

Pet owners support changing trap regulations

By Mark Robison, Reno Gazette-Journal

Jason Ruckman took his two German wire-haired pointers named Gauge and Gretchen for a run in the ravine next to the South Valley Sports Complex last month.

The puppies ran a little ahead out of sight – they were being trained to be hunting dogs – so he whistled to call them back. Only Gauge returned. That's when Ruckman heard a whimper.

He followed the sound and found Gretchen caught in a live box trap baited with a few meats. The trap also contained snare traps, one of which got around Gretchen's neck.

"She started struggling against it immediately and she started choking," said Jason's wife, Amie. "Jason was trying to help her and she was freaking out and completely panicking because her air supply was being cut off."

He ran to his truck, got lineman's pliers to cut her free and ran back, she said.

"By now she was not moving, she was passed out," Amie Ruckman said, her voice cracking. "Sorry, it makes me choke up every time I think of it. He had to give her mouth-to-snout resuscitation."

The trap was set by David Steven Fulton of Reno. The Nevada Department of Wildlife cited Fulton for having a trap within 200 feet of a roadway and for the way it was baited. The law restricts usage of game species as bait, including trout.

NDOW is helping the state Wildlife Commission develop rules regarding trapping near congested areas. The Wildlife Commission unveiled a draft trapping proposal last week that

would make the use of traps illegal on public property within 1,000 yards of a residence.