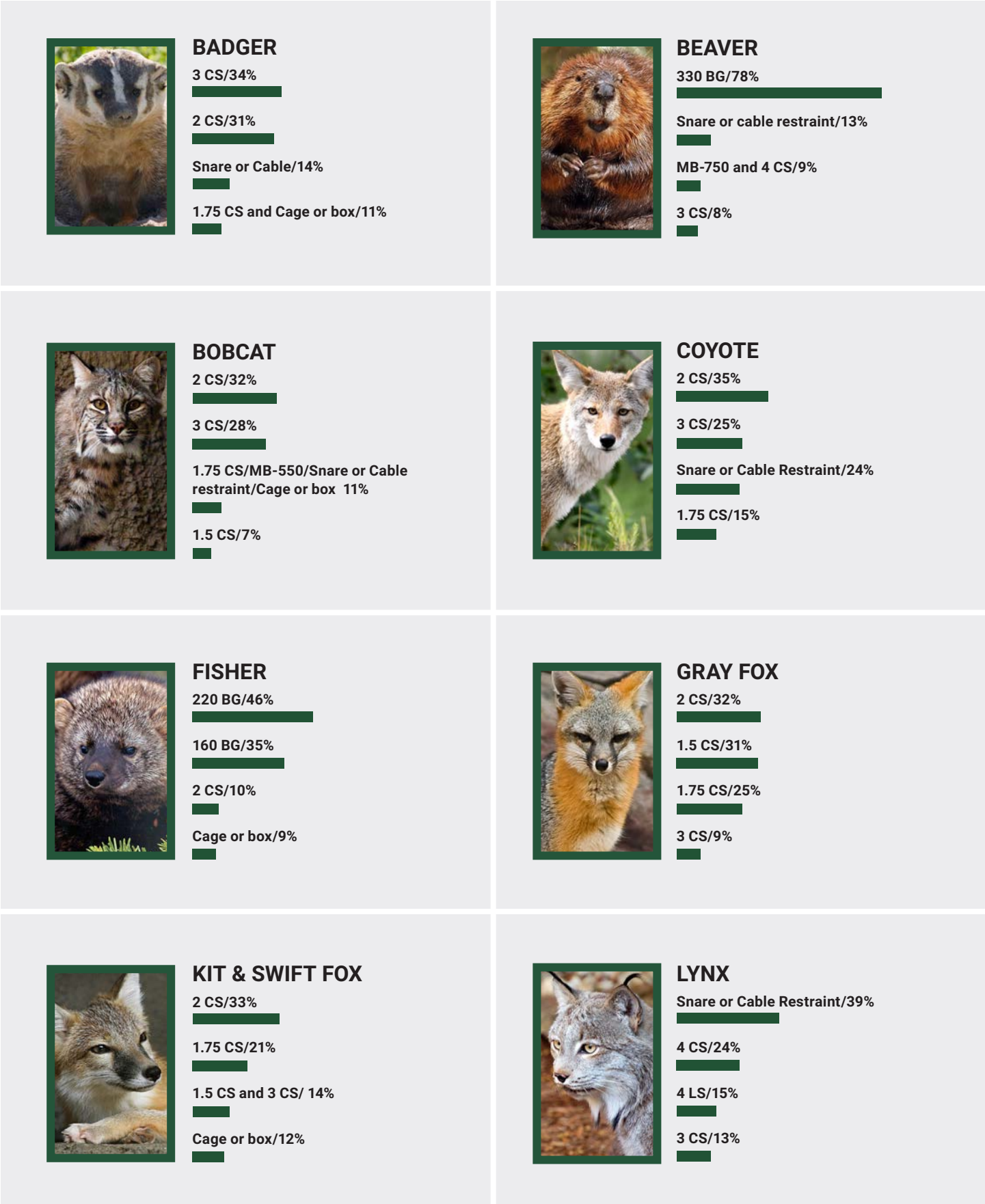
### ALASKA REGION: MOST COMMONLY USED TRAP TYPES

	SPECIES	NO. 1 TRAP	NO. 2 TRAP	NO. 3 TRAP	NO. 4 TRAP
	MARTEN (at left)	No. 1 longspring/120 bodygrip	110 bodygrip	220 bodygrip/No. 1 coil-spring/ No. 1½ longspring	n/a
	BEAVER	330 bodygrip	Cable device	No. 4 longspring	220 bodygrip/No. 4 coil-spring
	CANADA LYNX	Cable Device	No. 4 coil-spring	No. 4 longspring	No. 3 coil-spring
	WOLVERINE	330 bodygrip	Cable device	MB 750/No. 4 coil-spring	n/a

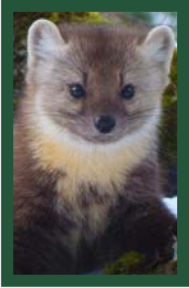
\*also known as foot enclosing traps, foot-encapsulating traps or encapsulated-foothold traps

TOP 4 MOST COMMONLY USED TRAPS AND % OF USE NATIONALLY BY SPECIES

CS= COIL-SPRING TRAP    BG= BODYGRIP TRAP    LS= LONGSPRING TRAP

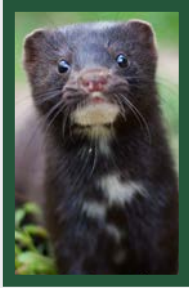






MARTEN

- 120 BG/33%
- 110 BG/25%
- 1 LS/15%
- 220 BG/8%



MINK

- 110 BG/55%
- 1.5 CS/37%
- 120 BG and 1 CS/ 13%
- 1 LS/9%



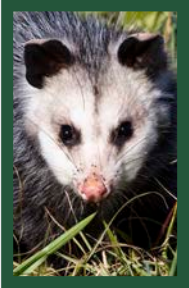
MUSKRAT

- 110 BG/69%
- 1.5 CS/18%
- 1 LS/17%
- Colony/15%



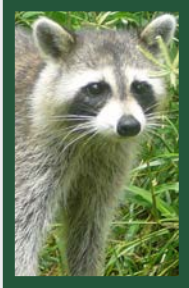
NUTRIA

- 11 LS/21%
- 1.5 CS/15%
- 2 CS/13%
- 220 and 330 BG, 1 CS and 2 LS 8%



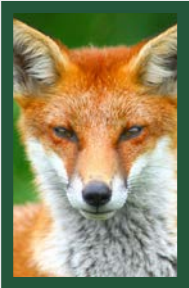
OPOSSUM

- Cage or box trap/45%
- Dog proof/26%
- 1.5 CS/17%
- 2 CS/13%



RACCOON

- Dog proof/54%
- 1.5 CS/32%
- Cage or box/16%
- 220 BG/15%



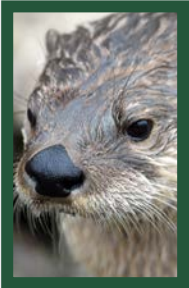
RED FOX

- 2 CS/34%
- 1.5 CS/32%
- 1.75/25%
- Snare or Cable Restraint/17%

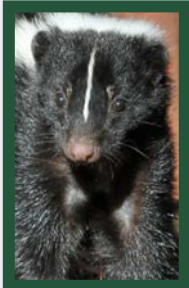
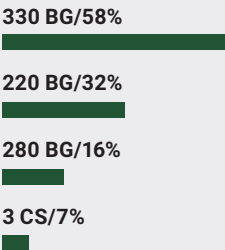


RINGTAIL (WEST ONLY)

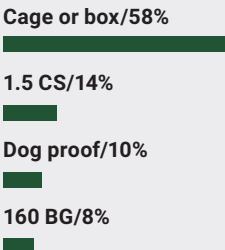
- 1.75 CS/27%
- Cage or box/21%
- 1.5 CS/18%
- 2 CS and 3 CS/12%



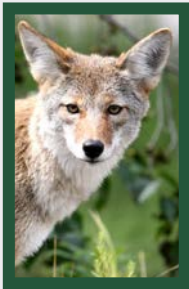
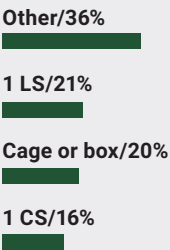
**RIVER OTTER**



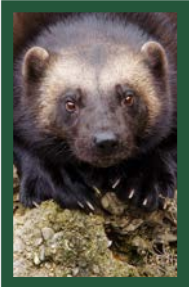
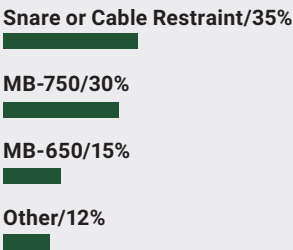
**SKUNK**



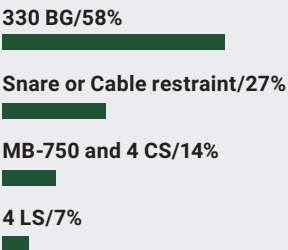
**WEASEL**



**WOLF**



**WOLVERINE**



NOTE: Arctic Fox sample size was too small for accurate estimate. Photos from Wikimedia Commons, AFWA





## DEMOGRAPHICS

**98%**

of trappers are male. This corresponds to previous years: 99% of trappers were male in the 2004 study.

**47.7**

The mean age of trappers. There are few trappers in the < 24 years age group; 90% of all trappers are over 24 years old.

**\$40,000  
to \$59,999**

The average household income (pre-tax) of respondents most often falls in this range (18% gave a response in this range).

## TRAPPING INCOME

**21%**

Trappers who responded that their trapping has been a **very** or **somewhat important** source of income over the past 3 years.



**TRAPPERS MOST OFTEN SAID THEY SELL FURS** using a local fur dealer (48%), at a Canadian auction (17%), or at an in-state auction (13%); note that 23% have not sold furs. Local fur traders were the most commonly used means of selling furs in every region.