

From: [Grizzle, Betty](#)
To: [Shoemaker, Justin](#)
Subject: MT FW&P comment re trapping
Date: Friday, February 3, 2017 10:24:08 AM

From their comment letter: (emphasis added)

Currently there is no trapping season for wolverine in Montana, nor has there been since 2013. The portion of the current regulations pertaining to wolverine reads as follows:

WOLVERINE – 0 QUOTA - NO HARVEST

There is no trapping or harvest of wolverine allowed at this time.

Incidental Take – Trappers who accidentally capture a furbearer when the season is closed or trapper limit is met must notify a designated Fish, Wildlife & Parks employee residing in the trapping district where the animal was taken within 24 hours to arrange collection of the animal if the animal cannot be released uninjured. It is unlawful for any person to retain possession of an incidentally taken furbearer as per Montana law.

Wolverine management has evolved over the years as the field of wildlife management has evolved and in response to increased public attention to wolverines. Prior to 1978 wolverine were considered a predator and/or a non-game animal and there was no limit on trapping. A Montana Fish and Game Commission “Wolverine Annual Rule” in 1978 (attached) set the trapping limit at one wolverine per person per year. That same rule also shows Montana’s decades-old dedication to sound wildlife management using the latest and best information when it says:

“The Department of Fish and Game participating in investigations on wolverine, a species of nongame wildlife, finds it necessary to promulgate the following rule as provided in Section 26-1804 and 26-1807, in order to develop biological and ecological data to determine management measures necessary for the wolverines’ continued ability to sustain themselves successfully.”

Harvest regulations continued at one per person per year through 2003. The annual harvest from 1994 to 2003 averaged 11 per year and ranged from 4 to 15 (Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks 2013a, attached). In 2004 FWP established 3 Wolverine Management Units (WMUs) with harvest quotas in each that totaled 12 combined to better manage the species. The quota was reduced to 10 in 2007. In 2008 four newly-defined WMUs were established for more effective management and the combined harvest was reduced to 5. The new WMUs allowed trapping in three areas of the best wolverine habitat while no trapping was allowed in areas between them. This continued until 2013 when the quota was reduced to zero. There has been no wolverine season in Montana since 2013. As pointed out in our letter of May 6, 2013 (attached), “FWP has been responsive to new science and information about wolverines and has modified regulations in recent years to be even more restrictive so that wolverines are conservatively managed on a landscape scale with a focus on dispersal.”

--

Betty J. Grizzle, D.Env.
Fish and Wildlife Biologist
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Carlsbad Fish and Wildlife Office
2177 Salk Ave, Suite 250

Carlsbad, CA 92008
760-431-9440, ext. 215
760-431-5901 fax