

SUMMER 2021

THE HUMANITARIAN

SASKATCHEWAN SOCIETY FOR THE PREVENTION OF CRUELTY TO ANIMALS



**SASK
SPCA**

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Notice of AGM

The SaskSPCA's 2021 Annual General Meeting will be held on Saturday, September 18. The location and time is to be determined. This event is open to the public. You can find the latest up-to-date information regarding the 2021 AGM at saskspca.ca.

Reporting Animal Cruelty

If you suspect a case of animal cruelty, report it to the proper authorities immediately.

Dogs & cats:

In Saskatoon: Saskatoon SPCA:
Phone: (306) 374-7387

In Regina: Regina Humane Society
Phone: (306) 543-6363

Dogs & cats in all other locations:

Animal Protection Services of Saskatchewan
Phone: 1 (844) 382-0002

Livestock:

Animal Protection Services of Saskatchewan
Phone: 1 (844) 382-0002

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A new look for the SaskSPCA

You may have noticed something different about the latest issue of *The Humanitarian*. This is the first issue of our newsletter to feature the SaskSPCA's new branding.

Our staff team has been working with William Joseph Communications

to develop a new visual identity and communications strategy for the SaskSPCA, complete with a revamped newsletter.

In addition to the newsletter, you will notice a new SaskSPCA logo. The logo includes updates to the pentagonal icon such as softer corners, a thicker border, and updated animal silhouettes, along with a shortened version of our name. A fresh pallet of colours will also be incorporated in our new brand.

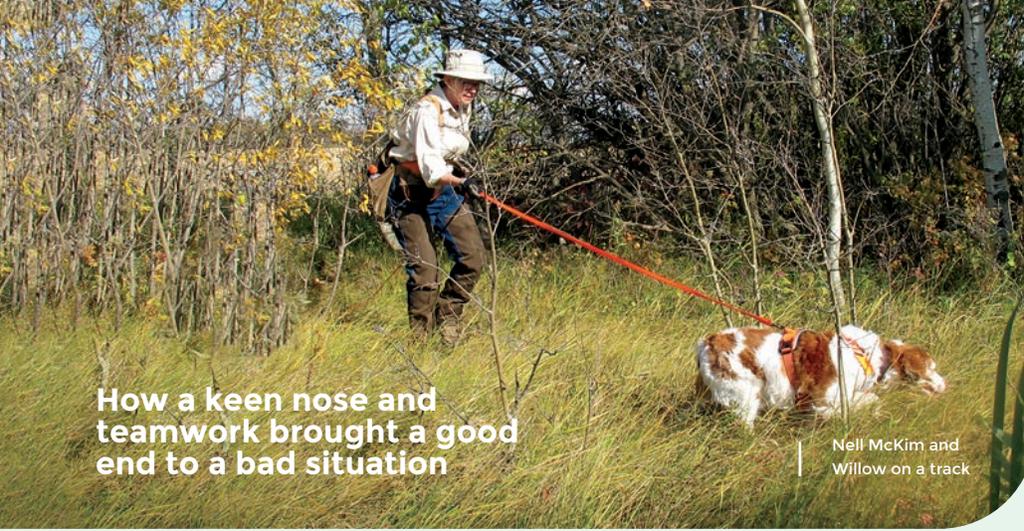
A new positioning statement for the SaskSPCA has been developed that encapsulates the importance of the work of the Society:

The SaskSPCA is the voice for animals and their people. We educate and

promote the wellbeing of animals, strengthening the human-animal bond. As change-makers, we advance policy, with a focus on ensuring the sustained humane treatment of animals. Our collective efforts improve the lives of animals today and into the future.

Social media will be an integral part of our new communications strategy. You may already like us on Facebook and follow us on Twitter, but the SaskSPCA has expanded our social reach by joining Instagram and LinkedIn. We invite you to click the "follow" button on all of our social media channels.

Work on the rebrand for the SaskSPCA continues. A re-designed website will be launched later this fall. ●



How a keen nose and teamwork brought a good end to a bad situation

Nell McKim and Willow on a track

Article submitted by Nell McKim, Saskatoon Gun Dog Club, Versatile Hunting Dog Federation – Canada, United Blood Trackers

It started like any other spring morning in rural Saskatchewan; up and at 'em to get a good start on the day – then the phone rang. On the way to work, my husband had seen a mule deer cross the road and make its way into the grove around our neighbour's farmyard. The deer was badly injured; moving slowly, dragging one hind leg, and it needed to be humanely dispatched.

I called the Saskatchewan Ministry of Environment Inquiries Line and promptly got a call back from Conservation Officer Bruce McLarty who works out of the Humboldt Field Office. After he made a visit to the site, Bruce let me know that he had been unable to locate the injured animal and had to leave the area. If we could find the deer, we were not to leave it to suffer but should shoot it. I agreed to continue looking for the deer, but also had a question for Bruce. If I was unable to find the deer, would he allow me to search again using one of our trained tracking dogs? The dog would be under my control and supervision at all times, in harness and on a long line. I would be unarmed. He agreed and asked me to give him an update later in the day.

When I looked through the area, I found just what Bruce had described: a lot of deer tracks, but no marks from

the dragging leg and no blood sign. It was time to call for expert backup!

I put Willow into her tracking harness. She is our 10-year-old Brittany, a seasoned bird dog who has done many practice blood tracks but this time it was the real thing, with an injured animal at the end of the trail. Because I knew where the deer had crossed the road, we could begin by casting across the area where the scent trail led into the corner of the shelterbelt. She immediately put her head down and began tracking in earnest, pulling hard in her harness and working her way between the rows of trees. We had good ground moisture and scraps of snow, so scenting conditions were in our favour. About 50 metres along, Willow made a sharp turn towards the center of the yard where the ground was dry and we lost the track in front of the fuel tanks. The invisible highway of scent had petered out.

After casting around that area with no luck, we took a little break, then decided to search outside the perimeter of the grove to make sure the deer hadn't left the yard. This resulted in Willow picking up the deer's scent on the air, so we knew it was still in the yard and we cast about to pick up the trail again. She began to work; head down and pulling hard, then suddenly stopped as the doe slowly stood up out of the long grass between a seed drill and cultivator. No wonder neither Bruce nor I could find her.

We backed out of the area and watched the doe relocate a short distance to a small

bunch of brush. In a few minutes, my son arrived and he was able to kill the doe with a safe shot. On examination, she had a closed fracture of the left femur. Her thigh was filled with a huge hematoma and she had a couple of fresh skin abrasions which were not scabbed over. Hit by car? Caught in a fence? We couldn't tell. Like many deer last winter, this deer became food for coyotes, but at least she met a quick and humane end before they found her. Later that day, it felt good to let Bruce know how we had been able to find the doe and that she was no longer suffering.

It took a team to make this happen: Bruce McLarty C.O., my husband, our son, myself, and of course the key player was the little dog who worked out the puzzle.

At this time, Saskatchewan does not allow the use of leashed tracking dogs to recover legally shot and wounded big game animals during hunting season; however, it is possible to train dogs and handlers for this task. Leashed tracking dogs are presently used in many countries all over the world, including 40 of the U. S. states and in British Columbia, Ontario, Quebec and Nova Scotia, and we are working to make it happen here in Saskatchewan. Changing the regulations to allow leashed and supervised dogs to track wounded big game will aid in the recovery of many animals that would otherwise be lost and wasted, and will ensure the most humane harvest possible.

Almost any dog from any breed can be taught to track. In support of this activity, the Saskatoon Gun Dog Club and the Versatile Hunting Dog Federation Canada offer coaching and training opportunities which help handlers and their dogs learn to track effectively and improve the recovery of wounded big game animals. ●

This article was submitted to Outdoor Canada Magazine and an edited version was published in the January/February 2020, Western View issue.



Webinar series focuses on abuse

In May, the Violence Link Webinar Series, organized by the One Health Education Committee, explored the complex relationship between animal abuse and abuse and violence toward people. Topics included animal abuse, child abuse, older adult abuse, and domestic violence.

Representatives from the Ministry of Social Services, Saskatchewan Seniors Mechanism (SSM), Animal Protection Services of Saskatchewan, and the

Provincial Association of Transition Houses & Services of Saskatchewan (PATHS) shared their knowledge with attendees from Saskatchewan, Alberta, British Columbia, and Nairobi, Kenya.

Each presentation offered information on how to recognize abuse and what to do if you suspect someone you know, or their animal, is being abused. Presenters also shared information on a variety of public resources available to address violence and abuse in our communities.

The One Health Education Committee helps improve the quality of life of animals

and humans by providing education for animal welfare and human service professionals.

Additional webinars are being planned. If you would like to be notified of upcoming webinars, subscribe to our mailing list at saskspca.ca/webinar-signup.



Learn more about the Violence Link:

- The link between interpersonal violence and animal abuse: How to aid those experiencing interpersonal violence – and their pets – through the use of protective orders.
- What about my pets? Leaving interpersonal violence with your pets.



Strengthening legal protections for animals

How can we ensure animals are treated with compassion and respect throughout their lives?

At the SaskSPCA, we are the voice for animals and their people. One of the ways we help promote animal welfare is through our advocacy for stronger animal protection legislation.

We support and raise awareness of improvements to federal legislation relating to animals. Recent updates to the *Criminal Code* strengthen animal fighting offences, ban the captivity of whales and dolphins, and provide greater protection for police and military dogs. In May 2021, Bill C-3 (*An Act to amend the Judges Act and Criminal Code*) passed into law. This bill requires judges to receive training on the relationship between human and animal abuse.

At the provincial level, the SaskSPCA provided comments and feedback on the 2018 updates to *The Animal Protection Act, 2018*. The Act has been strengthened with an expanded definition of distress and greater detail on the actions animal protection officers can take in a suspected cruelty case.

Through our newly established Legislative Committee, the SaskSPCA reviews existing and proposed laws and promotes the development of legislation that improves the welfare of pets and livestock.

As we work to strengthen animal welfare legislation, we are grateful for the volunteer support provided by the Saskatchewan Chapter of Pro Bono Students Canada (PBSC).

Each academic year, PBSC places law students with community-based organizations, legal clinics, and public interest groups. PBSC students typically volunteer 3-5 hours per week between

September and March. They conduct research and draft memoranda on a wide range of justice issues.

Working on behalf of the SaskSPCA, Pro Bono law student volunteers have reviewed trespass legislation in Canada and researched legal protections available for victims leaving situations of interpersonal violence and their animals.

"We truly appreciate the contribution these students have made to the SaskSPCA," says Executive Director Frances Wach.

"In working with the students, we are learning first-hand about the animal welfare issues that matter to young people. This diversity of thought is vital to us as we continue to grow and evolve as an organization."

Thank you to Pro Bono Students Canada volunteers:

/ Larissa Doerr / Brionna Wheaton
/ Alexis Kardas / Zak Anderson



What you need to know about water quality going into Spring

Old Wives Dugout, May 7, 2020. This photo shows how low the dugout was in the spring. Photo provided by Agriview.

By Alexis DeCorby, BSA, AAgr, Livestock and Feed Extension Specialist, Humboldt and Catherine Lang, BSA, AAgr, Livestock and Feed Extension Specialist, Moose Jaw

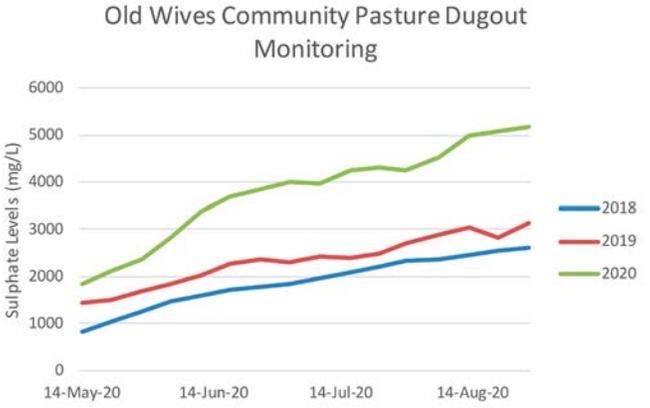
Water is arguably the most important nutrient for cattle, but is often overlooked. Water is essential for an animal's basic functions and it's directly related to feed intake. Feed intake impacts weight gain, milk production and, ultimately, animal health. However, many producers don't monitor water quality because cattle appear to be healthy when drinking it, or the water was good when checked a number of years ago.

The problem with these assumptions is that water quality can change quickly, especially surface water. One of the key water quality issues in Saskatchewan is the presence of sulphates. High sulphate levels have been linked to low fertility rates, trace mineral deficiencies, decreased immune status, loss of hair pigment, poor growth performance, polioencephalomalacia (PEM) and, in extremely high levels, death.

In summer, cows will consume approximately 64 to 95 litres (14-21 imperial gallons) per day, depending on weather. To put this into perspective, a sample of water that is marginally high in sulphates

in the winter could prove toxic in the summer. This is due to increased consumption of water, which leads to a greater amount of sulphates being consumed.

As water evaporates in the summer, the concentration of dissolved constituents increases. The Moose Jaw Regional Office has been monitoring several dugouts for the last few years. Of particular interest is a dugout located in the Old Wives Community Pasture. Over the last three years, this dugout has been monitored weekly throughout the spring and into the fall. As shown in the chart,



each year the dugout becomes unusable at some point during the grazing season. It is recommended that cattle consume water containing below 2,000 mg/L of sulphate. The symptoms noted above can occur at sulphate concentrations below 2,000 mg/L.

Although snowfall has been minimal the past few winters, there has been enough winter runoff to refresh the dugout and lower the concentration of sulphates to make the dugout usable in the spring. The recent lack of rain over the summer, coupled with hot days and with poor moisture over winter, likely contributed to water quality decreasing faster over the year. These rapid changes show how monitoring your livestock's water quality is more important than ever. In partnership with the Roy Romanow Provincial Laboratory in Regina, the Ministry of Agriculture facilitates water analysis for Saskatchewan livestock producers. This service only provided for water being used for livestock, and clients must have a Premises Identification Number. This service can be accessed at any of the 10 Ministry of Agriculture Regional Offices in Saskatchewan.

You may be wondering; how do I submit a sample? Collect a representative sample in a clean bottle or container that can hold at least one litre of water. Label it with your name, the date and the name of the water source. If you're not planning on delivering the sample immediately, the sample should be refrigerated, but avoid freezing it. Deliver the sample as soon as possible to get an accurate snapshot of the water quality at that time.

When you submit a water sample through your local regional office, the livestock and feed extension specialist will screen it for an initial conductivity reading to estimate water quality. Conductivity is quickly measured and related to overall water quality. Generally, when conductivity is high, water is of poorer quality. This reading doesn't give an exact analysis of the water sample, but provides

a quick estimation of water quality. The only way to know for sure what is in the water and if it is safe for livestock is a full lab analysis. Once the lab results are received by your livestock and feed extension specialist, they contact you to discuss the results. In the fall of 2020, we surveyed producers who had water analyzed within the past year. The results from this survey demonstrate that water quality is extremely important in Saskatchewan. Ninety-nine per cent of respondents rated water quality monitoring as valuable, or very valuable. The bulk of water concerns and testing occurred during the summer months. Winter water sources cannot be disregarded, and should be monitored as well.

Almost all producers who used the service made some sort of operational change based on the specialist's recommendation. Most often, it was discontinuing the use of that water source (59.6 per cent) or making changes to their mineral program (48.1 per cent). Some producers reported higher conception rates and increased weaning weights, ultimately improving the profitability of their operation.

Managing water quality on your livestock operation can improve profit margins. As we head into the spring and summer months, it is important to test your water sources to get a baseline for quality. If your samples are marginal in the spring, your local livestock and feed extension specialist can help you develop a management plan to use these water sources. If the water is not usable, you can be put in touch with an agriculture programs specialist to learn about resources and programs to develop new water sources.

For more information contact your closest Regional Office or call the Agriculture Knowledge Centre at 1-866-457-2377. ●

Article originally published in the April 2021 issue of Agriview.



A banner promotes the Emergency Pet Food Bank at the Melville & District Food Bank. Photo credit: Melville & District Food Bank

Saskatchewan Emergency Pet Food Bank Update

Since launching in December 2020, the Saskatchewan Emergency Pet Food Bank (SEPFb) has provided food for more than 800 animals throughout the province.

The success of this program is a direct result of support from our members and donors, and partners such as Horizon Pet Nutrition and Humane Canada. A heart-felt THANK YOU goes out to all supporters of the Saskatchewan Emergency Pet Food Bank.

To make a donation, or to learn more about the SEPFb, visit our website at saskspca.ca/food.

Is it okay to trap cats?

Animal Protection Services of Saskatchewan receives many inquiries related to the trapping of cats on private property. The information below provides a brief overview of the responsibilities that fall upon an individual who has trapped a cat.

While it is the legal right of a property owner to trap cats, there may be serious legal ramifications for the person doing the trapping if the animal is harmed in the process.

The moment the cat is trapped, the person who set the trap has the legal responsibility to ensure the health and welfare of that animal. If the cat becomes distressed, the property owner can be charged under *The Animal Protection Act, 2018*.

Once the cat is trapped, the property owner has only three options:

- the cat may be released in the hope the experience deters the cat
- the cat may be returned to the owner, if known
- the cat may be turned over to the local municipal animal care facility



Cats are not to be relocated (example: moved to farms, across town, abandoned in the country, or destroyed). Abandoning animals is an offence under the *Criminal Code of Canada*, and killing other people's cats is prohibited under the *Criminal Code*.

Any traps used must be live traps. The use of leg hold traps for domestic animals is an offence under the *Criminal Code*.

Traps should only be set in locations where they will be protected from weather (sun, rain, hail) and other potentially hazardous conditions. Traps should not be set in extreme weather such as in the winter,

when thunderstorms are expected, or when temperatures are expected to be high. Traps should be monitored and checked at least twice a day.

Traps must only be set on property owned, leased, or rented by the user, or with the permission of the person owning, leasing, or renting the property.

Wildlife must be released in compliance with *The Wildlife Act* (contact the Saskatchewan Ministry of Environment for details). ●

Source: *Animal Protection Services of Saskatchewan*

Plates for Puppies: Win a personalized SaskSPCA licence plate

Here's your chance to win a personalized SaskSPCA licence plate! It's easy to enter. Everyone who donates to the Saskatchewan Emergency Pet Food Bank using the enclosed donation form will be entered into win their very own personalized plate.

Throughout 2021, proceeds from the sale of all SaskSPCA licence plates will support the Saskatchewan Emergency Pet Food Bank. To learn more about licence plates, or to order your



own plate, visit saskspca.ca/licence-plates. The winner will be announced in the Fall 2021 issue of *The Humanitarian*.