



The problem

Unhealthy and bad-tempered rescue dogs from both national and international rescues (typically unregulated) are pouring into our communities and replacing healthy, well-bred dogs in the US dog marketplace.

The source of the problem

Dog overpopulation no longer exists in most parts of the US, with many regions lacking enough dogs to meet demand. The vacuum left by solving dog overpopulation creates a marketplace for rescues and shelters, which continue to advertise their dogs using outdated information that makes their dogs look like a more humane and worthwhile choice.

The consequences of this problem

Dogs, consumers, breeders and pet sellers are affected. Rescue and shelter dogs are affected because rescue and shelter operations lack oversight. Dogs in this environment are often treated inhumanely, lacking the facilities, transport and care required by law of breeders and sellers. Consumers are affected by the degraded quality and temperament of the dogs offered to them. Rescue dogs carry diseases and parasites that in some cases can be lethal in people and other animals - rabies, TB, and countless tick-borne diseases like ehrlichiosis, babesiosis, and other diseases, like leishmaniasis carried by vectors such as ticks and flies. These parasites and vectors are becoming common in US destination cities for rescue dogs. Seattle and Spokane were among the top10 cities in the United States for new heartworm infections in February of 2019. Before rescue relocation programs started, there were no native cases of heartworm in the Pacific Northwest. Now, Northwesterners need to treat their dogs every month to keep heartworm infections from developing.

The solution

Laws and regulations need to be drafted and passed in recognition that regardless of whether a dog transfer is called an adoption or a sale, they deserve humane handling, consumers need options and information, and stray dogs should be prohibited from entering the US altogether unless rigorously screened for disease risks. Strays are the most likely reservoirs of disease, and unlike owned or deliberately bred dogs, strays have no histories, no means by which to clear them.

One evolving consequence

A particularly worrisome consequence of swamping the dog marketplace with rescue dogs, is the increasing regulation of dog breeders and the minimal regulation or outright exemption of rescues and shelters. The glut of rescue dogs impacts the gene pools of popular breeds by reducing demand and diminishing breeding efforts. Many breeds are hundreds of years old, but once their gene pools decline below certain levels, it will be impossible to bring them back.

Statements by government agencies, public health professionals, and media on pathogens found in rescue animals

Definition: Humane Relocation

Humane relocation (or *dog trafficking* if you oppose it) refers to the practice of transporting un-owned pets in need of adoption (primarily dogs and cats) from areas with a surplus of homeless pets to areas with a higher demand for pets and more shelter and rescue space. ^{([link](#))} When done responsibly, it is a cooperative, common-sense method of finding homes for pets that might otherwise be euthanized. When done without care, it does nothing to solve the problem of pet overpopulation at its source, and in some cases even encourages it. Worse, it can turn participating rescues and shelters into unregulated pet stores that deal in animals of unknown backgrounds – animals that may have serious behavioral problems or may be infected with parasites and diseases not endemic to a particular region (e.g. whip worm, heart worm, or rabies). ^{([link](#))}

National Association of State and Public Health Veterinarians: Rabies

Compendium <http://www.nasphv.org/Documents/NASPHVRabiesCompendium.pdf>

Excerpt *"Importation and interstate movement of animals. a) Areas with dog-to-dog rabies transmission. Canine rabies virus variants have been eliminated from the United States^{3,7};*

however, rabid dogs and a rabid cat have been introduced into the continental United States from areas with dog-to-dog rabies transmission.^{4–6,48,49} The movement of dogs for the purposes of adoption or sale from areas with dog-to-dog rabies transmission increases the risk of introducing canine-transmitted rabies to areas where it does not currently exist, and this practice should be prohibited. b) International importation. Current federal regulations are insufficient to prevent the introduction of rabid animals into the United States and must be strengthened and appropriately enforced.”

CDC Federal Register / Vol. 84, No. 21 / Thursday, January 31, 2019 / Notices page 727

Full report: <https://www.naiaonline.org/uploads/WhitePapers/CDC1-31-2019Rabies-FreeGuidance.pdf>

TABLE 1—ESTIMATED AVERAGE ANNUAL NUMBERS OF DOG IMPORTS BY COUNTRY AND BY IMMUNIZATION STATUS:

Baseline estimate of dog imports	Best estimate	Lower bound	Upper bound
Total	1,064,796	884,036	1,245,555

CDC <https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/yellowbook/2018/conveyance-transportation-issues/taking-animals-animal-products-across-international-borders>

Excerpt “Although done with the best of intentions, rescuing and importing stray animals from foreign countries can create human health risks. Travelers are at an increased risk for possible bites and scratches from fearful and stressed animals, which may result in injury or exposure to infectious disease. Animals that are infected with zoonotic diseases might not show any outward signs of being ill. Therefore, all rescued animals should be examined by a licensed veterinarian both before departure and after arrival in the United States. If the intent of travel is to rescue animals, participants should discuss rabies pre-exposure prophylaxis with their health care providers.”

One Health: What is One Health?

AVMA Press Release

<https://www.avma.org/KB/Resources/Reference/Pages/One-Health94.aspx>

Excerpt: "It is estimated that at least 75% of emerging and re-emerging diseases are either zoonotic (spread between humans and animals) or vector-borne (carried from infected animals to others through insects)."

Imported dogs carry vector-borne diseases

Report from 6th Vector Borne World Forum: Researchers Fear Spread of Canine Vector-Borne Diseases <http://www.dogwoodjrctc.com/new-page/>

New parasite may have come from imported pets

<https://pets.webmd.com/news/20151008/parasite-imported-pets#1>

Pathogens and parasites found in imported dogs, mostly rescue dogs

Federal Select Agent Program:

<https://www.selectagents.gov/SelectAgentsandToxins.html>

Excerpt: "The Federal Select Agent Program oversees the possession, use and transfer of biological select agents and toxins, which have the potential to pose a severe threat to public, animal or plant health or to animal or plant products."

A select agent pathogen, Burkholderia pseudomallei, was diagnosed in a rescue dog imported from Thailand in 2016. The federal special agent list includes anthrax, Ebola, etc.: Public Health Response to an Imported Case of Canine Melioidosis caused by:

<https://cste.confex.com/cste/2017/webprogram/Paper8413.html>

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Melioidosis>

B. pseudomallei infection in humans is called melioidosis; its mortality is 20 to 50% even with treatment. ^[22]

Rabies in rescue dog imported from Egypt – falsified papers:

<https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm6449a2.htm>

Second rabid rescue dog imported from Egypt, 2017

<https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/67/wr/mm6750a3.htm>

Third rabid rescue dog imported from Egypt, 2019

<https://www.nwahomepage.com/news/rescued-dog-from-egypt-tests-positive-for-rabies/1824310538>

TB was diagnosed in a rescue dog from Turkey in 2015:

<http://www.naiaonline.org/uploads/WhitePapers/TBInRescueDogFromTurkey.pdf>

<https://equimanagement.com/news/foreign-animal-disease-happen-53687>

Rabies in rescue dog: Vermont state veterinarian cautions adopters to learn about their dog's background before adopting.

<http://www.naiaonline.org/uploads/WhitePapers/PetAdoptionPressReleaseNov2013.pdf>

Rabid dog imported from Iraq into US

<http://www.naiaonline.org/uploads/WhitePapers/rabiesInDogImportedFromIraqJune2008.pdf>

New strain of distemper imported from So. Korea

<https://www.wormsandgermsblog.com/2019/02/articles/animals/dogs/new-imported-distemper-strain-in-dogs/>

Rescue dogs from So Korea bring canine flu (H3N2 virus) epidemic to US

https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/eid/article/23/12/17-0246_article

Important: Cornell scientists have documented a direct cause and effect relationship between rescue dog shipments from Korea and several outbreaks of the H3N2 canine influenza in the United States.

The introduction of this virus

- Caused the American public to spend \$ millions for veterinary care
- forced the temporary closure of some veterinary clinics
- added additional costs to animal shelters whose dogs fell ill with this disease
- required pharmaceutical companies to make huge expenditures to develop new vaccines
- forced pet owners to make additional expenditures to vaccinate their dogs
- hurt dog clubs through lost entries
- lost tourism dollars in communities where dog events were impacted by virus

These shipments were facilitated and advertised by the Humane Society International, which is an affiliate of the Humane Society of the United States that raises funds on this issue.

http://www.hsi.org/issues/dog_meat/facts/stop-dog-meat-trade.html scroll to Animal Rescue: South Korea.

<https://www.avma.org/News/JAVMANews/Pages/150815g.aspx>

<https://www.avma.org/KB/Resources/Reference/Pages/Canine-Influenza-Backgrounder.aspx>

<http://mediarelations.cornell.edu/2015/04/12/midwest-canine-influenza-outbreak-caused-by-new-strain-of-virus/>

http://www.weny.com/story/35775357/experts-at-cornell-university-explain-dog-influenza-how-to-protect-your-pups?utm_medium=social&utm_source=facebook WENY TV News

<http://www.clickorlando.com/pets/dog-flu-causes-orlando-pet-alliance-to-suspend-dog-adoptions>