

Properly Regulate Nuisance Wildlife Control

Support H.411, sponsored by Rep. Jim McCullough

What is Nuisance Wildlife?

- Nuisance wildlife refers to any furbearing species that comes into conflict with humans.
- When a conflict exists between humans and animals it is usually because the animal is only doing what it needs to do to survive. It is simply following its own instincts, and intends no harm or discomfort.
- Often times these “nuisance” interactions occur outside of normal trapping seasons and at biologically sensitive times of the year, such as birthing and nursing seasons.

Current Nuisance Wildlife Law in Vermont

- Vermont statute allows nuisance activity by furbearers (such as beaver, otter, marten, mink, raccoon, fisher, fox, skunk, muskrat, coyote, weasel, and opossum) to be remedied by the landowner or their agent in ways not allowed by the rules which govern the take of the species. In practice, most furbearer animals are exempted from laws that govern trapping activities.
- Nuisance wildlife control operators (NWCs), individuals who are paid to trap nuisance wildlife animals, receive no special training and are only required to obtain a normal VT trapping license.



Problems Caused by the Current Policy

- According to the VT Fish and Wildlife Department, their “ability to influence and track nuisance furbearer control activities in the state is limited. It is reasonable to expect, therefore, that some of this work is being completed by people having little trapping experience and/or limited knowledge of the modern Best Management Practices trapping methods and devices.”
- As a result, nuisance animals are routinely trapped at biologically sensitive times of the year by individuals with little or no training on non-lethal exclusion or habitat modification techniques.

How would H.411 address these problems?

- Establishes licensing and training for commercial nuisance wildlife control operators to provide education on non-lethal options and ensure the use of humane trapping and killing methods.
- Forbids those with wildlife violations or criminal records from being a hunting or trapping instructor.
- Establishes approved, humane methods for killing trapped nuisance wildlife.
- Prohibits the use of drowning as a method of killing any wildlife species.
- Retains the current ability of landowners to control nuisance wildlife on their own property.

