

# MONTANA FUR HARVESTERS

July 2022

Summer issue 2022

## Education is Key

**Classes, Clinics,  
Seminars and Video  
Available**

**President's Message**

**Mandatory Trapper Education**

**Legend of Tripod**

**Trappers of the past**

**Advanced Wolf Trapping Seminar**



## Montana Fur Harvesters

### 2022 Summer Magazine

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*Cover Photo; Reaching out to the public  
through Education..*

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#### Hunting and trapping is conservation!

Working to rebuild the local undulant herds here in Northwest Montana. So many of the local people that lived and recreated here back in the last half of last century remember how those herds prospered and lived in the mountains. Rarely seeing deer and elk in the bottom lands. Most wintering areas were not on private lands. Now the majority of them spend most of the year down there. Large herds of deer are creating potential for major disease outbreaks like blue tongue and others we see in Eastern Montana.



## Notes from the president.

# Education, important to our community.

As we go into the summer months, our attention turns to getting ourselves out in the public. Our fur booth was a big hit at the Kalispell Gun Show at the end of March. It has been so in the past and certainly was again. Sales from the inventory went really well and lots of funds were raised. Paul Antczak did a trapping demo that was well attended by young and old each day.



We had some awesome help from fellow members and spent endless hours talking to kids and adults about furs and trapping. Our booth is very popular at these public events and invited by many. Our chance to educate the public is never more fruitful and reaches the general public not just outdoors people. This event broke attendance records for both tables and public.

After our Spring Fur Shows, the Kalispell Sportsmen Show, the Kalispell Gun Show and Fur Handling Clinic we had a short break. All of these were great successful events.

Next on the **events coming** up will be Mandatory Trapper Education Classes. The required online class has been up and running since June 1<sup>st</sup>. Anyone not having three previous trapping licenses is required to take these classes. Once you have completed the 3-hour online course, you will need to attend a Mandatory Trapper Ed

Field Day class. That in-person class will be a one all day class. Look on fwp.mt.gov website under education to register. The first field day is scheduled for July 9<sup>th</sup> in Missoula. Helena is hosting the next one on July 16<sup>th</sup>. At this time, we don't have any other classes scheduled. See the article below for more info on FWP Education.

On July 23<sup>rd</sup> we will be hosting the **Advanced Wolf Trapping Seminar** partnering with FWP for the day. It will be held at the Pine Grove Fishing Pond, just north of Kalispell. See page 13 for all the info and click on link at bottom of flyer to pre-register.

Then it's off to a grueling five day show at the **Flathead County Fair**. The dates are **August 17-21**. While the covid scare was down last year in the summer, people were out more. The fair attendance was a little down from a few years ago but we still recorded over three thousand visitors to our booth last year. Best of all, we gained some awesome new members that really stepped up at the booth. I was hoping for a little down time but that hasn't happened yet. It should be a bigger event again this year. I think, barring some big catastrophe, I expect that we will between four to five thousand visitors at the booth.

Usually, our last event of the year is the **Kalispell Gun Show** at the Majestic Arena on **September 9-11<sup>th</sup>**. This three day-event should draw big crowds again. It is usually a good venue for raising funds.

Let me know if you will be able to help out on any of these days. It's a lot of work but can be fun and you never know what you will learn from the visitors.

## Mandatory trapper education course available online soon

People looking to get into trapping will have a new, and required, education course available online June 1 from Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks.

The course is being developed by the Trapper Education Committee, which has members from the Montana Trappers Association and Montana Fur Harvesters, as well as staff from FWP.

During the 2021 legislative session, Senate Bill 60 passed, which requires trapper education for all trappers who have not been a licensed trapper for at least three previous seasons. The education program



will include online course work and a mandatory field day where new trappers can learn from experienced trappers about trapping ethics, humane techniques, avoidance of non-target species, fur management, and safety. This course also includes the mandatory wolf trapper certification for anyone looking to also trap wolves.

“Our trapper education course is really the culmination of years of collaboration to implement mandatory trapper education in Montana,” said FWP Director Hank Worsech. “Trapping has a long-standing history in Montana and is not only part of our outdoor culture, but a critical tool in wildlife management. Alongside our partners from Montana trapping organizations, we’re going to ensure that we’re teaching ethical and safe trapping, that avoids conflicts and maintains the tradition of trapping in Montana.”

Trapping licenses went on sale in April. Trappers who have been licensed trappers for three previous seasons will be asked to list that experience when purchasing a license. All other trappers age 12 and older will need to take the trapper education course before purchasing a license. Wolf trappers who have taken the wolf trapper education course, but haven’t been a licensed trapper for three years, will need to complete the trapper education course to be able to trap wolves in 2022 and beyond.

The online course will be available by June 1. Two field days are already scheduled for July. More field days will be scheduled and advertised in the coming weeks.

For people who are interested in going through the course curriculum in hard-copy format, please call or email Wayne Cooperider, 406-444-9947 or [wacooperider@mt.gov](mailto:wacooperider@mt.gov).

For more information, on upcoming field days, please go to <https://fwp.mt.gov/hunt/education/trapping>.



## SPRING TRAPPERS’ MEETINGS

Hello to all, this is a recap of our annual Spring FWP/Trapper meetings. Region One and Two Offices hosted them. **In Missoula on April 16<sup>th</sup>** we had a group of around 15 trappers attend. FWP members, Liz Bradley, our new Wildlife Manager, Tyler Parks, biologist, Tom Chianelli, Esra wardens were also there. Another biologist spoke about plans to study and relocate beavers.

Bobcats addressed first. Our quota had ran around 180 from 2000 through 2008. Number of days to reach quota averaged 71.2. In 2009 harvest dropped to near 100 and we voted to drop quota to 100, that lasted until 2011. Quota filled in 31.5 days. In 2011 the quota was voted to raise back to 180 and harvest was a little over for the next 4 years and filled in 27.5 days. The quota was raised again in 2016 to 200. The quota was met for the next 3 years, it took 61 days to fill. In 2019 the harvest dropped to 150 and it ran 64 days, at that time it was voted to drop quota back to 150. That quota has remained to date. However, harvest has dropped significantly to 135 in 2020 and 119 in 2021. Quota was not met, concerns were raised. It was felt that the cats were still there, but numbers of trappers were less, access was hampered by deep snows, low fur prices and high gas prices. The Bobcat IPM Abundance report shows a stable population prediction. Due to this information, it was decided to keep the quota at 150.

The river otters seem to be doing really well here in region two. At the time of the meeting, 28 otter had been harvested in region two but the season had not closed yet. The quota has been closely watched since 2004. At that time the quota was set at 13. Quota was met or exceeded until 2008. At that time it was voted to raise the quota to 20. For the next 5 years harvests were reached only in 2013. In



THE OUTSIDE IS IN US ALL.

2014 quota was voted to raise to 25, harvests met quota 4 of the 7 years. Last year, 2020 we voted to raise quota to 40. As you can see all of these ups and downs have been voted on and approved by trappers present.

Pine martens are species that harvest reports show a decline in region two. Since a steady raise in harvest since 1998 that peaked in 2013, a steady decline has followed. This trend is also noted in region one. However, if you look you will see it follows the fur prices. Again, the number of trappers targeting marten has dropped also. Harvest rates from 1994 to 2006 averaged near what they are today. Our last two years do show a slight decline in harvests. It was decided that a quota or more restrictions were not warranted. The question of mandatory tagging was voted on and approved by those present to gather data.

Fishers were covered and not much concern was expressed. It was discussed that we need to keep the quota the same and provide DNA samples and mandatory tagging.

Wolves are always a hot topic. Only three or four trappers present actually trapped wolves. Our harvest fell far short of what the anti's were misleading the public with. The actual statewide harvest was 276 for the state, 148 by hunters and 128 by trappers, 20 were snared. That was the lowest in four years. Those present noted that the deep snows in early January had an effect as well as the late starting date due the grizzly bear delay. No one thought that the wolf population was any less. Even with the past years harvests the population continues to expand and grow.

Regulations were covered by the game wardens. Some points were covered that helped to explain how they need to enforce them. Setbacks from roads was not thought to be able to be changed anytime soon. Region Two has too much opposition and suggested not to open that subject.

In **Region One Meeting on May 1<sup>st</sup>** in Kalispell we had 21 trappers and I think 8 FWP employees. Close to half were wolf trappers and we had a robust discussion on the wolves.

Bobcat data was presented as perhaps a declining population. I don't have the printed charts to reference back to so in general here is my take. Harvest rates dropped and seasons ran to the end without filling quotas, similar too region two. Since region two had dropped its quota by 50 from 200, last year, they retained theirs. Jessie requested a drop in our quota here. Her preference was to drop from 275 to 200 but that was voted down. The majority did vote to adopt a quota of 225 for next season. This data will be addressed each year and adjusted as need.

Some of the members were concerned that giving up any quota would be lost. That has not been the case, we have voted almost yearly on raising or lowering quotas. Our local FWP has been very willing to adjust quotas both ways, based on our voting. This is why you must attend these meetings, the majority of votes has always determined the outcome.

The pine marten harvests are still dropping and are of concern. I believe that as in region two, the number of trappers targeting, the lack of access due to heavy snows and no mandatory tagging are the main causes of the drop. We as a group did vote to support mandatory tagging at the end of the season along with region two. Since then, I found out that that won't take effect until next year at the earliest. So, for now nothing has changed for the marten.

Our trappers here in Western Montana have always been very conservative managing our wildlife with regulations and work closely with FWP.

Fishers are still being studied here in region one. Data so far is very dismal. Only a couple have been documented in the last two years. We have been able to keep the quota at zero in hope of a recovery. No changes are requested but additional studies are being added hopefully this year.

However, wolves are another issue. Discussions got hot and foul language came out. Passions are high and we seem to not be able to get anywhere. I apologize for the outburst; we need to reserve that for the anti's to use in Commission Meetings. They have done themselves more harm by using that tactic.

For reasons our local sportsmen and women have not been able to understand, we cannot agree with our biologists. Most of us have lived and spent most of our lives here in Northwest Montana. Collectively we have for generations hunted, trapped, and spent time in the outdoors. We have seen our ungulates rebound in the late 1950s to only decline since the mid-nineties. For those who did not live or work here during those times, seem to not grasp what it is capable of. We hear that all suitable habitat is currently occupied, we adamantly disagree.

We have seen game populations retreat to the lowlands and private land. Pressure from the predators have forced them from the remote public lands. I fear that most of the elk and deer are building into unsustainable numbers in these areas that will lead to disease that we have seen over the years in Eastern Montana. Shoulder seasons and special permits don't always work on private land. Our ungulates are not at objective numbers here as in other areas of Montana.

We need to keep working on this, we can't manage our landscape for just one animal because of emotions. People may not know that wolves have impacted all ungulates, moose, elk, deer, caribou, bighorn sheep as well as mountain goats.

We did request data on grizzly bears, but biologists didn't make the meeting. Of big concern is the ever-expanding grizzly bear occupied habitat that has covered almost all of Western Montana, from Canada all the way to south of Yellowstone Park. Relocating problem bears to predetermined release sites outside of the Grizzly Bear Protection Zone has taken over all except a small area along the Idaho boarder south of Interstate 90. With this expansion come additional regulations to protect the bears. We need to support our governors in Montana and Idaho, in the quest to get the grizzly bear delisted.

Another issue that has been at odds with the trapping community is the use of roadkill for bait. After much discussion over the years, I think that we have found a way to utilize this resource. When the subject came up at the region one meeting, the description on the regulation came up on a power point slide. It stated that the "edible portions of meat cannot be used for bait". Leaving any tainted meat or

parts would be exempt. However, the skull and spines cannot be left in the field and must be disposed of in a landfill due to CWD. You would be required to call in for a salvage permit within 24 hours. We need to study this further and hope to be able to confirm it.

It was brought up by a trapper about extending the season for beavers. During the discussion, it was brought up that it would affect otter as well. As for the change in beaver season dates, the biologist wrote that I am not supporting a change in dates and will not put forward a proposal to lengthen the season. Beavers often have kits in the den in March, so even a April 15 trapping date can result in kits left without anyway to survive. This is conservation issue for beavers, and there is no need to extend this season further into the season when kits are vulnerable.

To those who made a first attendance, thanks again for attending, some really good comments came out. Over the years I have learned that discussing concerns locally rarely ends in immediate results. Our local employees are not the ones that control what happens, most all changes have to come from Helena. Experience shows that working with local FWP has led to relationships that do benefit our community.

We want to thank all the FWP employees that gave their time on a Saturday and Sunday to host these meetings and look forward to working with them in the future.

Montana Fur  
Harvesters  
President

**Tom Fieber**



Feral  
Academy  
Member,  
Dillyn Doble  
out on a  
trapline.





# 2021 Tripod

## My History with a Legend

By Scott Ramsay

With fires shutting down a large portion of the North Idaho forests, there was a lot of anticipation during the summer as to what to expect in the fall when the trapping season opened.

Cameras were laid out in May and June in traditional areas we are trapping. When the forests closed, the only positive thing to focus on was the hopes that there would be wolves in the areas we were scouting. An extremely hot summer slowly went by and it wasn't till late August that the forest was opened back up.

As we covered our trail camera line, it was soon obvious that the wolves hadn't filled in the void of the 10-20 wolves that were taken out the previous season. There was one pair that was on camera. They were covering plenty of ground and we had them at quite a few different locations. There was a mature male wolf that we had history with and a young female that he had paired up with.

The male, whom we'd named Tripod, was easily identified. He was missing his left, rear foot. He was a very large, alpha type wolf, that had most likely, been injured in a fight with another wolf, been shot, or possibly had a freak accident that caused him to lose the rear leg. Wolves live in a brutal environment with all kinds of hazards they are constantly exposed to. There are many other scenarios one could imagine, but these made the most sense. I was aware of and had chased this guy for 3 years in a row, and believe I had him on cameras for at least 5 years.



In the 2015-2016 winter, he was the alpha male in a pack of 11 wolves. His large body and

head stood out compared to the other wolves he ran with. It was obvious on many pictures that the others kept their distance from him and cowered to him when they were close.



The first year we noticed the missing foot, he was with the other wolves on occasion. We had plenty of pictures of him alone, also. In the second year, without a foot, he was running with a black female and two younger juveniles. This year, year 3, he was with a young female with no pups. They were always together, and the female was always in the lead. In my pre-set dirt-holes, she was always the first to go right in and investigate the holes. He would lag behind by about 30 seconds and would never go directly to the hole. He would keep his distance and investigate from behind brush and never approach any closer than 6-10 feet. His body was showing a lack of bulk and his left hip was atrophied so much, that the left hip bone was showing against the hide. He seemed to move around easily, but his obvious limp was a give-away.

After 3 years without a rear foot, it's a wonder he had survived two extreme winters. My guess was that he relied on his mates to help with taking down game. I knew he was older by his actions and his face; besides I'd had him on camera for years.

The young female he ran with seemed like a brazen, aggressive wolf that didn't seem to be afraid of anything. He was definitely using her to keep him alive. I

knew this guy would be a tough opponent. I'd tried to catch him

Trail Cam photo of Tripod

for many years without success. This season, in the first week, I put sets out that I thought might grab his interest. I mainly use pee posts, or sets with scat involved early in the fall. An old male of his liking is always interested in what other critters

are in their immediate area and have a hard time not putting their nose on it. In week two of the season, he showed up at a flat set that I deposited a mixture of, wolf, fox and coyote scat, and squirted some wolf urine on it. Wolves want to roll in anything smelly, and this is what he did. The deposit was on a small pile of dirt about the size of a football. The KO Extreme Wolf trap, on a disposable Wolf Fang stake, was set below the mound about 16 inches in front of it. Tripod went to the back side of the set, avoiding the depression where the trap was set. On video, he sniffed the attractant, and lowered his front side to the mound and rolled his shoulder through the pile of scat. As he rolled, he carried himself to the front side where the trap was set and went right over the trap. The trap went off and he curiously stood up. The trap had grabbed some of his longer back hairs and only stuck for a second. He wasn't spooked at all. He looked at the trap, let out a tentative, quiet "woof, woof", and walked away from the set. His mate followed him, and, as she went towards the trap to investigate, he let out a small woof and she just followed in his steps, staying away from the trap.

Cameras are such a huge part of my education of these critters. My mind went into overdrive, knowing how close I was to catching this guy. I decided I'd block off the backside and use a different urine smell on the scat. Coyote was my choice. I didn't know if he'd return or not, or even ever approach this set again, but I was willing to try.

My blocking on the backside would be put at the set so anything approaching the scent pile, would have to take the path directly over the trap. 16 days later, I picked the male up on a camera that was at the head of the drainage where this same set was at. I decided to stay out until the

next day, being I was only a couple hours behind him. That evening, I'd learned that another trapper that was about a mile from this set, had picked up a female wolf near his camp. Since my belief was that there weren't any other wolves in the area besides this pair, my assumption was that he'd caught the female.

I was a bit spoiled in this area the previous years, having this area to myself. Knowing another trapper had moved in and knowing they hadn't put the work in that I had, boiled my blood. On top of that, knowing there were only a pair in the entire area got to me mentally. My thoughts were that he'd have a shot at Tripod, as this male wolf would most likely go back and check the spot his mate was caught. At that moment, I contemplated pulling all my traps and moving on, but a friend convinced me not to give into someone jumping your line. I decided to stick it out until I personally caught the big male or heard that the other guy had connected on him.

That next morning, I jumped on my quad and headed to my line. I hit 4 areas that held about 25 traps. As I approached the set the male had rolled in, my overall attitude was pretty negative. At the last bend, rounding the corner, I saw movement at the trap site. At the set, there was a big grey colored wolf with a perfect front foot catch. He had a look on his face as though he didn't even care his life was about to end. As I got closer, I saw it was missing the left rear foot. It was Tripod. He was a very large wolf with a huge head. He was in poor condition and without a mate to help him hunt, I doubt he'd have made it another winter. Nature is cruel and wildlife management is necessary.

This was a special 5-year experience that helped me grow as a wolf trapper. There were many occasions, while chasing this elite alpha that I didn't believe in myself enough that I could catch him. He was indisputably in control of the situation, and I always believed he was a step ahead of what I was doing. Many thoughts have gone through my head about how I finally connected. Was I really in control here? I have my own theory in this situation. Maybe my imagination wanders too much, but my thoughts that Tripod was in control of this situation, will always hold true in my own mind. Tight chains.

**Scott Ramsay** 🐺







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## Greetings from Idaho! By Rusty Kramer

June was a busy month for the ITA. Missy and I drove straight through the night to get to the NTA western in Forsyth Montana to set up an ITA table. I did a wolf trapping demo that was very well attended. It was a little intimidating to see the legendary Slim Pederson sitting in the front row of the demo! Conventions are always a great place to see great old friends and catch up.

The next weekend was our 2<sup>nd</sup> ever United Trappers of Idaho convention in Idaho Falls. United Trappers is the brainchild of the late great Delbert Jepson. It is all of the trapping organizations and F4WM all coming together to create a great convention. Attendance was down with gas and fur prices gloomy, but I was impressed with the turnout, nonetheless. I saw some old friends and we got in front of a lot of trappers in the eastern side of the

state. I want to thank all the volunteers but especially the Murdock's. They really put a lot of legwork in, to get this convention off the ground. I'm not really sure if Mike's mom was conned into helping or volunteered but we could not have done this convention without Kellie Murdock's help!

I want to continue to move our conventions and banquets to different parts of the state to get in front of trappers all over the state. I want all trappers in the entire state to feel represented! To do this, I need local volunteers to step up and help us. The board and our core volunteers will help during the actual event, but we defiantly need help leading up to the events. The 2023 convention will be in St. Maries and the banquet will be in McCall. Daets to be released soon but we are trying to closely mirror the same time frame as previous years. Bernie Nelson will be our point of contact on the convention (509-671-1946) and Missy (soon to be) Kramer will the contact for the banquet (775-401-0717).

I will be flying back to Lima Ohio at the end of the month to serve on the NTA Executive Board under my General Organizer title. I am also going to have an Idaho Trappers Association booth selling memberships. I see several hundred ITA memberships that are expired so if you're reading this in one of the national magazines but not receiving your Idaho Trapper magazine something is wrong. We want you back as a member! Please contact Natalie at [idahotrappersmembership@gmail.com](mailto:idahotrappersmembership@gmail.com) with questions on membership status, email changes, and address changes. Renewing is easy with a card on our Idaho Trappers Association website or mailing a check to our PO Box. Your membership is critical with keeping our membership running! Please encourage your friends to sign up as a member and protect trapping and it's also the only place you can get our awesome Idaho Trapper magazine. We still have a few of both the 2021 wolf and 2022 cross fox sustaining membership patches left. Sustaining membership is a way for you to give a "little extra" to the ITA. Membership is \$25 and you get a limited-edition patch and a listing in the magazine. You can sign up online or mailing a check to our PO box.

Thank you

**Rusty Kramer**

Idaho Trappers Association President

## TO ENTERPRISING YOUNG MEN:

**Submitted by: Scott Smith**

It was the spring of 1822, When William Ashley placed an ad in the St. Louis newspaper. The ad read:

TO ENTERPRISING YOUNG MEN, the subscriber wishes to engage ONE HUNDRED MEN to ascend to the sources of the Missouri River, for a time period from one, two, or three years. Contact Major Andrew Henry. Within a few short days, they had the one hundred men.



Some of the men's names we still remember, Daniel T. Potts, James P. Beckwourth, Jim Bridger, Hiram Scott, and of course Jedediah Smith of the Lewis and Clark expedition-1804 to 1806. These were just a few of the adventuresome lot.

The men were put into brigades. The brigades were formed by two British fur trading companies. The North West Fur Company and the Hudson Bay Company. The Hudson Bay company was one of the first fur trading companies in Northern Canada around 1760. After years of bitter rivalry, the two companies joined forces under one name: Hudson Bay Company. The two companies operated west of the continental divide, in what is now western Montana. A side note time frame, on {July 4, 1776 Independence Day} we declared our Independence from Great Britain after a long and bloody Revolutionary war. Montana gained its statehood on November 8, 1889.

Brigades or teams were formed and sent from the fur post to a location to trap. These brigades would sweep an area quickly. The brigades consisted of Indian, Métis and none Indian trappers. Métis people were mixed blood descendants of early European fur trapper, traders that married Native woman. These Métis people were from the Great Lakes region to the Rocky Mountains. The French called them Métis, meaning mixed. The Métis were of great importance as they spoke both Native and English language, and knew how to survive on the land. The Métis people started forming around the mid 1700's. They were believed to be as important to trapping as the beaver itself.

By the late 1700's there was a group of trappers known as The Free Trappers. The free trappers were not associated with any fur trading company. The Free Trappers spread out across the landscape traveling the old Indian trails. They built log cabins and stock-piled fur and supplies. They stayed in some areas for a year or more. It is said that up to 80% of the men were married to Native women. There were several hundred free trappers in the rocky mountain region by the 1830's. The free trappers just wanted to trap the land, not take it.

The Native women were the perfect partner for the mountain man. The Native women had many skills necessary for this life style. They knew how to skin, and brain tan the pelts and hides. They also knew how to live off the land, and survive the different seasons. They also knew how to make medicine for whatever you were suffering from. These were tougher than nails type of people.

Free trappers were not much different than any other trapper of the period. They were young, fit, restless,



adventuresome, and mostly loners. They had little use for society. Like today's trappers they were not often found in large crowds or gatherings.

By this time there were three rival fur companies established in North America. A German immigrant by the name of John Jacob Astor owned the Pacific Fur Company. The North West Company, run by Scottish and worked by the Frenchmen, and the Hudson Bay Company, represented by the British interest. In 1807 Manuel Lisa built the first fur trading post in what is now Montana along the Bighorn and the Yellowstone River area, east of the divide.

Manual Lisa's own company was named the Missouri Fur Co. Around the same time {1807-1809} David Thompson a Canadian fur trader and explorer working for Hudson's Bay co. and North West Fur Co. built a trading post on Idaho's Lake Pend d'Oreille. This was the first trading post west of the divide. In November he ascended the Clark Fork River



and near today's Thompson Fall's, built the Salish House, the first trading post, west

of the divide in Montana.

David Thompson was quite the man. The British-Canadian explorer mapped what is today's northwest Montana and western Canada. Over three decades while working for Hudson's Bay and North West company, Thompson traveled an estimated 55'000 miles, Lewis & Clark, 5'000 miles. Thompson surveyed and mapped nearly 2.5 million square miles of previously uncharted land. The map made from his journals was 10 feet long by 6 feet high and covered 2.5 million square miles. The map was completed by 1814 and was amazingly accurate. The map hung in the board room of the North West Company at Fort Williams.

In northwest Montana, Thompson Falls, Thompson River, Thompson Creek and Thompson Chain of Lakes State Park are all named for him. His first trip into the wilderness was at age 16. Thompson 29 married a Métis girl 13. They had 13 children and the family traveled with him.

Around 1815 one of the first of the rendezvous was organized by explorer Jacques La Ramee. This rendezvous was organized for a group of independent free trappers. This rendezvous was held at the junction of the North Platte and Laramie rivers. The Laramie River is a tributary of the North Platte River approximately 280 miles long in the states of Colorado and Wyoming.

When Lewis & Clark and the Corps of Discovery Expedition came through Montana 1804-1806. They thought that the

upper Missouri could support 300 trappers for 100 years of beaver and water trapping. Jefferson also told them he believed they might see Mastodons. Sad to say that it only took 30 years until nearly all the beaver, otter and mink numbers dropped. By that time the big heavy felt beaver hats went out of style. The beaver top hats were replaced with a silk material and the buffalo robes were now in style.

By 1822 William Ashly had set up a system that all the trappers could meet to buy, trade and sell the wears of their labor. This was called a Rendezvous, French word for meeting in advance. The rendezvous were held in early summer and lasted only a few weeks ending by mid-summer each year. These rendezvous or gatherings only lasted from 1822 to 1840. These were much like our county fairs of today.

This large gathering was the social event of the year. The mountain man and the trappers would meet with the buyers from St. Louis, and elsewhere. They would trade, barter and sell what they had procured from the past season. At that time, they would resupply whatever they needed to get them through until the following year. Some of the items available were traps, food, rifles, shooting supplies, and of course alcohol.

They had many contests at these gatherings. Running races, shooting, dancing, jumping and singing. They had music and book tents. They offend made up games and different contest that any man could think of to occupy their time. Within a short period, the men had enough of the crowd, fun, or bruises, grabbed their supplies and disappeared into the wilderness like a ghost for another season.

The supply companies made an incredible profit, often marking items up 1000%. They suppliers took an incredible risk traveling to and from these rendezvous. After the rendezvous they loaded up the mules and wagons and headed back to the rivers and settlements for another year. Much of this fur was shipped around the world, very similar as we do today.

I guess in closing, much has stayed the same. Fur items and styles come and go. The value of the dollar, and the disease's like small pox or the China flu. The Rendezvous season is upon us. Please hang in there and take a young person or someone new to trapping along. Please support as many trapping chapters and organizations as you can afford.....Yes, that is priceless: Pay it forward as them who trapped before us. **Scott the Tail Dragger** 🐾



**WE PROMOTE AND PRESERVE FUR HARVESTING AND ITS HERITAGE IN MONTANA AS BOTH A SPORT AND AN INDUSTRY THROUGH EDUCATION AND REGULATORY ACTIVISM. WE SUPPORT FUR HARVESTING AS A SUSTAINABLE USE TOOL FOR WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT, AND FIGHT TO PROTECT AND PRESERVE WILDLIFE AND HABITAT. WE WORK WITH MT FWP TO SUPPORT THEIR MANAGEMENT GOALS.**

**Activities\*\*\*\*\***

**Active with FWP shaping regulations that shape our trapping.**

**Trapper Education**

**Booths at Family Forestry Expo**

**School Shows**

**Northwest Montana Expo**

**Newsletters**

**Local County Fairs**

**Fur Handling Clinics**

**Public events**

**✕ Montana Fur Harvesters represents Trapper, Houndsmen and Predator Hunters**

**✕ Consider becoming a member of The Montana Trappers Association and The National Trappers Association. Every dollar raised will help to fight for trappers across the nation. Go online to their websites to join.**

## **Memberships run from January 1 to December 31**

Please Complete this form and send to: MFH, PO Box 3482, Kalispell MT 59903

Please Print Clearly

Date \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Please check one ☐ New Member ☐ Renewal ☐ Pro-rate for 2020 balance.

☐ Sustaining Membership \$20.00 annual dues ☐ Junior ( under 18) \$10.00 annual dues ☐ Family Membership

\$30.00 annual dues ☐ Charter Member \$100.00 annual dues **Add a magazine to your membership at a**

**discounted price** ☐ Trapper Post Magazine \$14.00 ☐ The Trapper \$12.00 ☐ Trappers World \$13

Predator Extreme Free. Goto [www.grandviewoutdoors.com/order/subscription/option](http://www.grandviewoutdoors.com/order/subscription/option).

Note: ☐ Check here to receive your Newsletter by Email ☐ Check here to have Newsletter mailed.



**Sharing knowledge with others through clinics, seminars and online. This is a goal for the Montana Fur Harvesters.**



# Hunters, Trapper's,



# Houndsmen



FWP

**Join us for a Potluck Barbecue July 23<sup>rd</sup>**

**From 8am until?? At the Pine Grove Fishing**

**Access just north of Kalispell off Rose Crossing Rd**

**HELP US SAVE SOME ELK AND DEER,  
get up to \$500 reimbursement**

**Free!** no fee to attend, families welcome. Bring the kids fishing gear, great trout fishing in lake. Potluck dinner but we'll provide barbecued hamburgers and water for \$10.00 as requested. Save your dinner ticket for the raffle. Bring your chairs.



**Hunters, Jay Sheffield will be sharing his successes with us on calling wolves with firearms and bows.**

**Trappers, Paul Antczak from Montana and Scott Ramsay of Idaho will be doing wolf trapping demos.**

**Snaring, We will talk about proven methods on successful snaring and avoiding bi-catches.**

**FWP Game Wardens, will be on hand to cover regulations.**

**Raffle held at end of day. Buy your tickets throughout the day. Great prizes include:**

Hooped Beaver Tanned Beaver Pelt Trapping items Tee Shirts  
Game calls, For information 406-250-3386 or [tfieber@bresnan.net](mailto:tfieber@bresnan.net)

**PRE-REGISTER ONLINE OR AT THE EVENT.** Click the link below or copy and paste.

<https://register-ed.com/programs/montana/248-montana-advanced-hunter-ed-outdoor-skills>

**Learn how you can get reimbursed up to \$500 if you legally harvest a wolf with a firearm, archery or trapping. Make sure you are eligible. Reps will be talking about how it works**

**Montana Fur Harvesters** works closely with local FWP personnel.

Region One, Game warden, **Jon Obst**, is one of the first to work with trappers and is a valued asset to the trapping community. He knows trapping, regulations, how traps function, what trappers are dealing with.

Wildlife biologist, **Jessy Coltrane**, has been heading up the fisher denning box project in the Cabinet Mountains. She has been great to work with and is a hard worker herself.

Wildlife manager for region one, **Neil Anderson**, he has been another one that attends public meetings and sportsman events. He has been working to address road and trail issues as well as other issues that affect sportsman. Neil really listens to people's concerns and acts on them.

Out of Region Two office. **Tom Chianelli** is a great guy to work with on regulations.

**Liz Bradley**, our new wildlife manager that replaced long time manager, Mike Thompson. Liz has been great to work with over the years as a biologist. I look forward to working with Liz.

**Tyler Parks**, another great wolf biologist that has been the one to get answers from.

From Helena, **Wayde Cooperider** has been our FWP facilitator working with our Trapper Education Program. His part has been invaluable. These are just a few of the many local personnel that I work with and appreciate

**Thanks to each and every one of them!**

## Charter Members

\$100 or more for 2021/2022

The following members have gone the extra mile to support MFH. Without this commitment, it would be hard to publish this and host the fur shows.

**Bill Boehme**, Bill has been supporting us as a charter member for years. He is a great seminar instructor and a real member of the trapping community.

**Ken Cordoza**. As a founding member Ken is our last one. Kens support and dedication paved the way for what we are today.

**Linda Tutvedt**, Linda not only joined as a charter member but offered muskrat trapping on her property this fall. Her generosity was really appreciated by the kids and instructors as well.

**Dan Thingelstad**, Dan has donated several wolf pelts that he donated back the proceeds and helps run booths. His work on the Fisher denning Box project was above and beyond.

**Tom Gilmore**, Tom has donated more time and merchandise to trapping organizations than most. His fur handling clinics in Libby are top notch.

**Raven Van Den Bosch**, of Virginia, attended a trapping event at Marion. She is a wonderful supporter of the Trapping Community across the nation.

**Idaho Trappers Association**, We are working together to protect and promote trapping. Rusty Kramer works hard to educate the public locally and nation wide.

**These people are ones that go above and beyond to support the trapping community.**

**Good luck on your lines and stay safe. Tom Fieber**





## Our first Mandatory Trapper Education Class was just completed on July 9<sup>th</sup> in Missoula.

The class started at 8:00am and ran to 5:00pm. Our education committee started working back in March putting together the format, content and requirements needed. Thanks to Mt FWP Outdoors Skills & Safety Supervisor, Wayde Cooperider. Wayde as the facilitator, was able to shepherd us through the process and keep us on track. Awesome job Wayde.

It was a pleasure working with fellow committee members. Trappers: John Nolan, Bob Sheppard and myself. FWP personnel: Keven Heinle, Jon Obst, Tyler Parks and Jim Williams briefly. The collaboration between actual trappers and experienced FWP personnel resulted in a well-rounded product. I felt that the class went well and the students' comments at the end were positive and suggestions from them will be incorporated into future classes.



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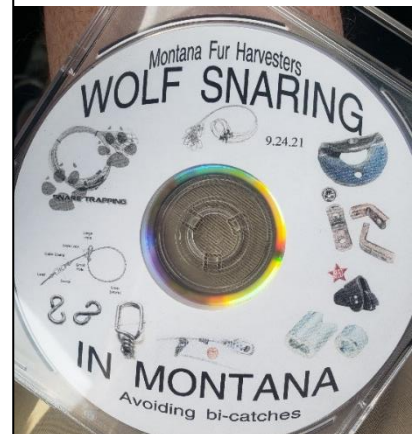
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### Snaring Wolves in Montana!

For those of you who would like to snare for wolves in the future, we still have some of the DVDs for sale. It is very important to avoid bi-catches and this shows some methods to do so.

You can order one of these from MFH. Call or Email us to order. The price is \$20 plus \$5 to ship or you can purchase one at one of our events.







Montana Fur Harvesters  
PO Box 3481  
Kalispell, MT 59903  
mtfurs@gmail.com

Blessed to be in Western Montana, it is well worth preserving. Managing wildlife is a responsibility that all users need to strive to benefit all, not just a few.



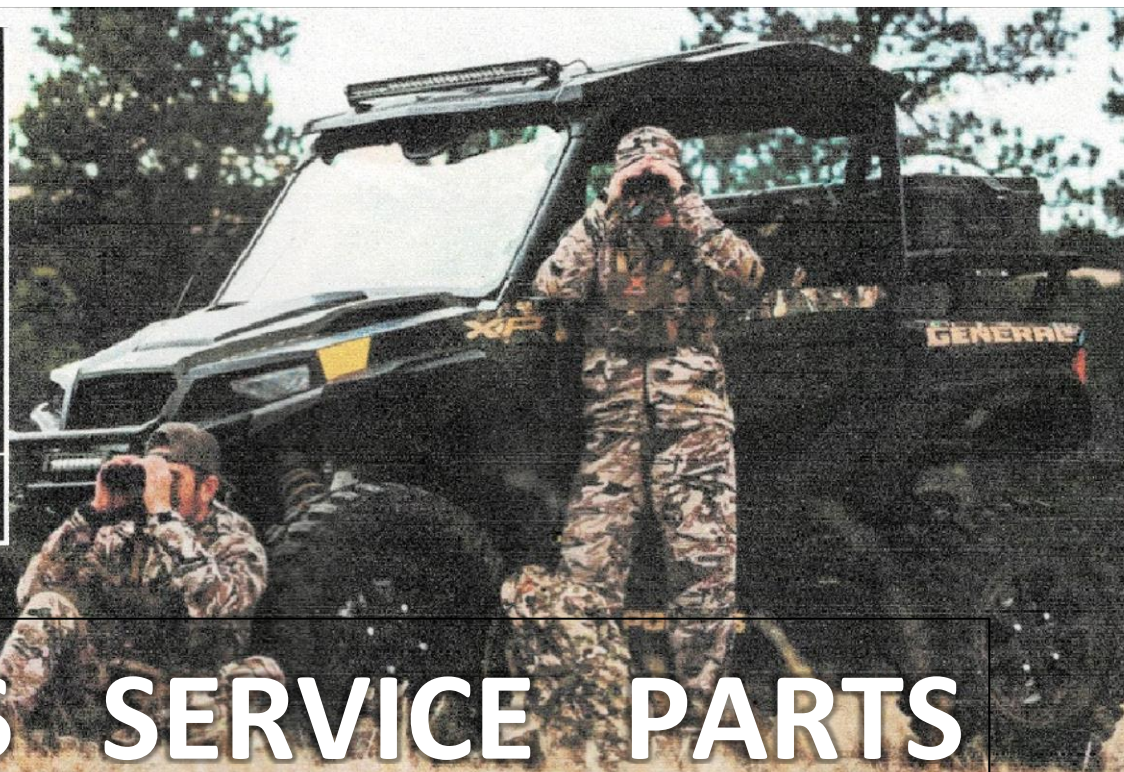
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