

Trapping in the Northwest Territories

Information for Applicants and Local Harvesting Committees

(including hunters and trappers committees, renewable resource councils, band or Métis councils)



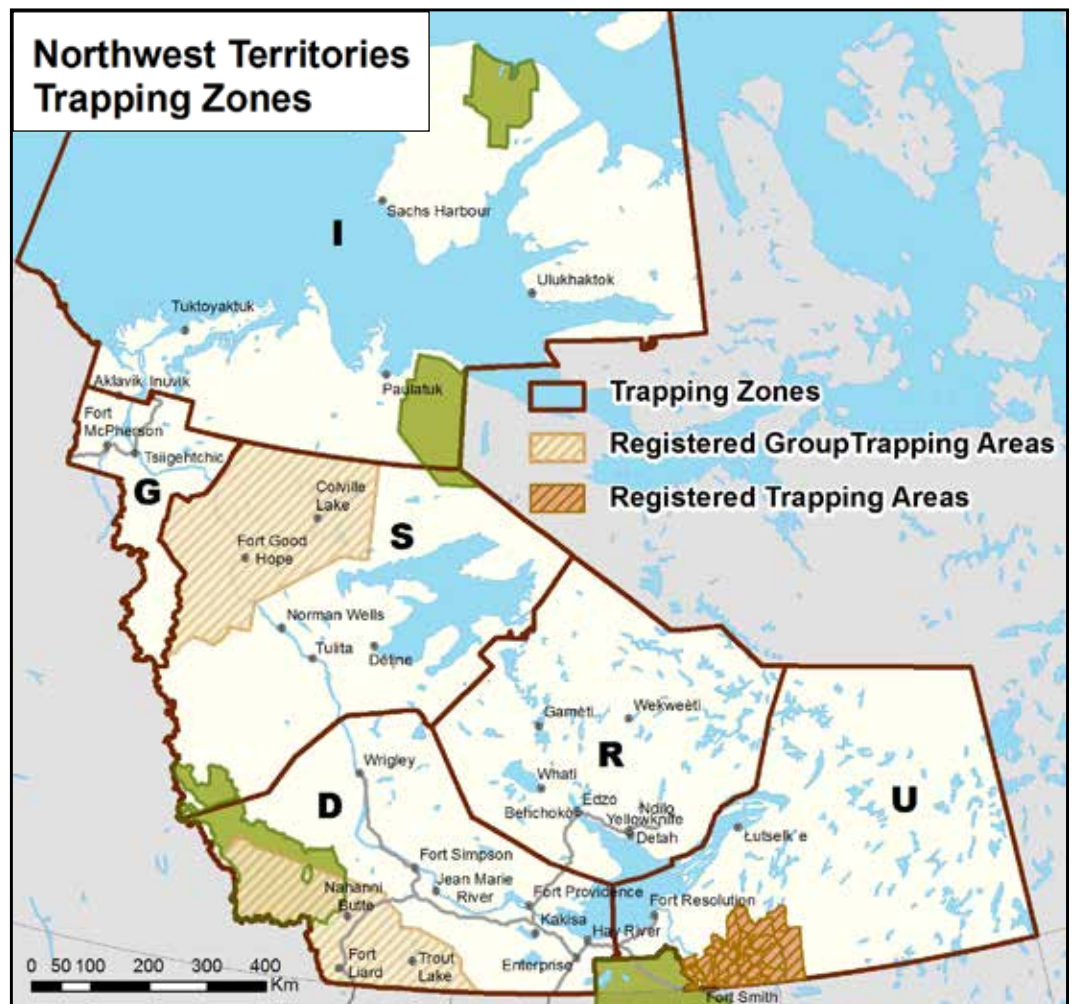
Trapping is an important way of life in the Northwest Territories (NWT). Wild fur from the NWT is some of the best in the world and is proudly marketed under the Genuine Mackenzie Valley Fur (GMVF) Program.

Where can you trap?

People with an Aboriginal or treaty right to harvest in a particular area of the NWT no longer need a licence to trap. Trappers must show a Renewable Resource Officer identification proving their right to harvest in that area, when requested.

Settled land claim agreements in the NWT include an exclusive right for beneficiaries to harvest furbearers in certain areas. Licensed non-beneficiary trappers are not allowed to harvest some species without permission from the land claim organization.

Registered trapping areas or registered group trapping areas can be found in some areas of the NWT. These areas permit exclusive rights to individuals or groups of people to trap in a specific area. Contact your regional or local Environment and Climate Change (ECC) office for more information about registered trapping areas.



Genuine Mackenzie Valley Fur Program

Furs harvested as part of the GMVF program use the most humane trapping techniques in the fur industry today. They also comply with European market guidelines and standards set out in the *Agreement on International Humane Trap Standards*.

Support for harvesters through the GMVF Program include the:

- Guaranteed Fur Advance
- Trapper's Grubstake
- Prime Fur Bonus Program
- Hide Procurement Program
(through the Department of Industry, Tourism and Investment)

Trapping seasons vary for species harvested in the NWT. Also, the best season for harvesting prime fur can vary in different parts of the NWT. Remember, there are **NO** set trapping seasons for people exercising an Aboriginal or treaty right to trap in their traditional use area.

Renewable Resource Officers can provide an advance on pelts harvested through the GMVF Program if the fur was lawfully harvested by a person with a General Hunting Licence (GHL), or a by person with an Aboriginal or treaty right to harvest.

In this case, the fur must be harvested from their traditional use area in the NWT and proof of that right must be provided.



Prime Fur Bonus

Only well-handled furs are accepted into the GMVF Program. A bonus is provided for prime furs.

Renewable Resource Officers and fellow trappers encourage harvesters to trap during prime fur season so harvesters can get top price for their furs.

Renewable Resource Officers determine if the furs are prime and eligible for a bonus. They can refuse to send a fur to market if it is very poorly handled or is very poor quality. They can also refuse to provide an advance on poor quality fur and send the fur to auction to let the marketplace establish its value.



Trapping with a General Hunting Licence or Special Harvester Licence

A GHL holder can harvest wildlife in areas outside their traditional use areas in the NWT under certain conditions, and subject to land claim agreements.

Trappers with a GHL are bound to the seasons and conditions in the *Trapping Regulations* when trapping outside of their Aboriginal or treaty rights traditional use area. The seasons outlined in the *Trapping Regulations* generally follow prime fur seasons.

A Special Harvester Licence can also allow a person to trap furbearers. The licence holder is bound to the conditions recommended by the local harvesting committee, local band council or Métis council, who recommended approval of the licence.

Trapping Restrictions

Land claim agreements in the NWT provide beneficiaries, participants or citizens with an exclusive right to harvest certain furbearers. Licensed trappers cannot harvest the following species in the land claim areas without permission from the relevant land claim organization:

- Ground squirrel, red squirrel, marmot and hare in the Inuvialuit Settlement Region
- Ground squirrel, red squirrel and marmot in the Gwich'in Settlement Area
- Red squirrel and marmot in the Sahtu Settlement Area
- Woodchuck and red squirrel on Tłıchǫ lands.

Wastage

Wastage provisions of the *Wildlife Act* apply to all harvesters and trappers. No person can waste, destroy, abandon or allow to spoil a raw pelt or hide of the following furbearers:

- | | | |
|------------------|----------------|-------------|
| • Bear* | • Fox | • Muskrat* |
| • Beaver* | • Least Weasel | • Otter |
| • Coyote | • Lynx | • Skunk |
| • Ermine (stoat) | • Marten | • Wolf |
| • Fisher | • Mink | • Wolverine |

** The raw pelts or hides of bear, beaver or muskrat can be discarded if any of these furbearers are harvested for the meat.*

Best Practices

All licensed trappers are required to check their live hold soft catch or leg snare restraining traps at least once every 72 hours. Remember:

- Regularly check your traps.
- Follow humane trapping practices.
- Bring your trapped prime furs to ECC as soon as possible so the furs can be sent in time to meet market demand.
- Trap safely and avoid setting traps or snares in or around communities and municipal boundaries.
- Take a kid trapping and pass on traditional harvesting practices to a new generation.

Take a Kid Trapping Program

This program introduces school age youth in the NWT to traditional harvesting practices like hunting, trapping, fishing and outdoor survival. Instruction includes visits to trap lines and hands-on experience setting traps, snares and fishnets. The next generation of trappers are taught traditional life skills, wildlife conservation and best practices in the preparation of pelts for market to help make sure NWT wild fur continues to be recognized as amongst the best in the world.



For more information

For more information on humane trapping methods or instruction on trapping or snaring practices and devices, contact your ECC regional office.

Fort Simpson	867-695-7450
Fort Smith	867-872-6400
Inuvik	867-678-8091 ext. 53661
Norman Wells	867-587-3500
Yellowknife	867-767-9238 ext. 53247