



THE ASSOCIATION FOR THE
PROTECTION
of Fur-Bearing Animals

Suite 701, 718-333 Brooksbank Ave.
North Vancouver, BC V7J 3V8
Telephone: 604-435-1850
Fax: 604-435-1840
info@thefurbearers.com
thefurbearers.com

April 24, 2019

Re: Snares in the community

Dear Mayor Harrison and Council,

We heard with great sadness the tragic story of how Molly, a healthy and happy family member of Jeff Zakus, lost her life to an inhumane neck snare.

Mr. Zakus will best tell his story to you, and we believe that as compassionate leaders of your community, you will listen. We would like to provide some ancillary facts that can help inform your decision regarding the use of dangerous traps in Salmon Arm.

At current time there are no provincial requirements for trappers to post warning signs of traps in an area regardless of how densely populated it is, or how frequently recreational areas are used by families, pet owners, and other outdoor enthusiasts. There are no required setbacks from publicly accessible trails or property lines – only that traps cannot be set within 200 metres of a dwelling. There is no required consent from municipalities for traps to be used on private property regardless of property boundaries and access points. We are aware that the government of British Columbia estimates approximately eight pets are reported maimed or killed by traps per year in the province (evidence found in a briefing note through Access to Information and Privacy Act, and only includes those directly reported).

The latest research, conducted primarily by trapper and biologist Dr. Gilbert Proulx, indicates that killing neck snares cannot be used humanely and can leave target animals – let alone non-target animals – suffering for hours. The injuries sustained are horrific and can include what is known as “jelly head”, a phenomenon in which blood vessels may burst internally causing a visible and grotesque swelling of the animals’ head. Like most traps, snares cannot discriminate between target species and as such present a risk to any wildlife large enough to engage the restricting wire loop. Death can be slow and painful.

Additionally, killing neck snares are not included in the Agreement on International Humane Trapping Standards (AIHTS), a trade agreement to which Canada is a signatory.

While a by-law may not address poaching, it does give the municipality the tools to prevent unnecessary suffering as well as education to those attempting to “manage” wildlife on their own.

The Conservation Officer Service has noted publicly that municipalities have the ability to create local by-laws prohibiting traps in their communities. To support our position and the request made by Mr. Zakus we have attached a sample by-law from Gibsons, British Columbia, that addresses such issues, as well as links to the science and anecdotal information regarding the cruelty of traps.

We look forward to reading your response and will happily work with Council, staff, and community members to protect those who are most vulnerable.

Warmest regards,

Michael Howie
Director of Advocacy and Communications
The Fur-Bearers

References on following page.

The Fur-Bearers is a wildlife non-profit based in British Columbia that was founded in 1953 to advocate on behalf of fur-bearing animals in captivity and in the wild. They work with communities to promote co-existence through science-based tools, policy, and education.

References:

Gilbert Proulx & Dwight Rodtka (2017): Steel-Jawed Leghold Traps and Killing Neck Snares: Similar Injuries Command Change to Agreement on International Humane Trapping Standards, *Journal of Applied Animal Welfare Science*
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/10888705.2017.1286989>

Proulx, G., Rodtka, D., Barrett, M. W., Cattet, M., Dekker, D., Moffatt, E., & Powell, R. A. (2015). Humaneness and Selectivity of Killing Neck Snares Used to Capture Canids in Canada: A Review. *Canadian Wildlife Bioogy & Management*,4(1). Retrieved April 24, 2019, from https://www.alphawildlife.ca/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/127-2015-1-Proulx_FINAL-Kiling-Neck-Snares.pdf.

Howie, M. J. (2019, February 28). Intolerable Cruelty paints an alarming picture of wildlife killing in Canada. Retrieved April 24, 2019, from <https://thefurbearers.com/blog/intolerable-cruelty-paints-alarming-picture-wildlife-killing-canada>

Howie, M. J. (2015, December 02). BC government knew pets were dying while they reviewed policies. Retrieved April 24, 2019, from <https://thefurbearers.com/blog/action-alert-bc-government-knew-pets-were-dying-while-they-reviewed-policies> (Article regarding ATIP information on trapped pets)

Brak, J. (2019, March 27). Salmon Arm man loses dog to coyote snare within city limits. *Salmon Arm Observer*. Retrieved April 24, 2019, from <https://www.saobserver.net/news/salmon-arm-man-loses-dog-to-coyote-snare-within-city-limits/>

"Setting traps on private property is legal in B.C., with regulations stating snares cannot be located within 200m of a private residence and must be set by an approved trapper. Because of the 200m restriction [conservation officer Tanner] Beck says snares are not common within city limits, but the deep bush behind this particular property allowed for legal snare use. Municipalities can prohibit trapping through bylaws, but Salmon Arm has no such bylaw."