



# FURBEARER TRAPPING REGULATIONS

Effective from April 1, 2025 to March 31, 2026, both dates inclusive

## TRAPPER EDUCATION REQUIREMENT

If you are buying a Washington State Trapping License for the first time you must pass the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) exam in safe, humane, and proper trapping techniques. For information on trapper education, contact the Hunter Education section of the WDFW Olympia headquarters office at (360) 902-8111 or see [wdfw.wa.gov/hunting/requirements/education](http://wdfw.wa.gov/hunting/requirements/education).

## ANNUAL TRAPPING LICENSE

A trapping license year begins on April 1 and ends on March 31 of the next year. Fees below include transaction and dealer fees.

Resident Trapping License .....	\$41.60
Youth Trapping License .....	\$18.50
Non-Resident Trapping License .....	\$200.00
Fur Dealer's License .....	\$200.00

Trapping and fur dealer's licenses are available online at [fishhunt.dfw.wa.gov](http://fishhunt.dfw.wa.gov) and at all WDFW license dealers. Trapping and fur dealer's licenses may also be purchased through the Commercial Licensing program at the WDFW Olympia headquarters office (in person or by mail) for an additional application fee.

## STATEWIDE TRAPPING SEASONS

A trapping license authorizes the lethal harvest of furbearing animals for their hides, pelts, or other resources during the trapping season. Furbearers may not be taken from the wild and held alive for sale or personal use without a special permit pursuant to WAC 220-450-030. Any wildlife trapped for which the season is not open shall be released unharmed. Any wildlife that cannot be released unharmed must be left in the trap, and a WDFW representative must be notified immediately. Lawfully trapped wild animals must be lethally dispatched or immediately released. A firearm may be used to dispatch trapped animals where firearm use is allowed. For more information on lethal dispatch, see [wdfw.wa.gov/species-habitats/living/nuisance-wildlife/trapping](http://wdfw.wa.gov/species-habitats/living/nuisance-wildlife/trapping) and the Trapper Education manual at [wdfw.wa.gov/hunting/requirements/education/trapping](http://wdfw.wa.gov/hunting/requirements/education/trapping).

FURBEARER SPECIES	SEASON DATES	RESTRICTIONS
Badger, Beaver, Bobcat, Mink, Muskrat, Raccoon, Red Fox, River Otter and Weasel	Nov. 1 - Mar. 31 during the current license year	
Marten	Nov. 1 - Mar. 31 during the current license year	CLOSED in Clallam, Jefferson, Mason, and Grays Harbor counties
Red Fox	Nov. 1 - Mar. 31 during the current license year	CLOSED within the exterior boundaries of the Mount Baker-Snoqualmie, Okanogan, Wenatchee, and Gifford Pinchot National Forests

## Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife

### Director

Kelly Susewind

### Wildlife Program

Mick Cope, Wildlife Program Director

**Olympia Office:** (360) 902-2515

### Visitors:

Natural Resources Building  
1111 Washington St. SE  
Olympia, WA

**Mailing Address:** PO Box 43141  
Olympia, WA 98504-3141

**Email:** [WildThing@dfw.wa.gov](mailto:WildThing@dfw.wa.gov)

### Regional Offices:

#### Region 1

(509) 892-1001  
2315 North Discovery Place  
Spokane Valley, WA 99216-1566

#### Region 2

(509) 754-4624  
1550 Alder Street NW  
Ephrata, WA 98823-9699

#### Region 3

(509) 575-2740  
1701 S 24th Ave.  
Yakima, WA 98902-5720

#### Region 4

(425) 775-1311  
16018 Mill Creek Blvd.  
Mill Creek, WA 98012-1541

#### Region 5

(360) 696-6211  
5525 S 11<sup>th</sup> Street  
Ridgefield, WA 98642

#### Region 6

(360) 249-4628  
48 Devonshire Road  
Montesano, WA 98563

### Fish and Wildlife Commission

(360) 902-2267  
[wdfw.wa.gov/about/commission](http://wdfw.wa.gov/about/commission)

### Website

[wdfw.wa.gov](http://wdfw.wa.gov)

## TRAP CHECK REQUIREMENTS

- Restraining traps (any non-killing set) must be visually checked (via binoculars, trail camera, spotting scope, or in person) each calendar day and captured animals must be removed within 24 hours of capture.
- Kill traps must be checked and animals removed within 72 hours.

## IT IS UNLAWFUL TO TRAP FOR WILD ANIMALS:

- With body-gripping traps which include, but are not limited to, foot-hold traps, snares, and conibear-type traps. Specified body-gripping traps identified by WDFW may be used with a special trapping permit to abate human-wildlife conflict under WAC 220-417-040.
- Using game birds, game fish, or game animals for bait, except nonedible parts of game birds, game fish, or game animals may be used as bait.
- Within thirty feet of any exposed meat bait or nonedible game parts which are visible to flying raptors.

## IDENTIFICATION OF TRAPS AND DISCLOSURE OF IDENTITIES

Trappers shall attach to the chain of their traps or devices a legible metal tag with either their WDFW identification number (trapper ID or WILD ID) or the name and address of the trapper in English letters not less than one-eighth inch in height. Failure to identify traps is a misdemeanor punishable under RCW 77.15.190. When a property owner, lessee, or tenant presents a trap identification tag to WDFW and requests the identification of the trapper, WDFW shall provide the requestor with the name and address of the trapper. After disclosing the trapper's name, WDFW will also release the requesting individual's name and address to the trapper. It is unlawful to take a wild animal from another person's trap without permission, or to spring, pull up, damage, possess or destroy the trap; however, it is not unlawful for a person to remove a trap placed on property owned, leased, or rented by the person. See RCW 77.32.545.

## PERMISSION TO TRAP ON PRIVATE LAND

A state trapping license allows the holder to trap furbearing animals throughout the state; however, a trapper may not place traps on private property without permission of the owner, lessee, or tenant where the land is improved and apparently used, or where the land is fenced or enclosed in a manner designed to exclude intruders or to indicate a property boundary line, or where notice is given by posting in a conspicuous manner.

## CLOSED AREAS

Most public lands are open to trapping, but some areas may be closed. Closed areas include, but are not limited to, state and national parks, most federal wildlife refuges, and state game reserves. Trappers should check with land managers prior to trapping. Legal descriptions of state game reserves are found in the game bird hunting regulations at [wdfw.wa.gov/hunting/regulations](http://wdfw.wa.gov/hunting/regulations) and Chapter 220-411 of the Washington Administrative Code.

## TRAPPER REPORT OF CATCH

All licensed trappers must report their trapping activity (regardless of success or whether they trapped or not) by April 20. Annual reports must be made using the department's designated Trapper's Report of Catch form or WILD licensing system, found online at [fishhunt.dfw.wa.gov](http://fishhunt.dfw.wa.gov). It is the responsibility of the licensed trapper to ensure their report is complete, with all trapping activity and harvest reported. Any trapper not reporting by April 20 will be in noncompliance of reporting requirements. False reports will be considered the same as noncompliance. Failure to report trapping activity is an infraction, punishable under RCW 77.15.160. Licensed trappers that are also certified Wildlife Control Operators (WCO) must submit their WCO activity separately, and can contact [SpecialTrapping@dfw.wa.gov](mailto:SpecialTrapping@dfw.wa.gov) for more information.

## SEALING REQUIREMENTS FOR BOBCAT AND RIVER OTTER

It is unlawful to possess or export from the state of Washington bobcat or river otter pelts taken in Washington without a WDFW identification seal attached. All bobcat and river otter pelts, on or off the carcass, must be presented to an authorized Department employee or authorized individual under permit with the Department for sealing by April 20. Pelts must be presented in a way that the hide can be sealed. No frozen hides or carcasses will be accepted. Pelts must be fully thawed prior to sealing appointment if previously frozen.

Whomever submits a bobcat or river otter pelt for mandatory sealing must have collected the following appropriate and accurate information from the harvester that is required for sealing: the harvester's name and WILD ID, date of kill, location of kill, sex of the harvested animal, and harvest method.

Whomever brings a bobcat in for sealing must also provide a cleaned and dried complete lower jaw (both sides) for aging before a pelt can be sealed. Bobcats being sent to taxidermists or sold to fur buyers may be sealed prior to jaw submission so long as the individual signs a statement that it is being taken to a WDFW licensed taxidermist or fur buyer and that they will submit the jaw to the department by the April 20 deadline.

Before bringing in the lower jaw, remove as much flesh as possible and allow it to dry in the open air in a safe place, in a cardboard box or paper bag, or in a plastic bag with salt or borax to prevent decay. **It is imperative to label the pelt and jaw so it is clear which pelt belongs to which jaw.** More information on bobcat pelt sealing and jaw collection, including a video demonstration of jaw removal, can be found online at <https://wdfw.wa.gov/species-habitats/species/lynx-rufus>.

Contact a regional office to schedule an appointment for pelt sealing and jaw collection ([wdfw.wa.gov/about/regional-offices](http://wdfw.wa.gov/about/regional-offices)) prior to bringing in a bobcat or river otter.

## INCIDENTAL TAKE OF CANADA LYNX, FISHER, AND WOLVERINE

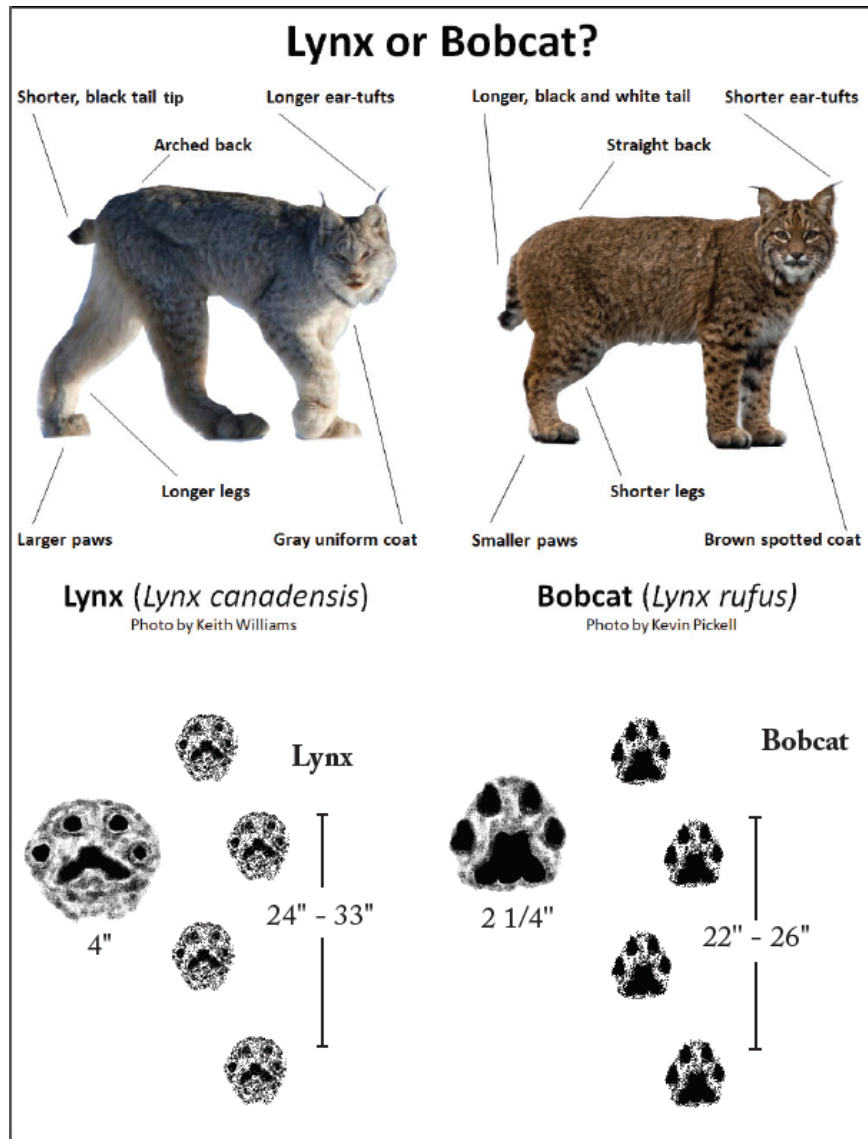
Canada lynx, fisher, and wolverine are protected in Washington. Accidentally trapped Canada lynx, fisher, or wolverine that are

uninjured must be released immediately and the incident must be reported to WDFW ([WildThing@dfw.wa.gov](mailto:WildThing@dfw.wa.gov) or 360-902-2515) within 24 hours. The report must include the circumstances surrounding the incident, observed physical and ambulatory condition of the animal, and final disposition of the animal. Any Canada lynx, fisher, or wolverine that cannot be released unharmed must be left in the trap, and a WDFW representative must be notified immediately.

### INCIDENTAL TAKE OF FOX

The Cascade red fox is a state-endangered subspecies of fox in Washington. Fox trapping is closed in certain areas to protect this subspecies. Any uninjured fox that is accidentally trapped in areas closed to fox trapping must be released immediately and the incident must be reported to WDFW ([WildThing@dfw.wa.gov](mailto:WildThing@dfw.wa.gov) or 360-902-2515) within 24 hours. Any fox that cannot be released unharmed must be left in the trap, and a WDFW representative must be notified immediately.

*This pamphlet is a summary of the trapping seasons and regulations (Chapters 220-400, 220-417, 220-440 and 220-450 of the Washington Administrative Code) adopted by the Washington Fish and Wildlife Commission. This pamphlet does not contain nor is it intended to contain all department regulations. Caution: Emergency regulation changes may occur while seasons described in this pamphlet are in effect and will supersede information contained herein. Area news media will be informed of changes as they occur.*



## Identification of Fisher and Marten in Washington

Fishers are protected under both federal and state law and may not be trapped or killed.

Be sure of identification if you are trapping marten or mink.

### Pelage Colors

Fisher — dark brown with lighter shading on head, back of the neck and back.

Marten — light brown to brown (cinnamon, russet), with creamy brown/ beige face and occasionally chest with darker brown legs, feet and end of tail.

### Size

Fishers are bigger, darker and have noticeably longer and fuller tails than marten. Fishers tails average 14-15 inches in length and Martens tails average 6.5-7.5 inches in length.

### Ear Shape

Fishers — rounded “teddy-bear” shaped ears

Martens — more pointed ears

### Elevation

Fishers and martens overlap in elevation. Therefore, elevation should not be used as an indicator of species presence.

#### FISHER



Photo by Paul Bannick

#### MARTEN



WDFW Staff

### Trapping Information

Use cubby boxes, with a closed front and 2.5 inch entrance hole, to avoid catching fishers.

## Wolverine Identification



Washington Department of  
**FISH & WILDLIFE**

**Wolverines are protected under state and federal law and cannot be trapped or killed.**



Photo by Sabrina Logeais

In Washington, wolverines average 18 to 33 pounds and use very large activity areas (i.e., 77 to 770 square miles). Wolverines occupy alpine and subalpine-forest habitats and occur in the remote mountainous areas of the Cascades and in northeastern Washington. They typically avoid humans and developed areas.

Be sure of identification if trapping other species in wolverine occupied areas. Avoid setting traps where wolverine tracks are observed. Leaning poles for marten traps should be less than 4 inches in diameter and set at a 45-degree (or greater) angle with trap and bait placed at least 4 feet above ground (or snow) level to avoid wolverine.



Photo by from The Wolverine Foundation

Other species commonly mistaken for wolverines include: badger, bear, fisher, marmot, and porcupine. Wolverines can be distinguished by their light colored “mask” across the forehead and around the eyes, and a distinctive blond stripe along their sides.

Front and hind tracks have 5 toes and are 3.5-7 inches long by 3-5 inches wide