

2016-17 NORTH DAKOTA FURBEARER HUNTING AND TRAPPING GUIDE

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Hunters and trappers should refer to the North Dakota 2016-17 Small Game Guide for license fees, sunrise and sunset times, and other information.

This guide is provided for informational purposes and is not intended as a complete listing of regulations. For specific information on regulations and laws, visit the Game and Fish Department website (for season proclamations), or for North Dakota state laws go to www.legis.nd.gov/cencode/T20-1.html.



Photo by Lara Anderson

Species*	Harvest Method	Season Opens	Season Closes
Badger, Coyote, Fox	Firearms, traps, archery equipment, pursue with dogs	Year-round	
	Cable devices	November 21, 2016	March 15, 2017
Beaver, Raccoon	Firearms, traps, archery equipment, underwater cable devices, pursue with dogs (raccoon only)	Year-round	
	Cable devices on land	November 21, 2016	March 15, 2017
	Cable devices on land within 50 ft. of water	March 16, 2017	May 10, 2017
Bobcat	Firearms, traps, archery equipment	November 5, 2016	March 15, 2017
	Cable devices, pursue with dogs	November 21, 2016	March 15, 2017
Fisher	Traps, cable devices	November 21, 2016	November 27, 2016
Mink, Muskrat	Traps	October 22, 2016	May 10, 2017
	Cable devices, firearms, archery equipment	November 21, 2016	May 10, 2017
Mountain lion	Firearms, archery equipment	September 2, 2016	March 31, 2017
	Pursue with dogs	November 21, 2016	March 31, 2017
Weasel	Traps	October 22, 2016	March 15, 2017
	Firearms, cable devices, archery equipment	November 21, 2016	March 15, 2017

*See specific information inside for each species.

ELIGIBILITY

Hunter education requirement – Hunters born after December 31, 1961 must complete a certified state or provincial hunter education course to purchase a North Dakota hunting license. **Exceptions:** Persons who hunt only on land they own or operate, youth under age 12 if they have appropriate licenses and are accompanied by a parent or guardian.

Minimum age – There is no minimum age for hunting furbearers, but anyone under age 15 afield with firearms must be under direct supervision (must be able to have unaided verbal contact) of a parent, guardian, or adult authorized by their parent or guardian.

LICENSES

Licenses are valid in either paper or electronic format. Printed licenses must be signed in ink. No person may give away, barter or sell an issued license. Licenses are nontransferable.

Except for residents under 16 years of age, a furbearer license is required to hunt or trap furbearers. Nonresidents may not take furbearers, except they may hunt fox and coyote if they possess a furbearer and nongame license. **Exceptions:** Residents of a state that allows North Dakota residents to trap within that state, may purchase a nonresident reciprocal trapping license to trap in this state. Nonresidents having this license may not take bobcats, mountain lions or fishers.

Hunters and trappers are required to purchase licenses, except any resident, or member of his or her family permanently residing with him or her, may hunt small game, trap or

use cable devices during the open season without a license upon land owned or leased by him or her, but otherwise is governed by seasons, limits and all other regulations.

Residents do not need a license to take unprotected species of wildlife (prairie dogs, rabbits, skunks, ground squirrels). Nonresidents hunting only unprotected species of wildlife need only a nongame license.

A combination license, which consists of fishing, small game, general game and habitat, and furbearer license, is available for residents.

A resident who is on leave and on active duty with the United States military may hunt small game or trap furbearers during the season without a license. Contact the Department for details.

DEFINITIONS

Body gripping trap – trap designed to allow the animal's head, neck or torso to enter the trap opening and be held by compression of the jaws when sprung (example, Conibear). See **TRAP SET RESTRICTIONS** section.

Cable device – noose used for restraining furbearers by the neck or body (example, snare). See **CABLE DEVICES RESTRICTIONS** section.

Colony trap – enclosure device designed to allow the capture of one or more furbearers in a single setting with one or more one-way entrances; cannot exceed 12 inches high, wide or in diameter by 36 inches long.

Foothold trap – steel-jawed trap used for restraining furbearers by the foot (examples, long-spring or coil-spring foothold trap).

Protective covering – trap set covering of structural material (wire mesh, wood, plastic, metal) limiting access to the trap through an opening not to exceed 8 inches high by 8 inches wide.

Sight exposed bait – any bait weighing in excess of 1 pound, composed of animal flesh, fur, hide, entrails or feathers placed in such a manner that it can be seen by any soaring raptor.

Water Set – trap or cable device which is set or staked in a manner to permit the trap, cable device or trapped animal to reach water. See **TRAP SET RESTRICTIONS** section.

GENERAL GUIDELINES

- Hunting hours are from 30 minutes before sunrise to 30 minutes after sunset. See exceptions for fox (red and gray), coyote, beaver and raccoon in species sections.
- The opening hour on the first day of all furbearer seasons is 30 minutes before sunrise. After the first day of the season, trapping or using cable devices is legal at any hour.
- Written permission must be secured from landowners or operators before placing or setting any traps or cable devices on private land, including PLOTS lands. The owner or operator may determine the length of time permission is granted.
- The season for Canada lynx, gray wolf, swift/kit fox, black bear, wolverine, American marten and river otter shall remain closed.
- Any furbearer taken for which the season is closed, or other protected species incidentally taken, must be reported within 12 hours and turned over to the Department.
- Furbearers may be taken statewide, except for bobcats and fishers. See **BOBCAT and FISHER** sections.
- It is illegal to drive off established roads or trails during the deer gun season while attempting to take furbearers with firearms, archery equipment and dogs.
- It is illegal to place traps or cable devices within 25 feet of any sight exposed bait.
- It is illegal to intentionally destroy, molest, disturb or tamper with any trap or cable device, the set, or with any furbearer restrained therein.
- No furbearer may be taken and possessed live.
- No person, while operating a snowmobile in this state, may kill, chase, flush, or harass any wild animal or wild bird, protected or unprotected.
- Aircraft may not be used to take coyote, fox or other furbearers without a special permit.

CLOSED OR RESTRICTED AREAS

Wildlife management areas so posted, refuges, sanctuaries, national parks and historic sites shall be closed to the hunting and trapping of all furbearers. Exceptions: Hunting and trapping furbearers may be permitted at times and on those areas of federally owned refuges designated by the refuge manager. A permit from the refuge manager is required for those wishing to trap on federal refuges. For additional regulations on federal refuges, contact refuge headquarters. A permit from the Department director is required to take

furbearers on those state wildlife management areas and state easement refuges posted closed to hunting.

Trapping on school trust lands is allowed, if the current surface lessee gives written permission. By giving permission, the lessee is made aware that legal traps and snares could be in the area. The state does not guarantee that school trust lands are legally accessible; in some cases, terrain and other natural obstructions may make access difficult. Access to school trust lands is strictly nonvehicular. Trails are used only for management purposes and may not be used by the public for vehicular travel. Contact the ND Department of Trust Lands at 701-328-1919, or email jsaude@nd.gov, for the name and address of the current surface lessee.

CABLE DEVICE RESTRICTIONS

- Cable devices are permitted on state wildlife management areas and federal waterfowl production areas after the close of small game seasons, starting January 9, 2017.
- A metal or plastic tag must be attached to each cable device. This tag must display the trapper's name, address and telephone number.
- Relaxing cable devices are permitted. One stop must be affixed to each cable device on land to prevent the loop from opening to a diameter greater than 12 inches.
- Cable devices cannot be placed or set in the field prior to the opening date and cannot remain in the field after the closing date of the cable device season for respective species.
- All cable devices must be affixed to an immovable object solidly attached to the ground. The use of drags is prohibited.

The North Dakota Game and Fish Department, along with the North Dakota Fur Takers Association, recommends that all traps be visually inspected and all captured animals be removed at no greater than 48-hour intervals, and that rubber gloves be worn for skinning and handling of all furbearers.

- Cable devices must be set so the bottom of the loop is no greater than 12 inches from the ground; or when the ground is snow covered, no greater than 12 inches above the bottom of an adult's footprint in the snow beneath the cable device with the full body weight on the foot.
- Cable devices must be constructed of single-strand (1x19) or multi-strand (7x7) or (7x19) carbon or stainless steel cable of 1/16-inch diameter or larger.
- Cable devices must possess a lock or breakaway device that allows the cable loop to disassemble at no more than 350 pounds pull. The Testing Standard for Breakaway Cable Devices determines the pounds of pull for disassembly (<http://gf.nd.gov/hunting/furbearers/cable-test-std>).
- Individuals who self-assemble cable devices from components must assume liability and responsibility for ensuring that devices, locks or parts break or disassemble at 350 pounds pull, or less.

TRAP SET RESTRICTIONS

State wildlife management areas

Year-round: Body gripping traps with greater than 6-inch inside jaw spread must –

- Be in 4 inches or more of water; or
- Be recessed at least 7 inches in a plastic, wood or

metal cubby with a maximum 50 square inch opening; or

- Be recessed at least 10 inches in a plastic, wood or metal cubby with a maximum 80 square inch opening.

• **All other lands**

September 1 – October 21: Body gripping traps with greater than 8 inches inside jaw spread and all water sets

JAW SPREAD SIZES OF COMMON BODY GRIPPING (CONIBEAR) TRAPS

- 110/120 – 4.5” • 220 – 7” • 330 – 10”
- 160 – 6” • 280 – 8”

must –

- Be in 4 inches or more of water; or
- Be used in an upland set and recessed at least 10 inches in a plastic, wood or metal cubby with a maximum 80 square inch opening.

October 22 – January 8: Body gripping traps greater than 8 inches inside jaw spread must –

- Be in 4 inches or more of water; or
- Be used in an upland set and recessed at least 10 inches in a plastic, wood or metal cubby with a maximum 80 square inch opening.

January 9 – March 15: No restrictions on placement.

March 16 – May 10: Foothold and body-gripping traps placed in or on water, but not used on float sets, must –

- Have a protective covering; or
- Foothold traps not being used on a float set must be submerged under water; or
- Body-gripping traps less than 8 inches inside jaw spread must have no more than 2 inches of the trap above the water surface.
- Foothold and body-gripping traps used on float sets must have a protective covering May 1 through May 10.

May 11 – August 31: No restrictions on placement.

BADGER, COYOTE, FOX (RED AND GRAY)

Firearms, traps, archery equipment, pursue with dogs – Open year-round (officially from April 1 – March 31)

Badger, coyote, and fox (red and gray) may be hunted statewide using legal firearms, archery equipment or pursued with dogs during regular hunting hours. Badger, coyote and fox (red and gray) may be trapped statewide using legal traps (including footholds and body-gripping traps).

Cable devices – Opens: November 21 – Closes: March 15

Badger, coyote, and fox (red and gray) may be captured statewide using legal cable devices.

Firearms at night – Opens: November 21 – Closes: March 15

Coyote and fox (red and gray) may be hunted at any hour. Any person who engages in coyote or fox hunting from 30 minutes after sunset to 30 minutes before sunrise must hunt exclusively on foot. Use of spotlights or any other artificial light is prohibited. Use of night vision equipment, electronically enhanced light gathering optics or thermal imaging equipment is allowed.

BEAVER AND RACCOON

Beaver dams may be dismantled when their presence causes property damage.

Firearms, traps, underwater cable devices, archery equipment, pursue with dogs (raccoon only) – Open year-round (officially from April 1 - March 31)

Beaver and raccoon may be hunted statewide using legal firearms and archery equipment during regular hunting hours. Beaver and raccoon may be trapped statewide using legal traps (including footholds and body-gripping traps) and underwater cable devices. Raccoon may be pursued statewide with dogs. Beaver and raccoon may also be taken at any hour of the day, while hunting on foot, with the aid of a flashlight with a power source of not more than 6 volts. A red or amber filter must be placed over the light except when taking a raccoon treed or at bay. The use of auto headlights, spotlights and lights other than a flashlight with a power source of over 6 volts as an aid in taking beavers and raccoons is prohibited. Legal firearms for flashlight hunting of beaver and raccoon are rifles or handguns firing a rimfire cartridge no larger than .22 caliber, or shotguns no larger than .410 gauge. Rifled slugs are not legal.

Cable devices on land – Opens: November 21 – Closes: March 15

Beaver and raccoon may be captured statewide using legal cable devices. There are no placement restrictions for cable devices during this time.

Cable devices on land within 50 feet of water – Opens: March 16 – Closes: May 10

Beaver and raccoon may be captured statewide using legal cable devices. Cable devices must be placed within 50 feet of water and be no greater than 4 inches off the ground and have a stop restricting loop size to 12 inches or less in diameter.

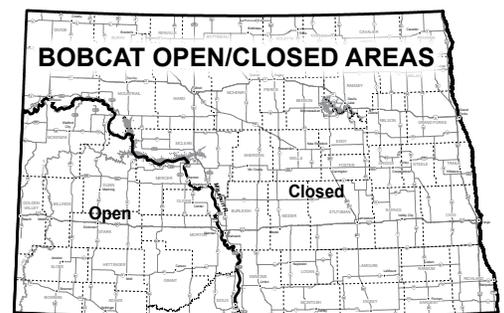
BOBCAT

Bobcat may only be harvested by North Dakota residents. Bobcat may only be harvested south and west of the Missouri River. The pelt and carcass of each bobcat must be presented

to Department personnel for inspection and tagging no later than 14 days after the close of season, or prior to sale or transfer of possession, whichever comes first. No bobcat pelt will be tagged until the animal is skinned and presented with the intact carcass. The carcass shall remain the property of the Department. No person, taxidermist or fur dealer shall possess or purchase an untagged bobcat. When any part of the animal is mounted, if the tag is removed from the pelt, the tag must be securely fastened to the back or bottom of mount.

Firearms, traps, archery equipment – Opens: November 5 – Closes: March 15

Bobcat may be hunted with legal firearms and archery equipment or trapped using legal traps (including footholds and body-gripping traps).



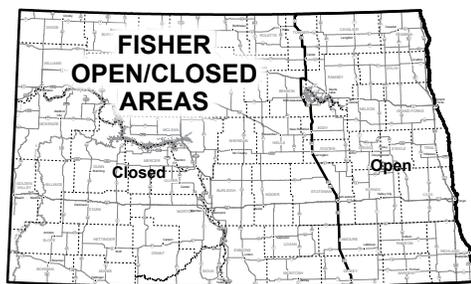
Cable devices, pursue with dogs – Opens: November 21 – Closes: March 15

Bobcat may be captured using legal cable devices. Bobcats may also be pursued with dogs.

FISHER

Traps, cable devices – Opens: November 21 – Closes: November 27

Fisher may only be harvested by North Dakota residents. Fisher may only be harvested east of U.S. Highway 281



and ND Highway 4. The limit for fishers is one animal per trapper per season. Any fisher that is harvested must be reported to the Department within 12 hours to make arrangements to have the fisher tagged. The pelt must be removed from the carcass prior to presenting the fisher to Department personnel for tagging. No fisher pelt will be tagged until the animal is skinned and presented with the intact carcass. The carcass shall remain the property of the Department. No person, taxidermist or fur dealer shall possess or purchase an untagged fisher. When any part of the animal is mounted, if the tag is removed from the pelt, the tag must be securely fastened to the back or bottom of mount. Fishers incidentally trapped after the close of the season must be reported to the Department within 12 hours and turned over to the Department.

MINK AND MUSKRAT

Muskrat huts may be opened to insert traps or cable devices. However, huts must be restored to their approximate original condition to prevent freeze-up.

Traps – Opens: October 22 – Closes: May 10 (See below for additional restrictions)

Beginning March 16, colony traps must be under at least 2 inches of water and trapping on the outside of any muskrat house or structure is prohibited; traps may be placed completely inside a muskrat house or structure of any size; except when used on float sets, foothold traps must be submerged under water at all times or have a protective covering; body-gripping traps used in a water set can have no more than 2 inches of the trap above water or a protective covering.

Beginning May 1, float sets must have a protective covering.

Cable devices – Opens: November 21 – Closes: May 10 (See below for additional restrictions)

Mink and muskrat may be captured statewide using legal cable devices.

Beginning March 16, using cable devices on the outside of any muskrat house or structure of any size is prohibited.

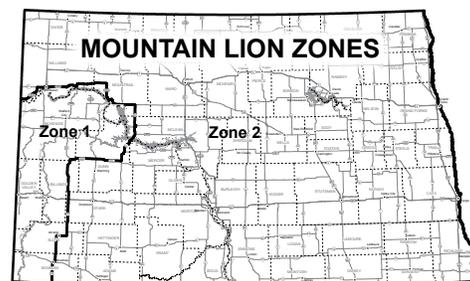
Firearms, archery equipment – Opens: November 21 – Closes: May 10

Mink and muskrat may be hunted statewide with rimfire cartridges of .22 caliber or smaller, muzzleloaders of .45 caliber or smaller or legal archery equipment.

MOUNTAIN LION

Mountain lions may only be hunted by North Dakota residents. The limit for mountain lions is one animal per hunter. Any mountain lion, other than kittens (kitten defined as a mountain lion with visible spots) or females accompanied by kittens, may be harvested during the season. Any mountain lion that is harvested

must be reported to the Department within twelve hours and the entire intact animal must be submitted for analysis and tagging. Legally taken animals will be returned to the hunter following analysis so that the



pelt may be removed but the carcass shall remain the property of the Department. The use of traps or cable devices (snares) to take mountain lions is prohibited. The state will be split into two management zones; Zone 1 and Zone 2. Zone 1 includes land south of ND Highway 1804 from the Montana border to the point where ND Highway 1804 lies directly across Lake Sakakawea from ND Highway 8, crossing Lake Sakakawea then south along ND Highway 8 to ND Highway 200, then west on ND Highway 200 to U.S. Highway 85, then south on U.S. Highway 85 to the South Dakota border. Zone 2 is the remainder of the state not described as Zone 1. Each Zone 1 season will have harvest limits. Once these harvest limits are reached, each respective season will close immediately. The Department will inform the public through press releases, public service announcements, and media contacts of each closure. Mountain lions taken by USDA Wildlife Services, the Department, private landowners in defense of livestock, road killed animals, mountain lions incidentally taken by traps or cable devices, animals taken for human safety issues and those taken on Indian land will not count against any harvest limit.

Zone 1 early-season – Opens: September 2 – Closes: November 20

Mountain lions may be harvested using legal firearms and archery equipment. Harvest may be no more than 8 mountain lions.

Zone 1 late-season – Opens: November 21 – Closes: March 31

Mountain lions may be harvested using legal firearms, archery equipment, and pursuing with dogs. Harvest may be no more than 7 mountain lions or 3 female mountain lions, whichever comes first.

Zone 1 conditional season – If the harvest limit for the early season is not reached prior to November 20 and after the late season has been closed (due to quota reached) for 5 consecutive days, the early season will reopen until the Zone 1 early-season harvest limit is reached or until March 31. If the late season closes after March 25, there will not be a Zone 1 conditional season.

Zone 2 – Opens: September 2 – Closes: March 31

Mountain lions may be harvested using legal firearms and archery equipment. Beginning November 21, mountain lions may also be harvested by pursuing with dogs. There is no harvest limit for Zone 2.

WEASEL

Traps – Opens: October 22 – Closes: March 15

Weasel may be trapped statewide using legal traps.

Firearms, cable devices, archery equipment – Opens: November 21 – Closes: March 15

Weasel may be hunted statewide with rimfire cartridges of .22 caliber or smaller, muzzleloaders of .45 caliber or smaller, or legal archery equipment. Weasel may be captured statewide using legal cable devices.