

Submitting a lower bobcat jaw

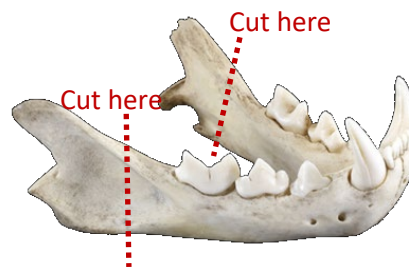


Photo by Tim Danne

Hunters or trappers harvesting a bobcat must now provide a complete lower jaw (both sides), cleaned and dried, before a pelt can be sealed. WDFW uses the jaw to determine the age of the harvested bobcat.

Before bringing in the lower jaw, remove as much flesh as possible and allow it to dry in the open air, in a cardboard box or paper bag, or store in a plastic bag with salt or borax to prevent decay.

When removing the jaw, please attempt to remove the entire lower jaw from the bobcat. If you cannot get the entire jaw, then the jaw may be cut at the designated location (see image below) upon removal.



You MUST label both the pelt and the jaw so it is clear which pelt belongs to which jaw. You can use any form of waterproof tagging to identify the jaw to the correct pelt. One example is to use livestock ear tags (example at left) and write a matching label on the pelt and the jaw. Alternatives would be to use different colored string, ribbon, tape, or flagging to identify the matching pair.



We will also ask for a tissue sample at the point of sealing. This is not required, but sharing a sample can help WDFW identify the accuracy of hunter and trapper sex ID by genetically identifying the sex of the individual bobcats in a lab. If we can confirm hunter and trappers' accuracy, we may eventually be able to eliminate the requirement that evidence of sex be left on the pelt at the time of sealing. The size of the sample should be 1mm thick x 2-3 mm long, and should not impact the condition of the pelt. We can even take a sample from the jaw bone that you submit if there is enough meat to collect a sample. The tissue sample can be either dried or wet, as long as it is not rotten.

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FAQ

Why the lower jaw? We need the canine for best accuracy. Unfortunately, the canine cannot be removed easily like premolars and incisors in other species. The jaw must be cooked to soften the bone holding the canine in place (and all the other teeth, for that matter).

Why are we collecting it? The canine teeth provide us with age data for your bobcat. Age data will help WDFW better manage the bobcat population by allowing us to obtain an age class of harvested bobcats and track that age class ratio over time. Additionally, we can estimate survival of the population with age data using population reconstruction methods.

Why is bobcat sex important to know? Harvesting each sex impacts the population differently, and population models with incorrect sex information may produce inaccurate results.

Will you get turned away if it's not prepared correctly? That depends. If the lower jaw is not completely dry at the time of pelt sealing, that's okay. We are going to store them in the freezer until we are ready to use them. If your jaw is not removed from the carcass, then you will be turned away and given helpful information on how to remove and submit the lower jaw. You must remove and submit the lower jaw before getting your pelt sealed.

What tools can I use to remove the jaw? You can use a scalpel or a sharp knife to remove the jaw from the bobcat. No other tools should be necessary.

How will we be able to find out the results of our bobcat's age? What about results of the population analysis? Your harvested bobcat's age will be available on the WDFW tooth age lookup website (<https://wdfw.wa.gov/hunting/requirements/harvest-reporting/tooth-lookup>) by entering your WILD ID. The population analysis results will be available in WDFW's annual status and trend report.

Can we get our jaw back? Yes! When you have your pelt sealed and submit the lower jaw, you can request to receive your jaw back. We will mark this in the form we use to collect your harvest data and will confirm your mailing address. Note that we can also send you back the canine, though the tip of the root will be missing. There is an extra 6-8 month waiting period for your jaw and canine to be returned.

What information do I need to submit with the lower jaw and tissue sample? WDFW will ask for your name and WILD ID, date of harvest, location of harvest, method of take (trap or hunt), and your ID of the bobcat's sex and age class.

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