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### **VVMA Position Statement on Trapping**

Approved by the VVMA Executive Board on March 3, 2021

The VVMA opposes the use of conventional (non-padded, non-offset) steel-jawed foothold traps (also called leghold traps). We support the adoption of more modern and humane traps with modifications that have been designed to improve the welfare of the trapped animals. These modifications include laminating, padding, and/or offsetting the jaws, adding extra coil spring, using pan-stops, and reinforcing the base plate. These modifications are described in detail in the current "Best Management Practices for Trappers in the United States."

We encourage the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department to vigorously pursue its philosophy of ensuring that "fur-bearing animals are taken as humanely and expeditiously as possible" and we expect it to strenuously enforce its trapping regulations, including those banning toothed foothold traps and snares; timely checking of traps; trapping season dates, and trap identification.

We believe that trapper education and licensing should be mandatory, and that information concerning trapping seasons and policies should be widely disseminated by the Fish and Wildlife Department each year to the public, and in particular, to pet owners so that they may take steps to prevent their pets being accidentally trapped. We believe that the accidental trapping of endangered species should be reported to the Fish and Wildlife Department, and we support the reporting of accidental pet entrapment.

The VVMA supports continued research into ensuring that the trapping of fur-bearing animals is carried out in the most humane way possible. We also expect that any proposed changes to the current trapping regulations take into consideration target species biology, welfare and population dynamics, as well as potential increased risk to endangered and other non-target species.