



United States Department of the Interior

Fish and Wildlife Service
Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge
14000 West State Route 2
Oak Harbor, Ohio 43449



In Reply Refer to:

MEMORANDUM

Date: October 20, 1993

To: Regional Director, Twin Cities, MN, (WAM2)

From: Project Leader, Ottawa NWR, Oak Harbor, Ohio

Subject: 1993 - 1994 Annual Trapping Proposal

Refuge marshes varied in habitat for furbearers due to construction activities and the water management program. Muskrats are the number one furbearer taken and pursued in the area. Muskrat numbers appear to be stable from last year.

Trapper selection will be made on 7 units by a sealed bid process. Previewing of trapping units will be offered to all interested trappers. Viewing dates have tentatively been set for November 4 and 5. Sealed bids must be received at the refuge office by 2:00 P.M., Friday, November 12, 1993. Bids will be opened in a public meeting at 2:00 P.M. the same day.

1992 - 1993 Trapping Season

The refuge's 1992-93 trapping season was probably the best season, as far as harvest is concerned, in five years. The seven units that were opened allowed for 14,612 muskrats to be removed. More muskrats could have been harvested, but weather conditions during the last three weeks of the season prevented late-season, open water trapping. This harvest compares to 1991-92's reported harvest of 6,521 muskrats. The increase in muskrat numbers is from opening Cedar Point trapping units, which accounted for almost 75 percent of the harvest. These units have not been opened for four years to allow the muskrats to open up the cattail dominated marsh.

Reported fur harvest for the past five seasons:

	<u>1988-89</u>	<u>1989-90</u>	<u>1990-91</u>	<u>1991-92</u>	<u>1992-93</u>
Muskrats	226	1,984	2,637	6,521	14,612
Raccoon	34	68	122	40	58
Mink	10	29	34	16	41
Skunk	1	7	4	0	0
Opossum	12	20	36	11	17
Fox	5	15	6	0	3

Income from the last five seasons:

	<u>Number of Units</u>	<u>Income</u>
1988-89	6	\$4,101.25
1989-90	5	2,797.74
1990-91	8	3,345.94
1991-92	5	5,151.38
1992-93	6	6,757.69

1993 Conditions

Several water impoundments on Ottawa Division were in drawdown conditions this year to facilitate regeneration of moist soil plants, refurbish units infested with brush, and for dike rehabilitation. Three of the four units at Darby were dry again this year to finish construction work not completed last year. All units in the Navarre Division and at Cedar Point NWR were well inundated throughout the year. Muskrat populations continue to be very stable in both of these areas.

1993-1994 Season

Trapping interest will probably be the same as last year with most trappers bidding on Cedar Point units. Due to the abundance of muskrat houses and opening the trapping season after the closure of duck season, unit 3 will be divided into two units to allow for an extra set of trappers into Cedar Point. For this year, units 1, 2, 3A, 3B, 4, 10, and 12 will be opened and assigned through a sealed bid process. Youth units will again be available this year, however, units will not be divided up until applications are received to determine youth interest in trapping. Youth trappers will be selected by a lottery system. Unit 9 will again be available for the Ohio State Trappers Association, who conduct an educational program for young trappers teaching them trapping techniques and ethics. Units 5, 6, 7, and 8 will be closed again due to construction and rehabilitation work during the summer, fall, and possibly winter. Darby Division, Unit 13, will not be trapped because 3 of the 4 water impoundments were dry again this year for dike and ditch construction. Construction was mostly completed this year and unit 13 should be open next year.

Trapping of muskrat, mink, raccoon, fox, opossum, and skunk are allowed to be harvested according to State of Ohio regulations. Coyotes are becoming more numerous on the refuge and are not allowed to be trapped. Trappers must report to the refuge immediately if a coyote is caught and release/turn in the animal depending on its condition. The trapping season for the refuge will be from November 30, 1993 through March 15, 1994. Permits, daily trap logs, and maps for awarded units will be issued on November 29th. The November 30 start date allows for the closure of Ohio's duck hunting season and waterfowl hunting on the refuge. Administrative costs are expected to be:

Planning and Preparation	\$400.00
Law Enforcement	\$150.00

Prepared by:

Thomas P. Rosta Date: 10/24/93

Concurrence:

Steven J. Long Date: 10/29/93

Acting

Project Leader

/s/ James P. Mattsson Date: 10/10/93

Division Biologist

William H. Hutchinson Date: 11/10/93

Asst. Wildlife Associate Manager (AWAM2)

Matthew Walker Date: 11/12/93

Wildlife Associate Manager (WAM2)

Pers - Thanks for a good proposal.

Bill