



88 Beech Street, Essex Junction, VT 05452
(802) 878-6888 voice • kathy@vtvets.org
www.vtvets.org

VVMA Position Statement on Trapping

Approved by the VVMA Executive Board on January 31, 2017

The VVMA recognizes that trapping is a traditional activity in Vermont. We believe that trapping should be as humane as possible, minimizing pain and suffering of the target species, and minimizing the capture of non-target species.

We encourage the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department to vigorously pursue its philosophy of ensuring that "furbearing animals are taken as humanely and expeditiously as possible" and we expect it to strenuously enforce its trapping regulations, including those banning toothed foothold traps and snares; timely checking of traps; trapping season dates, and trap identification.

We believe that trapper education and licensing should be mandatory, and that information concerning trapping seasons and policies should be widely disseminated by the Fish and Wildlife Department each year to the public, and in particular, to pet owners so that they may take steps to prevent their pets being accidentally trapped. We believe that the accidental trapping of endangered species should be reported to the Fish and Wildlife Department, and we encourage voluntary reporting of accidental pet entrapment.

The VVMA supports continued research into ensuring that the trapping of furbearing animals is carried out in the most humane way possible. We also expect that any proposed changes to the current trapping regulations be fully researched taking into consideration target species biology, welfare and population dynamics, as well as potential increased risk to endangered and other non-target species.

We support the phasing out of the conventional, unmodified steel jawed leghold trap which is still in use here in Vermont, and the adoption, in its place, of the more modern and humane traps with modifications that have been designed to improve the welfare of the trapped animals. These modifications include laminating, padding and/or offsetting the jaws, adding extra coil spring, using pan-stops and reinforcing the base plate. These modifications are described in detail in the current "Best Management Practices for Trappers in the United States," and are continuously being recommended to Vermont trappers by the department.