

When I read the online responses to Beth Dopp's letter against trapping, I saw once again how the trapping community resorts to name calling, "blame the victim", and emotion.

Not all dogs caught in traps are the results of negligent owners. My dogs have been in both a leg hold and conibear trap, and both times they were under my control. The traps, both times, were next to the trail, which is illegal. Trappers rant about "ethical" trapping, but in my experience, "slob" trappers seem to be the norm.

The canyons near my home are infested with traps, and one can hardly go anywhere without encountering them, probably because there's no limit to how many a trapper can set.

Some writers implied Beth has never been in the woods and seen nature's raw reality. What does that have to do with anything? Apparently, trappers think that excuses their cruelty, done for profit.

Comparing trapping with hunting is like apples and oranges. Hunters have the intent to make a humane kill, while trappers know the extended trauma they inflict. I've seen plenty of trapping, and it's not easy to forget for people with ethical sensibilities or compassion. Some people are bothered by torturing animals, and some aren't.

Personally, I spend months in the wilderness every year, and have been a member of the NRA for almost thirty years. I wasn't born here, but I've lived here 42 years. I think that makes me a native.

Mike Koeppen
Florence, MT