

## WCTEP Instructor Orientation

### Why do we need Trapper Education?

- Trapper Ed became mandatory in 1992, and is required for all first-time trappers who haven't held a license prior to 1992 with the exception of those engaged in farming, as defined by statute
- Meant to teach all new trappers the basic knowledge and skills to be a responsible trapper. It is not to make someone a trapping expert, which takes time and experience.
- Wisconsin Cooperative Trapper Education Program is cooperative effort between the WDNR and WTA. We have an official Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that is the binding contract between the two groups to conduct Trapper Education.
- We consistently have one of the largest Trapper Ed program in the country, thanks to the dedication of the WTA and our volunteer instructors (YOU!).

### What it takes to be an Instructor?

- Complete a WCTEP course, be a WTA member in good standing and be able to pass a background check.
- The first step to becoming an Apprentice WCTEP instructor is to fill out an application and consent to a background check and send it to the DNR Coordinator.
- Once someone is an apprentice instructor, they need to assist with at least 3 classes and then fill out a WCTEP Instructor Application to send to the DNR Coordinator. This application gives consent for background checks for as long as they are an instructor.

### What it takes to stay ACTIVE an instructor?

- If you go for three years without being listed on a WCTEP class roster, you will be switched to an INACTIVE instructor. To regain ACTIVE status (and to be able to post classes) you will need to either assist with any WCTEP course or attend an instructor training program.
- If GOWILD says you are INACTIVE but you believe this is false, contact the DNR coordinator.
- Remain a current member in good standing with the WTA.

## Preparing and Setting up a Class

### *Getting your WCTEP class posted on GOWILD*

- Once you line up the date and location, post your class onto GOWILD.
- Class must be a minimum of 12 hours and this time needs to be accounted for in the schedule tab of your class posting. Class fee is and can only be \$12.
- You may allow for online registration (allows students to sign up online) or not if you would like students to contact you in order to register.
- You can set the max number of students to whatever you like. If allowing students to register online, GOWILD will only let your MAX number in.
- If you want to reserve some seats for students who you know are taking your course. GOWILD will allow you to do this. Example: If you have room for 25 students but know that your 4 cousins are taking your course you can set the max student number to 25 and set 4 seats as reserved. GOWILD will allow the remaining 21 seats to be filled with students who register online.
- If your MAX number and RESERVED number are equal, the class will NOT SHOW UP in searches because GOWILD thinks its full.
- Notify the statewide coordinators so they are aware of your class and let them know if you will need supplies, paperwork, helpers or need any help getting the class posted or advertised.

### ***Once your class is posted***

- It's a good idea to advertise your class using local avenues but you can always post class information onto the WTA Facebook page to generate interest. Coordinators can help here.
- Remember all students must have a customer ID number to be in class. No exceptions!
- Decide if you want to assign any reading before class starts. Some instructors have students' pickup manuals, but we also have the manuals available online and, on a CD, to mail if you like. Reading or doing homework before class starts is optional and up to the instructor.
- Make sure you have all the assistants, class paperwork, manuals, equipment and furs lined up for your class. The District WCTEP Coordinators keep a supply of paperwork, equipment and a fur collection for classes. Contact the DNR Coordinator for any further class needs.

### ***Teaching your class***

- WCTEP Instructors have flexibility in how they instruct. Generally, its best to try to cover all the chapters in the manual but the hands-on portions, regulations, responsibility and ethics are especially critical. Responsibility and ethics should be a central theme.
- Bring in other instructors to help. Even though many instructors can cover every aspect of trapper education, having helpers to diversify the instruction can help keep students engaged and makes the class more fun for everyone.
- Schedule breaks into the class especially for classroom days. Students will stay more engaged if given formal breaks every 3 hours or so. This also helps to encourage conversations amongst students and instructors.

### ***Cable Restraints and Body-Grips***

- Be sure to focus on cable restraints and body-grips on dryland during classes.
- Proper setting of all tools is important, but non-entanglement of cable restraints and responsible setting of dryland body-grips are especially crucial to the future of trapping.
- Try to thoroughly cover legal vs. illegal sets and ethical vs. unethical sets for these tools and have a brief discussion about considerations (other users, stray domestics) when setting.

### ***Bringing in DNR staff***

- Wardens or other DNR staff are usually available to help with classes. They know the regulations; common mistakes seen and provide the opportunity for students to ask questions and get to know their local warden or biologist. They may even be able to suggest local public land.
- If possible, time the warden's presentation right before a break. Some students may not feel comfortable asking a question in front of the whole class but will go up and ask the warden during the break.
- Wildlife biologists can generally cover BMPs, furbearer ecology and/or management portions of the class.

### **After Class**

#### ***Paperwork***

- Make sure all students have a DNR CID number and their class triplicate filled out before class starts. Students under 18 MUST have a parent sign the triplicate form to give permission for them to be there.
- Non-residents should get the "Non-Resident" triplicates which indicates that it DOES NOT count as a trapping license for Non-residents. Ask for a few of the NR triplicates just in case.
- The expiration date at the top of the triplicate is for WI residents only and is how long the triplicate will count as their trapping license. Always write in the expiration as the last day of March for the following year. Starting on January 1<sup>st</sup>, you may write in the expiration date for the following

license year. Example: Student completes a course on January 5<sup>th</sup> 2020, the instructor would write March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2021 as the expiration date so that the student gets more than a couple months to trap.

- Use DNR CID numbers to identify all instructors who helped with the class so that they get credit.
- Paying the class fees using a card online is the preferred method to finalize a class but you may also send a roster and the class triplicates along with a check or money order to the DNR coordinator. Paying with a card online will immediately certify your students!
- Even if you have already paid the course fees, send in the white copy of the triplicates (students get the yellow copy) and a roster to the DNR Coordinator. You can keep the pink copy or give it to the student.

### ***Frequently Asked Questions:***

- Students should always receive the Yellow (second) copy of the triplicate. This copy indicates that this slip functions as the student's trapping license for the first year. Students will need to carry this slip if using it as their trapping license. Send the white copy into the DNR Coordinator and the pink copy can be kept for your records, given to students or shredded.
- WCTEP certification never expires and is accepted by all known states that require trapper education.
- Students looking for classes in their area can be referred to the WTA website where we keep a running list of classes that doesn't disappear after the classes fill up or are completed. Students will still need to use GOWILD to enroll in OPEN courses.
- Lead Instructors may keep up to ½ of the class fees to cover course expenses with no need to retain or turn in any receipts. The only reason receipts would be needed is if instructors are remitting less than \$6 per student.
- Always use DNR CID numbers to identify instructors. The Instructor number is no longer used.
- Beginning in 2020, river otter will be a bag limit species. When people purchase their trapping license, they will automatically get harvest authorizations for otter to equal the bag limit. Our trapper education students will get the otter authorizations added to their GOWILD account once the class roster is finalized. This makes it even more important to turn in class paperwork ASAP. Finalizing classes by paying class fees online with a card is the preferred option and will get students their otter authorizations as quickly as possible.
- Our WCTEP Instructors are covered in classes through an Insurance policy held by the WTA.
- We can accommodate students with special needs. If you have a student who needs our materials in a different format or an interpreter, contact the DNR Coordinator to see what options exist.
- If you have built in meals, lodging or other fees associated with your class, it will need to be written into the class description. GOWILD will only accept \$12 as the class fee.
- Include as much hands-on learning as is possible. Students learn more this way. Instead of just showing them how to set a foothold, show them while they set one themselves.
- There is no Final test requirement for WCTEP courses. You may use a final test or use other methods to ensure that students are engaged and learning the material. WCTEP Instructors are the best outdoor instructors in the country so we let them INSTRUCT as they see fit.
- Mail all WCTEP paperwork including new instructor forms to the DNR Coordinator. Sending them to the general DNR address will slow down the process. Trapper education is a small program and paperwork needs to be properly addressed to get to the right spots.
- Any questions or comments are welcomed at any time. The DNR and WTA Coordinators are always happy to talk to instructors.