

Relaxing Snare Requirement for Bobcat Sets in Trapping Districts 1, 2 and Portions of 3, 4, and 5

This regulation is specific to bobcat sets on public land to minimize the incidental capture of lynx: Non-relaxing (lethal) snares are prohibited in all bobcat sets. This regulation is designed to avoid the incidental take of federally threatened lynx by snares in a bobcat set and will now cover occupied lynx habitat and the two federally designated critical lynx habitat areas in Montana. In addition, the current breakaway snare lock requirement still applies for all snares.

What is a relaxing snare?

A relaxing snare actually means that the locking device on the snare cable operates both ways allowing the snare cable to move back and forth to some degree. A relaxing snare should be defined as having a lock which allows the snare loop to loosen slightly when an animal stops pulling against it. This is to reduce the possibility of strangulation, particularly in the case of lynx. Locks that only close or that use springs or other powering devices to hold them closed are not considered relaxing snares. The Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies (AFWA) defines a relaxing snare as having a snare lock that allows the snare loop to release constriction pressure on the captured animal when the cable is not taut (e.g., when the animal stops pulling it will loosen).

As per this “non-relaxing snare prohibited” regulation (terminology referring directly to relaxing locks as defined above), deer stops do not meet the requirement to the definition of a relaxing snare. Stops are not a snare lock device.

Listed below is a partial list of locks that are commercially available through snare and trap dealers and are considered as relaxing locks by Fish, Wildlife & Parks, if they are not modified and are assembled with the appropriate snare cable diameter. Any alteration of a lock from its manufactured condition may affect performance and again, the cable size must match the lock to avoid the cable from being bound up at the lock.

- Relax-A-Lock
- Dakota Line's Low Pro
- Relaxing Washer Lock
- Quarter Washer Lock
- Berkshire Washer Lock