

Longlining
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When one hears the word longlining, they dream of hundred of furbearing animals hanging in the drying room and hundreds more caught in traps, waiting to be picked up the following morning. But to a longliner, other things seem to come into play. Some of the most important concepts are time, money, energy and also numbers.

He no longer has to worry about how he is going to make "the set" for certain type of predator. He already knows! He no longer has to worry what lures and lure combinations will work and which ones won't. He already knows! He no longer has to worry about if the set was made on "location" or not. He already knows! His mind has expanded above and beyond the school boy type trapper and is now working on problems the weekend trapper will never face.

Take time for instance, the first time problem is the total year in general. When do the season start and end for each species or predator? When is the right time to ask permission, the right time to pre make sets, the right time to pull his sets, the right time to buy equipment and the right time to sell furs? This is what I call general time.

There is also a thing call specific time. Saving time on a daily basis. These are tricks learned through the years, that have saved maybe fix minutes of time as a set. Considering he is running between 60-100 sets, he in turn has saved from 5 to 10 hours of time when setting time comes around. The easiest way to think of this time saving concept is to think of a typical day of setting out the trapline. What things could have been done ahead of time, what tools would make things easier and faster, what movement; such as backtracking, could be done away with to save time?

The we come to the money concept. How can we save money? How can we make money? And, how can we make even more money than the next guy? Saving money comes from buying equipment in bulk. Some longliners buy more equipment than some of the smaller supply dealers do every year. If you ask, some supply houses will offer you supplies at wholesale prices due to the large amount of money you will be spending with them.

Gas mileage is another money save. Keep that truck or car in tune for maximum mileage. Some are sizing down their vehicles for better mileage, but beware, some of these mini trucks can not stand the rugged day to day trapline use. When trying to save money keep one thought in mind. Poor equipment equals poor results.

Then there is another side of the fence. Making money! Catching furbearers in season season will produce price top qualify pelts. Putting your fur up so they look like a pile of diamonds in a coalfield, and then marking that fur. Selling to the right place, at the right time. A five-dollar difference on 400 pelts is a gain or lost of \$2,000.

Energy is another concept of the longliner. How do we use our energy? Run like heck the firs week with two hours of sleep a night or keep a constant rhythm going throughout the season; the choice is yours. I did not write this article to tell anyone what to do. I just wrote it to make you aware of what can be done.

Then we look at numbers. Ah, yes, numbers. Everyone has to have numbers, of course. This is the longliners trademark. The number he catches. Who is better? The professional muskrat trapper who catches 5,000 muskrats a year or the professional fox trapper who catches 250 fox a year? Sure there were those that catch 500-800 fox a year or 8,000 muskrats a year. Like I said, there were those in the hayday of the 60's or 70's when numbers were up and compensation low. But there is a new breed of longliner out there. The man who keeps punching away at the trapping game. The man who drops out of today's fast society and goes trapping for a 100% living, who battles the elements, the antis, the weekends, the vacationers, the hunters, the snowmobilers, the thieves and all the toe-pinned predators. With all of these influences on this business, you can still manage to come up with astounding catches.

Yes, it is a numbers game from the outside looking in. But from the inside look out, it is more of a systematic, procedure kind of thing. Have a great year. Until next year.