



STATE OF MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF
INLAND FISHERIES & WILDLIFE
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AUGUSTA, MAINE
04333-0041

JOHN ELIAS BALDACCI
GOVERNOR

ROLAND D. MARTIN
COMMISSIONER

September 30, 2009

Dear Trapper:

Another trapping season is fast approaching, and I want to call your attention to an error in the *State of Maine Hunting and Trapping 2009-2011 Laws & Rules* book. The trapping regulations for "killer-type (body-gripping) traps" in WMDs 1-11 found on page 45 in the book **are incorrect**. The Laws & Rules book omits several regulations that were implemented in December, 2008. The correct rule is provided below.

Trappers in WMDs 1 through 11 are now required to set conibears (killing-type traps) either

- 1) completely under water or
- 2) at least 4 feet above the ground or snow level and 4 feet away from any bank.

For all killer-type traps in Wildlife Management Districts 1 - 11 that are set on land, the pole or tree that the trap is affixed to must be:

- 1) no greater than 4 inches wide at 4 feet above the ground
- 2) at an angle of 45° or greater to the ground the entire distance from the ground to the trap.
- 3) The area within 4 feet of the trap in all directions must be
 - free of objects greater than 4 inches wide and
 - free of slanted trees or poles between the ground and the height of the trap.
- 4) If using a pole, the pole must be a natural section of tree which has not been planed or sawed to create a flat surface.

The purpose of this rule is to ensure there are no objects that make it easier for a lynx to access the trap. Some exceptions are made for blind sets and sets under overhanging banks. Please see p. 45 (Item 18.d.2) of the *Hunting and Trapping 2009-2011 Laws and Rules* book for details.



Once again, the Department will be distributing the Trapper Information Booklet over the Internet, rather than mailing copies to every trapper. The Trapper Information Booklet, also known as the Beaver Mailing, contains information on beaver seasons, beaver trapping closures, regulatory changes, and other trapping related matters. The Internet is a cost-effective tool for delivering information to trappers, and allows MDIFW to use its resources more efficiently to conserve wildlife. We are asking trappers that have access to the Internet, either at their local library or at home, to obtain their copy of the Trapper Information Booklet from the Department's webpage at [http://www.maine.gov/ifw/hunting_trapping/trapping/index.htm]. The link to the trapper information booklet appears at the top of the "Trapping in Maine" page. If you do not have access to the Internet, or would otherwise have trouble obtaining a copy on-line, please telephone the Wildlife Division at 287-5252 to request a printed copy of the Trapper Information Booklet; a copy will be mailed to you.

As most of you are aware, the Department is currently involved in another lawsuit concerning the incidental trapping of lynx. The judge has not yet made a decision in the case, although one is expected shortly. Since the judge's decision may affect the current trapping season, please pay attention to the Department website, and your mail for any updates. I am asking trappers to be diligent and follow Department recommendations on how to reduce the incidental catch of lynx. Tips on avoiding lynx incidental captures are on the same web page as the Trapper Information Booklet and can be viewed by clicking on "How to Avoid Incidental Take of Lynx". Remember, **you must report any lynx caught incidentally, whether dead or alive**, to a game warden or biologist of the Department as soon as possible and prior to removing the animal from the trap, unless a Department official cannot be reached in time to prevent injury to the lynx. Any lynx released under this provision must also be reported to the Department within 24 hours from the time it was discovered.

To protect Maine's trapping tradition, and shield the Department and trappers from additional lawsuits, the Department formally applied to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for an Incidental Take Permit in 2008. This application outlines the Department's obligations to minimize and mitigate for the incidental trapping of lynx. The Service has formally accepted the application and is currently preparing the document for the Federal Registry and public comment.

The 2009-10 beaver seasons will run from October 18 through April 30 in WMDs 1, 2, and 4; from November 1 through April 30 in WMDs 3, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, and 11; from November 1 through April 15 for WMDs 18, 19, and 28; and December 1 through March 31 for WMDs 7, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, and 29. The general trapping season begins November 1 and ends December 31. The early muskrat season starts Sunday, October 25 and lasts until Saturday, October 31. During this period muskrats can only be trapped in WMDs 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 9, 10, and 11. The special fox and coyote trapping season runs from Sunday, October 18 through Saturday, October 31 and is open statewide. There is no required setback distance from an active beaver dam in WMDs 1, 2, 4, 8, 9, and 10.

Remember, all skins must be tagged within 10 days of the end of the season for that species and all bobcats taken by hunting must be tagged within 72 hours. If you have difficulty getting fur tagged, call the nearest regional office between 8:00 AM and 5:00 PM, Monday through Friday to make arrangements. Telephone numbers for regional offices, other Departmental offices, and Advisory Council members are on page 2 of the 2009-2011 regulations booklet. Remember that only Department personnel, not tagging stations, can tag otter and bobcat.

If you have questions regarding any of these regulations or the furbearer program in general, please feel free to contact your Regional Wildlife Biologist, or John DePue our Furbearer Biologist at our Bangor Office (207-941-4473). I wish you a good trapping year.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Roland D. Martin". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent horizontal stroke at the end.

Roland D. Martin
Commissioner