

Wolf Trapping in Blaine County Fact Sheet



OVERVIEW

A new proposal from Idaho Fish and Game (IDFG) will open wolf trapping and expand wolf hunting year-round in the Wood River Valley. As a result of statewide expansion of wolf trapping and hunting in recent years, there have been a series of tragic encounters with pets and other wildlife becoming caught in traps and snares intended for wolves.

One of the few places in Idaho where one can recreate relatively safely without fearing your pet will be caught in a trap is the Wood River Valley. **But now IDFG is considering expanding wolf trapping areas and seasons in the Wood River Valley.**

If you live and recreate in the Wood River Valley, we encourage you to reach out to the Idaho Fish and Game Commission and voice your support of keeping current protections in place during the public comment period that runs through February 25.

[COMMENT HERE](#)

TALKING POINTS

- **Wolf trapping threatens tourism and recreation in Blaine County.** The proposed trapping area within Units 48 and 49 on the west and east side of Highway 75 in Blaine County are heavily used by both summer and winter on-trail and off-trail recreationists and their dogs. Wolf trapping threatens these users. In particular, winter recreation on the Blaine County Recreation District nordic ski, snowshoe, dog, walking trails is growing rapidly. Winter is a popular time to wolf trap putting all winter recreational users at risk.
- **Recreation is an economic driver in Blaine County.** In Blaine County, there are 15 outdoor retail sports that cater to Nordic, backcountry, alpine skiing, hiking, bicycle, mountain biking, fishing, and clothing and shoes needed for these activities. Wildlife related activities like hunting, fishing and wildlife watching are also popular and largely compatible with these other types of recreation. Trapping is not. There is only one retail store that caters to hunting and that store does not carry animal traps.
- **Wolf trapping is not needed for game management/depredation in Blaine County.** It has been argued that wolf hunting and trapping are critical to protecting the elk population in Idaho. In Blaine County, the IDFG staff reported in January 2021 that there are strong elk numbers in Blaine County, Units 48 and 49. Livestock depredation is always challenging when livestock grazes on public lands. Blaine County has partnered for 13 years with the Wood River Wolf Project which employs non-lethal practices to prevent livestock depredations. These techniques have been proved effective. Additional efforts to address livestock depredations should also focus on non-lethal measures.
- **Coexistence with wildlife is a community value for Blaine County residents and visitors.** Recently, Blaine County and four of its cities passed a resolution establishing a Wildlife Friendly Cities Coalition to explore and implement programs that reduce conflicts.
- **Wolf trapping injures people and pets.** There have been a series of tragic encounters with pets severely hurt or worse after becoming caught in traps and snares intended for wolves. In 2013, IDFG noted that more than 30 dogs were caught in such traps in Idaho. Since then, trapping has expanded significantly. Since 2013, over 173 dogs have been caught in traps and snares in Idaho.
- **Wolf trapping harms other animals.** Idaho Department of Fish and Game's data shows that "Idaho wolf trappers are capturing nearly as many non-target species as they are capturing wolves. 47% of the species captured between the 2012/2013 to 2018/2019 trapping seasons, including rare fishers, wolverine, eagle, and lynx were non-target species. Of the non-target species captured, 57% of those were killed. During the period covered by the public records response, wolf trappers

killed 813 wolves, caught 620 non-target species of which 269 were released alive at the time and 351 were killed. It is likely that a percentage of those animals that were released alive eventually died from injuries sustained from the traps that either killed them outright or made it difficult for them to find food." (cite: [The Wildlife News](#)).

HELPFUL LINKS

- [Letter from Blaine County Commissioners to IDFG](#)
- [F&G mulls wolf trapping, expanding hunting in Blaine \(Mountain Express article\)](#)
- [ICL Blog: IDFG seeks to expand wolf trapping again despite recreation and safety concerns](#)