

Missoulian

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Dennis “Foothold” Schutz ignores real issues and twists the truth about his hobby — killing our wildlife for fun and profit (Missoulian letters, June 3). Speaking for trappers as well as Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks, he wants us to believe that FWP and trappers are trying to solve the pesky pets-mangled-and-killed-in-traps problem. Quite the opposite is true: the reason FWP and some trappers have gone “pro-active” is to combat Footloose Montana’s success shedding light on the barbaric activity of trapping. Hundreds of people have joined our mission and more have written letters to the editor expressing their disgust about trapping.

FWP must protect the public’s right to safely enjoy public lands; our taxes, hunting and fishing licenses support FWP. Yet FWP supports — with our money — a sport that maims and kills our hunting dogs, four-legged companions and wildlife, including endangered species. What is FWP’s policy on the trapping of endangered species? FWP doesn’t keep records of non-target animals killed by traps, preferring to hide the problem-- reason alone for departmental investigation.

Instead, FWP plans to copy Footloose Montana with “Pet Release Clinics,” a public relations ploy to improve the image of trapping and keep traps on public land, for the public to deal with. Footloose Montana has conducted pet safety workshops for two years, teaching people how to release pets from traps—without the pro-trapping spin and without FWP funding.

Let me make something very clear: No amount of spin can change the indiscriminate cruelty of traps set on public land to kill wildlife as well as collaterally injure and kill other animals. It is purely wrong to torture animals in the name of recreation or sport, and no matter how hard FWP and the trappers try to avoid that truth, they cannot hide it from the rest of us.

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*Promoting trap-free public lands for people, pets and wildlife*

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