



NEW MEXICO FURBEARER LAW AND SPECIES IDENTIFICATION COURSE



New Mexico Trapper Education Program
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction.....	3
Prior to Trapping or Hunting Furbearers.....	4 to 10
Open Seasons and Dates.....	4
Bag Limits.....	5
Licenses, Validations, and Stamps.....	6
Private Property.....	7
Areas Closed to Trapping and/or Hunting.....	8
Regulations for Trapping Furbearers.....	11 to 17
Introduction and BMPs.....	11
Definitions.....	11
General Trapping Regulations.....	12
Foothold Traps and Modifications.....	14
Body-grip Traps and Modifications.....	14
Snare Modifications.....	15
Anchoring Devices and Modifications.....	15
Trap and Snare Placement.....	16
Releasing Animals.....	17
Regulations for Hunting Furbearers.....	18
Legal Hunting Hours.....	18
Legal Sporting Arms.....	18
Dogs and Falcons.....	18
Artificial Light.....	18
Hunting from Roads.....	18
Mobility Impaired.....	18
Requirements after Hunting or Trapping Furbearers.....	19 to 20
Possessing Furbearers.....	19
Mandatory Harvest Reporting.....	19
Bobcat Pelt-tagging.....	20
Species Identification Guide.....	21 to 32





INTRODUCTION

Wildlife agencies use hunting and trapping regulations to manage and conserve wildlife. Regulations are used to protect species when populations are low, increase harvest when populations are high, protect habitat and property, and to meet public expectations for animal welfare.

Furbearer hunting and trapping was first regulated in New Mexico in 1939, when the legislature defined a list of protected furbearer species and granted regulatory authority over those species to the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish (NMDGF). Since that time, seasons have been established and the dates for those seasons have changed, seasons have closed for some species, and restrictions on the manner and method by which furbearers are hunted or trapped have been put in place. These ensure that populations are not overharvested, that harvest is done in a safe and humane way, and that the public may enjoy this resource.

In New Mexico, there are a number of regulations that dictate how, when, and where a person may trap or hunt furbearers. Some of the regulations related to hunting and trapping furbearers are part of the Furbearer Rule, which is updated every four years. Changes in regulations may be a result of: changes in a furbearer population, improvements in trapping technology, habitat changes, or changes in society.





OPEN SEASONS AND DATES

New Mexico offers a diversity of tremendous landscapes and a wealth of wildlife for the public to experience and enjoy. For anyone interested in trapping or hunting furbearers in New Mexico, there are numerous opportunities they can take part in. However, NMDGF has a number of requirements and regulations that need to be followed prior to, while, and after someone is out in the field hunting or trapping. Prior to hunting or trapping, you need to consider: what can be hunted or trapped, when that can happen, where it can happen, and what licenses, permits or other validations you need to do so.

Open Seasons and Dates

Protected Furbearer Species	Season Status & Dates
Badger, bobcat, gray fox, kit fox, red fox, swift fox, and ringtail	Open; November 1-March 15
Beaver and muskrat	Open; April 1-April 30 and November 1-March 31
Raccoon	Open; April 1-March 31 (restricted to hunting, foot-encapsulating traps and cage traps May 16-August 31)
Nutria	Open; April 1-March 31
Black-footed ferret, marten, mink, river otter, and coatimundi	Closed; no harvest is allowed

Some furbearer species have limited numbers in New Mexico and their populations cannot support take from hunting or trapping. As such, there is no open season to hunt or trap mink, otter, black-footed ferret, pine marten, or coatimundi. Nutria is a non-native and invasive species that has caused extensive damage to wetland and riparian habitat in the United States. Their distribution is restricted in New Mexico to the Rio Hondo, and the trapping season is open year-round to prevent population increase and expansion. There is no closed season or bag limit for non-game species like coyotes and skunks, but hunters and trappers must still abide by NMDGF restrictions regarding trapping and hunting.





BAG LIMITS AND LICENSES

Bag Limits

Currently, there are no bag limits for any furbearer for which there is an open season. However, NMDGF may set a bag limit for a given species to address a statewide population change or critical management need. The bag limit will be effective for no more than one year, and will expire at the end of the license year. Be sure to check the current rules and information booklets and NMDGF's website for updated information on bag limits.

Licenses, Validations, and Stamp Requirements

Why do you have to spend money on licenses, validations, and stamps? Because trappers, hunters, and anglers pay for wildlife and habitat conservation projects that enable populations to remain healthy enough for you to enjoy them. What's more, every dollar



that NMDGF spends on conservation projects can be matched 3 to 1 with federal Pitman Robertson Act (PR) dollars. The PR Act was enacted by Congress in 1937, and it established a tax on sporting arms and ammunition to be administered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). The USFWS distributes the funds to state wildlife agencies based on the number of licensed hunters and trappers in the state, and the geographical size of the state. So, your purchase of a license and the necessary stamps and validations is multiplied when New Mexico receives the federal funds from the USFWS. NMDGF will spend that money on wildlife research, habitat improvement, and promoting conservation. You should pride yourself on these purchases knowing that your participation, along with the taxes paid on sporting arms and ammunition, directly funds wildlife management and conservation.





LICENSES, VALIDATIONS, AND STAMPS

Licenses - When trapping or hunting furbearers, be sure to keep a copy of your trapping license with you. Licenses may be in electronic or paper format.

New Mexico Residents - to trap or hunt protected furbearers you must have a:

- Trapper License prior to hunting or trapping if you are 18 years of age or older
- Junior Trapper License if you are 12 to 17 years of age. If you are going to hunt protected furbearers, you must also complete Hunter Education.

No license is needed for residents to hunt or trap non-game species, or for anyone 11 years of age or younger.



Nonresidents - You must have a Nonresident Trapper License in order to hunt protected furbearers, or trap any animal (protected and non-game). If you have any current New Mexico nonresident hunting license, then you may hunt and possess non-game species (coyotes, rabbits, and skunks), but you may not set traps or snares unless you have a Nonresident Trapper License. Nonresidents of states that do not allow New Mexico residents to trap may not legally purchase a New Mexico Nonresident Trapper License.

Habitat Management and Access Validation (HMAV) - Everyone, except for those 17 years of age and younger, and disabled veteran card holders, is required to purchase a HMAV in conjunction with any trapping license. Only one HMAV is required per license year, and it can be used with all trapping, hunting, and fishing licenses. Revenues generated from HMAV are used to lease access to private lands for public use, provide public access to landlocked public land, and improve, maintain, develop, and operate NMDGF property for fish and wildlife habitat management.

Habitat Stamp - Everyone, except for trappers 11 years of age and younger, and disabled veteran card holders, is required to purchase a Habitat Stamp if they will hunt or trap on U.S. Forest Service or Bureau of Land Management (BLM) properties. The Habitat Stamp is not required to hunt or trap on other public property, or on private property. It only needs to be purchased once per license year and can be used in conjunction with all trapping, hunting, and fishing licenses. Funds from the sale of Habitat Stamps are used to improve wildlife habitat throughout New Mexico.





PRIVATE PROPERTY

Private Property

It is important to respect private property. Prior to the trapping or hunting season you should politely request permission from landowners, and be sure to be a good representative of the trapping community. Once you obtain written permission to hunt or trap on private land, you may do so legally. It is illegal to hunt or trap on private land without written permission from the landowner or person in control of the land.

Rabies

In recent years, rabies has been detected in some furbearers in New Mexico. All mammals are capable of contracting rabies. Wild animals infected more often include skunks, foxes, coyotes, raccoons, bobcats, and bats. Trappers should be aware of the potential risk of contracting rabies when harvesting an animal. Rabies is nearly always fatal, so any event that causes concern should be followed by a visit to medical professionals.





AREA CLOSURES

Area Closures

There are a variety of reasons an area may be closed to a certain type of use by the public, such as habitat protection, resource protection, protecting vulnerable wildlife populations, or maintaining a desired aesthetic. In regards to public use for hunting, fishing, or trapping, those areas may be closed either by NMDGF or by responsible land management agency. People choose to recreate on public lands in a variety of ways. Certain areas, typically those located close to urban areas with large human populations, receive particularly high recreational use, and that may lead to closure of an area to minimize potential incidents between trappers and other outdoor users.

The following public land areas have been closed to some form of trapping:

Areas may be closed to furbearer hunting and trapping by the agencies that manage them. Contact them prior to furbearer hunting or trapping:

- Valles Caldera National Preserve
- Portions of the Wild Rivers Recreation Area
- Orilla Verde and Santa Cruz Lake Recreation Areas
- Chihuahuan Desert Rangeland Research Center
- New Mexico State Parks
- National parks and monuments
- National wildlife refuges

State Game Commission Lands closed to furbearer hunting and trapping:

- Wildlife Management Areas (except with written permission from NMDGF)
 - ◊ Exception: Prairie Chicken WMAs are open to hunting and trapping protected furbearers and non-game species from November 1 to March 15.



Areas closed to beaver trapping in the interest of protecting low and re-establishing populations:

Cibola, Gila, and Lincoln National Forests

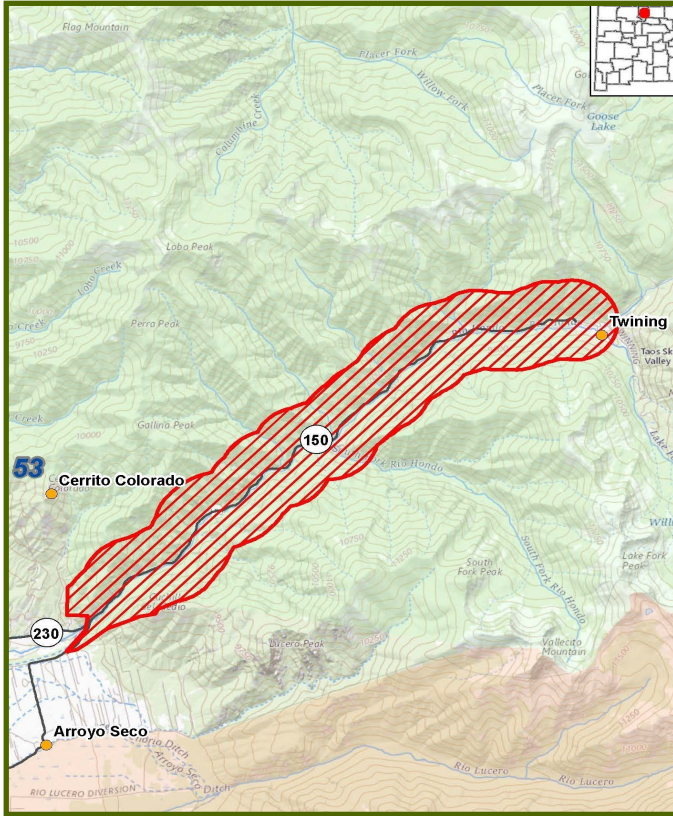
Additional areas closed to land sets by the State Game Commission:

See maps on the following pages

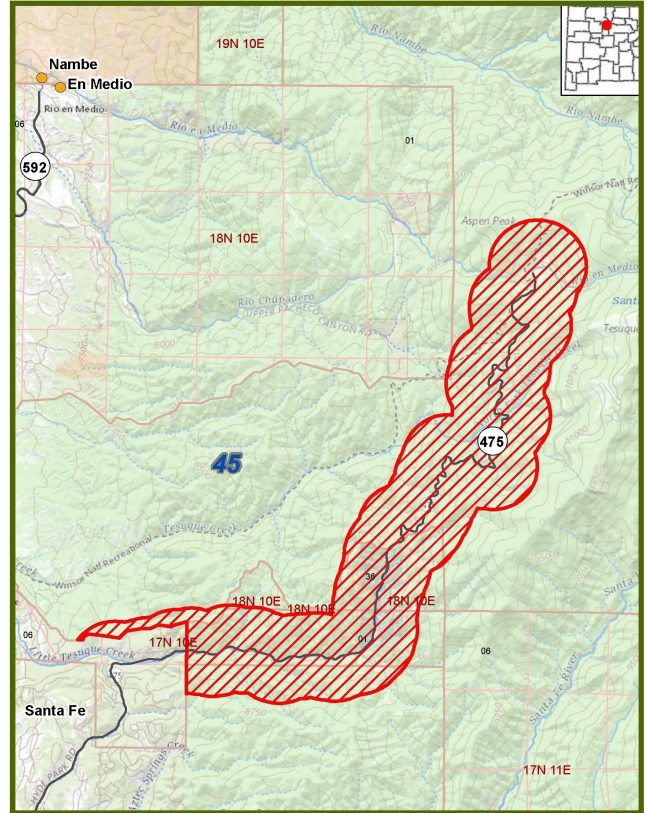




AREA CLOSURES



US Forest Service land within one-half mile of NM 150, north of Taos to the Taos Ski Basin is, closed to land sets

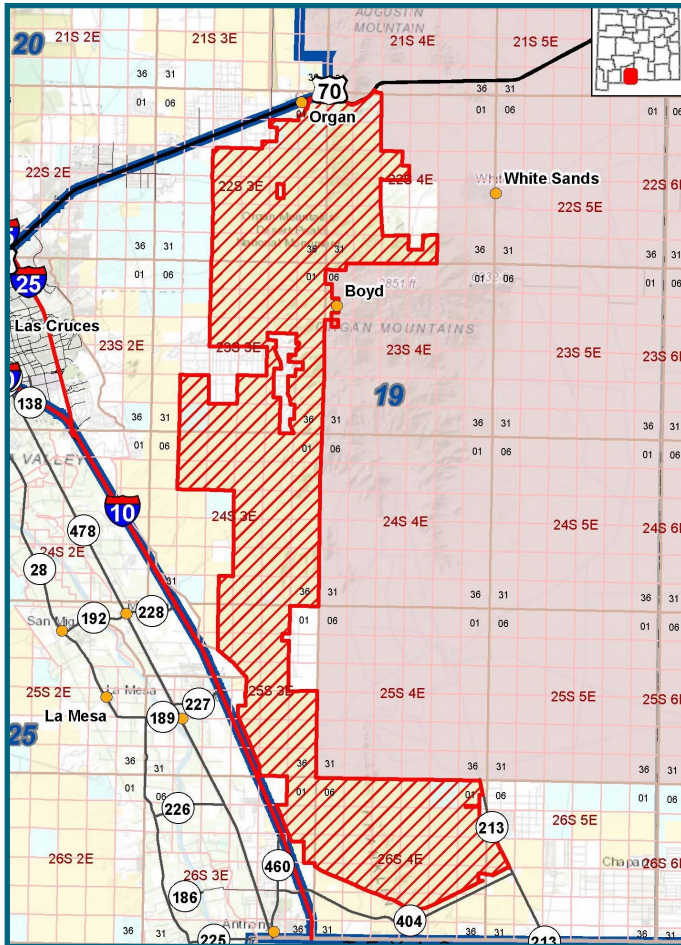


US Forest Service land within one-half mile of NM 475, east of Santa Fe to the Santa Fe Ski Basin, is closed to land sets

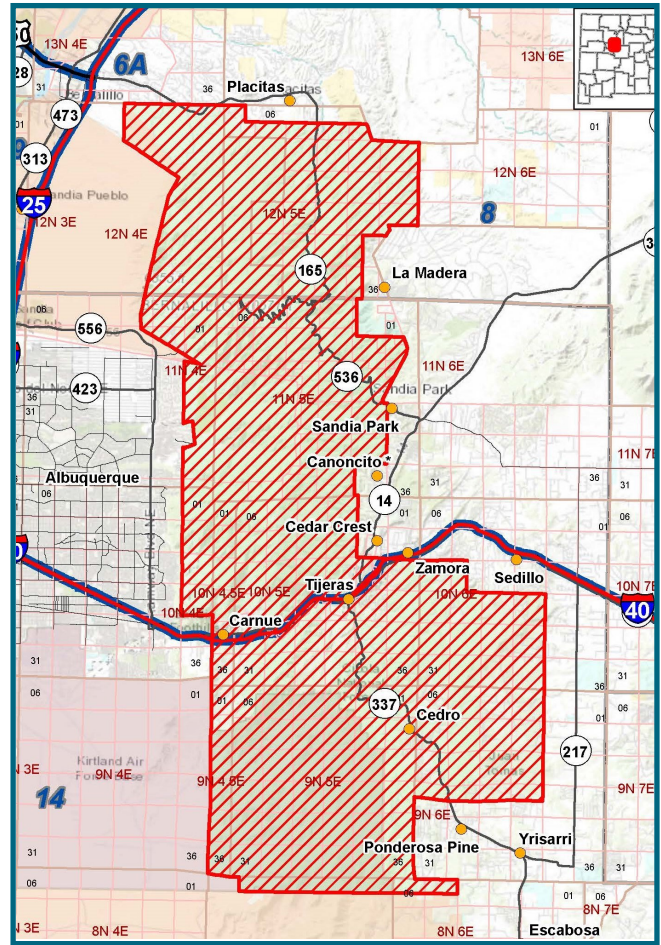




AREA CLOSURES



BLM land within the Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks National Scenic Area is closed to land sets

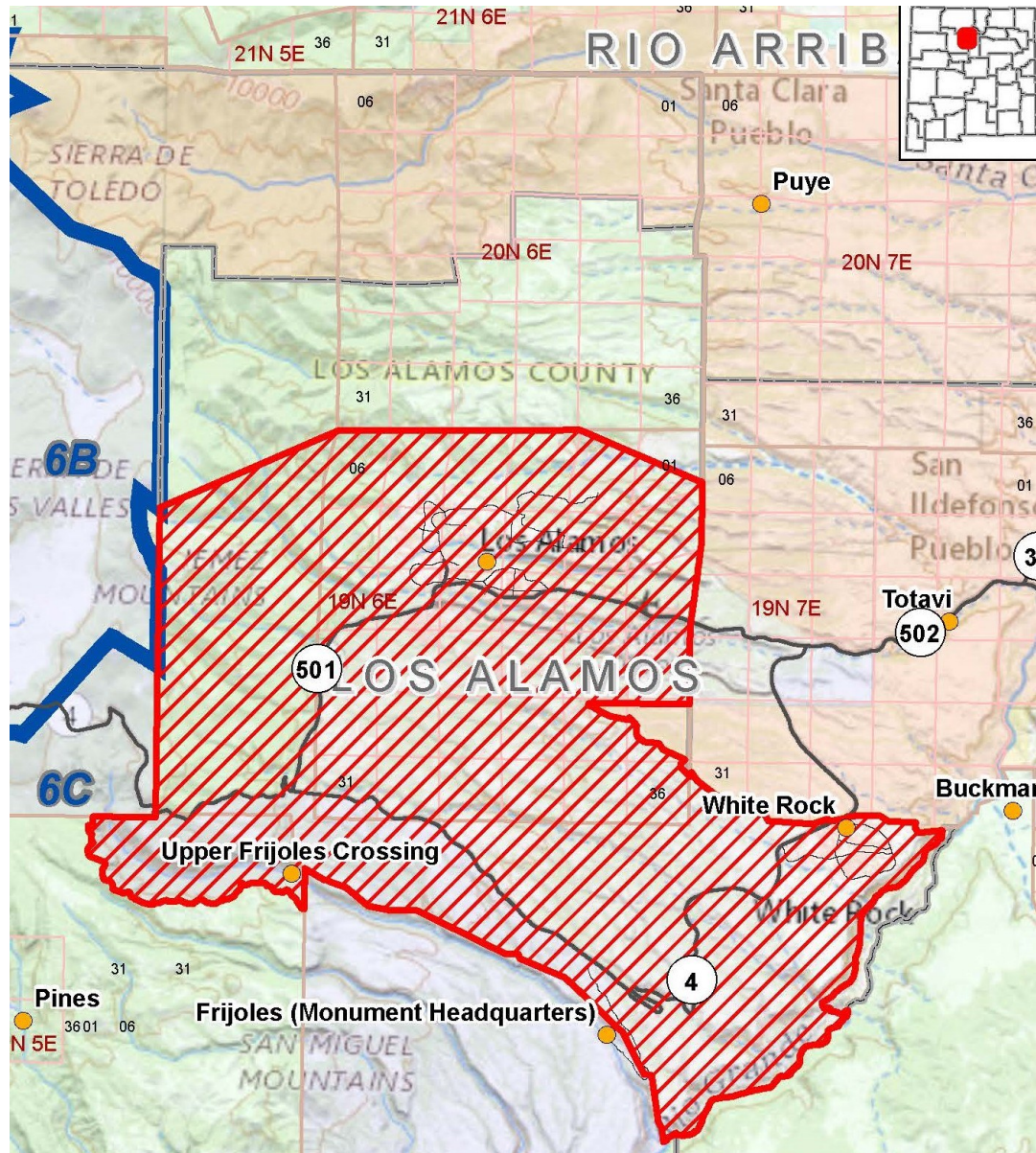


US Forest Service land within the Sandia Ranger District is closed to land sets





AREA CLOSURES



Portions of Los Alamos County are closed to land sets





BMPs AND DEFINITIONS

Best Management Practices (BMPs)

NMDGF develops regulations on trap types, sizes, and modifications using recommendations from the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (AFWA's) Best Management Practice (BMP) program. These recommendations are based on over 20 years of scientific evaluation of each trap for efficiency, selectivity, safety, practicality, and animal welfare. There are BMP recommendations for each furbearer species that is harvested in North America so that trappers can be informed on the best trap types and modifications for capturing that given species.

The majority of trappers use BMP recommendations when selecting and tuning their traps.

Modifications like off-set jaws, laminations, shock-springs and swivels improve a trapper's productivity, ensure welfare of trapped animals, and improve public confidence in trappers and wildlife managers.



Definitions

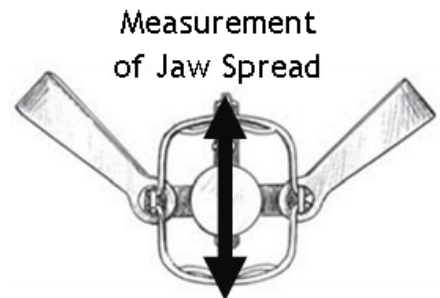
Bait - the flesh, hide, fur, or viscera of any animal. Bones free of flesh are not considered bait

Jaw spread - the distance between the jaws when measured across the center of the trap and perpendicular to a line drawn through the pivot points of the jaws when the trap is set

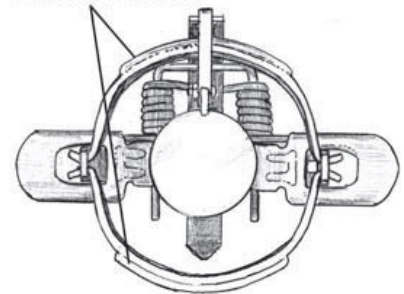
Laminated - any modification to the jaw thickness of a foothold trap by fastening a strip of metal (rod or flat stock) to the trap jaw, or a trap that is manufactured with cast jaws, which increases contact surface area of the jaw

Land set - any foothold trap or snare set on land

Water set - any trap or snare set fully in water



Laminations





GENERAL TRAPPING REGULATIONS

The following restrictions apply to traps and snares that could reasonably be expected to catch a protected furbearer. This includes traps and snares set for unprotected furbearers that might catch a protected furbearer.

General Trapping Regulations

Legal Shooting Hours

There are no restrictions on shooting hours for trapping.

Legal Sporting Arms

Traps, snares, any firearm, muzzle-loader, compressed air gun, shotgun, bow, or crossbow are legal methods of taking furbearers. Restricted-use pesticides may not be used for the take of any furbearer.

Marking Traps and Snares

You must permanently mark all of your traps and snares with your NMDGF-issued user identification number or the name and address of the trapper using the trap or snare. Each trap or snare must be permanently marked (i.e. etched) or have a durable tag securely attached with the required identifying information.



Tampering with Traps

It is illegal to destroy, damage, disturb, steal or remove any trap, snare, or trapped wildlife without permission of the owner of the trap or snare. However, domestic animals caught in traps may be released at any time.





GENERAL TRAPPING REGULATIONS

Check Requirements

All traps and snares set on land must be visually checked at least once every calendar day.

Water sets must be visually checked at least once every other calendar day.

A licensed trapper may designate another licensed trapper as an agent to check their set traps and snares on alternating check days, but the trapper must personally check the traps and snares at least every other check day.

For example, for land sets operating Monday through Friday, the trapper checks Monday, Wednesday, and Friday and his or her agent checks Tuesday and Thursday.



An agent must be designated by written permission that includes the agent's full name and contact information.

The agent must know the location of each trap and snare they will be checking.

Off-road Travel

Licensed furbearer hunters and trappers may not drive or ride in a motor vehicle which is driven off an established or closed road on public land. Written permission is required to drive or ride in a motor vehicle off-road on private land. An exception is the use of snowmobiles used to retrieve game in an area not closed to vehicular traffic.





TRAP AND SNARE REQUIREMENTS

Foothold Traps and Modifications

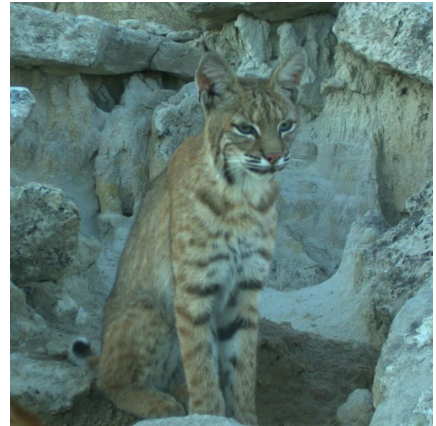
Land Sets

Foothold traps set on land must:

- Have an outside jaw spread of 6 ½ inches or less, unless the trap is laminated on the outside surface of the jaw or has cast jaws, in which case the jaw spread must not exceed 7 inches
- Be off-set with a 3/16 inch off-set, or be modified with padded (rubber, canvas, or other soft material) jaws, if the trap has a jaw spread of 5 ½ inches or larger
- Not have toothed jaws.

Water Sets

The maximum jaw spread for foothold traps set fully in water is 7 ½ inches.



Body-grip Traps and Modifications

Land Sets

Body-grip traps set on land must:

- Have an inside jaw spread of 7 inches or less
- Be set recessed in a cubby with the trigger at least 8 inches from the entrance, if the inside jaw spread is 6 to 7 inches.

Water Sets

Body-grip traps set fully in water must:

- Have an inside jaw spread of 12 inches or less
- Be submerged in water up to their jaw pivot or deeper if the inside jaw spread is 8 inches or larger.





TRAP AND SNARE REQUIREMENTS

Snare Modifications

Snares are an effective device for capturing furbearers. There are a number of techniques for setting snares that make them more selective, and NMDGF has the following regulations on snares to improve selectivity and animal welfare:

- Snares set on land must have a lock or break-away device which is designed to release or fail when a maximum of 350 pounds of pressure is applied. The lock/break-away must be attached so that no part of the snare remains on the animal when it releases or fails.
- Snares must be securely anchored, and cannot be attached to a drag (except foot snares).

An additional modification that is recommended, but not required, is a stop on the snare loop that prevents it from closing smaller than a two inch diameter. This improves the selectivity of the snare by stopping the loop before it can close and capture animals like deer and small mammals.

Anchoring Devices and Modifications

Modifying foothold traps for furbearers in New Mexico to have at least two swivels and a shock-spring can reduce the risk of injury to the captured animal, and improve the efficiency and holding capacity of the trap.

Any foothold trap set on land must have at least two separate swivel points in the anchor chain, one of which must be within 6 inches of the trap.

All traps and snares set on land must have stakes, chains, drags, or another anchoring device, such that any furbearer, coyote, or wolf caught will be prevented from escaping with the trap.





TRAP AND SNARE PLACEMENT

Visible Bait

No land set may be placed within 30 feet of bait over 2 ounces which is visible to airborne raptors. This improves the selectivity of your sets by avoiding incidental capture of birds of prey, vultures, ravens, and crows. Another selective technique when using bait is to avoid using food-based baits in areas where pets are common.

Setbacks

Setback distances minimize the chance of people and pets coming into contact with your traps. This protects your traps, decreases time spent releasing non-target animals, and avoids negative interactions with the public.



There is a minimum setback distance of **one-half mile** from:

- an established and maintained public campground or boat-launching area
- an occupied dwelling without written permission of the occupant of the dwelling
- a designated and signed roadside rest area, public picnic area, or trailhead.

There is a minimum setback distance of **150 feet** from:

- any man-made livestock or wildlife catchment, pond, or tank containing water, except on private land.

There is a minimum setback distance of **75 feet** from:

- the edge of any public road or trail (including any culvert or structure located beneath it) if no right of way fence is present, except on private land. Land sets may not be placed within any right of way fence on any public road.





RELEASING ANIMALS

Releasing Animals

At times, you will catch non-target species or individuals that you do not wish to keep. You are required to carry a release device or catchpole. All captured animals must be removed or released from any trap or snare at the time of check. If you cannot release the animal yourself, NMDGF must be notified as soon as possible.

You may not kill any protected furbearer outside of the established season, protected furbearer for which there is no season, any federally protected bird, or any federal or state threatened or endangered species (including by use of body-grip trap or snare). If you capture one of these species, you must release it alive and unharmed. If the animal is badly injured and/or releasing it would be dangerous, NMDGF must be contacted as soon as possible.

If you are trapping in southwestern New Mexico there is the possibility you will come across the federally endangered Mexican wolf. If you capture a Mexican wolf, you must report the capture to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Interagency Field Team as soon as possible to arrange for radio-collaring and release of the wolf. If the wolf is released or has pulled out of the trap, it must be reported within 24 hours. You can contact the USFWS at 1-888-459-9653, or 928-339-4329. To learn more about the Mexican wolf recovery program, visit their website at <https://www.fws.gov/southwest/es/mexicanwolf/>.





HUNTING FURBEARERS

Legal Hunting Hours

The period one-half hour before sunrise to one-half hour after sunset.

Legal Sporting Arms

Any firearm, muzzle-loader, compressed air gun, shotgun, bow, or crossbow may be used to hunt protected furbearers. Calls (including mechanically or electronically recorded calling devices) may be used.

Dogs and Falcons

Dogs and falcons may be used only during open trapping season for protected furbearers. There is no pursuit or training season other than the regular open season.

Artificial Light

Spotlights may not be used to hunt protected furbearers except raccoons. A hunter can hunt for and take raccoons by use of artificial light while hunting at night during open season. The artificial light used for raccoon hunting must be a headlamp or hand-held flashlight, and it may not be cast from a vehicle. The largest caliber allowed for raccoon under this provision is a .22 rimfire.



Hunting from Roads

You may not shoot at any protected furbearer from a road or from within the right-of-way fences of any maintained public road. If there is no right-of-way fence, you may not shoot at any protected species from any part of the maintained surface of the public road. A public road is any maintained road which is open to the public which has been maintained using public or private funds. In addition, you may not shoot at any protected species from within or upon a motor vehicle or aircraft.

Mobility Impaired Hunters

Any licensed furbearer hunter who has a Mobility Impaired card is allowed to shoot at, take or attempt to take furbearers during their respective open seasons, from a stationary motor-driven vehicle only if the vehicle has been parked completely off of the established road's surface, and only when the established road has no right-of-way fence. The holder of a Mobility Impaired card may not shoot at, take or attempt to take any protected species from within the right-of-way fence on any established road.





POSSESSING FURBEARERS AND MANDATORY HARVEST REPORTING

At the end of the season, you have responsibilities as a trapper or hunter. There are NMDGF regulations that require or prohibit you from taking certain actions after trapping or hunting furbearers.

Possessing Furbearers or Furbearer Parts

Transferring a harvested furbearer, or its parts, to another person (except a licensed fur dealer) requires you to provide a possession certificate to the person you are giving the furbearer to. A copy of a possession certificate can be found in the Rules and Information Booklet. No one is allowed to hold, retain, transfer, sell, or attempt to sell live protected species.

Mandatory Harvest Reporting

Wildlife biologists depend on data from trappers and hunters to monitor changes in furbearer populations and hunter and trapper habits. This contributes to NMDGF's ability to maintain healthy populations, create sensible regulations, and ensure maximum enjoyment of furbearer populations.

Harvest reporting is required for anyone who purchased a trapper license, regardless of whether you hunted/trapped or not. Your report:

- Must be submitted by the date listed in the current Rules and Information Booklet
- Can be submitted online or by phone
- Can be submitted past the deadline, but an \$8 fee will be assessed.

Failure to report will result in rejection of all draw license applications (deer, elk, etc.). False or fraudulent reporting can result in your license privileges being revoked.





BOBCAT PELT TAGGING

Bobcat Pelt Tagging

Just like mandatory harvest reporting, bobcat pelt tagging is important for NMDGF's ability to monitor bobcat populations and maintain harvest with sensible regulations.

NMDGF tags bobcats in accordance with the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES). Bobcats are not endangered, but the CITES tags are required because bobcat are a potential look alike-species for some endangered spotted cats from other parts of the world. The NMDGF tagging program satisfies requirements of the CITES agreement, ensures that only bobcats are being tagged (and not other species that may look similar), and is a piece of NMDGF's sustainable management of the bobcat population in the state.

You must present your bobcat for pelt tagging at either a NMDGF office or a participating fur dealer (free of charge):

- Prior to transporting the pelt out of state
- Prior to selling or bartering the pelt
- Prior to disposing of the pelt
- Or no later than April 14, annually, whichever occurs first.

You will need to present your current New Mexico trapper license when you bring your bobcats for tagging, except if you are a resident 11 years of age or younger. Note that:

- It is unlawful to present for tagging, or to have tagged with a New Mexico CITES tag, any pelt from a bobcat taken outside of New Mexico.

Fur dealers cannot purchase a bobcat pelt that is not CITES tagged, so be sure to get it tagged!





NEW MEXICO SPECIES IDENTIFICATION



Badger (*Taxidea taxus*)

Badgers are one of the larger North American members of the weasel family; average adults weigh 12 to 16 pounds. They are known for digging extensive dens (setts) and for their fierce, aggressive behavior. In New Mexico badgers occur statewide, from grasslands and deserts to mountain meadows, provided that loose soil is available for burrowing. They are often found around prairie dog colonies, which they feed on in addition to other small prey items and carrion. Breeding occurs in August or

September.

Distribution: Statewide



Rear-1.75"W 2"L, Front-2"W 1.5"L



Beaver (*Castor canadensis*)

Beaver are large rodents capable of altering their habitat by building dams and lodges, but they will also den in river banks. Adults can exceed 60 pounds. Both sexes have large castor glands beneath the skin on the lower belly. In New Mexico, beaver historically occurred in all major rivers and perennial streams. They are common in the northern part of the state, although they have not recolonized all of their historic range. In the southern part of the state they are

absent from the Sacramento Mountains, but occur in the parts of the Gila Mountains and along the Rio Grande and Pecos River. Habitats include rivers, streams, marshes, lakes, and ponds. In New Mexico beavers eat the saplings and bark of cottonwood, aspen, willow, and alder, but will also eat aquatic vegetation and crops. Beaver breed in late January or February.

Known Range of Beaver by County in NM



Rear-4"W 6"L, Front 2"W 2"L





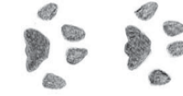
NEW MEXICO SPECIES IDENTIFICATION



Bobcat (*Lynx rufus*)

Bobcats have short tails that are black on top of the tip and white on the bottom. They are colored red, brown, or grey on the back and lighter below. Young bobcats have black spots or bars all over their bodies that fade as they age, remaining only on the insides of the legs and on the belly. Bobcats are primarily nocturnal and normally weigh 18 to 22 pounds with females smaller than males. In New Mexico, bobcats use a wide range of habitats, from deserts, shrubland, and riparian woodlands to sub-alpine forests. They may be found in close proximity to human dwellings. Breeding occurs during February and March.

Distribution: Statewide



Rear/Front - 1.75"W 2"L

How to Tell a Bobcat from a Lynx

Bobcat are a common resident of almost all habitat types in New Mexico. They are closely related to the Canada lynx, which inhabit the boreal forests of Canada and parts of the northern United States. Parts of northern New Mexico are classified as lynx range and although no populations are established here, transients may occasionally be observed. A few key identification characteristics can help distinguish between a lynx and a bobcat:

Range - The only potential habitat for lynx is high elevation forests in the San Juan and Sangre de Cristo Mountains. If you are not in this area, then it is almost certain you are seeing a bobcat.

Body characteristics - Lynx have much longer legs in comparison to their body size, almost like a bobcat on stilts. They also have larger feet for running on top of snow, and the tufts on their ears are much longer, often greater than two inches.

Pelage (coat) patterns - The most definitive way to distinguish a lynx from a bobcat, other than their range, is by their tails. In the pictures above and on the next page you can see that the tip of a bobcat's tail is black on top, and white on the bottom, while the tip of a lynx's tail is all black. Another common difference, although not always true, is that lynx rarely have the black spots or bars on their undersides and the insides of their limbs.





NEW MEXICO SPECIES IDENTIFICATION



Canada Lynx (*Lynx canadensis*)

Canada Lynx are light gray with scattered brown to black hair, cinnamon colored underparts, little to no spotting or barring, and short tails with an all-black tip. Males are larger than females, with weights ranging from 11 to 40 pounds. The Canada Lynx is on the U.S. Endangered Species List and classified as threatened in the lower 48 states. It has always been rare because its primary prey, the snowshoe hare, is uncommon. Canada lynx were never verified to occur historically in New Mexico, and historic records from

northern New Mexico in the 1900s were likely bobcat. Lynx were reintroduced in to southern Colorado in the early 2000s. It is illegal to harvest this species in New Mexico.

Distribution: There are no established populations in New Mexico, but they are occasionally sighted in the San Juan and Sangre de Cristo Mountains.



Rear/Front-3.25"W 3.25"L



Coatimundi, White-nosed (*Nasua narica*)

White-nosed coatimundi, also known as coati, are a relative of the raccoon with slender snouts and long slender tails. They are typically a chocolate brown color, but show a range of color from tan to almost black. Adult coatis weigh between 9 and 13 pounds.

This species is found mainly in southwestern New Mexico in association with woodlands in canyons and stream valleys. There are also a few reliable records from as far north as Socorro County in the Rio Grande Valley. The species might be

expanding its range in the state. Where coatis are established, multiple individuals are often found together in foraging groups called "troops". It is illegal to harvest this species in New Mexico.



Front-1.5"W 3"L, Rear-2"W 3"L





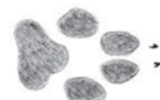
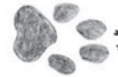
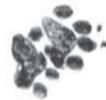
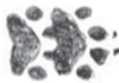
NEW MEXICO SPECIES IDENTIFICATION



Coyote (*Canis latrans*)

Coyotes are medium to large canines weighing 25 to 30 pounds. They are normally mottled with grey, but sometimes they are brown, reddish, or black. Coyotes occur statewide in a variety of habitats from deserts to mountains. Coyotes are intelligent and adaptable, living in a wide variety of habitats including urban and suburban areas. They are abundant and have become less wary of humans in recent years. Breeding occurs in February and March.

Distribution: Statewide



Rear 1.5"W 2"L

Front-2"W

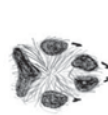


Fox, Gray (*Urocyon cinereoargenteus*)

Gray fox are small, nocturnal canines that are able to climb trees for food or refuge. They weigh 8 to 11 pounds. Their fur is gray above and red on the lower sides, chest, and back. Gray fox occur nearly statewide in New Mexico, most commonly in rocky or forested habitat. They are absent or uncommon on the plains of the eastern-third of New Mexico, but there are a few records. Gray fox have a small home range of one square mile or less. They often use dens, especially in the north. Dens are usually natural cavities marked with snagged hair and

scattered bones, but in more grassland habitat in New Mexico they may use abandoned ranch houses or gravel pits. Breeding occurs from January to early May.

Distribution: Statewide



Rear/ Front-1"W 1.5"L





NEW MEXICO SPECIES IDENTIFICATION



B. Peterson Public Domain

Known Range of Kit Fox by County in NM



Fox, Kit (*Vulpes macrotis*)

The kit fox is a small, long-legged canine with large ears. It is yellowish above and lighter below with a prominent black-tipped tail, and weighs 3 to 5 pounds. It is 24 to 31 inches in length, with a 9 to 12-inch tail. Some biologists consider the kit fox to be closely related to, or possibly a sub-species or the same species as, the swift fox found in the Great Plains prairie and grassland habitats. This small fox occurs throughout the lower and middle elevations of New Mexico west of the Pecos River. It is often associated with shrublands in desert or desert-grassland habitats. They eat rodents and rabbits. Kit fox breed from January to February.



Rear/1.25"W 1.25"L



Montana FWP

Known Range of Red Fox by County in NM



Fox, Red (*Vulpes vulpes*)

Red fox are small, shy, and adaptable, with a capacity for learning from experience. Red fox weigh 10 to 12 pounds, but may weigh up to 14 pounds in northern climates. Commonly red on top, gray to white below, with black on the ears, lower legs, and feet. Other color phases include black, silver, crosses between red and silver, and yellow. In New Mexico, red fox are common in the northwestern part of the state in the San Juan River Basin. They also occur in the Sangre de Cristo, San Juan, Jemez, and possibly the Sandia mountain ranges. In these northern mountains red fox are associated with forested habitat. The species is also found on the east side of the state, where it is associated with farmlands. Breeding occurs in January to early March.



Front-2"W 2.5"L, Rear 2"W 2"L



NEW MEXICO SPECIES IDENTIFICATION



Fox, Swift (*Vulpes velox*)

Swift fox are similar to kit fox but live in prairies east of the Rocky Mountains. Swift fox have longer ears with bases closer to the center of the skull, more rounded and dog-like heads, and tails that are shorter than kit foxes' in relation to body length. Swift fox are primarily nocturnal.

In New Mexico, swift fox are closely associated with shortgrass prairie habitats east of the Pecos River, where shrub and tree cover is minimal or absent. They may also be found in similar habitat west of the Pecos River in De Baca, Guadalupe, and Torrance counties.



Rear/Front-1.25"W 1.25"L



Marten (*Martes caurina*)

Marten are small, weasel-like woodland mammals varying from light to dark brown with a bushy tail and orange throat. They weigh from 1 to 3.5 pounds, with males larger than females. They can climb trees, but spend most of their time on the ground foraging for rodents. The Pacific marten of New Mexico and the West is often included with the American marten of eastern North America, and both species are informally grouped together as pine marten.

In New Mexico, marten are known to occupy high elevation forests of the Sangre de Cristo and San Juan mountains. Breeding occurs in July. It is illegal to harvest this species in New Mexico.



Rear/Front-1.5"W 1.5"L





NEW MEXICO SPECIES IDENTIFICATION



Ohio DNR

Mink (*Neovison vison*)

Mink are small, nocturnal carnivores with short dense fur shaded chocolate to nearly black with small patches of white on the chin, throat, or belly. Some have light fur and they are known as cotton mink. Mink vary between 1.5 to 3 pounds, with males larger than females. This species was formerly present in the northern half of New Mexico in the Rio Grande, Pecos, San Juan, and Canadian river basins where it frequented riparian habitats along rivers and streams. Mink have not been documented in New Mexico in many years and might be extirpated. Breeding occurs in late February or early March. It is illegal to harvest this species in New Mexico.



Mark Watson

Muskrat (*Ondatra ibethica*)

Musk rats are small rodents with dense glossy brown fur and a hairless tail, weighing 1 to 2 pounds in the south and 3 to 4 pounds in the north. In New Mexico, muskrats are found in all major river systems, mainly at lower elevations, but are known to occur in some headwater streams in the mountains. Habitat includes streams, marshes, ponds, ditches, and acequias or other still or slow-moving waters where cattails and other aquatic vegetation are present. Musk rats burrow into banks of streams and ponds, and they build prominent lodges out of cattails or other vegetation in marshes and lakes. Breeding occurs from late winter to September in the north, and year-round in the south.

Known Range of Muskrat by County in NM



Rear-1\"/>





NEW MEXICO SPECIES IDENTIFICATION



U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Photo

Nutria (*Myocastor coypus*)

Nutria are large rodents introduced to the U.S. from South America that create severe habitat problems in some areas. They have a negative impact on muskrats, waterfowl, and other native wildlife. Nutria weigh 5 to 25 pounds, with males larger than females. Nutria were introduced in the middle and lower Pecos River drainage in the 20th century, but are now apparently extirpated from most of this area. Nutria were released for aquatic vegetation control at San Simon Cienega in Hidalgo County in the 1950s, but this population no longer exists. They still can be found in the upper Rio Hondo and possibly on the Ruidoso River,

although its current status anywhere in the state is poorly known. Nutria use similar habitat as the muskrat in New Mexico. Breeding occurs throughout the year.



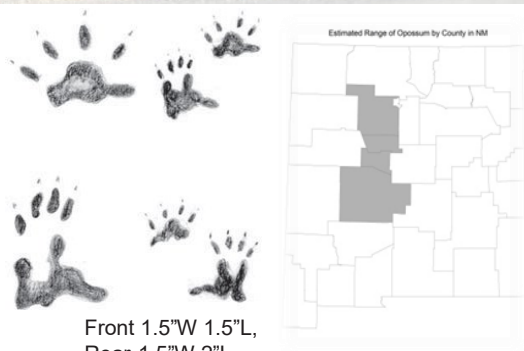
Rear-1.5"W , Front-1"W 1.5"L



MDC

Opossum (*Didelphus virginiana*)

Opossums are the only marsupial in North America. They have a fur-lined pouch and a prehensile, flesh-colored or whitish tail and a grayish-white pelt. They are typically 6 to 7 pounds. Opossums were likely introduced in the middle Rio Grande Valley in the mid-20th century and likely still persist in this area today. There are occasional sightings from the Pecos River Valley eastward that may be naturally occurring individuals originating from Texas, and native opossum in southeastern Arizona potentially could be found in southwestern New Mexico. Some records of individual opossums in New Mexico are apparently due to intentional or accidental introductions. The species is most often associated with lower-elevation woodlands along streams and rivers, and also in farmlands. Most breeding occurs in February and litters have 5 to 13 young, which stay in the pouch for 60 days.



Front 1.5"W 1.5"L,
Rear-1.5"W 2"L





NEW MEXICO SPECIES IDENTIFICATION



Otter, River (*Lontra canadensis*)

Otters are long, slender, semi-aquatic furbearers with rich, glossy fur that is brown on most of their body except for lighter patches on their cheeks, throat, and belly. Adult otters are typically between 19 and 25 pounds. Historically, otters occurred in most New Mexico river basins, but were extirpated by the mid-20th century. Since then, they have been reintroduced in the upper Rio Grande basin, where they occur from Cochiti Lake north to the Colorado state line. River otters are present on the San Juan



River, likely descended from reintroductions in the Colorado portion of the river. Otters are mainly found on perennial rivers and streams, but also use lakes, ponds, and canals. They are often associated with beaver dams and ponds. It is illegal to harvest this species in New Mexico.



Raccoon (*Procyon lotor*)

Raccoons are medium sized, adaptable furbearers with a masked face and ringed-tail. Average weights are 9 to 20 pounds, but larger in the north where weights up to 62 pounds have been reported. Raccoons occur statewide, including in the mountains, and mainly occur in close proximity to water bodies. They are often found in close association with humans, including in towns and around camping areas. Breeding occurs in January in the north to March in the south.

Distribution: Statewide





NEW MEXICO SPECIES IDENTIFICATION



Texas Parks and Wildlife

Ringtail/Bassarisk *Bassariscus astutus*

Ringtails have cat-like bodies and long, bushy tails with 14 to 16 distinct bands of black and white. They weigh 2 to 2 1/2 pounds. Some people call them “miner’s cats” because were once used in mines to control rats. During the day they stay in dens. They can climb trees or walls, and they are excellent leapers. In New Mexico the species occurs



throughout most of the state except the eastern plains. It is mainly associated with rocky areas, such as canyons, foothills, and mountains. They breed in April producing one litter of 2 to 4 young.



Front-1.5”L 2”W, Rear 1.5”W 3”L

Skunks

Striped Skunk, *Mephitis mephitis*; Spotted Skunk, *Spilogale putorius*; Hooded Skunk, *Mephitis macroura*; Hognosed Skunk, *Conepatus leuconotus*

New Mexico is home to 4 species of North American skunks. Skunks are omnivores whose diets include insects, worms, small animals, eggs, and vegetation. They are good at digging and at climbing in rough terrain.



Erwin C. Nielsen/Painet Inc.

Striped skunks are the most common skunk in New Mexico, and can be identified by the two white stripes on the back that meet and form a white cap on the head. They are widespread across New Mexico at lower and middle elevations. They use a wide range of habitats, including river valleys, grasslands, and farmlands.



The Hooded Skunk resembles the striped skunk, but has a nearly all-white back. The Hooded Skunk is limited to desert and forest areas in the southwestern part of the state.





NEW MEXICO SPECIES IDENTIFICATION



Gordon Karre © (BY-NC)

The **Hognosed Skunk** has an all-white back and a distinctive long, hairless snout that gives it its name. They are most common in the southern half of the state, but also ranges north into the Jemez Mountains and through Eastern New Mexico to the Colorado state line. Hognosed skunks use a wide range of habitats, from desert and grasslands to forest.



The **Spotted Skunk** is much smaller than the other species of skunks, and has irregular white markings all over its body. They are found statewide, mainly in rocky forested habitats, but are rarely encountered.



Rear-1"W 1.5"L, Front-1"W 1"L,

Weasels

Long-tailed weasel, *Mustela frenata*; Short-tailed weasel, *Mustela ermine*; Black-footed ferret, *Mustela nigripes*



Alden M. Johnson © CA Academy of Sciences

Long-tailed weasels are common and occur statewide in a range of habitats from shrublands to forests. They are brown on top with white fur on their belly and neck, but can turn white in winter. Their long tail measures 3 to 6 1/2 inches. The 'masked' or 'bridled' form of this weasel is found at lower elevations in the state.



VTFW

Short-tailed weasels are similar in coloration, but smaller than, long-tailed weasels. Their short tail measures 1 1/2 to 3 1/2 inches. The short-tailed weasel or ermine is found at high elevations in the Sangre de Cristo, San Juan, and Jemez mountains, where it occurs in forests and mountain meadows. The photo at left of is a short-tailed weasel in the all-white, winter color phase.





NEW MEXICO SPECIES IDENTIFICATION



The **black-footed ferret** historically occurred in prairie dog towns statewide. It was extirpated from the state, but is being reintroduced in northeastern New Mexico. Black-footed ferrets measure 19 to 22 inches, and can be distinguished from the 'masked' form of the long-tailed weasel by their larger size and dark markings on their feet. This species is federally Endangered, and it is illegal to harvest this species in New Mexico.



Wolf, Mexican Gray (*Canis lupus*)

The Mexican gray wolf is the smallest wolf in North America. They typically weigh between 50 and 80 pounds and are 5 1/2 feet long from nose to tail. Their coat is a combination of buff, gray, rust, and black. Forested mountains are the typical habitat type inhabited by wolves. They live in packs consisting of an alpha mated pair and their offspring. Breeding occurs during February and litters of 4 to 6 pups are born 2 months later.

Wolves occurred throughout New Mexico historically, but were extirpated by the early 1900s. Mexican wolves were listed as a federally endangered species in 1976, and reintroduction efforts in the Blue Range Wolf Recovery Area in western New Mexico and eastern Arizona began in the late 1990s.

Distribution: Gila National Forest and adjacent areas

