

## **Resolutions from the 38<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting of The Newfoundland and Labrador Trappers Association**

**Resolution 38-1: that the season for semi-aquatic furbearers (except mink) on Newfoundland be returned to an October 20 opening.**

**Rationale:** Since our request last year, and its subsequent approval, to move most furbearer season opening dates to November 1, we have had significant feedback from northern trappers who feel this late date will adversely affect their harvesting ability, particularly for semi-aquatic furbearers. We are still supportive of a November 1 opening for land furbearers for reasons outlined in Resolution 37-1 of 2013. Although we acknowledge that this will also adversely affect some fur harvesters, we feel that it is in the best defense of our continued use of predator neck snares to make concessions to accommodate rabbit hunting with beagles. Considering that there is a provincial precedent in place for an earlier opening date for Labrador semi-aquatic furbearers, and to accommodate concerns from our northern Newfoundland members, we feel that the water fur season opening date of October 20 for Newfoundland should be re-instated.

**Resolution 38-2: that the use of #110 type body-grip traps (single spring-powered) be discontinued on land-only for mink.**

**Rationale:** Regulations governing kill-trap type use for mink were excluded from the Agreement on International Humane Trapping Standards process. The 110 sized trap when set on land is not a humane device for kill-trapping mink, yet it is widely used for this purpose in Newfoundland. We request that consideration be given under our provincial trapping regulations to banning use of 110 sized body-traps on land only for mink capture. When completely submerged these traps efficiently dispatch mink, so we recommend their continued use in submerged applications.

**Resolution 38-3: that scientific investigations be initiated to determine why Newfoundland muskrat populations appear to be in further decline.**

**Rationale:** Reports from trappers throughout Newfoundland suggest that muskrats are either in extremely low numbers, or no longer present in traditional muskrat habitats. An understanding of what may be at play in repressing muskrat numbers is essential in effectively managing this usually prolific species.

**Resolution 38-4: that the stamping of beaver pelts on Newfoundland be discontinued and replaced with beaver pelt tags issued directly to trappers, as was previously done for several seasons.**

**Rationale:** Beaver pelt prices are currently at a very low value, and are anticipated to further drop this season due to high inventory of unsold goods. Trappers are incurring unnecessary cost to travel to a location to have these pelts stamped. Further, in some cases trappers were unable to schedule a mutually-convenient stamping appointment with a resource officer. Also, the onus is now on the trapper

to complete and return the beaver harvest (and measurements) form. It is therefore unnecessary to continue the expense and inconvenience to trappers to travel to have beaver pelts stamped. If not a complete elimination of the stamping/tagging process, then we request a reinstatement of the previous method of mailing out tags to trappers to apply to pelts themselves.

**Resolution 38-5: that beaver trappers expected to do problem beaver control receive adequate compensation for providing this public service as is done in other Canadian jurisdictions.**

**Rationale:** With the current low value of beaver pelts, trappers are incurring out of pocket expense in responding to problem beaver complaints. The time spent dealing with these complaints often impacts on available time to harvest more valuable furbearers, and so poses an additional financial loss. Other provinces either directly provide, or make provisions that allow a trapper to collect, a standard fee for the harvest and related expenses of beaver problems. NLTA has prepared a separate discussion paper to this effect which has been provided to Wildlife Division.

## **UNRESOLVED RESOLUTIONS FROM NLTA 37<sup>th</sup> AGM**

**Resolution #37-4: that the Wildlife Division reconsider the present 24 hour mandatory live holding set check requirement for Labrador, with a view toward implementing a longer duration check requirement consistent with those of all other northern Canada jurisdictions.**

**Rationale:** currently mandatory live holding sets province-wide are required to be checked daily. Across Canada mandatory check requirements (MCR) vary from every 24 hours to no mandatory live holding set check requirement within the trapping season. In northern sparsely populated areas equivalent to conditions in Labrador, check requirements vary from 72 hours to none whatsoever. For example the Yukon and Northern Sask. have 5 day MCR, while Northern Ontario, Quebec and Nunavut have no time restriction.

**Resolution #37-3: that mitigative measures be examined and implemented to reduce the “saturation” trapping effort of marten in the population hub areas of Labrador.**

**Rationale:** Recent information obtained from the Wildlife Information Management System confirms that general trapper licence sales in the noted areas have significantly increased in an apparent direct correlation with marten pelt values. As a result, local traditional fur harvesters with a reliance on trapping have experienced harvest declines (and consequent revenue loss) from the shared harvest intensity. In the absence of trapper-exclusive fur management units, it is therefore recommended that Wildlife Division examine and implement mitigative measures, such as but not restricted to licence caps, to address this management inconsistency. The current decrease in pelt value presents a window of opportunity to achieve this ambition, since it will likely reduce the number of opportunistic trappers who have participated in marten harvesting during the recent high value seasons.

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In addition to the above 5 resolutions arising from the 38<sup>th</sup> AGM, and the two carried over from our 37<sup>th</sup> AGM, we also present the following additional 3 recommendations which were discussed during the 36<sup>th</sup> AGM.

#36 – 1: That the .17 cal. HMR be legalized for humane dispatch of trapped furbearers.

#36 – 2: That each beaver trapper be entitled to have one designated helper to assist on the trapline and who is authorized to check/reset traps and transport trapped beaver on behalf of the trapline-holder.

#37 – 3: That it become mandatory that all neck snares set for predators be equipped with some form of standard breakaway device to allow for escape of hoofstock and bears from these snares.

NLTA

October 29, 2014