

NJ Division of Fish and Wildlife
2006-07 New Jersey Trapper Harvest, Recreational and Economic Survey

Summary

Mail questionnaires were sent to 698 trappers requesting harvest, recreational and socio-economic information for the 2006-07 trapping season. The mean age of licensed trappers sampled was 45.9 years. Resident trappers live in every county of the state and have a tendency to reside in rural areas. The majority of licensed NJ trappers (53.6 percent) are affiliated with one or both statewide trapping organizations. Trapping is a lifelong activity and respondents had a mean 23.5 years of overall experience. Annual expenditures on trapping equipment and supplies are usually low, however overall investment is likely to be substantial. An estimated 16,223 Conibear™ traps, 12,267 cable restraints, 1,390 box traps and 607 diver traps were in use during the 2006-07 season. The number of active trappers was estimated at 501, with most trappers targeting muskrat (66.5 percent), raccoon (61.3 percent), red fox (41.3 percent) and beaver (35.3 percent). Based on the survey results, mandatory coyote reports and beaver-otter check station reports, trappers harvested 33,747 muskrat, 3,741 raccoons, 3,108 red fox, 164 gray fox, 813 opossum, 151 skunk, 981 mink, 711 beaver, 42 river otter, 108 coyote and 17 weasels. The total estimated raw pelt value of the 2006-07 harvest was \$286,658 based on reported fur sales.

This survey was conducted as part of **Job III-B. Hunter and Trapper Harvest, Recreational and Economic Survey**. This job is included within **Grant Number W-68-R-11, New Jersey Wildlife Research and Management: Project III. Upland Wildlife and Furbearers**.

Methods

New Jersey instituted an electronic licensing system during calendar year 2006. Two files were obtained from the system vendor, Automated License Systems, Inc. (ALS), one for 2006 licenses and one for 2007 licenses. The 2006 file contained 186 records, including four duplicates. The 2007 file contained 590 records, including five duplicates. The files were combined and contained 674 unique individuals. Twenty-four other individuals were obtained from the list of applicants for special beaver and/or otter permits, bringing the total database to 698. Of these 24 individuals, four were determined to be holders of a Youth trapping license based on their age and the license type provided. Therefore, the number of licensed trappers during the 2006-07 season was determined to be 678. License information for the remaining 20 individuals that applied for a beaver and/or otter permit was not provided, and it was presumed that these individuals were qualified farmers trapping on their own property and thus exempt from licensing requirements. Therefore, the total number of trappers during the 2006-07 season was determined to be 698. Age and demographic analyses were completed on all 698 individuals.

A survey packet was mailed to 698 trappers by April 1, 2007. No questionnaires (0.0 percent) were returned by the postal authorities as undeliverable and 698 were presumed delivered. One trapper deceased during the 2006-07 season. Trapper group affiliation, prior experience and activity were based on the 295 (42.3 percent) responses that were correctly completed and returned by May 15, 2007.

Harvest and economic data analyses were based on the 212 respondents (30.4 percent) that actively participated in the 2006-07 trapping season.

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Results

Age

The age class of licensed trappers (as of 15 November 2006) is presented in Table 1. Ages ranged from 12 to 93 years, with a mean age of 47.3 years (n = 678) in 2006-07. The simple majority of the 2006-07 sample (15.5 percent) was between 45 and 49 years of age. Estimates of trapper numbers by age class for 2005-06, 2004-05 and 2003-04 are presented for comparison purposes.

Table 1. Age class of licensed trappers sampled during the 2006-07 New Jersey Trapper Harvest Survey

Age Class	Licensed trappers (2006-07)	Percent of 2006-07 sample	Estimated number of trappers (2005-06)	Estimated number of trappers (2004-05)	Estimated number of trappers (2003-04)
<16	15	2.2%	21	6	0
16 to 19	14	2.1%	7	3	6
20 to 24	21	3.1%	16	18	17
25 to 29	29	4.3%	30	12	12
30 to 34	37	5.5%	33	21	35
35 to 39	58	8.6%	68	65	86
40 to 44	101	14.9%	92	107	81
45 to 49	105	15.5%	100	83	101
50 to 54	81	11.9%	71	68	63
55 to 59	77	11.4%	57	86	81
60 to 64	71	10.5%	40	56	49
65+	69	10.2%	59	80	78
Unknown	0	0.0%	1	3	3
Total	678	100.0%	596	609	610

Gender

Information on trapper gender was not solicited during the current survey. Prior surveys have indicated that trappers are overwhelmingly male (over 95 percent). Based on prior survey results, an estimated 586 males and 24 females were licensed trappers in 2004, compared to 593 males and 17 females licensed in 2003.

Occupation

Information on trapper occupation was not solicited during the current survey. Occupations for 77.1 percent of 2004-05 respondents could be categorized into three of the nine groupings: Trade (33.7 percent); Professional (22.9 percent) and Retired (20.5 percent). These three groups constituted 68.2 percent of the 2003-04 responses.

Residency

The estimated number of resident trappers by county (2006 v. 2005, 2004 and 2003) is presented in Table 2. Nearly all (99.1 percent) of licensed trappers are New Jersey residents, while non-resident trappers resided in neighboring Pennsylvania (3) and New York (2). One non-resident trapper resided in Texas. Resident trappers live in every county of the state and have a tendency to reside in

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predominantly rural areas. The majority (50.1 percent) of New Jersey’s resident trappers live in Cumberland, Gloucester and Salem Counties (33.2 percent) or Sussex and Warren Counties (16.9 percent).

Table 2. The number of licensed resident trappers in New Jersey, by county

County	2006-07 database	Percent of 2006-07 database	Estimated number of trappers (2005-06)	Estimated number of trappers (2004-05)	Estimated number of trappers (2003-04)
Atlantic	29	4.3%	25	18	25
Bergen	23	3.4%	26	24	23
Burlington	42	6.3%	33	33	33
Camden	20	3.0%	20	23	24
Cape May	30	4.5%	26	24	27
Cumberland	88	13.1%	42	61	57
Essex	5	0.7%	5	2	7
Gloucester	58	8.6%	44	36	42
Hudson	2	0.3%	2	1	4
Hunterdon	22	3.3%	29	33	30
Mercer	14	2.1%	16	20	20
Middlesex	23	3.4%	23	23	15
Monmouth	29	4.3%	16	16	11
Morris	29	4.3%	38	36	36
Ocean	24	3.6%	20	20	21
Passaic	28	4.2%	17	19	19
Salem	77	11.5%	75	74	73
Somerset	10	1.5%	10	9	8
Sussex	71	10.6%	85	76	74
Union	6	0.9%	1	2	4
Warren	43	6.3%	34	48	52
Total	672	99.1%	587	600	604

Affiliation

New Jersey has two statewide trapping organizations, the New Jersey Fur Harvesters (NJFH) and the New Jersey Trappers Association (NJTA). Affiliation of respondents in either organization is presented in Table 3. The majority (53.6 percent) of survey respondents is affiliated with one (24.4 percent NJTA, 20.3 percent NJFH) or both (7.5 percent) of these organizations. A large percentage (46.1) of respondents is unaffiliated or only affiliated with a national organization (Fur Takers of America, National Trappers Association) (1.3 percent). Based on survey results, an estimated 222 trappers were NJTA members, 194 trappers were NJFH members and 321 trappers were unaffiliated in 2006. The reported 2006 membership of the NJTA is 315 (New Jersey Trappers Association minutes, 07 January 2007) and 270 for the NJFH (J. Mounier, personal communication 2007). It should be noted that each organization lists members who may not be licensed to trap in New Jersey or family memberships that include more than one licensed trapper.

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Table 3. Affiliation in New Jersey trapping organizations

Affiliation	Estimated number of trappers (2006)	Estimated number of trappers (2005)	Estimated number of trappers (2004)	Estimated number of trappers (2003)
NJ Fur Harvesters	142	98	62	77
NJ Trappers Association	170	210	255	233
Both NJFH and NJTA	52	82	68	52
Subtotal	364	390	386	362
Unaffiliated in NJ	321	206	217	236
Subtotal	695	596	603	598
Unknown	2	0	6	12
Total	697	596 licensees	609 licensees	610 licensees

Prior Experience

Prior to the 1972-73 season, it was unlawful to trap any fur-bearing animal without possessing a Trapping and Firearm Hunting License. This requirement did not apply to occupant farmers and their immediate family members and to bona fide residents of the State under 14 years that required no license to trap according to state law. A separate Trapping License was provided for residents (age 12 and older) and non-residents (age 14 and older) in 1972. A previous year's license or a certificate showing successful completion in a trapper education course has been required since 1978. Junior Trapping Licenses were required for residents between the ages of 12 and 15, inclusive, from 1980 through 1999. Since 2000, trapping licenses are required for all persons age 16 year or older. Survey respondents indicated years of trapping experience prior to the 2005-06 season ranging from 0 to 80 years, with a mean 23.5 years of experience (n = 295, SD = 19.0). Twenty-four respondents (8.1 percent) were new to the sport in 2006-07, and 52 (17.6 percent) were relatively inexperienced (1-5 years of prior experience).

Table 4. Years of experience of licensed trappers prior to the 2006-07 trapping season

Year of prior experience	Estimated number of trappers (2006-07)	Estimated number of trappers (2005-06)	Estimated number of trappers (2004-05)	Estimated number of trappers (2003-04)
0 years	57	7	0	6
1-5 years	123	137	100	95
6-10 years	71	43	63	58
11-15 years	43	36	41	46
16-20 years	61	56	41	49
21-25 years	31	46	47	35
26-30 years	59	36	47	66
31-35 years	31	39	44	35
36-40 years	61	56	41	43
41-45 years	28	36	47	40
46-50 years	50	49	69	58
+ 50 years	59	39	69	60
Unknown	24	16	0	20
Total	697	596	609	610
Mean	23.5	24.9	28.6	27.6

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License Buyers

The Division’s electronic licensing system did not become fully functional until June 2006. Survey recipients were therefore asked whether they purchased a trapping license for calendar year 2006 only. The majority of 2007 survey respondents (89.2 percent) indicated purchasing a trapping license for 2006, and license sales were therefore estimated at 621. According to the Division’s Licensing and Permit Section, trapping license sales total 693 for calendar year 2006. It was noted in the data provide by ALS that several trappers purchased more than one license in the same calendar year. It is presumed that they lost or misplaced the license purchase in January and found it easier to purchase a new license than travel to a regional Division office for a \$2 duplicate license. According to ALS, 585 trapping licenses were sold for 2007 through 22 March 2007.

Active Trappers

Two hundred twelve (71.8 percent) of the respondents participated in trapping activities during the 121-day, 2006-07 season that began 15 November 2006 and concluded 15 March 2007. Active 2006 respondents had slightly less experience trapping (mean 22.8 years, SD = 19.0) compared to all respondents (mean 23.5, SD = 19.0 years).

Trap Types

Steel-jawed leghold type traps, such as coil springs and long springs, have been prohibited in New Jersey since 1985. Box traps, Conibear™ traps, diver traps and body-gripping cable restraints are currently legal for use, and active trappers seldom utilize one trap type to the exclusion of all others (Table 5). Conibear™ traps were used by the majority of active respondents (75.9 percent), followed by cable restraints (57.5 percent), box traps (48.6 percent) and diver traps (18.9 percent). Based on survey responses, there were an estimated 2,859 box, 16,220 Conibear™, 607 diver and 12,265 cable restraints in operation during the 2006-07 season.

Table 5. Trap types utilized by active respondents in New Jersey during 2006-07.

Trap Type	Percent 2006-07 active respondents	Estimated number of active trappers (2006-07)	Estimated number of active trappers (2005-06)	Estimated number of active trappers (2004-05)	Estimated number of active trappers (2003-04)
Box only	4.2%	21	10	6	12
Box and cable restraint	5.2%	26	23	18	35
Box and Conibear™	11.3%	57	43	42	52
Box and diver	0.5%	2	0	0	0
Box, cable restraint, Conibear™	15.6%	78	98	121	88
Box, Conibear™ and diver	3.3%	17	13	3	3
Box, cable restraint, Conibear™, diver	8.5%	43	33	68	83
Cable restraint only	10.8%	54	16	42	29
Cable restraint and Conibear™	11.8%	59	72	71	63
Cable restraint and diver	0.5%	2	3	0	3
Cable restraint, Conibear™, diver	5.2%	26	13	12	29
Conibear™ only	19.3%	97	105	74	78
Conibear™ and diver	0.9%	5	10	15	14
Diver only	0.0%	0	3	3	3
No response	2.8%	14	3	3	6
Total	100.0%	501	445	478	498

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Expenditures and Investment

Information on expenditures (excluding license and permit fees) by active 2006 respondents is presented in Tables 6 and 7. The majority of active respondents (58.9 percent) spent less than \$300 on items such as gasoline, food, clothing, trapping equipment and supplies during 2006-07. Total expenditures by active trappers during 2006-07 was estimated at \$182,744 with a mean \$365 per trapper. The mean expenditure may be under estimated given the high cost of gasoline. Over one-half (57.5 percent) of active respondents reported an overall investment in trapping equipment and supplies exceeding \$1,000. Total investment for active trappers was estimated at \$851,498 with a mean \$1,700 per trapper. The NJDFW received an \$27,241 in revenue from license and permit sales in calendar year 2006.

Table 6. Expenditures on gasoline, food, clothing, trapping equipment and supplies (excluding license fees) in New Jersey by active respondents, 2006-07

2006-07 Expenditures (US\$)	Number of active 2006-07 respondents	Estimated number of active trappers (2006-07)	Estimated number of active trappers (2005-06)	Estimated number of active trappers (2004-05)	Estimated number of active trappers (2003-04)
\$1-100	61	144	82	160	176
\$101-200	25	59	98	151	115
\$200-300	39	92	82	74	95
\$301-400	14	33	46	50	40
\$401-500	24	57	59	9	20
\$501+	36	85	75	27	43
No response	13	31	3	6	9
Total	212	501	445	478	498

Table 7. Total investment in trapping equipment and supplies by active respondents, 2005-06

2006-07 Expenditures (US\$)	Number of active 2006-07 respondents	Estimated number of active trappers (2006-07)	Estimated number of active trappers (2005-06)	Estimated number of active trappers (2004-05)	Estimated number of active trappers (2003-04)
\$1-500	81	191	105	128	121
\$501-1,000	41	97	85	107	89
\$1,001-1,500	16	38	85	42	81
\$1,501-2,000	17	40	46	71	55
\$2,001-2,500	4	10	29	24	26
\$2,501+	34	80	88	101	115
No response	19	45	7	6	11
Total	212	501	445	478	498

2006-07 Fur Harvest

A summary of the 2006-07 fur harvest is presented in Table 8. An estimated 43,581 animals from eleven game species open for trapping were harvested. No nutrias were reported by survey respondents. Nearly all (65.4 percent) of the animals harvested consisted of muskrat (77.4 percent), raccoon (8.6 percent), red fox (7.1 percent) and mink (2.3 percent). The fur value of these three species represents 91.1 percent of the total fur value, estimated at \$286,658 at the local level. Information by species is also presented.

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Table 8. New Jersey fur harvest results for 2006-07

Species	Number of 2006-07 active respondents	Estimated number of active trappers (2006-07)	Mean experience (years)	Mean days trapped (2006-07)	Mean effort (traps / day)	Estimated harvest	Estimated value (US\$)
Beaver	75	177	9.3	18.2	4.2	711	13,497
Coyote	45	106	4.6	38.3	15.6	108	2,179
Gray fox	30	71	16.7	38.0	15.2	164	5,058
Mink	68	161	14.7	33.4	16.4	981	12,610
Muskrat	141	333	25.8	31.2	37.8	33,747	166,954
Nutria	0	Unknown	0.0	0.0	0.0	0	0
Opossum	57	135	8.1	15.7	7.4	813	2,305
Raccoon	130	307	15.7	29.9	12.2	3,741	37,939
Red fox	86	203	15.5	34.2	18.2	3,108	43,646
River otter	24	57	9.4	19.1	2.2	42	1,943
Skunk	27	64	8.1	17.1	2.0	151	603
Weasel	4	9	21.5	5.0	12.0	17	25
Total	212	501	23.5			43,581	286,658

Land Ownership Utilized by Trappers

The opening date for trapping in areas outside of State WMA is November 15. In previous years, the opening date for trapping on State WMA was delayed until January 1 to avoid possible conflicts between pheasant and waterfowl hunters, and trappers. The delayed opening for trapping on all State WMA was no longer warranted since many new State WMA that are not stocked with pheasants have been added to the system and waterfowl season dates now vary over a wide range of dates by zone and season. Accordingly, the opening date for trapping in those WMA not stocked with pheasants was the same as the regular opening dates for trapping in other areas. The opening date for trapping on pheasant or quail stocked WMA remained January 1. This change increased recreational trapping opportunity on approximately 147,000 acres within the WMA system (49 percent) with minimal impact on the furbearer resource. A higher percentage of resource users trapped on public lands in 2006-07 (69.8 percent) than in 2005-06 (67.0 percent), 2004-05 (60.3 percent) or in 2003-04 (61.8 percent) (Table 9).

Table 9. Percentage of trappers utilizing private and public land in New Jersey, 2006-07

Land type	Percent of active trappers			
	2006-07	2005-06	2004-05	2003-04
Private land only	29.7%	32.4 %	38.5 %	36.4 %
Public land only	22.6%	16.2 %	14.9 %	12.1 %
Both private and public	47.2%	50.7 %	45.3 %	49.7 %
No response	0.5%	0.7 %	1.2 %	1.7 %
Number of active trappers	501	445	478	498

Changes in Trapping Season Lengths and Regulations

No changes were enacted regarding season lengths or other regulations for the 2006-07 season. Several changes in season lengths and regulations enacted for the 2005-06 season based on field

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investigations, complaint data, scientific studies conducted in other states and in response to comments received from previous harvest surveys continue to be evaluated.

Comments

The 2006-07 survey did not ask recipients how many days they trapped during the entire season nor did it include a section for recipient comments due to space and budgetary considerations.

Remarks

Occupant, qualified farmers are exempt from licensing requirements on their own property and consequently are normally excluded from the mailing database. Licenses are otherwise required. Qualified farmers may receive a beaver and/or otter trapping permit. It is presumed that 20 such individuals (2.9 percent of potential survey recipients) received such permits during 2006-07, and underscores the need to acquire information from the predominantly non-licensed, farming community.

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Beaver (*Castor canadensis*)

The beaver trapping season was 26 December 2006 – 09 February 2007 (46 days), except on the 23 State Wildlife Management Areas that received game bird releases where beaver trapping was permitted from 01 January – 09 February 2007 (40 days). A special, beaver trapping permit was required in addition to a trapping license. Two hundred ten applications were received for the 186 available permits. All permits were issued via lottery (170) or OTC (16). One hundred seventeen trappers (62.9 percent) were successful in harvesting at least one beaver and 44 trappers (23.7 percent) were successful in harvesting the permit bag limit of eight beavers. Successful trappers were required to present their beaver pelts for examination at regional check stations on Saturday, 24 February 2007. Permit holders harvested 673 beavers. Nine site-specific permits were issued and resulted in the harvest of 38 beavers, bringing the total 2006-07 harvest to 711. Additional information on the 2006-07 beaver harvest may be found in Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Performance Report W-68-R-11 Job III-C entitled Beaver Distribution and Population Trends and River Otter Harvest.

Based on active survey respondents (n = 75), there are 177 active beaver trappers in New Jersey. Active respondents had 21.0 years of overall trapping experience and 9.3 years experience trapping beaver. Active respondents trapped a mean 18.2 days using a mean 4.2 traps per day. The majority of active respondents (81.3 percent) utilized the 330 Conibear™ trap. Total trap-nights were estimated at 14,577 and 20.5 trap-nights were needed to harvest a single beaver. The reported mean price per pelt received by active respondents was \$18.98 and the estimated raw pelt value of the 2006-07 beaver harvest was \$13,497 based on reported fur sales.

Coyote (*Canis latrans*)

The eastern coyote trapping season was 15 November 2006 – 15 March 2007 (121 days), except on the 23 State Fish and Wildlife Management Areas that received game bird releases where trapping was permitted 01 January – 15 March 2007 (74 days). State regulations require successful trappers to report their harvest to a regional, Division Law Enforcement office within 24 hours. One hundred eight coyotes were reported by trappers in 2006-07. Additional information on coyotes may be found in Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Final Report W-68-R-10 Job III-D entitled Occurrence and Distribution of the Eastern Coyote in New Jersey.

Based on active survey respondents (n = 45), there are 106 active coyote trappers in New Jersey. Active respondents had 20.7 years of overall trapping experience and 4.6 years experience trapping coyote. Active respondents trapped a mean 38.3 days using a mean 15.6 traps per day. The majority of active respondents (60.0 percent) utilized the 3/32” or 5/64” cable restraint. Total trap-nights were estimated at 91,036 and 842.9 trap-nights were needed to harvest a single coyote. The reported mean price per pelt received by active respondents was \$20.17 and the estimated raw pelt value of the 2006-07 coyote harvest was \$2,179 based on reported fur sales.

Gray fox (*Urocyon cinereoargenteus*)

The gray fox trapping season was 15 November 2006 – 15 March 2007 (121 days), except on the 23 State Fish and Wildlife Management Areas that received game bird releases where trapping was permitted 01 January – 15 March 2007 (74 days). Based on active survey respondents (n = 30), there are 71 active gray fox trappers in New Jersey. Active respondents had 19.4 years of overall trapping experience and 16.7 years experience trapping gray fox. Active respondents trapped a mean 38.0

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days using a mean 15.2 traps per day. The majority of active respondents (56.7 percent) utilized the 5/64" cable restraint. Total trap-nights were estimated at 49,520 and 302.3 trap-nights were needed to harvest a single gray fox. An estimated 164 gray fox were taken by trappers, the reported mean price per pelt received was \$30.27 and the estimated raw pelt value of the 2006-07 gray fox harvest was \$4,959 based on reported fur sales.

Mink (*Mustela vison*)

The mink trapping season was 15 November 2006 – 15 March 2007 (121 days) in the Northern Zone, 01 December 2006 – 15 March 2007 (105 days) in the Southern Zone, and 01 January – 15 March 2007 (74 days) on the 23 State Fish and Wildlife Management Areas that received game bird releases. Based on active survey respondents (n = 68), there are 161 active mink trappers in New Jersey. Active respondents had 23.6 years of overall trapping experience and 14.7 years experience trapping mink. Active respondents trapped a mean 33.4 days using a mean 16.4 traps per day. The majority of active respondents (55.9 percent) utilized the 110 Conibear™ or 1/16" snare. Total trap-nights were estimated at 105,490 and 107.6 trap-nights were needed to harvest a single mink. An estimated 981 mink were taken by trappers, the reported mean price per pelt received was \$12.86 and the estimated raw pelt value of the 2006-07 mink harvest was \$12,610 based on reported fur sales.

Muskrat (*Ondatra zibethicus*)

The muskrat trapping season was 15 November 2006 – 15 March 2007 (121 days) in the Northern Zone, 01 December 2006 – 15 March 2007 (105 days) in the Southern Zone, and 01 January – 15 March 2007 (74 days) on the 23 State Fish and Wildlife Management Areas that received game bird releases. Based on active survey respondents (n = 141), there are 333 active muskrat trappers in New Jersey. Active respondents had 27.5 year of overall trapping experience and 25.8 years experience trapping muskrat. Active respondents trapped a mean 31.2 days using a mean 37.8 traps per day. The majority of active respondents (84.4 percent) utilized a 110 Conibear™. Total trap-nights were estimated at 405,953 and 12.0 trap-nights were needed to harvest a single muskrat. An estimated 33,747 muskrat were taken by trappers, the reported mean price per pelt received was \$4.95 and the estimated raw pelt value of the 2006-07 mink harvest was \$166,954 based on reported fur sales.

Virginia opossum (*Didelphis virginianus*)

The Virginia opossum trapping season was 15 November 2006 – 15 March 2007 (121 days), except on the 23 State Fish and Wildlife Management Areas that received game bird releases where trapping was permitted 01 January – 15 March 2007 (74 days). Based on active survey respondents (n = 57), there are 135 active opossum trappers in New Jersey. Active respondents had 20.4 years of overall trapping experience and 8.1 years experience trapping opossum. Active respondents trapped a mean 15.7 days using a mean 7.4 traps per day. The majority of active respondents (47.4 percent) utilized box traps. Total trap-nights were estimated at 65,404 and 80.5 trap-nights were needed to harvest a single opossum. An estimated 813 opossum were taken by trappers, the reported mean price per pelt received was \$2.84 and the estimated raw pelt value of the 2006-07 opossum harvest was \$2,305 based on reported fur sales.

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Raccoon (*Procyon lotor*)

The raccoon trapping season was 15 November 2006 – 15 March 2007 (121 days), except on the 23 State Fish and Wildlife Management Areas that received game bird releases where trapping was permitted 01 January – 15 March 2007 (74 days). Based on active survey respondents (n = 130), there are 307 active raccoon trappers in New Jersey. Active respondents had 21.2 years of overall trapping experience and 15.7 years experience trapping raccoon. Active respondents trapped a mean 29.9 days using a mean 12.2 traps per day. The majority of active respondents (66.1 percent) utilized a box trap or 5/64” cable restraint. Total trap-nights were estimated at 152,005 and 40.6 trap-nights were needed to harvest a single raccoon. An estimated 3,741 raccoons were taken by trappers, the reported mean price per pelt received was \$10.14 and the estimated raw pelt value of the 2006-07 raccoon harvest was \$37,939 based on reported fur sales.

Red fox (*Vulpes vulpes*)

The red fox trapping season was 15 November 2006 – 15 March 2007 (121 days), except on the 23 State Fish and Wildlife Management Areas that received game bird releases where trapping was permitted 01 January – 15 March 2007 (74 days). Based on active survey respondents (n = 86), there are 203 active red fox trappers in New Jersey. Active respondents had 21.3 years of overall trapping experience and 15.5 years experience trapping red fox. Active respondents trapped a mean 34.2 days using a mean 18.2 traps per day. The majority of active respondents (54.7 percent) utilized a 5/64” or 3/32” cable restraint. Total trap-nights were estimated at 190,498 and 61.3 trap-nights were needed to harvest a single red fox. An estimated 3,108 red fox were taken by trappers, the reported mean price per pelt received was \$14.04 and the estimated raw pelt value of the 2006-07 red fox harvest was \$43,646 based on reported fur sales.

River otter (*Lontra canadensis*)

The river otter trapping season was 26 December 2006 – 09 February 2007 (46 days), except on the 23 State Wildlife Management Areas that received game bird releases where otter trapping was permitted from 01 January – 09 February 2007 (40 days). A special, river otter trapping permit was required in addition to a trapping license. The number of applicants was unknown, but all 106 available permits were issued. Forty-two trappers (39.6 percent) were successful in harvesting the season bag limit of one otter. Successful trappers were required to present their otter pelts for examination at regional check stations on Saturday, 24 February 2007. Additional information on the 2006-07 river otter harvest may be found in Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Performance Report W-68-R-11 Job III-C entitled Beaver Distribution and Population Trends and River Otter Harvest.

Based on active survey respondents (n = 29), there are 69 active otter trappers in New Jersey. Active respondents had 20.5 years of overall trapping experience and 9.4 years experience trapping river otter. Active respondents trapped a mean 19.1 days using a mean 2.2 traps per day. 62.1 percent utilized a 330 Conibear™. Total trap-nights were estimated at 3,245 and 77.3 trap-nights were needed to harvest a single otter. The reported mean price per pelt received by active respondents was \$46.25 and the estimated value of the 2006-07 otter harvest was \$1,943 based on reported fur sales.

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Striped skunk (*Mephitis mephitis*)

The striped skunk trapping season was 15 November 2006 – 15 March 2007 (121 days), except on the 23 State Fish and Wildlife Management Areas that received game bird releases where trapping was permitted 01 January – 15 March 2007 (74 days). Based on active survey respondents (n = 27), there are 64 active skunk trappers in New Jersey. Active respondents had 18.9 years of overall trapping experience and 8.1 years experience trapping skunk. Active respondents trapped a mean 17.1 days using a mean 2.0 traps per day. The majority of active respondents (40.7 percent) utilized a 1/8” cable restraint. Total trap-nights were estimated at 12,882 and 85.2 trap-nights were needed to harvest a single skunk. An estimated 151 skunks were taken by trappers, the reported mean price per pelt received was \$3.99 and the estimated raw pelt value of the 2006-07 skunk harvest was \$603 based on reported fur sales.

Long-tail (*Mustela frenata*) and **Short-tail** (*M. erminea*) **weasel**

The weasel trapping season was 15 November 2006 – 15 March 2007 (121 days), except on the 23 State Fish and Wildlife Management Areas that received game bird releases where trapping was permitted 01 January – 15 March 2007 (74 days). Based on active survey respondents (n = 4), there are 9 active weasel trappers in New Jersey. Active respondents had 42.3 years of overall trapping experience and 21.5 years experience trapping weasel. Active respondents trapped a mean 5.0 days using a mean 12.0 traps per day. Weasels were captured with box traps, 110 Conibear™ and 1/16” snares set for other target species. An estimated 17 weasels were taken by trappers, the reported mean price per pelt received was \$1.50 and the estimated raw pelt value of the 2006-07 weasel harvest was \$25 based on reported fur sales.

2006-07 New Jersey Trapper Harvest Survey

Dear Fellow Trapper:

This is a copy of the 2006-07 NJ Trapper Harvest Survey. This survey contains questions about your trapping activities in New Jersey during the past season. Kindly take a moment now to complete this survey and return it in the Business-Reply envelope provided. Any personal information you provide is kept confidential.

The information you provide will be used in evaluating, planning and improving trapping in New Jersey, and for determining harvest levels and trends for several species. For example, the information provided in 2004 was used to support the positive changes in snare regulations enacted in 2005. Your reply is very important, even if you did not trap or trapped but were not successful in harvesting any game.

Thank you for completing this brief questionnaire and for promptly returning it in the envelope provided.

Sincerely,

Larry Herrighty

Larry Herrighty, Chief
Bureau of Wildlife Management
NJ Division of Fish and Wildlife

SURVEY INSTRUCTIONS

1. Please answer all applicable questions, even if you did not trap or trapped but didn't harvest any game.
2. Please report only the game taken by you, not the entire trapping party (if sharing a trap line). For example, if you were trapping with a friend who snared two red fox while you snared only one, you would report 1 red fox.
3. Estimate the number of days trapped or game harvested if you don't recall the exact number. List specific numbers where they are asked for in days; please do not write in "week" or "month".
4. Record your answers in the space provided after each question.
5. After completing the questionnaire, return it in the envelope provided.

If you would like a copy of the survey results emailed to you, send a request to Wildlife Biologist Andrew Burnett at Andrew.Burnett@dep.state.nj.us and type "Trapper Survey Results" in the subject bar.

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2006-07 New Jersey Trapper Harvest Survey Questionnaire

1. Do you belong to a NJ trapping organization? (check one) YES* _____ NO _____
2. *If YES, which organization(s)? (check any) NJFH _____ NJTA _____ Other _____
3. Prior to the 2006-07 season, how many years have you been trapping? _____ years experience.
4. Did you purchase a 2006 NJ Trapping License? (check one) YES _____ NO _____
5. Did you actively trap during the 2006-07 season? (check one) YES _____ NO** _____

****If you answered NO to Question # 5, STOP HERE and return the survey. Otherwise, please continue.**

Please provide the information requested (if known) for each species you harvested in New Jersey only from November 15, 2006 through March 15, 2007 on the following table. There are several questions for each species, so please take your time completing this portion of the survey.

Species	A. How many did you harvest?	B. Was this a targeted species? [Yes or No]	C. If a target species, how many years have you trapped for it [prior to 2006-07]?	D. How many days did you trap for this species during the current season [2006-07]?	E. What size trap did you mainly set for this species? [Ex: #110 Conibear, 1/8" Snare, etc.]	F. How many of these traps per day did you set for this species?	G. In which county did your primarily set for this species? [Use first 3 letters of county name(s), i.e. SUS for Sussex]	H. If known, what was the total dollar amount you received for this species' pelts?
6. Beaver								
7. Coyote								
8. Gray fox								
9. Mink								
10. Muskrat								
11. Nutria								
12. Opossum								
13. Raccoon								
14. Red fox								
15. River otter								

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16. Skunk								
17. Weasel								

18. During the past season, did you trap primarily on: (Check one)
A. Privately owned land **B. Publicly owned land** **C. Both private and public land**

19. How much money would you estimate spending on items such as gasoline, food, clothing, equipment and supplies for trapping (excluding license fees) in New Jersey during 2006-07? \$_____

20. How much would you estimate you have invested in trapping equipment and supplies overall? \$_____

21. Please indicate the number of traps you used during the 2006-07 season (Complete all that apply)

A. Cage / Box traps

B. Conibear

C. Colony

Number Size

Number Size

D. Snare

F. Other

Thank you, the survey is now complete. Please return the survey in the envelope provided, or mail to NJ Division of Fish and Wildlife, Northern Region Office, 26 Rt. 173 West, Hampton, NJ 08827, Attn: Joseph Garris. The NJ Division of Fish and Wildlife values your input and the information provided.

Optional: A common failing in anonymous surveys is the inability to contact survey recipients in the event of an answer need to be clarified. If needed, may we contact you? If so, please supply your first name and daytime telephone number where we may reach you: _____