

Trapper Harvest Reports



Trapper logs/ harvest reports have been around a long time in Maine, but volunteer surveys have typically had low response rates (less than 5% of licensed trappers typically sent in annual harvest reports). Beginning in the fall of 2019, Trapper Harvest Reports became mandatory to improve the management of all furbearer species. In 2020, the rule was revised so that Harvest Reports are required for all trappers 16 years old and older, which accounts for ~95% of the trapping license holders.

Harvest Reports are important for collecting information on the amount of effort it takes to catch each species. Catch per unit effort (or catch rate) can be a useful index to monitor populations. In the absence of trapping effort, it is difficult to interpret fur harvest trends. When fur harvest decreases, is it because the population is decreasing or is it because trapper effort is decreasing? The number of trapping licenses have been somewhat stable over the last 2 decades, but the number of trappers setting traps is changing. Documenting the number of active trappers, total catch, and success rates is valuable for understanding the harvest of all furbearers in the state.

We recognize that everyone's effort differs. However, documenting the total traps set and how many captures are made in a given area over time can give biologists a benchmark for trapping effort. Here are some examples of how we use the data from the Harvest Reports:

- Percent of trappers that did and did not trap furbearers
- Percent of trappers that only trapped for Bear
- Percent of trappers that only trapped nuisance wildlife as an Animal Damage Control Agent
- Species targeted and species caught
- WMD's trapped and the distribution of species - particularly valuable for species expanding their range like opossum and gray fox
- Catch per 100 trapnights for each species
- Number of trapnights trappers spent pursuing marten, fisher, or canids in the Lynx WMDs
- Interesting observations on disease, such as prevalence of mange
- Documenting variables that affect annual effort, like weather or health
- Evaluating changes in regulations

How Do I Complete a Harvest Report?

There are separate reports for the Fall (October-December) and Spring (January-April) trapping seasons- they are both required to be submitted each year, even if you did not trap, by January 31st and May 31st. Trappers have several options to complete their annual reports.

- Fall and Spring Reports are mailed to all trappers each fall
- Reports can be completed online (preferred method) or emailed, mailed, faxed, or phoned to Shevenell Webb (see instructions below)

Trapper Harvest Reports



Instructions

1. MOSES ID #: find this number on your license.
2. Date: this is the date you completed the report.
3. Trapping Activity: Check the appropriate line whether you DID NOT trap for furbearers, whether you ONLY trapped for bear, whether you ONLY trapped nuisance wildlife as part of an Animal Damage Control Agent, or whether you did ALL your trapping with a partner and partner tagged all fur.
4. If you DID NOT check off one of the above options, then you need to enter trapping activity for each furbearer you targeted and/or caught.
5. Town or WMD- For management purposes, we summarize trapping activity by Wildlife Management District. But you have the option of entering your trapping activity by Town if that's easier. A map of towns and WMDs can be found on the trapping website (see Related Links).
6. In each Town/WMD, you need to enter:
 - a. # Traps Set: The average number of traps you had set for the primary species you targeted. If a trapper is constantly pulling and setting traps, there is never a constant number of traps set. One option is to determine the minimum and maximum number of traps set over the time period and take the average.

A target animal is defined as abundant in the area, likely to be caught in the trap set, and considered a species you'd like to catch. This can be 1 species or multiple species. For example, if someone sets a 220 trap in a stream, the primary targets may be beaver, otter, muskrat and mink. If someone sets a foothold trap in central Maine, the primary targets may be coyote, bobcat, red fox, and gray fox. If someone sets a fisher trap in northern Maine, the primary targets may be fisher and marten. It is okay to enter the same trapping effort for multiple species. Trapping effort is calculated for each species and never combined across species. Also, if you track actual trapnights for your own record keeping, please report trapnights instead of #Traps Set and Days and make a note on the report.
 - b. # Nights: this is the number of nights that traps were set. For example, if traps were out for about 2 weeks, enter 14 nights.
 - c. # Caught: this is the number of each species that was caught and taken. If you caught and released any animals, make a note as this does not get entered as animals that were harvested.
7. Comments/ Observations: Feel free to leave comments about the health of the animals taken, weather conditions, factors that affected your ability to trap, interesting observations, or improvements for the Harvest Report.

Give me a call and we can walk through your report if you have questions. If you are a Lifetime trapper and no longer plan to trap, please contact me.

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