

Snare Regulations Update.

Dear member, as many my know we have been engaged in a dispute with the Department of Wildlife and fish (LDWF), Wildlife Division, Large Carnivore Department over the use of snares in 15 parishes. This fight has consumed so much of our time and resources in and attempt to ensure that we do not start down the rocky road of anti trapping regulations in the state. On Thursday, March 1st 2012, in the Louisiana Room at LDWF Head Quarter in Baton Rouge on Quail Dr, proposals were made by LDWF Wildlife Division, Large Carnivore Department. A large contingency from many different organizations was present in support of our case. Members from the LTAHA, NWCO, Louisiana Fur Advisory Council, Louisiana Land Owners Assoc, Louisiana Alligator Advisory Council and trappers at large were present.

The LDWF Commission listened to the proposed regulation and asked many question relevant to the cause and affect these regulations would present to the trapping industry. The commissioners were not satisfied that the Department had just cause for the proposed regulations and called for a vote to table the proposals till more data could be presented and US Game and Fish could explain why they are requesting these regulations to be implemented at this time. Before the vote was made Commissioner Steve Oats wanted clarification on the “table item”, in that LDWF could not re-submit the proposals or re-introduce them, only the commissioners could bring it back from the table after further information was presented by the Department. Commissioner Stephen Sagrea also asked if the public comment could be heard on the issue due to the fact that many of the members in the audience had signed up to comment on the issue had driven many hours from all across the state. He asked that we be allow to make public comment for the record therefore all the commissioners could hear the trappers side. Many members made comments on the issue and they all rang through with one unifying voice, “these regulations are not needed”. All the presentations were well received by the Commissioners and no one repeated another’s comments nor did anyone express anything but respect for the proceedings and were thankful to be heard.

It is the belief of the LTAHA officials that these regulations are being called for as attempt to ending snaring state wide. There are no current laws regarding the use of snares, therefore there have been no citations written to the persons who have snared black bear while engaging in legal pursuit of fur bearing animals or hogs. The proposed regulations would give the Department legal standing to “throw the book” at someone for snaring a black bear. The citations could then revert to the Endangered Species Act (ESA) for penalty and fines. The ESA penalty is very costly with up to \$10,000 in fines, restitution for the black bear and loss of hunting/trapping rights for life. This is one of the reasons we feel it so important to fight these regulations now.

Thursday April 5, the Snare regulation Will come before the Commission again.

The Wildlife Division will be presenting more data and have the US Game & Fish reps at the April 5th Commission meeting. If you missed the March meeting, please make plans to attend the April 5th meeting. The Commission will hear the information presented and make a decision to either leave the “Notice of Intent” part C tabled or bring it back for discussion and possible vote. We need as many members present to show that we are not willing to let this issue pass without a fight. I know many people are working, busy and or out of time to take off, but we need representation at this meeting as we had at the March meeting to show the Commission that we plan to fight this till the bitter end. Please come join us March 5th at LDWF Head Quarters on Quail Dr. at 9:30 am. Thank you for your support and efforts in stopping these regulations. Remember when the regulations were first proposed, they asked for the total ban on snares, limits on foot hold size and NO dry land body grip traps. The snare regulations requested are the first chip at the foundation of our sport, trade and industry.

From the President

This has been a very successful year for the LTAHA as we have reached many people through our advertisement in the LDWF hunting regulations, events and classes we have attended. The sport side of trapping is coming back stronger than ever and with current market trends people are finding that they can off set the cost of their hobby with small amounts of fur, while hunting clubs are finding benefit in allowing trappers to remove predator animals to help the deer and turkey populations. With this new interest in trapping, the association is gearing up for many new challenges in the current world of political correctness. We are also looking for new venues to offer educational material for the general public.

2011 saw us embroiled in a fight for our very existence with the proposed snare regulations. The regulations were originally asking for limits on foothold and body grip sizes along with the snare regulations and all were proposed to be implemented state wide. Through many meetings and discussions, these proposed regulations have been put on hold for now, but we are still keeping a watchful eye on their progress through the commission and possible legislative actions.

With 2011 and the first three months of 2012 consuming most of our time and resources, we did not get to achieve many of the goals we had set. So with the snares regulations on hold we will be moving forward in and attempt to gain ground. I have asked to be on the agenda for the May meeting of the fur advisory council, where I will be asking for educational material to mail out to all persons purchasing a trapping license for the past two seasons. I will be asking the council to fund this project from the monies saved in the account over the past few years. This money comes from the sale of trapping license and what better why to spend it than to put educational material in the hands of trappers across the state. We will have to include the Department of Wildlife in this, as they will have to make the mailing from their list of license sales.

The next item I will be asking the council for is advertisement to be run in local, state and national venues to expose the general public to the concept that trapping is still an industry and trade in the state. I ask you as members to please submit ideas for this ad campaign. We are looking for something in good taste which can be run in many different venues without causing an outcry from anti's around the country. I will specifically be asking that an ad promoting trapping be run in the hunting and fishing regulations. This reaches sportsmen across the state and could in fact spark interest or help trappers gain access to properties before untouchable. Through the knowledge that the industry is working together for the greater good we hope to open doors to LTAHA members.

Jimmy Gallaspy of the Louisiana Fur Advisory Council has been trying to work with the association and LDWF for a few years on the experimental season that LDWF has on the bobcat at this time. The sheer numbers of bobcat being slaughtered and left to waste in the field is overwhelming. Jimmy has a plan which will allow for a season for hunters to shoot bobcat, allowing them to take a trophy, but will stop the wholesale slaughter. With bobcat prices hitting a two decade high and expected to hold at current levels, it is a total waste to see them shot and left lay. We feel that if bobcat numbers are too high, the trappers should be allowed more access to lower them, also allowing the fur to find its way to the fur industry.

These items will keep us busy for the rest of the year if nothing else comes up. We are making plans to attend the NTA SE convention to be held in Russellville, Arkansas on April 12-15. We will have a booth set up with LTAHA items for sale and also explaining our association's current stance in the fur market. If you have time, please come join us in Russellville and help man the booth. I am proud to say that John Linzay will be presenting a coyote demo and I have been contacted and also asked to put on a fox demo along with a pelting demo. For those that don't know I flesh vertical and most people have never seen it done, so I have been asked to show this technique. We are also making plans to attend the National Convention to be held in Minnesota this year. The LTAHA is getting very active and needs your support. By support we are not talking about \$\$\$\$\$, but rather skills, letter writing, words of encouragement and leadership at events hoisted by the association. Remember this organization is operated totally by volunteers. Every dime that comes in is spent on operating cost or to support our education program. Please bare with us as every officer or BOD member has a full time job and some have two.



LTAHA 2012 annual Convention

April 21

Woodworth, La.

Come joins us on April 21st 2012 for food, fun and fellowship. We will be having trapping demonstrations from some of the best trappers in the state covering various species of animals including coyotes. We will demonstrate fur handling, have a kid's trap setting contest and kids trapping demos, silent auction, live auction and other activities. Our main attraction will be Mr. Ronnie Guy doing an alligator skinning demo at 9 am. We will have trapping supply dealers on site with all your trapping needs at prices that you can afford. Admission is free, so bring the family and enjoy the day outdoors with us.

Also, this year in the kitchen, Gail Keller and Toby Leger will be stirring up some fine eating. I heard Gail was putting a call for nutria rat and Toby might be saving possum and beaver. I am sure what ever it is, it will good!

We would like to hear from our members, we want to know what direction you want to see our education and lobbying go. Remember this association is in place to promote trapping for trappers and to aid and assist trappers and gator hunters any way possible through out the year. If you have ideas, concerns or comments, please let us know. This is your association, help it grow and ensure the future of trapping in the state.

We will be electing three new board of directors from the general membership this year and all officers are up for re-election. If you wish to take the next step and serve, please sign up and help guide the direction of the association. Understand that this association is made up of hobby trappers, NWCO's, professional trappers and out doors enthusiast. It does not matter what category you fall in, we need your in put and help. We need people who can research issues such as the proposed snare regulations or someone who can type up a response for news letter or maybe make a public appearance for the association. We need your help and support to keep this going so please take the next step and help guide the association.

Location: Woodworth La at the LDWF Education Building just off I-49. Take exit 73 from I-49 and turn right or west bound on La 3265. The LDWF Education Building/Rifle Range is approximately 1 mile from I-49 on the left.

From the Vice President

Did you know that back in 1980 that there were over 20,000 licensed trappers in the state of Louisiana and Louisiana led the nation in producing fur for some time? This of course was at the height of the fur boom and prices were sky high. Fast forward to modern times and you have about an average of 1,000 trapping license sold annually. We work a lot of festivals and get the opportunity to meet a lot of folks. It is not uncommon for 50 percent of the people that we talk to say that they didn't know people still trap. When the fur prices fell, many folks put their traps in the shed never to pull them out again. If they weren't going to be paid what they thought that their fur was worth then they just weren't going to trap. During this time, nobody was passing it along to the next generation. Often we hear the comment "my grandpa used to trap". I always respond "so why don't you"? What we are seeing today is a whole new found interest in trapping but it's a different breed of trapper from 30 years ago. What we are seeing are fathers and sons, enthusiast, hobby trappers, whatever you want to call them wanting to learn the craft and learn together. They have jobs and aren't depending on fur prices to dictate their livelihood. They want to spend time in the outdoors facing a new challenge and making memories doing it. I get several calls a month from people and organizations asking questions and wanting in on our next trapper's workshop. It is imperative that we meet the needs of these people and don't just send them out there with traps and say good luck. There are many things that a new trapper needs to learn other than making a set. Ethics is top of the list. We don't want a weekend trapper not checking traps for 3 or 4 days with farmers Browns dog in it. We want to stress safety on the line, respecting people's property. We want to teach them the laws regulating trapping and what to do with the animal once caught. The LTAHA was founded for this purpose. We are here to educate and promote trapping and fur production in the state. Typically our workshops have been 3 day weekends. With so much interest in these workshops and volunteers busy schedules, I have realized that we can reach far more people if we do an 8 hour workshop on Saturdays. This way the volunteer does not have to give up his whole weekend and we can have larger classes as we will not have to provide lodging. As soon as our convention season is over we will be aggressively seeking venues and volunteers and begin holding these courses to the public. If you are interested in attending a course or volunteering your time to help us hold a course, please feel free to contact myself or any officer. My number is 337-375-1932. Thank you and God bless,

From the Education Coordinator

Hello everyone. The convention is rapidly approaching and we are busy as bees trying to put it together so that it will be a success. Typically at the convention we have many youth attend and not much to keep them busy throughout the day. At this years convention I plan to add some extra events for our youth. As always we will be having our youth trap setting contest with a boys and girls division. This year however, trophies will be awarded to the winners for 1st, 2nd and 3rd place. Now for the kicker: only the winners of the trap set competition will move forward to the next stage which is the youth quality trap set competition. This is something we have never done but it will be a great opportunity for them to show their stuff and be awarded for it. The winner of this competition will receive a large trophy and bragging rights for one year. Second and third place will receive nothing. It's all or nothing and sure to create some excitement. I got my money on a certain red headed girl from north Louisiana. Yes, that is a challenge to all you boys. Also for the first time we will have a trapping demo for kids only and it will be educational and hands on. (also there may be some handouts but you have to be there to find out). Please attend our convention and bring your kids and your kids friends. We want to make sure that we get the word out to as many as our youth as we can and that trapping is fun, rewarding and necessary. Don't forget about our live and silent auction. If you have an item to donate then bring them and help raise funds for the association annual operating expenses. **Also, get those raffle tickets sold and the money mailed in or brought to the convention. More tickets are available if you need them. Our future success depends on it. I hope to see you there!**

Wesley Blanchard, Education Coordinator/ Vice President 337-375-1932

Market Report

NAFA's Wild Fur sale opened with a very large offering of North American Sables, which sold under strong competition from all major markets, at increased prices. Otter and Wild Mink sold exceptionally well with prices at new high levels. Raccoons had a much higher clearance than expected – 95 percent – under strong competition from China, with support from Russia. Beavers sold well with shearing types and larger sizes advancing sharply over last year.

Below are the high lights of the NAFA sale held in February.

Otter, 7,186 offered with 100% sold. Average of the total offering was \$102.29 with the top lot going for \$170.

Wild Mink, 30,223 offered with 100% sold. Average of the offering was \$23.14 with the top lot going for \$160

Raccoon, 443,362 offered with 95% sold.

Eastern North Central, 97% sold, \$14.39 average, top lot \$44.

Western Semi Heavy, 100% sold, \$19.45 average, top lot \$39.

Eastern Semi Heavy, 100% sold, \$13.15 average, top lot \$30

Section III, 100% sold, \$3.41

Beaver, 103,095 offered with 100% sold

Easter, \$42.27 average, top lot \$220

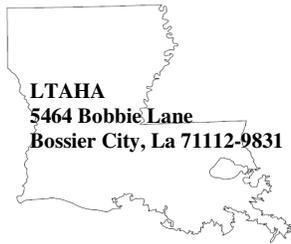
Western, \$38.22 average, top lot \$76

Section III \$13.12

The market is expected to hold on otter for the May sale with some talk of a slight slip in lesser cats. The beaver prices climbed higher than expected and the market is expected to hold. The May sale has more fur to offer, with more buyers attending the sale.

The importance of well handled fur from the time the set is made till the pelt reaches the market is very important and does ultimately predict how much your fur will bring at market, either green or finished. Clean, fluffy, dry fur bring as little more green while clean, fluffy and well formed and dry leather fur grades well at the auction house. Each trapper should educate themselves about the market and what the consumer is looking for to get the highest price possible for their time and efforts. With a little extra time you can increase your profits through a few extra steps.

When selling your fur green it is important to freeze your fur clean and dry. This can be accomplished by washing with a water hose, preferably with a spray nozzle to give ample pressure to wash away any dirt or loose material. If the fur has sand burs or is matting it is a good idea to run a fur comb or fur brush through the fur so the hair will stand straight and be fluffy. After washing you can wring a large percentage of the water out by simply holding the nose in one hand and grasping the fur with your other hand, then pull the pelt though holding tightly. This will remove volumes of water. Then you pop the fur by sticking your index finger in the mouth opening and grasping the nose. Then pop the fur like you would a whip. Doing this several times will remove even more water and make the fur fluff at the same time. You can then hang your fur in a dry, cool and fly free area over night. Make sure the pelt is not in direct sun light as this can heat the inside of the pelt up and cause spoilage. If the weather is warm, you may not be able to hang the pelts as long and may find that popping them out several times over a few hours of hanging will dry them quicker. If you plan to keep the pelts frozen for any length of time before selling them, make sure that you roll the fur up in a manner that will keep any exposed skin from the direct open air of the freezer as a de-humidifying freezer will freeze burn the pelt any where the leather is exposed to the air. Also, if you are freezing large number of pelts at once, make sure that you do not stack them too tight or pack them so air can not flow around them. Fur is an insulator and it may take days for the inter pelt to freeze if there is many pelts packed too tight, causing spoilage. These few tips can make for a better \$\$\$ fur check when you sale.



!!!!!!Legislative Alert!!!!!!

Member, many of you may know about the money grab Governor Jindal has set forth to plug holes in the budget, but did you know there is an attempt to grab trapping money? The Fur Advisory Council has been able to bank approximately \$430,000 for a rainy day fund when other funds were no longer available. These funds are derived from \$20 of each trapping license sold and are used to promote the fur industry in our state and our fur industry around the world. These funds are also used for educational material and educational programs in the state and are supposed to be protected by laws passed to keep this from happening.

Louisiana House Bill 822, for 2012 session is being entered by Democrat James R "Jim" Fannin from Dist. 13 which will compile moneys from many different programs and transfer them to one account which can then be rolled into the General Budget. Please call any Representative you know or your local district Representative and let them know that this money is not General Budget money, but rather money set aside by trappers for the promotion of our industry. Please look up house bill 822 and read it for yourself and see where they plan to take our money July 1, 2012 and use it for state medical plan coverage. This is no different than being asked to open your saving account to the state treasurer and allow him to use your saving accounts to bail out the state medical program. I am sure the medical program is in dire shape like most everything else in the country and state, but to take money we as trappers set aside to further our cause is wrong! Please, contact every representative you can and let them know that these monies were set aside by us for our use.

The LTAHA has plans to ask the Fur Advisory Council to appropriate monies from this fund for three different programs to begin this year in an attempt to promote trapping in the state. Let's face it, it does not get cold enough here to promote the sale of fur, but we can surely promote trapping a humane means to keep animal numbers in check at no taxpayer expense. We also plan to ask for these monies to be used to issue every trapper an educational material such as the Best Management Practices (BMP) to every trapper in the state.

Please pick up the phone and let your representative know that you are against this money grab. We as citizens have to live within our means and have to learn how to save our money. We should expect no less from our government. This money is not theirs to take. Think about the money BP has paid the state after the oil spill. Think about all the revenue the state has taken in from the Haynesville shale production. Where is all this money going? What programs are they trying to fund? We levied these license fees on ourselves in an attempt to promote our fur industry. Please, join in this fight and pick up the phone and call your representative today and let your voice be heard loud and clear. It is time our government stop asking for our money and live within their means.