PNRO is serving on the steering committee of MADelk (Measure Against the Domestication of Elk), a diverse coalition representing animal protection, conservation, and hunting organizations, formed to eliminate elk farming in Oregon.

Currently, private ranchers raise captive, tame elk behind high fences on private land. Crowded living conditions and the transport of elk among farms encourage the spread to wildlife and cattle of highly contagious and deadly diseases such as tuberculosis (TB) and chronic wasting disease (CWD), which is related to mad cow disease.

The states of Wisconsin and Colorado have already killed more than 30,000 wild deer because of the threat of CWD. TB was recently found on an elk ranch in northeastern Oregon, which resulted in the entire herd being killed and tested for the disease. A subsequent plan to kill hundreds of wild deer and elk by aerial gunning to test for TB exposure was, thankfully, halted.

One of the financial incentives for elk farming is the sale of antler velvet for its purported aphrodisiac properties. “Velveting” is a very bloody, cruel procedure, which takes place when the bull elk’s antlers are fully formed, but still heavily emphasized. PNRO spoke with classroom children about the importance of spaying and neutering their companion animals and distributed pet care information to the hundreds of people who brought their animals to the clinic.

Each day saw long lines of people holding cats in cardboard carriers and dogs on leashes, streaming out the door of the local community centers, which had been temporarily transformed into spay/neuter clinics. At one clinic, held in the small rural town of Inchelium, a beautiful white cat with long, silky fur and a large wound on the side of his head caught the eye of a clinic staff-member. He was a friendly barn cat, here to be neutered and then released back outdoors. However, the veterinarian in charge determined that the wound on his head would require extensive surgery and outdoor living would endanger his life. A clinic volunteer agreed to transport him to continue on page 2
Making Room for Wolves in Oregon

Due to heavy persecution by hunters, wolves were virtually extirpated in Oregon by the 1960s. In the late 1980s, three wolves were documented to have entered the state, presumably from Idaho, which has an active wolf-recovery program. One wolf was returned to Idaho, the second was illegally shot, and a car killed the third. Since that time, additional wolves have been sighted in Northeastern Oregon. These magnificent predators appear to be slowly finding their way across the Oregon border and back into their former territory.

The reappearance of wolves in Oregon has stirred up both sides of the controversial issue of wolf reintroduction. Many people celebrate the return of wolves to Oregon and recognize their value in our ecosystem. Unfortunately, some people share this viewpoint, and preparations are already underway for the animals’ destruction. Some Oregon ranchers view wolves as threats to livestock and vehemently oppose wolf conservation efforts. The HSUS and other animal protection and conservation groups maintain that livestock losses can be largely prevented through improved livestock husbandry practices. These groups also advocate non-lethal predator control methods, which have proven successful throughout the world and provide a long-term solution to ranchers. One increasingly popular method is the use of guard animals, including llamas and particular breeds of dogs, which can defend domestic sheep and cattle from predators. Many ranchers have begun to embrace these progressive and non-lethal techniques, and have found that they provide more effective and long-term reductions of livestock losses compared to lethal methods.

Oregon’s little-known state Endangered Species Act (ESA) protects wolves and requires the state to assist in their recovery. In June the state Fish and Wildlife Commission (FWC) received petitions from both sides of the wolf issue. Agricultural groups petitioned FWC to remove the wolf from the state ESA. The HSUS and other conservation groups petitioned FWC for wolf protection. The HSUS and others have initiated a Wolf Coalition Working Group to support wolf conservation efforts in Oregon. You can help by contacting FWC to express your support of wolf protection in Oregon. Write to Fish and Wildlife Commission, 2501 SW First Ave., Portland, OR 97207; e-mail Maureen.B.Farrell@state.or.us; or fax: 503-872-5276.

Regional Update

Washington Trapping

Our last newsletter reported on the outrageous action taken by the Washington State Senate to repeal Initiative 713 (I-713)—the widely supported anti-trapping initiative that passed with a 55 percent majority in November of 2000. As we went to press with that newsletter, the battle over I-713 was being fought in the House of Representatives. We are happy to report that thanks to your correspondence to elected officials and the hard work of a few dedicated legislators, the effort to repeal I-713 was defeated this legislative session and the initiative remains intact.

Unfortunately, we will face this battle again next year as numerous legislators have vowed to bring the issue up again. It is more important than ever for you to continue to contact your legislators to let them know you do not want Washington’s elected officials to overturn the will of the voters by repealing I-713. For help in identifying your legislators, contact PNRO.

Washington Coyotes

Last fall we reported that Washington had held its first-ever “coyote derby.” The stated goal of the event was for contestants to kill as many coyotes as possible during an allotted time period. Individuals who killed the most coyotes increased their chances of winning raffle prizes. Participants killed 124 coyotes during the three-day event.


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Nine groups, including The HSUS and the Oregon chapter of the Sierra Club, filed a lawsuit against USFWS in federal district court seeking a preliminary injunction to stop the study until the case could be heard in court, but the request was denied. This means the study may begin at any time, and the cougars still need your help. Please express your opposition to this plan now by writing Gov. John Kitzhaber, State Capitol Bldg., 900 Court St., NE, Salem, OR 97301-4047; calling 503-378-3111; or e-mailing direcort.lovewolf@gmail.com. Also contact John Eder, chair, Oregon Fish and Wildlife, 2501 SW First Ave., Portland, OR 97207; 503-872-5272; fax: 503-872-5276.

Please send me information about

The Humane Society of the United States (HSUS). Using charitable gift annuities and trusts to support The HSUS. Giving The HSUS a gift of stock.

Promoting the protection of all animals.

THE HUMANE SOCIETY OF THE UNITED STATES PNRO Regional News Fall 2002
Canada geese are remarkable birds. They mate for life, nurture their young, and form strong family bonds. The USDA's barbaric round-ups separate these family groups, leaving orphaned goslings to fend for themselves without their parents' care and guidance. Lone geese honk forlornly as their mates and young struggle and die. Killing geese is not only unjustified—it is a short-term solution at best and does nothing to prevent goose conflicts in the future. For the past two years, PNRO has done everything within our means to stop the killing of geese in the Puget Sound region, including offering assistance to private property owners and local parks departments in dealing with goose conflicts in a non-lethal and humane manner. We've also generated public pressure on decision makers who, to date, have chosen to maintain the status quo.

The public has responded with outrage to the goose kills in Puget Sound. Hundreds have joined demonstrations, written letters and made phone calls asking for an end to the carnage. In an effort to stop the round-ups completely, or to ensure that they did not occur without adequate documentation and media coverage, dozens volunteered their time to patrol local parks during the weeks the USDA was killing.

The outpouring of compassion for Canada geese is heartening and clearly demonstrates that citizens expect a better and more humane solution to any perceived problems with these birds. PNRO will continue to urge officials to implement a comprehensive, non-lethal plan to address Canada goose conflicts and offer our help, free of charge, to ensure the success of these methods. We will also continue to emphasize the injustice of the goose slaughter and the importance of striving to live in harmony with wildlife. The geese are depending on it.

By Lisa Wathne
Director of the Pacific Northwest Regional Office

No Peace for Geese

 Summers in the Pacific Northwest always provide welcome relief from our dreary and seemingly endless wet winters. The bright skies, longer days, clear views of snow-capped mountains and calm lakes lift our spirits, renew our energies, and make life a little more pleasant. If only the same were true for our Canada geese.

At this time of year these magnificent birds have shed their flight feathers and are raising their young, yet they are the targets of U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) agents who are on a mission to kill 4,200 geese throughout the Puget Sound. The birds' crime? Defecating in public parks.

The taxpayer-funded federal goose round-ups resemble a scene from a horror movie. Trusting families of geese—including goslings—are lured into pens with bread and then grabbed and shoved, struggling, into a gas chamber mounted on a pickup truck. As carbon dioxide gas is released into the dark and cramped chamber, the panicked geese trample the bodies of their mates, children, and siblings as they slowly asphyxiate.

Contacting HSUS

Write: HSUS Pacific Northwest Regional Office 5200 University Way, NE, Ste. 201 Seattle, WA 98105

Call: 206-526-0949

Fax: 206-526-0989

E-Mail: pnro@hsus.org

Web Page: www.hsus.org/pnro

Promoting the protection of all animals