



United States Department of the Interior



FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge
7071 Riverview Road
Thomson, Illinois 61285
September 17, 2013

Spring Lake Furbearer Management Unit Guidelines

A special trapping program is conducted within the Spring Lake Furbearer Management Unit in order to reduce the muskrat and beaver populations that are causing damage to Refuge structures. This management unit contains 3,600 acres. The Spring Lake Furbearer Management Unit overlays the Spring Lake Closed Area Sanctuary that prohibits all public access, including trapping, from October 1 to the end of the duck hunting season, annually. This special management program allows exclusive trapping rights under restricted conditions during the duck hunting season. Exclusive trapping rights are awarded to the highest bidder.

The following guidelines are in effect within the Spring Lake Furbearer Management Unit:

1. Time table for special trapping program.
 - September 16: Bid forms are available at the Refuge office.
 - September 16-October 15: Sealed bids are accepted at the Refuge office.
 - October 16: Bids (\$200 minimum) are opened and trapping rights awarded to highest bidder.
 - October 22: Full payment must be received in Refuge office.
2. Bids will be accepted at the Savanna District office (Ingersoll Wetlands Learning Center, 7071 Riverview Road, Thomson IL 61285) for exclusive trapping rights during the regular Illinois duck hunting season within the Spring Lake Furbearer Management Unit. Because the Spring Lake Unit is closed to all public access beginning October 1, inspection of the trapping unit must be coordinated with Refuge staff in advance. There will be no vehicle access allowed to inspect the trapping unit.
3. The highest bidder will be awarded a Special Use Permit to exclusively trap the Spring Lake Management Unit, during that portion of the Illinois trapping season (starts in early November) that occurs prior to the end of the regular duck hunting season (typically ends mid-December).
4. These exclusive trapping rights within the Spring Lake Furbearer Management Unit under this Special Use Permit will expire the last day of the regular Illinois duck hunting season (December 17, 2013). The trapper must remove all traps and equipment prior to the end of the duck season. The day after the close of the duck hunting season, the Spring Lake Furbearer Management Unit will be open to public trapping in accordance with Refuge regulations.
5. The Spring Lake Management Unit includes all water areas within five subunits: "A" impoundment; "B" impoundment; "C" impoundment; Sloane Marsh; and Lower Spring Lake. See the attached map for location of the subunits.

**SPRING LAKE FURBEARER MANAGEMENT UNIT
SPECIAL CONDITIONS OF TRAPPING PERMIT (2013-14 Season)**

The following special conditions are prescribed for the trapping of furbearers within the Spring Lake Furbearer Management Unit on Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge (Refuge) situated in the State of Illinois.

1. State laws - Permittee must comply with all State and local game laws and regulations, in addition to all Federal regulations and Refuge permit conditions. In cases where any of these regulations differ, the most restrictive regulations shall apply.

2. Trapping permits - Any person exercising the privilege of trapping furbearing animals on the Refuge shall possess a valid trapping license issued by the State where trapping is performed and a valid Special Use Permit for trapping issued by the Refuge. Permittee shall carry both the State trapping license and Refuge Special Use Permit on their person at all times while trapping, and upon request, shall exhibit them to any Federal, State, or local law enforcement officer.

3. Refuge trap tags will not be required under this permit - An unlimited number of traps may be used within the Spring Lake Furbearer Management Unit during the period this exclusive trapping permit is valid.

4. The permittee will be allowed 3 helpers in the field to tend traps - Helpers must be identified on the Special Use Permit. A maximum of 6 helpers can be identified on the permit, but only 3 can help tend traps during each visit. If helpers are replaced with individuals not listed on the permit, the permittee must notify the Refuge office and add the new helper's name to the Special Use Permit prior to using the new helper. Each helper must have a valid Illinois trapping license. The permittee must be physically present within the Spring Lake Furbearer Management Unit during all trap tending activities. Any individual (including helpers) that has committed a Refuge or State trapping violation within one year of September 15 annually, is ineligible to trap in the Spring Lake Furbearer Management Unit during that respective trapping season, or for a longer period as outlined in the Refuge's Furbearer Management Plan.

5. Restricted access - Access into the Spring Lake Furbearer Management Unit will be restricted in order to reduce disturbance to waterfowl. The permittee will be issued keys to the Spring Lake gates and will be permitted to drive the designated levee roads within the Unit. All gates must be immediately closed and locked. In order to minimize disturbance to waterfowl within the Closed Area Sanctuary, the following access restrictions are in effect:

A. Access into the Unit, including setting and tending traps, is only allowed from 11:00AM to 2:00PM, daily.

B. Trapping will be conducted in only one subunit at a time. The subunits are: "A" impoundment; "B" impoundment; "C" impoundment; Sloane Marsh; and Lower Spring Lake. The permittee can select which subunit is to be trapped, but must contact the Refuge office 24 hours in advance of moving traps from one subunit to the next. All subunits must be trapped during the trapping season.

C. Only vehicles that are licensed to travel on highways are allowed access into the Unit. Vehicles must stay on designated routes of travel. A maximum of two vehicles are allowed within the Unit. The levees will not be snowplowed and vehicular access may be restricted if weather or river conditions require it. All vehicles must stay on designated roads.

D. No all-terrain vehicles (ATV) or snow machine use is allowed anywhere, including on ice, in the Unit under this Special Use Permit.

E. No watercraft are allowed in the Unit under this permit.

F. A non-motorized pull-behind sled or floating “raft” may be used to access the interior of the units.

6. Weekly report - A weekly Fur Trap **Report** must be submitted to the Refuge office **by 4:00 PM each Monday** and identify the number and type of traps set, number of trap days, and the total harvest of furbearers by species, conducted during the previous week. The weekly Fur Trap Report must also include all non-target species, e.g. waterfowl, waterbirds, otters, that are accidentally trapped. Failure to accurately complete and return the report may be sufficient cause for refusal of future permits.

7. Disposition of unauthorized animals - Birds and mammals other than those authorized to be trapped under permit and found alive in the traps of the permittee shall be immediately liberated. Non-target species that are dead should be left in the trap and Refuge Law Enforcement Officer Darryn Witt notified (cell 815-541-4607) as soon as possible. Non-target species cannot be possessed under this permit. **If furbearers are caught out of season or over the Refuge bag limit (eg: more than 1 otter), Officer Witt must be notified prior to the removal of the furbearer or handling the set.**

8. Minimum trap nights/week requirement - The retention of exclusive trapping rights under this Special Use Permit within the Spring Lake Furbearer Management Unit will be based upon performance of trapping activities. Minimum trapping performance requires 100 trap days per week, e.g., 25 traps set for 4 days. If minimum performance requirements are not met, the Special Use Permit for exclusive trapping rights may be terminated immediately with no refund of bid monies.

9. Traps must be checked daily - All animals/carcasses must be removed from the Refuge and disposed of properly. Skinning of animals is not allowed within the trapping unit. All materials (e.g., wood, lathe, flagging, wire) used for trapping must be removed from the Refuge at the end of the Special Use Permit period.

10. Approved traps; trap inspection and removal; plant life - Furbearers may be taken on the Refuge using traps allowed under state law, except no snares or multiple-catch (colony type) traps are allowed. Permittee shall tend each trap/set on the Refuge at least once every calendar day, except for beaver sets which must be tended at least once every two calendar days. Permittee shall not cut any vegetation on the Refuge, except willow for use as trap stakes or drags.

11. Bag limit includes only 1 otter – The bag limit for each furbearer shall be that limit prescribed by applicable State law or Refuge regulation, whichever is more restrictive. All animals taken on the Refuge shall be included as a part of any State bag limit. Otter trapping is allowed in States where open but with a maximum harvest of 1 otter/Refuge permittee in accordance with State seasons and licensing.

12. Prohibited methods and acts

It Is Unlawful To:

* **Set** or trap within 3 feet of the waterline of any muskrat house or feeding house.

* **Set** a trap closer to a beaver house or dam than permitted by state law, and in no case shall a trap be set closer than 6 feet of where the lodge or dam meets the water. The 6-foot setback restriction does not apply to bank dens that do not have an associated lodge structure/cache. Dog-proof traps and #110 sized body-grip traps are allowed on beaver dams and lodges unless prohibited by state law.

- * **Set** a trap within 30 feet of an otter den.
- * **Disturb** or molest any muskrat house, mink or otter den, or beaver house or dam.
- * **Use** exposed flesh or carcass baits, including fish.
- * **Dispose** of carcasses or animal parts on the Refuge.

13. Possession of firearms - Permittees are allowed to dispatch animals caught in traps with a firearm in accordance with State law.

14. Penalties - Failure of a permittee to comply with any of the Refuge trapping permit conditions or violation of any of the regulations issued under the authority of the Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge Act of June 7, 1924 or any Federal or State law or regulation related to trapping on Upper Mississippi River NW&FR may be sufficient cause for one or more of the following actions:

- a. Revocation of existing permit with no refund of bid monies.
- b. Refusal of future trapping special use permits.
- c. Refusal of other privileges requiring a permit.

All traps and equipment used as instruments of any violation, and all animals or furs illegally taken, shall be subject to immediate seizure, and subsequent forfeiture.

15. Refuge contact number

Savanna District Office: (815) 273-2732

Spring Lake Trapping Management Unit

