

# FOOTLOOSE MONTANA

Promoting trap-free public lands for people, pets & wildlife

October 2008

[www.footloosemontana.org](http://www.footloosemontana.org)

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## JOIN THE FOOTLOOSE MONTANA MARCHING UNIT IN THE PARADE OF THE DEAD

Please join the Footloose Montana Marching Unit for the Parade of the Dead on Sunday, November 2. We'll meet at 4:45 p.m. at the train on North Higgins. Dress in warm clothes under your Footloose Shirt! See you then!

## THANKS FOR SUPPORTING THE 2nd ANNUAL FOOTLOOSE MONTANA FUNDRAISER

Oh what fun! More than 100 supporters—seasoned and new—celebrated with us at our 2nd annual fundraiser at the Ten Spoon Winery. A beautiful late summer evening set the stage for our silent and live auctions and a bountiful buffet. Many thanks and compliments to Marc and Lorenza Cooke for catering a delicious barbeque! Supporters had lots of fun playing games—“apple dunk” and “ring it and win it!” The crowd was entertained by the fantastic music of The Pleasure Kings. With the onset of darkness, we gathered around a huge bonfire to enjoy the guitar playing of Dan Dubuque and watch the amazing fire dancers.

Our generous supporters allow us to expand our Montana educational reach: raising awareness about the danger—not to mention the suffering—that traps pose to companion animals and wildlife on our citizen-owned public lands; conducting more Trapped Pet Release Workshops; and establishing Footloose Montana chapters statewide. Please contact us if you know anyone, particularly in eastern Montana, who would be interested in running a chapter in their community to help spread the word about the dangers of traps.

Once again, a big Footloose THANK YOU to all of our many supporters, including the business and arts community, who made our auctions and the entire fundraiser a very fun, profitable, and gratifying experience. And a special warm welcome to our new members!

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE TRAPPING SEASON 2008-09

Fur prices are up so the number of commercial and recreational trappers will increase this season. Targeted furbearing animals are beaver, otter, muskrat, mink, marten, fisher, wolverine, bobcat (2,480 bobcats can be legally trapped this season in Montana), lynx and swift fox (trapping season for the latter two species is closed). Predators such as coyotes, weasel and skunks, and non-game wildlife with commercial value (badger, raccoon and red fox) can be trapped year-round. Thousands of animals are going to be injured or killed by trappers, including non-targeted, threatened and endangered species.

## **Montana is divided into seven trapping districts:**

- District 1 (Kalispell area), district 2 (Missoula area), district 3 (Butte/Helena/Bozeman area), district 4

(Great Falls/Lewistown area), district 5 (Billings area), district 6 (Havre/Glasgow area) and district 7 (Miles City area)

**Trapping seasons:**

- For beaver, otter, muskrat and mink (runs September 1 through May 31, 2009 in districts 4 through 7)
- For beaver, otter, muskrat and mink (begins November 1 and ends April 15, 2009 in districts 1 through 3)
- For all other species (begins December 1 and ends in March or May 2009 depending on the district)

**Posting traps:**

- Trappers are NOT required to post signs in areas where they set traps.

**Trap check:**

- Trappers are NOT required to check their traps in any specific period of time. Instead, Fish, Wildlife and Parks (FWP) merely recommends checking traps every 48 hours.

**Trap set back:**

- Public roads and highways: Body-gripping traps (Conibear traps [7 x 7 inches or larger] and foothold traps) can be set 30 feet from the road centerline.
- Public land roads and trails: Traps and snares can be set 50 feet from the edge of open roads and hiking trails.
- Public land trailheads: Foothold traps and snares can be set 300 feet from a designated trailhead. Conibear traps (body-gripping killing traps) can be set 1,000 feet from a designated trailhead.

**Closures:**

- In trapping district 2 (Missoula area), FWP has designated the Blue Mountain and Pattee Canyon Recreation Areas, and the Rattlesnake National Recreation Area (that portion lying outside and excluding the Rattlesnake Wilderness Area) CLOSED to furbearer trapping.

**Note:** Trappers have not been using these areas for trapping in the past thus the ‘closure’ of these areas can be perceived as a PR ploy by FWP to show the public they address the dog safety issue. At meetings with FWP officials, Footloose Montana representatives have repeatedly recommended closing the areas where most conflicts occur—companion dogs are injured or killed in traps. These are some of the areas preferred by trappers and therefore, our wildlife agency has decided that the interests of trappers are more important than the interests of the public who wish to protect companion animals and other non-targeted species.

**For more information on the 2008-09 trapping regulations, visit:**

<http://fwp.mt.gov/content/getItem.aspx?id=35118>

**CONTACT US TO REPORT TRAP LOCATIONS AND INCIDENTS**

When you are out and about this fall and winter and you come across traps or snares, please report the type of trap and exact location to Footloose Montana. Contact us at: [info@footloosemontana.org](mailto:info@footloosemontana.org). We will include the information on our website map (<http://footloosemontana.org>) to warn other recreationists about the potential dangers to companion animals in areas where traps have been spotted. Check out the locations of traps reported to us in 2007 by clicking on “Map” on our homepage.

Please share with us any trap incidents you and your companion animal may have experienced. Footloose Montana is the only organization in Montana that keeps track of these incidents. Though we know how heartbreaking and difficult it is to talk about experiences where a beloved companion animal may have gotten injured or even killed, please realize that these incidents provide important information for building momentum for our efforts to ban recreational and commercial trapping on public lands.

**FOOTLOOSE MONTANA SUPPORTED CASA (COURT APPOINTED SPECIAL ADVOCATE)**

In September, Footloose Montana made a donation to a fundraiser for Court Appointed Special Advocates—trained community volunteers appointed by a judge to represent the best interests of abused and neglected children in court. Specifically, we supported Carolyn Sime, FWP’s Wolf Coordinator in her efforts to raise money for the organization by biking from Glacier National Park to Yellowstone National Park! Below is an excerpt of Carolyn’s note she wrote to us:

“I wanted to thank you for your generous donation to CASA. I had a wonderful ride and had lots of time to reflect on the truly important work of this organization on behalf of Montana kids. We had CASA representatives meet us for dinner each evening to tell us more about their work. Truly inspiring! There were about 39 riders and about \$37,000 was raised, although donations are still trickling in.

Thanks again!!”  
Carolyn Sime

### **FOOTLOOSE MONTANA SUPPORTS CARE FOR ABUSED DOGS**

We also made a contribution to help providing for the care of the over 100 dogs recently found locked in a broken-down school bus and trailer at the Flying J in Rocker, west of Butte. According to a news report, the malnourished dogs were seized October 5 when they were found cramped in a school bus and trailer being towed by a man who was taking the dogs to Alaska to be used for sledding. Phyllis Ruana, FOOTLOOSE member and Butte-Silver Bow animal services director, said that the dogs, which range in age from a week to about eight years, “are all in rough shape.” Volunteers have helped setting up kennels and some even came during their lunch hours to walk and clean the dogs. Others brought food and blankets for the dogs whose situation since has much improved. If you’d like to make a donation, please send a check to:

Albert Angel Fund/Huskies  
c/o Butte Animal Shelter  
699 Centennial ave.  
Butte, MT 59701

For a compassionate and footloose 2008,  
Your friends at Footloose Montana