

SPECIAL CONDITIONS OF TRAPPING PERMIT (2012-13 Season)

Pursuant to Code of Federal Regulations, Title 50, Chapter 1, Subchapter C, Part 31, Subpart B, Section 31.16, the following conditions are prescribed by the Director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for the trapping of furbearers on the Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge (Refuge) situated in the States of Minnesota, Wisconsin, Iowa, and 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. Trap Tags and Fees; Limitations – In addition to tags required by State regulations, each permittee authorized to trap furbearing animals on the Refuge shall obtain from the Refuge Manager, or an authorized representative, appropriate Refuge tags for all traps used. A tag for the current trap year shall be securely attached to each trap in a manner that will allow convenient examination. Traps displaying current tags assigned to multiple permittees may be tended by any of the permitted tag owners. The Service is required to collect a fee which will be used to recover the cost of administering the issuance of permits.

4. 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. Traps shall only be tended between one-half hour before sunrise to one-half hour after sunset, or during hours set by state law if more restrictive. Permittee shall not cut any vegetation on the Refuge, except willow for use as trap stakes or drags.

5. Bag Limit – 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 permit in accordance with State seasons and licensing.

6. Fur Catch Report – It is mandatory that all permittees submit a Fur Catch Report by **April 15**, following the Refuge trapping season. Failure to accurately complete and return the report by the deadline may be sufficient cause for refusal of future permits.

7. Closed Areas/No Hunting Zones – All areas of the Refuge which are closed to hunting of migratory birds shall be closed to trapping during the duck hunting season for that State. Trapping in areas posted “**Area Closed**” or “**No Hunting Zone**” will be allowed beginning at 9:00 a.m. on the day following the close of the State duck hunting season, except as otherwise specified on this permit or prescribed by the Refuge Manager.

8. Prohibited Methods and Acts

It Is Unlawful To:

***Trap** before 9:00 a.m. on the opening day of the Refuge muskrat trapping season.

***Trap** in Youth Trapping Areas the first 14 days of the Refuge muskrat trapping season, unless permitted to do so.

***Trap** after March 15 until the start of the Refuge muskrat trapping season.

* **Mark** or stake traps sites or animal runs or paths, or chop holes in the ice for trap sets in advance of the applicable season.

* **Place** traps, stakes, or other equipment in more than one location before 9:00 a.m. on the opening day of any Refuge trapping season.

***Place**, without a tagged trap attached, any stake, pole, rod, or stick capable of holding or anchoring any kind of animal trap.

* **Set** or tend more traps than the number authorized on the permit.

***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.

***Use** exposed flesh or carcass baits, including fish.

***Use** snowmobiles or wheeled or tracked all-terrain vehicles on, over, or across refuge lands

at any time, including while trapping. These vehicles are allowed only on the ice over navigable waters, accessed from boat landings, but prohibited in Electric Motor Areas.

***Tend**, disturb, or molest another person’s traps, fur catch, or trapline.

(It is unlawful to set or tend any trap/set on the Refuge that does not have your current refuge trap tag attached. Any trap/set which is tended by multiple persons must display a current tag assigned to EACH permittee checking the trap. One exception is that someone may ASSIST with checking tagged traps, provided that the permittee is physically present at the trap site).

9. Possession of Firearms – Permittees are allowed to dispatch animals caught in traps with a firearm in accordance with State law, except in No Hunting/Trapping Zones.

10. 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. Such birds and mammals found dead or mortally injured in traps shall be immediately disposed of in accordance with State law. If any threatened or endangered species are caught, a Refuge employee or State warden must be notified immediately. **If furbearers are caught out of season or over the Refuge bag limit (1 otter), a Refuge Law Enforcement Officer must be notified prior to the removal of the furbearer or tampering with the set.**

11. 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 the Upper Mississippi River NW&FR may be sufficient cause for one or more of the following actions:

- Revocation of existing permits.
- Refusal of future trapping special use permits.
- 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.

12. Refuge Contact Numbers

Winona District Office: (507) 454-7351

La Crosse District Office: (608) 779-2399

McGregor District Office: (563) 873-3423

Savanna District Office: (815) 273-2732