

Wisconsin Dog Trialing Regulations

WM-563-2014

This publication gives you a summary of Wisconsin's laws which pertain to hound dog and bird dog testing and trials. It is not a complete set of laws.

A Wisconsin Dog Trail License authorizes the licensee and participants to engage in an organized, competitive field event that involves sporting dog breeds. The event must be sanctioned, licensed, or recognized by a local, state, regional or national dog organization.

The two types of trial licenses with requirements are described below. Neither license will authorize commercial shoots, organized hunts, or the selling, breeding, or propagation of captive wild birds or animals. Both the bird dog and hound dog trial license are valid until the first December 31st following the date of issuance. *Example: A license issued in June 2003 is valid until December 31, 2003.*

Bird Dog Trial License \$25.00

A bird dog trial license allows the licensee & participants to purchase, possess and use the following species for dog trialing purposes:

- * Captive-bred bobwhite and other quail of the subfamily *odontophorinae*,
- * Gray (Hungarian), chukar, and red-legged partridge,
- * Mallard duck, bred in captivity
- * Ring-necked and Reeves pheasants.

Bird dog trial licenses are not needed on bird hunting preserves licensed for the same species of birds.

In addition, individuals issued a bird dog trialing license are subject to the following requirements:

- ❖ **Display of license.** A bird dog trial license shall be in the possession of the grounds marshal during dog trialing activities and must be made available to any DNR conservation warden or other DNR authorized department agent upon request.
- ❖ **Location.** The licensee and participants may conduct trials only on the properties identified and approved on the license.
- ❖ **Captive wild bird identification.** Captive wild birds released and killed under the authority of a dog trial license do not have to be marked prior to release, except that captive mallards shall be marked prior to 6 weeks of age as described:
 - (1) Removal of the hind toe from the right foot; or
 - (2) Tattooing of a readily discernible number or letter or combination thereof on the web of one foot; or
 - (3) Banding of one metatarsus with a seamless metal band; or
 - (4) Pinioning of a wing by removal of the metacarpal bones of one wing or a portion of the metacarpal bones which renders the bird permanently incapable of flight.
- ❖ **Care, Handling & Treatment.** Captive wild birds and animals possessed for dog training purposes shall be treated in a humane manner and confined under sanitary conditions with proper and adequate space, shade, food and fresh water. If birds are severely injured, they shall be humanely killed. Primary and transportation enclosures for captive-bred wild birds shall meet the requirements in § NR 16.30 to 16.38, Wis. Adm. Code.*

*See also separate DNR informational pamphlet on Captive Wildlife Pen Specifications & Transportation Standards for details.

Hound Dog Trial License \$25.00

A hound dog trialing license allows the licensee and participants to purchase, possess and use captive raccoons, rabbits, coyote, fox, bobcat, and black bear (possessed under the authority of a Captive Wild Animal Farm license) for hound dog trials.

In addition, individuals issued a hound dog trialing license are subject to the following requirements:

- ❖ **Display of license.** The license shall be in the possession of the Master of Hounds during the trial event. The license shall be made available to any DNR conservation warden or other authorized DNR agent upon request.
- ❖ **Location.** Trial only on the properties or areas identified and approved on the license.
- ❖ **Care, Handling & Treatment:**

Lawfully-obtained captive bear, bobcat and raccoon may be used for dog training and trials, provided:

 1. Any bear is also possessed under authority of a Captive Wild Animal Farm license.

2. When not being used for training purposes, these species are housed in accordance with § NR 16.30 to 16.38.
3. The bear, bobcat or raccoon is kept in a cage at all times. The cage shall be constructed so that:
 - a. The cage is strong enough to contain the animal securely and comfortably, and to withstand the normal rigors of training.
 - b. The interior has no sharp points, edges, or protrusions that could injure the animal within it.
 - c. The animal is securely contained at all times in a way that it is not likely to result in injury to itself, handlers, or persons or animals nearby.
 - d. The cage containing the bear has a mesh size no greater than 2 inches square.
 - e. Sufficient space is provided to allow the animal to make normal postural adjustments, with adequate freedom of movement to sit, stand on all 4 legs, turn around and lie in a normal manner.
 - f. Urine and feces are allowed to drain from the cage.
 - g. Permanent handles or handholds are provided on the exterior, which enables the cage to be lifted and ensures that anyone handling the cage will not come into physical contact with the animal inside.
 - h. When the cage is elevated in a tree or on a pole for training or trial purposes, the cage shall be raised a minimum of 10 feet off the ground.
4. All individuals except the owner of the captive animal, the owner's designee or the dog handler shall be kept at least 4 feet from the cage. For bear, a barrier shall be provided to assure that individuals other than the owner, designee or handlers are kept 4 feet from the cage.
5. Dogs shall be kept a minimum of one foot from the cage at all times by restraint, cage design or barrier fence, except where the cage is covered by solid material which prevents all physical contact between the dog and the captive animal. The "one foot minimum distance" does not apply to raccoon training or trials with the use of roll cages.
6. The cage shall be adequately shaded at all times.
7. The bear, bobcat or raccoon shall have access to fresh water.
8. Roll cages may not be used for dog training with bear or bobcat.
9. Training & Trialing periods.
 - a. The length of time that captive wild bear, bobcat or raccoon may be used for training exercises may not exceed 12 hours within a 24-hour period.
 - b. Captive wild bear, bobcat and raccoon shall be provided a minimum of 8 consecutive hours of rest within a 24-hour period.
 - c. Bear, bobcat or raccoon used for training may not be housed in an enclosure that does not meet the primary enclosure standards in § NR 16.30(4), Wis. Adm. Code for a period of more than 72 hours.

Lawfully-obtained captive rabbits, hares, coyote and fox, may be used for dog training and trials, provided:

1. These species are confined within a hound dog training enclosure which meets the requirements of § NR 17.045, Wis. Adm. Code, has been inspected by the Department, and has a current Hound Dog Training Enclosure Permit.
2. Training & Trialing periods:
 - a. For captive coyote and fox within a hound dog training enclosure, training activity may not exceed 16 hours and trialing may not exceed 12 hours within a 24-hour period.
 - b. For captive coyote and fox within a hound dog training enclosure, a minimum of 8 consecutive hours of rest within a 24-hour period shall be provided during which no dog training or trialing may take place.

See also separate informational pamphlets on [Captive Wildlife Pen Specifications & Transportation Standards](#) Pub-CS-20, and [Hound Dog Training Enclosure Regulations](#) PUB-WM-477 for specific details. Copies also available at your local DNR Service Center.

DOG TRIALS ON DEPARTMENT LANDS

Applications should be made before March 1 for trials held on or prior to July 31 and before July 1 for trials held after July 31 to coordinate scheduling with other events. After these deadlines, applications will be considered on a first-come first-served basis and must be submitted at least 10 days prior to the date of the trial.

Captive wild pheasants, when provided by the DNR, may only be used on Department lands and may not be shot at dog trials unless authorized by the Department. All unused live game birds provided by the Department shall be released on the trial grounds at the end of the event. All animals which are no longer alive should be consumed or disposed of properly and promptly.

Captive bears may not be trialed on Department lands.

Equines may be used only as authorized by the trial license.

A grounds marshal or Master of Hounds shall be designated by the licensee, and is responsible for the dog trial coordination, supervision, clean up and regulation compliance for each field trial. All trash and other waste materials including field trial markers are to be removed at the completion of the trial.

The Department may cancel or reschedule dog trial events and restrict or prohibit dog trial equine or vehicle use if excessive damage occurs or is likely to occur to soils or vegetation on Department lands. License fees shall be refunded if a trial is canceled by the Department and an alternative site or date cannot be established.

Class 1 field trial grounds

Class 1 grounds are those department lands that are posted, marked or designated where dog trials are allowed year-round, except that hunting shall have priority. Class 1 field trial grounds include the following:

- 1) Richard Bong state recreation area- the west unit of the special use zone
- 2) George W. Mead wildlife area
- 3) Lower Wisconsin River wildlife area- Mazomanie unit
- 4) Kettle Moraine state forest- Ottawa unit
- 5) Pine Island wildlife area

Class 2 field trial grounds

Class 2 training grounds include any other DNR lands which are designated on maps available from the Department (dnr.wi.gov, keyword search “dog training”). Department lands will not be approved if dog training is determined to be inconsistent with the master plan, property plan, wildlife management objectives, or federal requirements. Class 2 grounds may have property-specific regulations (see maps). Many Class 2 grounds are closed April 15-July 31 as indicated on the property map and as posted at the property with department signs.

DOG TRIALING ON FREE-ROAMING WILD ANIMALS

Except as described in ‘Prohibitions’ below, any person may train or trial dogs on free-roaming wild animals (except wolves) without a dog training or trialing license.

Prohibitions

- ❖ *Department lands.* Dogs shall be controlled on a leash not longer than 8 feet in length from April 15 - July 31 on all DNR public hunting lands, with the exception of Class 1 and select Class 2 dog training grounds (see additional restrictions below).
- ❖ *Exceptions for training on raccoons and rabbits.* From July 1 to the following April 14th hound dogs may be trained on free-roaming raccoons and rabbits on Department lands without a leash (except where prohibited in state parks, campgrounds, natural areas and other posted area).
- ❖ *Northern restricted zone.* Dog training on any captive or free-roaming wild animal is prohibited May 1 to June 30 on all public and private lands within the northern restricted zone. *Exception:* A person may train or trial dogs on captive or free-roaming *raccoons and rabbits* in the northern restricted zone May 1 to June 30 provided all the following apply:
 1. The licensee applies for and receives a hound dog training or trialing license.
 2. The licensee complies with any restrictions placed on a license to prevent the pursuit of wild bear.
 3. The Department approves the requested property locations (licensee may list up to 3 townships in the same or adjoining counties for training purposes).
 4. No more than 2 dogs in a single pack may be used to pursue raccoon or rabbit for training purposes, regardless the number of persons assisting the licensee and regardless of the dogs’ ownership.



Northern Restricted Zone

- ❖ *Bear dog training period.* An individual may ONLY use dogs to pursue free-roaming wild bear from July 1 to August 31 provided:
 1. The person possesses a class A or B bear license, or is exempted from needing the license (e.g. under age 16);
 2. Each dog is uniquely tattooed or wears a collar with the owner's name and address attached;
 3. No more than 6 dogs in a single pack may be used to pursue bear, regardless of the number of persons assisting the licensee and regardless of the dogs' ownership.

NOTE: Bears may not be pursued where prohibited in state parks, state campgrounds, state natural areas or other posted or restricted areas.
- ❖ *Revocations.* Pursuant to s. 169.45(7), Stats., the department may revoke a dog training license issued under s. 169.20, Stats., when dogs are found to be running bear in the northern restricted zone at times other than the July 1 to August 31 bear dog training period established under s. NR 10.101(2)(b).
- ❖ *Killing wild animals.* No person engaged in training dogs may kill or cause to be killed any free-roaming wild animal including unprotected wild animals without Department approval.

REPORTS, RECORD KEEPING AND PROOF OF LEGAL POSSESSION REQUIREMENTS

Each person holding a dog training license must keep a record by date of all captive wild birds and animals that are purchased, acquired, transferred, died, killed or escaped, including:

1. Complete name and address and any Captive Wildlife License number of the person from whom the animals were purchased or acquired.
2. The date of the transaction and the number and species of the wild animals.
3. All captive wild animals that have died, have been killed, or have escaped.

Records must be kept up-to-date and all transactions must be recorded within 7 days. All records and reports must be kept for at least 3 years and must be made available for inspection by DNR personnel upon request.

Annual Reports

All license holders must submit an annual report by January 30th each year, which include all of the following information for each species of captive wild animal licensed by the person holding the license:

1. The total number of each species possessed on the date of the report.
2. The total number of each species that were purchased or otherwise acquired during the reporting year.
3. The total number of each species that were released or transferred during the reporting year.
4. The total number of each species that were killed, escaped or died during the reporting year.

Quarterly Reports

1. You must submit a quarterly report by April 30, July 31, October 31, and January 31 each year for the previous 3 months.
2. You only need to report transactions involving **bobcat, coyote and fox** on your quarterly report.
3. A quarterly report does not need to be filed if you do not purchase, acquire, transfer, or have any deaths or escapes involving these species during a quarter.

Submission of required reports may be a condition for renewal of any license or permit.

Captive Wildlife Laws

State Statute Chapter 169, Captive Wildlife is available for download here:
<http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/WildlifeHabitat/documents/captive169.pdf>

Administrative Code NR 16, Captive Wildlife is available for download here:
<http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/WildlifeHabitat/documents/captiveNR16.pdf>

To purchase copies via mail, please call or write:
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For more information, please see the Department of Natural Resources' website:
dnr.wi.gov , keyword search "Dog Training"