It Doesn’t Pay To Be a Chirikof Cow

A picture may be worth a thousand words, but the one word brought to mind by the picture below is singular: suffering.

The conditions shown in this image were those endured by the cattle removed from Chirikof Island on November 19, 2003, as part of a U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) plan to send them to slaughter. Their offense: They are a non-native species on the island, located 80 miles southwest of Kodiak Island, Alaska. The Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge manages Chirikof Island, and it is its mission to “conserve marine mammals, seabirds and other migratory birds, and marine resources upon which they rely.”

The cattle had been introduced to the island in the late 1800s and had flourished to a current herd of 800 animals. As the captive cows made their journey, the barge developed mechanical problems and ran into bad weather, and the animals were abandoned on the ship. According to reports, for more than a week they sat, so tightly packed that they had trouble moving around or even raising their heads, let alone eating or drinking. These are the miserable conditions the Chirikof cattle endured for more than a week abandoned aboard a barge.

Goldendale Rescue

On November 7, 2003, PNRO received reports of a woman living in a small car in Goldendale, Washington, with more than 17 dogs and 4 cats. Within a week, PNRO, SpokAnimal, and Goldendale Police Department patrolled the town in search of the woman’s blue car. According to reports, these dogs had been crowded together in small, filthy crates with little room to turn around. After the initial discussion with the owner, she agreed to surrender seven of the dogs, all small breeds.

“As we carefully loaded the dogs into our truck, we felt an enormous sense of relief and gratitude for the ones taken that day,” said PNRO’s Kelly Peterson. “Even so, there was an overwhelming sense of sadness for the ones left behind. Therefore, PNRO continued to work with SpokAnimal, local law enforcement, and citizens to resolve this situation.”

Within the next month, PNRO and SpokAnimal removed the remaining animals, 13 dogs and 4 cats, including four larger dogs who had reportedly been kept in their own waste inside small crates and a little shih tzu named Wanda, who brought tears to everyone’s eyes. Wanda, who had suffered urine burns to her belly and back legs, also appeared to have untreated Cushing’s disease, a glandular disorder that causes hair loss, distended abdomen, and chronic infections. According to veterinary reports, several of the animals were diseased and in need of immediate care.

Because of the collaborative effort among agencies and local citizens, the result was a true success story. PNRO supported the effort financially by paying for the medical and spay/neuter expenses for all animals. SpokAnimal, amazingly, placed every dog and cat into permanent loving homes. Local citizens Becky Stonewall and Susan Kerr kept up the pressure to remove these animals. At the time this newsletter went to print, the district attorney was still examining the case. The HSUS will continue to monitor this case and encourage prosecution to include provisions such as a total ban on animal ownership.

The Sad Truth About Animal Hoarders

Sadly, animal hoarders are not uncommon in the Pacific Northwest. The term hoarder is used to describe someone who “collects” animals, but lacks the resources or ability to adequately meet their needs. Often these individuals suffer from mental illness and cannot recognize their own inability to provide decent care for their animals. Animal collectors often call themselves “rescuers,” but don’t be fooled. No animal deserves to be subjected to squalor and misery—even if the caretaker’s intentions are well meaning. If you suspect an animal collector is mistreating animals in your area, contact the authorities immediately.
A February meeting, the Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission failed to make any meaningful changes in Oregon’s extraordinarily inhumane trapping regulations—a set of rules that will allow the continued suffering of wild animals and pets in indiscriminate and inhumane traps. The HSUS had asked that traps be checked every 24 hours. Allowing traps to be checked only every three to 30 days—four different trap check times—all of which are too permissive—trappers will simply claim that they were targeting predatory animals, and Oregon’s wildlife will be subjected to the least restrictive trap check intervals.

Animals caught in traps suffer from the effects of extreme cold, predation, dehydration, and starvation. Animals are known to twist off or chew off a leg to escape the vise grip of the trap. Peer-reviewed research reveals that both target and non-target animals sustain injuries and experience stress in steel-jaw leghold and snare traps. Studies show that even within a 24-hour period, hemorrhaging, fractured bones, and broken jaws and teeth are common in animals trying to struggle free from the traps. This issue was the subject of a ballot initiative in 2000, and voters rejected the proposed reforms, presumably because they had confidence in the Commission’s regulatory authority. Given the failure of the Commission and the Legislature to set humane and reasonable rules, the only option now is to consider a second attempt to pass an initiative petition. We cannot make this happen alone. Movement on this issue requires a collective approach, and we wish to thank you, our members, for your continued efforts to minimize the suffering of Oregon’s wildlife.

Oregon Earns Kudos for Course

PNRO was pleased to present the animal sciences department of Oregon State University (OSU) with the Distinguished Existing Course Award for their required course Ethical Issues in Animal Agriculture. Each year, The HSUS presents two awards for academic excellence in the design and instruction of courses dealing with animals and society. The goal of this award is to expand the availability of college courses concerned with animal ethics, animal rights, or animal welfare. OSU’s course encourages critical thinking about the welfare, rights, and uses of animals, and provides students with basic skills in ethical decision-making about production practices. Such skills are valuable as consumers are becoming increasingly concerned about animal welfare and food safety. OSU’s animal sciences department is the only one in the country to require undergraduates to take an animal ethics course. PNRO is proud that OSU is a leader in this field, and we hope and expect that many other colleges will follow in its footsteps.

Reward Brings In Goose Killers

The 49 Canada goose had been shot and left to rot near a drainage ditch in Clackamas County, Oregon. But thankfully a $2,500 PNRO reward offer for information leading to the arrest and conviction of those responsible led to the capture of five men.

Thanks to a PNRO reward, the killers of 49 Canada geese were caught and punished.

How You Can Help the Chirikof Cows

Contact the USFWS officials listed below and ask them to stop promoting the removal and slaughter of the Chirikof Island cattle. Let them know that the agency is obligated to investigate humane alternatives for dealing with the problem of non-native species. The agency’s claim that the cows are privately owned does not absolve USFWS’s responsibility, as USFWS is still requiring that the cows be removed from the island, and the agency has provided a permit to the individual who is fattening the remaining cows for slaughter.

Dr. Greg Siekaniec, Refuge Manager; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge; 95 Sterling Highway; Homer, AK 99603; 907-235-6546; Fax: 907-235-7783; e-mail: gregory_siekaniec@fws.gov

Drue Pearce, Senior Advisor to the Secretary for Alaska Affairs; Department of the Interior; 1849 C Street, NW; Washington, DC 20240; 202-208-4177; Fax: 202-219-0229; e-mail: drue Pearce@bos.doI.gov

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I want to learn how I can help our animal friends and The Humane Society of the United States (HSUS).

Please send me information about
Making a memorial donation to honor the life of a pet, friend, or relative. Providing for my pets in my will and in case of emergency. Planning my estate and will to help animals and The HSUS. Using charitable gift annuities and trusts to support The HSUS. Giving The HSUS a gift of stock.

Promoting the protection of all animals

在全国范围内实施动物保护政策
Director's Report

By Robert Reder
Director of the Pacific Northwest Regional Office

50 Years of History and a New Beginning

The year 2004 is a very special one for the HSUS, as it marks our golden anniversary. We are proud of our past and all that we have accomplished for the animals during these five decades. This year is especially significant for me as I become PNRO’s new regional director. The future holds many challenges; however, I find it exciting to think of what we can accomplish as we work together.

Founded in 1954, The HSUS envisioned a world in which people would satisfy the physical and emotional needs of domestic animals; protect wild animals and their environments; and change their relationships with other animals from that of exploitation and harm to respect and compassion. The HSUS has emerged as the world’s largest animal protection organization, encompassing 10 regional offices; an international arm; 250 staff members, including veterinarians, wildlife biologists, lawyers, animal behaviorists, and other professionals; and eight million members and constituents. One in every 50 Americans supports The HSUS.

I began my association with The HSUS in 1990 as a field investigator, following retirement as a New Jersey police officer. Working with both our Mid-Atlantic Regional Office and our national investigations department, I looked behind the scenes and documented animal cruelty at slaughterhouses, livestock auctions, puppy mills, animal fights, rodeos, zoos, circuses, dog races, fur farms, trapping, and many other venues. HSUS program specialists and the media used much of that information and documentation to increase public awareness and spur efforts to pass new animal protection laws.

In 2000 I accepted the position of regional coordinator of the HSUS West Coast Regional Office and relocated with my wife, Karen, and our two boys (dogs) to Sacramento. I never regretted that decision, and these past four years have been very special to us, filled with new friends, colleagues, accomplishments, and the addition of a third boy to our family. Junior is now one year old and in fine health, but when I first saw him at the scene of an animal cruelty investigation, he was four months old and in need of medical attention and a good meal. Junior has been a natural fit into our family and has been easily accepted by his brothers.

Now, as I begin my new assignment in the Pacific Northwest region, I accept the responsibility of representing our HSUS members and constituents. I look forward to working with the dedicated people who provide shelter and care for lost, injured, and unwanted animals. And I dedicate myself to making a positive difference for the animals of our region.

As the HSUS marks its 50th year, we are re dedicating ourselves to the importance of protecting the lives of all animals. We are a private, nonprofit, charitable organization, and donors fund our myriad programs. As your regional director, I plan on bringing many of those programs and resources to the states of Alaska, Idaho, Oregon, and Washington. Obviously, it will take more than the staff of PNRO to accomplish our goals. We will need your continued support, and together we can make a difference, as we build on the past and look to the future.

In 1968, HSUS investigator Frank McMahon observes the Pribilof seal hunt in Alaska.

Contacting HSUS
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