

N 378

Attachment 2
3/7/14

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I ask for your attention to the details I am about to share, particularly to the number of times I mention ethics.

53% of Idahoans fish. 35% of Idahoans hunt. 0.14% of Idahoans trap – that's 2339 people in the entire state.

Hunting, fishing, and trapping generates \$1.4 billion dollars per year for Idaho's economy. This is the second most popular outdoor recreation behind camping.

Hunter education is an ever expanding program with 13,500 HE graduates (a 14% increase from last year alone) and 3,900 youth in the passport program that haven't yet taken hunter ed. This program has been eviscerated and neglected for years. Instructor led hunter ed was 12 -18 hours plus a final exam and a 2 hour field day. Instructor led bow hunter ed was also 12-18 hours plus a final exam and a field day. Trapper ed was 16 hours with the largest amount of material, by far. Then a few years ago, it all changed. Some severely misinformed folks decided that folks with firearms weren't worth the education they were receiving.

Now the instructor led hunter ed class is a minimum of 10 hours, 2 of which is field exercise (the live fire portion was eliminated but that's different issue). Online hunter ed is only a final exam and 2 hour field exercise. The instructor led combination hunter and bow hunter class is 12 hours, 2 of which is the field exercise. Instructor led bow hunter classes are 8 hours with a final and 2 hour field exercise. Bow hunter classes online no longer require a field exercise (but that's a different issue). Trapper ed, as a non-mandatory class became 4 hours – now proposed as a 6 hour mandatory class – including the field exercise - with no mention of a final exam.

6 hours to teach 14 types of water sets, 17 types of land sets; signs, tracks, and habitats of 23 different species; parts, uses and limitations of dozens of traps; hundreds of baits, scents, and lures, AND put that newly found knowledge to use in a field exercise. This class has gone from 16 hours and 18 chapters of material to 4 hours and 9 chapters of cartoons.

How can you expect to protect Idaho's \$1.4 billion dollar economy with half the information in 1/3 of the time? The Idaho Trappers Association has stepped up to express their disapproval of this proposal as expressed in a letter from the ITA

President Pat Carney. Two states (Oregon and Minnesota) have already come forward and said that they will NOT accept this program in their state. They will not recognize this class to be sufficient in meeting their requirements for trapper education.

The single most important part of this class is ethics. People in this state and all over the world devote hours upon hours every week of their entire lives studying ethics and morals. Yet they have accomplished nothing in self-control and use of those ethics as evidenced in the daily news. Tens of thousands of hours in a lifetime to accomplish what trapper education instructors are expected to accomplish in six stinking hours.

An individual came here 6 months ago as the ONLY certified trapper education instructor in Southwest Idaho. He held a trapper education class in October and IDFG put out a press release announcing the class. 18 people registered; 5 of those 18 didn't show up; 2 failed for not attending the field day, so only 11 of the original 18 passed the class. Of those 11 students, 7 of them were certified as new trapper ed instructors. Of those 7, only 1 is holding his own classes because the rest of them do not feel comfortable teaching what they have only had 8 hours of experience in learning about. They were not trappers before they took the class and it's extremely likely none of them ever will.

Hunter Ed instructors have very little incentive to do what they do and they have even worse retention. There are 1053 individuals certified to teach hunter education; only 443 for bow hunter education, and a whopping 50 in this whole STATE to teach trapper education. IDFG has tried to propose license and tag incentives specifically for those dedicated individuals, but that's another issue.

We have a lot to gain by allowing trapping. We have much more to lose if we behave irresponsibly and unethically, especially if that is what is portrayed to the media. We can't afford NOT to do this right the first time and every time. Establishing and maintaining an education program that specifically details ethics, as well as legal methods and tools, will build credibility with the public and increase the efficiency and effectiveness of trappers.

Wolf trapper education is designed to accomplish the following:

1. Teach trapper ethics and responsibility when trapping wolves.
2. Reduce the frequency of non-target catches
3. Teach the legal equipment, methods, and regulations
4. Increase trapper's knowledge of trapping with humane and ethical standards.
5. Improve trapper success and efficiency.

The second year of trapping in Idaho, somebody on a snow machine found a wolf in a trap and shot it three times. The picture of that trapped wolf in bloody snow circled the globe and brought criticism and condemnation to trapping and Idaho (but wolves are another issue). We cannot risk Idaho's \$1.4 billion dollar hunting economy or the future of trapping and our wildlife. Making the most controversial form of wildlife management be limited to HALF the mandatory education time is a sophomoric mistake we cannot afford to make.

The same tenants of the federally mandated wolf trapping class apply to the standard furbearer trapping class.

1. Teach trapper ethics and responsibility when trapping.
2. Reduce the frequency of non-target catches – including lynx (but that's another issue)
3. Teach the legal equipment, methods, and regulations
4. Increase trapper's knowledge of trapping with humane and ethical standards.

Improve trapper success and efficiency.

This is not a class about "how to be a redneck." This is not "Mountain Man 101." This class is thousands of years of evolution, mixed with hundreds of years of history and decades of science put sideways through modern legal rhetoric and politics.

We have a lot to gain by allowing trapping. We have much more to lose if we behave irresponsibly and unethically, especially if that is what is portrayed to the media. We can't afford NOT to do this right the first time and every time. Establishing and maintaining an education program that specifically details ethics, as well as legal methods and tools, will build credibility with the public and increase the efficiency and effectiveness of trappers.

In case you missed it the last dozen times I've mentioned it, ethics is pretty important and overarching part of Hunter Education in general, not just for wolves, not just for trapping. If ethics were truly considered in the creation of this proposal, there would have been input from those 50 individuals certified to teach trapper education in the state and yet there was not – but that's a different issue. And so, members of the council, when IDFG proposes a rule change concerning hunter education, I implore you, ASK THEM if they considered the instructors. ASK THEM for their proof of representation from the organizations from which they legally and ethically must seek for input – but that's another issue.

6 hours is not enough time to educate the future outdoors men and women of this fine state on the last 15 times I've mentioned ethics in addition to the other requirements of this class. Trapping deserves more than a cursory mention in the law. Trapping demands more respect than that and certainly you can grant that. If the 2 other hunter education class can be a minimum of 10 hours, so can trapper education. It is not equitable, it is not conscionable, it is not ethical.

Trapper Education Course Syllabus

Course Objective: In a minimum of 6 hours, students will learn trapping methods and rules, non-target avoidance techniques, the ethics and responsibilities of a trapper, species identification and the use of trapping as a tool in wildlife management.

Welcome & Housekeeping

Trapping History and Use in Wildlife Management (30 minutes)

Comment [NP1]: 4 pages in the book

Wildlife Identification (30 minutes)

Concepts:

- Wildlife identification
- Fur quality remains only with proper care

Comment [NP2]: The book has 15 different species. That's 2 minutes each without even touching fur handling and care. The video on skinning a fleshing a beaver is 35 minutes by itself.

Equipment & Ethics (1 hour)

Concepts:

- Set types (foot hold, snare, body gripping)
- Trap locations
- Modifications for non-target avoidance from Best Management Practices (stops, pan tension, swivels, anchors, jaws, enclosed triggers)
- Beginning Trapper Recommendations (e.g. muskrat trapping, find a mentor, set what you can handle/check)

Comment [NP3]: 8 pages in the book PLUS the videos

Comment [NP4]: The book has 7 types of traps

Comment [NP5]: The book has 52 set locations.

Comment [NP6]: The book has 6 pages of this

Comment [NP7]: The book has 11 pages of this

Sportsman Ethics (1 hour)

Concepts

- Respect: Other trappers, sportsman, non-trappers, landowners
- Image: No carcass dumping, inappropriate social media posts/photos
- Place traps away from high use areas
- Quick humane dispatch of animal, Best Management Practices
- Minimize disturbance on surrounding wildlife
- Checking traps less than 72 hours if possible

Comment [NP8]: 3 pages on this

Comment [NP9]: Half a page on this

Comment [NP10]: There is nothing in the book about this.

Comment [NP11]: There is nothing in the book about this

Comment [NP12]: Half a page about this

Comment [NP13]: There is nothing in the book about this

Comment [NP14]: Nothing in the book about this either, this would be part of the state law section

Comment [NP15]: There are no "tags" for fur bearers, even if you have to bring in a pelt to be tagged, but that's part of the "reporting" section

Comment [NP16]: There's 1 and a half pages in the book, the rest is state law.

Comment [NP17]: Not in the book, this is part of state law.

Comment [NP18]: Train and execute how to set 1 snare, 1 land, and 2 water sets.

Comment [NP19]: Original syllabus gives 30 minutes for a final exam that hasn't been created yet.

Rules (30 minutes)

Concepts:

- Seasons and tags
- Baits/lures/scents
- Reporting (citi tags)

Field Exercise (2 hours)

Concepts

- Hands-on setting trap experience
- Culmination of lessons