

FAQs for the 2012 Wolf Hunting and Trapping Season

Licenses and License Drawings

What is the cost of the wolf harvest license?

For residents, the cost of the wolf harvest license is \$100. For non-residents, the cost of the license is \$500.

How many licenses will be available for each zone and statewide?

A statewide quota of 201 wolves was established by the Natural Resources Board, and the treaty harvest participants are eligible for 85 of those permits. A wolf harvest license is valid statewide, but zones may close early if the number of wolves harvested within a particular zone is likely to exceed the quota for that zone.

How was a quota of 201 wolves decided as the harvest number for this year's season?

The department's objective for this first year is to begin to reduce the wolf population. Quotas were set with that intent in mind. Quota ranges brought to the public for discussion purposes and feedback totaled 142 to 233. These quotas were calculated by multiplying a range of harvest rates (percentages) by the mid-point of the range of 2012 spring minimum wolf counts for the draft harvest zones. The quota was derived by establishing various harvest rates within primary or core, secondary, and unsuitable wolf habitat. For the core range, the quota range amounted to 10-20% of the mid-point. For the secondary range, the quota range amounted to 30-40%. The quota range was 50-75% of the mid-point of counts for the remainder of the state. With the proposed harvest zone modifications, the harvest rate prescriptions were again calculated. The department is proposing quotas at the high end of these percentage ranges for the modified harvest zones (20% core; 40% secondary; 75% remainder of state), but midway in the total quota range taken to the public for input. The total harvest quota for the 2012-13 season is 201 wolves, broken down by zone as follows: Zone 1 – 65; Zone 2 – 35; Zone 3 – 37; Zone 4 – 10; Zone 5 – 25; and Zone 6 - 29. The department believes this is a safe harvest that would begin to reduce the wolf population.

How was it decided that there will be 10 times as many permits (2,010) as the harvest quota (201)? Is this the same as all other game permits?

Success rates vary greatly among game species. Success rates used to set permit levels in other states, including in Minnesota, were lower. Minnesota used a factor of 15, so 6,000 permits are being issued to harvest 400 animals.

Will the State's tribes be given a set number of permits? If so, are they designated to hunt in a certain area (aside from the regulations following the six zones that all other hunters must follow)?

Tribes are eligible to claim up to half of the allowable harvestable surplus within the ceded territory. On reservations, they would have to abide by tribal code.

Will wolf harvest licenses be awarded through a drawing/preference point process?

Yes. In 2012, all licenses will be awarded by random drawing because no one will have accumulated any preference points. In subsequent years, one-half of the available licenses will be awarded through a random drawing and the remaining licenses will be awarded through a preference point drawing.

Why is the wolf license drawing different than the drawing for other species?

One-half of the available licenses are awarded through a preference point drawing and one-half of the available licenses are awarded through a random lottery. This gives everyone, regardless of preference points, the chance of drawing a tag each year through the random drawing process, and still accumulate preference points to be applied to the cumulative preference drawing for the second-half of the licenses. If there are more applicants than available licenses, this method makes some licenses available to anyone, including 1st time applicants, but also rewards long time applicants by giving them preference for half of the licenses.

Will I keep my preference points if I am awarded a wolf harvesting license through the random drawing?

No. If you are selected to receive a wolf harvest license you will lose your preference points regardless of which drawing awarded you the license.

Why doesn't the DNR issue a wolf harvest license to everyone who requests one, and then close the season when the quota is reached?

This is an option. However, this could create a scenario with thousands of hunters all hunting beginning October 15th and creating a 'rush' to harvest a wolf before the quota is reached. There would be a possibility that the season could close soon after opening, and many individuals could have the season close before they have a chance to hunt or trap. Additionally, issuing a license to everyone could create potential for the quota for a particular zone to be exceeded before DNR would be able to close that zone; there is a minimum of a 48 hour delay in closing a particular zone to wolf harvest.

What is required to participate in the wolf harvest season?

A wolf harvest license and a valid, unused wolf pelt tag are required to be in your possession while hunting or trapping wolf. In 2012, you must apply for a license between Aug. 1 - 31, 2012. Beginning in 2013, the application deadline will be August 1st each year. If selected for a wolf harvest license, you must purchase your license before you participate in the wolf season. A pelt and carcass tag will be issued to you along with your wolf harvest license.

In addition to possessing a wolf harvest license and pelt tag, the successful completion of a hunter education course or trapper education course, depending upon which harvest method is used, is required unless the hunter will be participating in the Hunter Mentorship Program.

Season Information

What are the dates for the wolf hunting and trapping season?

In 2012, the wolf hunting and trapping season will run Oct. 15, 2012 - Feb. 28, 2013. However, a zone could be closed early if the DNR determines it is necessary to avoid exceeding the quota for that zone.

How were the season dates determined?

Act 169, which created the wolf harvest season, requires the season to run from October 15th to the last day in February each year, but allows the DNR to close the season earlier when necessary to properly manage the wolf population.

Is there a per-hunter harvest limit?

Yes, one wolf per license; one license per hunter/trapper.

What methods of harvest will be legal for wolf?

Hunting with the use of firearms, crossbows, or bow and arrow, and trapping are the only legal ways to reduce a wolf to possession. Wolves that have been trapped or captured may only be killed humanely with a firearm. While not a legal firearm for shooting a wolf while hunting, a trapper can use a .22 caliber rimfire rifle to kill a wolf lawfully caught in a trap.

What hunting and trapping methods are legal for pursuing wolf?

A wolf license and carcass tag authorize wolf hunting or trapping so long as the harvester has completed the appropriate hunter education course if they plan to hunt for a wolf, or trapper education course if they plan to trap a wolf (unless exempt). Hunters who have not completed a hunter education course may hunt wolves by participating in the Mentored Hunting Program. Approved harvest methods include:

1. approved firearms, bow and arrow, or crossbow;
2. the aid of dogs used to track or trail wolf beginning the day after the November 9-day gun deer season closes

until the wolf season closes*;

3. use of predator calls, including electronic calls;
4. hunting with bait that does not contain animal parts or animal by-products other than liquid scents; or
5. trapping with or without bait, including the use of cable restraints.

Note: See the *2012 Wolf Hunting Regulations* for additional information on the restrictions surrounding each of these methods.

* Hunting wolves with dogs and training dogs to pursue wolves is not currently allowed. Call 1-855-299-9653 for updates.

What types of firearms are legal to hunt wolf?

Firearms approved for wolf hunting include center-fire rifles that are .22 caliber or larger; muzzleloaders that are discharged from the shoulder, fire a single ball or projectile, and are at least .45 caliber if smoothbore, .40 caliber if the barrel is rifled, or fire shot larger than size BB; center-fire handguns that are .22 caliber or larger and have a 5½ inch minimum barrel length; black powder handguns that are .44 caliber or larger, have a 7 inch minimum barrel length, and fire a single projectile weighing 138 grains or larger; and shotguns larger than .410 that fire slugs or shotshells loaded with shot larger than size BB.

Is meat legal to use while baiting?

It is legal to bait for wolves while hunting or trapping. However, the bait used for hunting cannot contain animal parts or animal by-products other than liquid scents. Bait used for trapping cannot contain feathers, animal flesh, fur, hide, or entrails if it is sight exposed **and** placed within 25 feet of a trap, snare, or cable restraint.

Can other furbearers (e.g., fox or coyote) be harvested by hunters over bait placed for wolf hunting?

No. It is generally still illegal to place or use bait to hunt other furbearing animals. Some exceptions apply.

Is hunting wolf with dogs legal?

A recent judicial ruling has temporarily prevented or enjoined the use of dogs for hunting wolves, and also the use of dogs to train to hunt wolves. As a result of this ruling, please be advised that the use of dogs for tracking and trailing of wolves is not authorized when hunting wolves under a wolf harvesting license. Also, the use of dogs for training to track or trail free ranging wolves is not authorized at this time. As this is a temporary injunction, the injunction on the use of dogs for wolf hunting and training could be lifted at a future date. Therefore, please contact the department for updates or changes later this fall.

How can I kill a wolf I caught in a trap or cable restraint?

Killing a wolf in a trap can only be done if a person has a valid, unfilled wolf harvest license and pelt tag, **and only by shooting the wolf with a firearm**. While not a legal firearm for shooting a wolf while hunting, a trapper can use a .22 caliber rimfire rifle to kill a wolf lawfully caught in a trap.

What if I catch a coyote, fox, raccoon, or bobcat in a wolf cable restraint?

If a person who has a valid, unfilled wolf harvest license and tag **AND** a regular furbearing animal trapping license should catch an incidental coyote, fox, or raccoon in a cable restraint lawfully set for a wolf, **AND** the season is open for the incidental species, the trapper may keep the incidental coyote, fox, or raccoon. They may also keep an incidental bobcat **IF** they also hold a valid, unfilled bobcat permit and tag and the bobcat season is open. If the season is **NOT** open for the incidental species, or the trapper only has a wolf harvest license and **NOT** a regular trapping license, they **MUST RELEASE** any incidental coyote, fox, raccoon, or bobcat they might happen to catch in any trap or cable restraint they have set for a wolf.

If a dog used to track or trail a wolf for hunting or training purposes is attacked by a wolf, will the department reimburse the dog owner for veterinary services or value of the dog?*

No. The department will not reimburse dog owners for any dog that is injured or killed by a wolf if the dog was being used to track or trail a wolf.

***Note:** Hunting wolves with dogs and training dogs to pursue wolves is not currently allowed. Call 1-855-299-9653 for updates.

Is hunting wolf at night legal?

Hunting wolf at night is legal from Nov. 26, 2012 - Feb. 28, 2013. Night hunting for wolf is only legal if hunting:

- 1) with aid of a predator call or over a legal bait site;
- 2) from a stationary position; and
- 3) without the use of dogs.

A flashlight may only be used while shooting a wolf at the point of kill or to find your way; shining for wolf is not legal. The point of kill is the point in time when an animal's position or location is known by the hunter and the use of a flashlight is allowed to accurately identify the animal, safely aim the weapon, and kill the animal. It does not include shining a light on fields, forests, or other areas for the purpose of searching for or attempting to locate wild animals for which the hunter does not already know their specific location.

When are cable restraints legal to use for trapping a wolf?

Cable restraints are legal to use from Dec. 1, 2012 - Feb. 28, 2013. See the *2012 Wolf Hunting and Trapping Regulations* for more information on legal cable restraints.

How will a successful hunter or trapper register their wolf carcass?

Upon killing a wolf, the harvester must immediately validate and attach the pelt tag to the wolf in the manner described on the tag. After skinning the wolf, the carcass tag shall be attached to the skinned carcass, and the pelt tag shall be left attached to the pelt. In addition to tagging the wolf carcass and pelt, successful wolf harvesters must:

- 1) notify the DNR by phone within 24 hours of harvesting the wolf by calling 1-855-299-9653; AND
- 2) exhibit the entire 'skinned out' carcass and 'pelt' for registration with an authorized DNR representative by the 5th day of the month following harvest.

Additionally, the DNR may require the wolf carcass, or parts of the carcass, be submitted to assist with population monitoring and research.

What is the bag limit for the wolf hunting and trapping season?

Each successful applicant for a wolf harvesting license will be allowed to harvest one wolf until the season closes or the quota is met. The wolf license does not limit in which zone a licensee is able to pursue a wolf, except that a licensee is not able to pursue wolf in a zone that has been closed. A zone could be closed early if the quota for that zone is met prior to the end of the season.

How will the DNR notify licensees of an early closure?

The DNR may close a wolf management zone to both hunting and trapping if the season quota in a particular zone is likely to be reached prior to the end of the season. Closure of a wolf zone will not take effect until at least 24 hours after the DNR has:

- 1) posted notice of the closure at *dnr.wi.gov*;
- 2) announced the closure on the telephone reporting system (1-855-299-9653); and
- 3) issued a press release announcing the closure.

Note: Contact the DNR Call Center and provide a current e-mail address if you would like e-mail notification of zone closures.

Wolf Population Information

When were the wolves taken off of the endangered and protected species list, and what were the reasons for doing so?

Wolves were officially delisted from the Federal Endangered Species list in the Western Great Lakes Distinct Population Segment (which includes Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota and parts of other great lakes states) on January 27, 2012. They were delisted because they have surpassed the delisting goal established for these states. The delisting goal for Wisconsin and Michigan was 100 wolves outside of Indian reservations. Our Spring 2012 minimum population count was approximately 850 wolves. Wolves were removed from the Wisconsin protected species list on August 18, 2012 as a result of Act 169 establishing an open season for hunting wolves in this state.

How many wolves does the DNR estimate are in Wisconsin?

The minimum count of wolves in Spring 2012 was approximately 850 wolves. That population approximately doubles over the summer after pups are born, but returns each winter to a number near the previous winter's minimum count due to annual mortality factors.

What does the DNR believe is the biological carrying capacity for wolves in Wisconsin?

According to the 1999 state wolf management plan, it was approximately 500 wolves, but studies indicate it could be higher.

Won't a wolf season potentially cause the wolves to need to be protected again?

This season proposal is an effort to find a balance between social, cultural and biological desires and realities. It is a tightrope to balance all the desires of so many. We will learn much from Wisconsin's first modern era wolf harvest season. Our goal is to assure that we have a viable and sustainable population of wolves in Wisconsin for future generations. Much has been invested in the successful recovery of the gray wolf in Wisconsin. We will continue to honor these contributions by managing this population with care, with the best information and science available, while continuing to weigh the social and cultural factors that are so significant with this species.

Other Information

How will hunters and trappers be informed about the upcoming season?

People interested in participating in the wolf harvest can sign up for updates about the upcoming season at the DNR's website, dnr.wi.gov, keyword: wolf. Information will also be distributed through press releases with local media outlets.

Why do we need a wolf harvest season?

2011 Wis. Act 169 requires the DNR to develop a wolf season based on the framework provided in the law.

A wolf harvest season adds a tool by which to manage the wolf population in our state. The combination of regulated public wolf harvest and issuance of landowner permits tied to depredation issues will allow us to balance biological and social dynamics of Wisconsin's wolf population.

Why did the DNR decide to begin allowing wolf harvesting now?

Wisconsin Act 169, which was signed by the Governor in April 2012, established that there would be a wolf harvest season in 2012. Hunting and trapping were also identified as methods that could be employed for population reduction and management in the state wolf management plan.

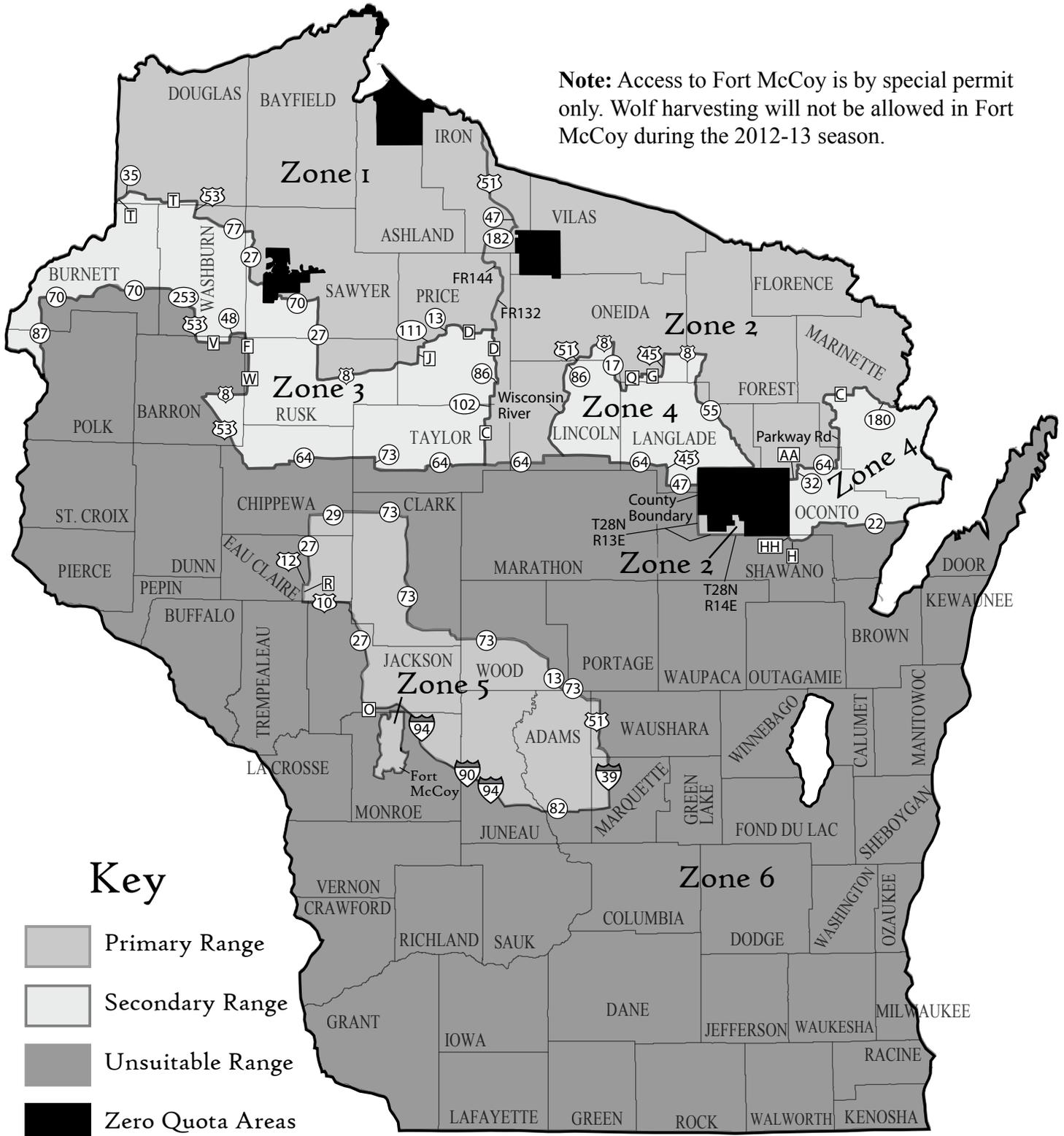
Will the wolf harvest season lead to conflict with other user groups?

The number of wolf harvest licenses issued will be limited to prevent overharvest of the species. There will be significantly less activity by wolf hunters and trappers than is currently expended for other species that are hunted or trapped using the same methods. It is possible that activity associated with a wolf hunting and trapping season will go unnoticed by most people.

A map of the wolf harvesting zones is available on the next page

Wolf Harvesting Zones

Note: Access to Fort McCoy is by special permit only. Wolf harvesting will not be allowed in Fort McCoy during the 2012-13 season.



Wolf harvest is not allowed within the exterior boundaries of the Bad River, Lac Courte Oreilles, Lac du Flambeau, Menominee, and Red Cliff reservations nor within the designated Stockbridge-Munsee wolf zone except with DNR depredation permits.