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bcc

Subject lynx - released from snare

Phil.

Below is information provided by a trapper who had snared a lynx, another trapper who saw that lynx in the snare, and a third person who assisted in freeing the lynx from the snare. On April 19, 2008, I visited the site to collect genetic samples, and observed.

Date and Location:

On Feb. 21, 2008, a lynx was released from a snare in Duluth Township (T52N R12W) in southeastern St. Louis County, approximately 15-20 miles northeast of Duluth.

Condition of lynx:

Lynx bounded away shortly after being released - two persons who witnessed the release indicated that lynx showed no apparent sign of injury.

Set:

The snare holding the lynx was set by a junior trapper on private land in wooded cover, approximately 50 yards from the edge of a snow-covered hay field. The set, consisting of 3 individual snares positioned within 40 yards of a beaver carcass, targeted mainly coyotes, secondarily foxes. No scent was used. Three trappers tended this set (their only set) and each had positioned one of the snares. The snare that took the lynx was tied to a shrub that had been set above a trail where trapper had formed a 9 or 10 inch snare loop, fixing the lowest point of the loop approximately 5-6 inches above the snow, which the trapper had walked down to create a trail that he hoped coyotes might use to approach the beaver carcass located approximately 5 yards away. The set was checked daily and all snares were removed after releasing the lynx.

Snare:

Swiveled snaring rigs were used at the set - 1/16 inch, 7x7 snare cable attached to a double-stranded tie wire.

Release:

The lynx survived incident likely because a slight kink in the snare cable precluded the loop from closing tightly enough on the lynx's throat to cause strangulation. Also, after triggering the snare, the lynx moved around a shrub causing the snare to be 'hooked short,' which possibly prevented lynx from tugging against cable in a way that would have caused the lock to slide past the kink, which in turn would have allowed snare loop to close tightly around the lynx's neck.

Since lynx are a protected species, trapper sought assistance to release it. A catch pole was used to subdue the lynx and the snare was then cut to extricate the animal. Not long after the lynx was freed, it bounded away.

Reporting:

Incident was not reported to DNR because DNR's Hunting and Trapping Regulations Handbook indicates that a person "*should release accidentally captured protected species back into the wild* ." The handbook does not suggest that catching a lynx requires reporting. Further, the highlighted notice in the regulations handbook

concerning taking of a lynx seems to infer that it would not be prudent to report a lynx taking, as it states, "*any taking or possession of a lynx, including accidental taking, is a violation of federal law* ."

Photographs: Attached are 3 photographs made at the set on the day of the release. Photo #1 depicts site where snare entangled in alder. Photo #2 reveals tie wire and snare cable. Photo #3 presents field marks used to determine species - that is, large, heavily furred paws; coloration of ventral surface of feet is light, not black or dark as in bobcats and lynx-bobcat hybrids; and black fur covers ventral aspect of tail tip.

Miscellaneous:

All trappers had earned trapper education certificates and had purchased required trapping licenses.

Site visit:

I visited location of this set on April 19, 2008.

Steve

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