RAVS Visits WA Tribes

This past May, the HSUS Rural Area Veterinary Service (RAVS) paid a visit to three Native American tribes on Washington’s Olympic Peninsula. PNRO staff joined them to present humane education programs and meet with local humane organizations and animal control officers. During one week, three veterinarians and 30 volunteer veterinary students spayed, neutered, and cared for 1,662 cats and dogs. The tribal councils of the Suquamish, Quinault, and Makah were very appreciative of this free service, and plans are to return.

RAVS brings veterinary services to poor communities around the globe, whether in Bolivia or Kitsap County, Washington. RAVIS has benefited not only thousands of animals and their owners, but has also expanded the knowledge of veterinary school students who learn some important life lessons. Another important aspect of RAVIS is the opportunity to bring humane education to the communities. Volunteers with experience in education are needed to assist HSUS staff in these efforts and are encouraged to contact our office. Students interested in volunteering can visit the RAVIS Web site at www.ruralareavet.org.

A girl brings her dog to the RAVIS clinic held on tribal lands of Washington’s Olympic Peninsula.

One Goose’s Happy Ending, Hope for More

Plastic fishing line wound tightly around this female goose’s leg (right) caused severe swelling and infection and left the goose to hobble about on one foot. Noticing the lame bird near a lake in south King County, Washington, PNRO Director Bob Reder captured the goose, and, after a veterinarian examined her, she was transferred to the Sarvey Wildlife Center. Further examination found a fish hook lodged in her esophagus. Following surgery, medical care, and three weeks of recuperation, she was ready to return to the lake. On the morning of the release, Sarvey’s William Miller and Leslie Henry joined Reder to watch the goose take to flight, call to the other geese, and return to her flock.

Reprieve for Seattle Geese

We wish all our goose stories could turn out so well. For the past few years, Canada geese have been rounded up and killed by the hundreds each summer in Seattle’s public parks and on the University of Washington campus as part of a regional effort to control their numbers. Geese have come to be viewed by many as nuisance animals, mainly because of the copious amounts of feces they leave on beaches, playing fields, and park lawns.

In opposition to the lethal removal of geese, The HSUS and the Progressive Animal Welfare Society (PAWS) have partnered with the Seattle Parks Department to employ humane and non-lethal methods of managing conflicts between geese and people in some of the city’s most popular recreation areas. As part of the program, the Parks Department has agreed to discontinue the capture and gassing of geese in 2004 and has furnished volunteers with insurance and clothing identifying them as program participants.

This past April, more than 60 volunteers attended an orientation sponsored by PAWS.
Federal Protection Sought for Whales, Otters

Washington Orcas Added to State's Endangered Species List

The HSUS is pleased to announce that the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife has added orcas (killer whales) to the state's endangered species list. In 2002, the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) refused to list the southern resident whales) to the state's endangered species list. A federal judge apparently agreed with this position when the court's order. “The HSUS submitted extensive comments and participated in workshops at both the state and federal levels,” said PNRO Director Bob Reder. “And we will continue to work closely with these agencies.”

Alaskan Sea Otter Population Shows Signs of Declining

While the sea otter population in northern Alaska was found to have recovered in the mid-1980s, a 1992 survey found that the sea otters had declined more than 50 percent in the waters surrounding Rat, Delarof, and western Andreanof Islands. The survey was conducted again in 2000 and found that sea otters in the Aleutians had declined by 70 percent from 1992 to 2000. Additional aerial surveys were conducted for the southwestern Alaska Peninsula and the Kodiak Archipelago. This data were then compared to that from previous surveys from the late 1980s, demonstrating a decline of 93 to 94 percent for the South Alaska Peninsula and a 27 to 49 percent decline for the North Alaska Peninsula. In the Kodiak Archipelago, a 40 percent decline since 1994 has occurred.

With these alarming statistics, this past June, The HSUS, the Defenders of Wildlife, and other concerned organizations submitted extensive comments to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFW) in response to its proposal to designate the southwest Alaska population of the northern sea otter as “threatened” under the Endangered Species Act. Please send your letters of support for the sea otters to this regional office, where we will assemble and forward them to the USFW.

Legislative Update

Alaska

• The governor signed H.B. 275 into law. Although it upgrades the penalties for all acts of animal cruelty to a class A misdemeanor, including neglect, it also removes from animal control agencies the power to investigate animal cruelty.

• Also introduced were H.B. 31 and H.J.R. 5, which would increase the amount of signatures required to put an initiative on the ballot. Humane groups have successfully used the initiative process to bring animal issues to the public when legislators were not sympathetic.

Washington

• Initiative 655 (I-655), which banned deer baiting and hounding of bears, bobcats, and cougars, was dealt a severe blow as a Jefferson County district court judge recently declared it unconstitutional. The HSUS and four other humane organizations have asked Attorney General Christine O. Gregoire to review the court’s decision. Washington voters made their feelings clear about these unsporting practices when they voted by a margin of 63 to 37 to ban them in 1996. Since that time, hunters have repeatedly attempted to undermine the measure. The HSUS will continue to fight to preserve the will of Washingtonians and protect the state’s bears, bobcats, and cougars.

• The Town of Auburn introduced a city ordinance concerning potentially vicious dogs. Included was a definition of a potentially vicious dog as any weighing more than 30 pounds. Along with 150 citizens, PNRO Director Bob Reder submitted written and oral testimony in opposition to the ordinance. At a subsequent meeting the city council removed the “30-pound” provision from the definition.

A slunk struggles in a trap. Such leghold trapping has successfully been banned thanks to ballot initiatives. Proposed Alaska bills would undermine the initiative process.
Promoting the protection of all animals

Director’s Report

By Robert Reder
Director of the Pacific Northwest Regional Office

Reaching Out

The HSUS has maintained its primary and motivating principle for over 50 years: the prevention of cruelty to all living creatures. The responsibility for the welfare of all animals is a daunting one, and it belongs to us all. HSUS staff members take our mission very seriously; however, the significance and vastness of our goals require the support, assistance, and personal involvement of our members.

How can you help? To begin with, if you are not already a member, we invite you to join The HSUS. Your membership will help fund our educational, legislative, investigative, and outreach projects. In addition to being a member, you may choose to give of your time or expertise as an HSUS volunteer. Together we will strive to make the world a better place for all animals.

The following are a few examples of opportunities in our region that require a collaborative effort and the work of volunteers. In Seattle, The HSUS has partnered with the Progressive Animal Welfare Society (PAWS) and a group of 60 dedicated volunteers, all united to prevent the future trapping and killing of unwanted Canada geese (see the story on page 1). We have asked our Oregon members and activists to contact their state legislators, retail stores, and neighbors about the adverse effects of Bovine Growth Hormones (BGH) found in dairy products. The goal is to bring consumer pressure upon the dairy industry, until it discontinues the use of BGH. PNRO is also currently working with several coalitions in Idaho, comprised of HSUS members and concerned citizens, to tackle issues of feral cats and animal shelter improvements. The Alaska Interior Police K-9 Fund is a non-profit organization that raises money to buy bullet-proof vests for police service dogs. PNRO has taken an active role in assisting the group’s efforts as it gains support throughout the state.

After the terrorist attacks of September 11, many people were motivated to become HSUS Disaster Animal Response Team (DART) members. Every year, wildfires, floods, hazardous-material spills, earthquakes, and other disasters threaten animals and people alike. DART teams consist of animal care and control professionals, emergency services and rescue workers, and other qualified volunteers. If you have skills and experience in animal handling, emergency public services, or disaster work and are interested in joining our DART team, please contact our office.

Many of our members have joined the HSUS Humane Activists Network (HAN). We realize that grass roots activism is intrinsic to successful legislative goals. HAN members staff phone trees, write letters of support, or attend legislative sessions. PNRO appreciates the work of these volunteers and is always happy to add another name to the network.

For more information about volunteer opportunities, please contact our office. As we reach out to you today, please keep in mind that collectively we can accomplish our goals for those creatures who cannot speak for themselves.

Contacting HSUS

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Promoting the protection of all animals

Celebrate the Season and The HSUS

The HSUS is proud to have May Company department stores and Radko as sponsors of our 50th anniversary. As part of the celebration, May Company is offering three exclusive HSUS 50th anniversary products for sale this fall: a Radko ornament (left) and a dog and cat plush toy by Gund. For more information visit www.hsus.org/marketplace.

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