NRRO Feral Dog Rescue Project

The Turks and Caicos Islands SPCA (TCSPCA) was facing a serious problem. Located about 600 miles southeast of Miami, this eight-island chain covers 193 square miles. The island’s resorts and tourism board demanded local government help control stray dogs (locally called “potcakes,” derived from the native islander habit of feeding the dogs the leftovers from the rice pots) who were creating a public safety and health concern.

In response, the government sanctioned a dog-shooting program and was considering a plan to intentionally introduce canine distemper as a way to control the dog population. TCSPCA sent out an international Internet plea for help in stopping the distemper proposal and to seek potential alternatives.

The distemper proposal caught the eye of Montana wildlife veterinarian Mark Johnson of Wildlife Veterinary Resources. Johnson

continued on page 3

Vet tech Paula Brennan has her arms full. These pups might have been shot had The HSUS not intervened.

NRRO Supports Alaskan Villages

When Alaska joined our region two years ago, NRRO staff knew addressing animal protection issues of the state would be a challenge. Alaska is the largest state (larger than California, Texas, and Montana combined) with the smallest human population per square mile.

The first NRRO Alaskan projects included helping the Alaskan Animal Care and Control Association bring quality training into the state. Last year, we sponsored a canine behavior workshop taught by dog training and behavior expert Sue Sternberg. We also worked to help facilitate networking with local agencies on issues such as animal cruelty, sheltering, and disaster preparedness. In the winter of 2001, we led an effort to bring tons of much needed dog food to the interior villages along the Yukon River.

This contact with remote villagers identified some major needs. Dozens of these interior villages are accessible only by plane, boat, or snowmobile. The only access to veterinary care for many residents is to fly their animals to a population center for treatment. Few villagers even have the option to have their dogs spayed or neutered. Issues such as strays, sick and injured animals, dog bites, and other animal wellness issues are addressed in very few remote communities.

Our office began researching several solutions including projects such as a spay/neuter flotilla (floating spay clinic) and native nation campaigns similar to those in the lower 48. But Alaska state and tribal regulations made it unlikely that we could replicate our efforts to bring in out-of-state clinics or veterinary school teams.

NRRO determined that, pending restrictions, the most effective way to bring services to the villages would be to work with local contacts to sponsor clinics and then recruit Alaskan-licensed veterinarians. In some villages where veterinarians might already make periodic visits, we have issued spay/neuter certificates and developed other incentives to get the people to bring their animals to the vet. Pending funding, we are scheduling at least a half dozen HSUS-sponsored animal wellness clinics in these remote Alaskan villages. For more information, contact our office.
The Shoshone-Bannock tribes of the Ft. Hall Indian Reservation located in the southeast corner of Idaho invited NRRO and University of Michigan School of Veterinary Medicine staff to participate in their first spay/neuter clinic in August 2001. The coordination and success of this event was due to hard work and outstanding communication with the Shoshone-Bannock Tribal Council, Tribal Health and Human Services Department, Pocatello Humane Society, Pocatello Animal Shelter and Control, and the Bingham County Humane Society. Each morning beginning at 7 a.m., this gentle community’s members began lining up with their pets outside the clinic. We held five days of surgeries, altering approximately 75 animals per day and vaccinating more than 250 non-surgery dogs and cats. Veterinary students and NRRO team members also presented humane education programs to the community while pet owners and their children quietly waited for their pets’ recovery or health assessment checks.

Tribal elders, dancers, and musicians honored our team with an outstanding thanks “for making our home a safer place, and for giving our pets the good health they deserve.” We are looking forward to returning to the Ft. Hall Reservation in 2002. Any members interested in volunteering during one or more of our 2002 native nations events should contact our office.

Opportunities to Get Involved

April 27-29 Spay/neuter clinic on the Duck Valley Reservation, Idaho
May 1-3 Humane education clinic, Wind River Reservation, Wyoming
May 1-5 Spay/neuter clinics on the Wind River Reservation, Wyoming
May 5 Grassroots legislation workshop, Casper, Wyoming
May 28-June 1 HSUS National Conference on Animals in Disasters, Radisson Plaza Hotel, Fort Worth, Texas
June 7 Livestock cruelty investigation and Henneke scoring workshop, Bozeman, Montana
June 8-9 Equine motivational response clinic, Bozeman, Montana
June Montana Spay/Neuter Task Force clinics on Montana reservations
July-July Spay/neuter clinics on South Dakota and North Dakota reservations
Sept 18-20 Regional Disaster Animal Rescue Team training, Billings, Montana
October Animal control officer 40-hour basic training, Montana Law Enforcement Academy, Helena, Montana

Selected 2001 Accomplishments

Did you know that in 2001, your regional office …

- Sponsored workshops on:
  - 3 ice rescue (Montana)
  - Canine behavior (Alaska)
  - Disaster preparedness (Alaska)
  - Euthanasia technician training (South Dakota)
  - Low-to high-animal rescue (Montana)

- Gave presentations about:
  - Feral cats (Texas)
  - Disaster preparation (California Wolf Center, Animal overpopulation (Philippines)
  - Wildlife handling (ZooMontana)
  - Chemical capture (Native American Wildlife Society)
  - Disaster preparedness (Montana)

- Conducted the following field projects:
  - Rodent control (North Dakota and Minnesota)
  - Tribal humane education (Wyoming)
  - Three-day animal wellness clinics in Wind River, Wyoming, and Northern Cheyenne, Crow Nation, and Fort Belknap, Montana
  - Five-day animal wellness clinic in Fort Hall, Idaho
  - Seven-day animal wellness clinic on Cheyenne Reservation (South Dakota)
  - Feral cat capture at Montana State Prison

- Tackled special projects such as:
  - If You Care, Leave Them There media campaign
  - Turks and Caicos Islands animal rescue project
  - Taiwan five-day field training of local inspectors

- Recruited and placed the following animals:
  - several hundred dogs and cats, horses, raccoons, coatis (3), ducks, chickens, opossums, prairie dogs, chinchillas, rats, gerbils, wild birds, guinea fowl, snakes, an owl, and a beag.

Join Us for Specialized Disaster Training

When a disaster strikes, everyone needs to be prepared, and NRRO offers disaster training for everyone. In mid September we will be hosting a multi-day Regional Disaster Animal Response Team conference with training levels appropriate for everyone from disaster strike team respondents to volunteer animal care providers at emergency shelters. More training will include four half-day certification training classes, including American Red Cross pet first aid, a Federal Aviation Administration helicopter safety course, and a human cardiology/resuscitation and first aid course. Other disaster training courses, such as the Federal Emergency Management Agency's Animals in Disaster Course and Incident Command System training will be available.

National recruited speakers will give presentations on hazardous materials and how they can affect animals, animal material management, HSUS disaster services, and other areas of concern in preparing for and responding to disasters.

The conference will also include simultaneous meetings with other stakeholders in regional disasters, such as the veterinary community, county disaster planners, and native nations.

While training such as the helicopter safety course is appropriate for strike team respondents, other training, such as pet first aid, animal TPR (temperature, pulse, and respiration) monitoring, and human first aid classes, are suitable for any animal owner or shelter volunteer. If you would like more information, please check our regional Web page at www.hsus.org/reg and contact our office for a flyer.

There's no place like home.

The HSUS Wildlife Law Trust program with the wildlife law scholars to help protect wildlife and wildlife habitats by preserving their unique ways of life.

To report wildlife poachers, or irresponsible wildlife projects, please contact the wildlife animal welfare protection project.

Please help us save wildlife.

If you have a project that should be permanently protected from destruction, please contact us at The HSUS Wildlife Law Trust or The HSUS Wildlife Law Trust.

The HSUS Wildlife Law Trust.

1-800-WILDLIFE (945-3543).

www.hsus.org/regions/

Please contact us at The HSUS Wildlife Law Trust.

The HSUS Wildlife Law Trust.

1-800-WILDLIFE (945-3543).

www.hsus.org/regions/
Dave’s Dialogue

By Dave Pauli
Director of the Northern Rockies Regional Office

Keeping Up!

Yikes! I cannot believe it is time for another newsletter. As the NRRO staff met to decide what we wanted to run in this issue, we discovered we had more material than we have space, so we want to remind you that you can always find more details and revised dates on the NRRO Web at www.hsus.org/regions.

The other quandary we always have at newsletter deadline time is whether to tell you about recently completed projects or to inform you about upcoming ones. In this issue we try to give you an equal mix with the Turks and Caicos Islands project (2001) and the potentially amazing 2002 Alaskan remote villages project. Any material that does not make the newsletter will also be posted on our Web site.

I know by the time this hits your mailbox, we will be well into a very busy 2002 calendar year. Some events such as our January and February ice rescue training session will have passed by, and we will be preparing for our annual trip to the HSUS’s Animal Care Expo.

We are currently scheduling several new events for 2002, such as our first ever visits to the Duck Valley and Nez Pierce native nations of Idaho. We will also be returning for visits to Idaho's Fort Hall, Wyoming's Wind River, and the Northern Cheyenne of Montana.

Other highlights for 2002 should be our equine workshops in Bozeman and the national disaster animal rescue training in September. We may also have a bear biology and bear tolerance workshop in late fall. Add a few dozen cruelty cases, some court appearances, a half dozen legislative lobbying trips, and a wildfire or two, and we don't have many days left in the year!

If you want to know more about what you read either in this newsletter or on the Web page, give our office a call. We enjoy getting your feedback about what animal issues we might address. Again, thanks to each of you for your continued support. You are the ones who allow us to get involved in so many exciting projects that improve the lives of the animals we share this planet with.


A variety of students from Montana and North and South Dakota with backgrounds in animal control, fire fighting, and forestry joined NRRO staff in the class that incorporated both human and animal rescue components. Rapelling down a cliff, harnessing, using a cable system to reach the bottom of a canyon, and learning anchoring and rope safety techniques were some of the aspects of this class. NRRO will continue technical rescue training events in 2002 to help our region be disaster and rescue ready. For 2002 technical rescue classes, please visit our NRRO Web site at www.hsus.org/regions, or contact us.

Contacting HSUS

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