



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## Reward Offered in Illegal Trapping Case in Pennsylvania

(June 25, 2010) — The Humane Society of the United States and The Humane Society Wildlife Land Trust are offering a reward of up to \$2,500 for information leading to the arrest and conviction of the person or persons responsible for setting an illegal trap that seriously injured a dog in northern Butler County, Pa.

### The Case:

According to the Pennsylvania Game Commission, on June 8, a citizen discovered a dog with her leg caught in a trap on state game lands near Route 38 in Washington Township. The beagle suffered a severe infection as a result of the trap, and her leg had to be amputated.

The Pennsylvania Game Commission requires that all traps include the name and address of the trapper or an identification number. This trap was reportedly unmarked. Trappers in Pennsylvania are required by law to check their traps every 36 hours. Veterinarians estimate that the dog was stuck in the trap for at least three days.

“This tragic case demonstrates how the violation of hunting and trapping laws can have grave repercussions. This dog suffered immensely because of the callous actions of an illegal trapper,” said Sarah Speed, Pennsylvania state director for The HSUS. “The Humane Society of the United States thanks The Butler County Humane Society for caring for the dog and the Pennsylvania Game Commission for their efforts to find those responsible for this reprehensible crime.”

The individual or individuals responsible for this possible crime could face charges of unlawful taking of furbearers, a fifth degree summary offense punishable by a fine of up to \$200. Additional charges could also apply depending on the outcome of the investigation.

### Poaching:

- Poaching is a broad term that includes any illegal hunting or trapping activity. Pennsylvania has some of the weakest penalties for poaching in the country. H.B. 1859, legislation currently awaiting action in the state Senate, would increase penalties for a wide range of wildlife crimes, from killing endangered species to operating commercial poaching operations. It also elevates habitual poaching to a felony and for the first time imposes the possibility of jail time for many wildlife crimes.
- S.B. 1200, currently awaiting action in the House Appropriations Committee, would allow Pennsylvania to join the Interstate Wildlife Violator Compact, a nationwide law enforcement network aimed at keeping poachers who have lost their hunting privileges in one state from

hunting in another. Since its institution in 1989, 34 states, including Ohio, Maryland, West Virginia and New York, have joined the Compact.

- Wildlife officials estimate that for every wild animal killed legally — tens of millions of animals per year — another is killed illegally.
- Every year, thousands of poachers are arrested nationwide; however, it is estimated that only 1 percent to 5 percent of poachers are caught.
- Poachers kill wildlife anytime, anywhere and sometimes do so in particularly cruel ways.
- The HSUS works with state wildlife agencies to offer rewards of \$2,500 for information leading to arrest and conviction of suspected poachers.

**The Investigators:**

Anyone with information about this case is asked to call the Pennsylvania Game Commission's Turn in a Poacher (TIP) hotline at 1-888-742-8001. Callers may remain anonymous.

**The HSUS Media Contact:**

Liz Bergstrom, 301-258-1455, [ebergstrom@humanesociety.org](mailto:ebergstrom@humanesociety.org)

The HSUS works to curb poaching across the country. Visit [humanesociety.org/poaching](http://humanesociety.org/poaching) for more information.

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*The Humane Society of the United States is the nation's largest animal protection organization — backed by 11 million Americans, or one of every 28. For more than a half-century, The HSUS has been fighting for the protection of all animals through advocacy, education and hands-on programs. Celebrating animals and confronting cruelty — On the Web at [humanesociety.org](http://humanesociety.org).*

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*Since 1993 the Humane Society Wildlife Land Trust, alone or in partnership with other conservation groups, has participated in the protection of more than 1.8 million acres of wildlife habitat in 37 states, including 172 acres in Pennsylvania, and eight foreign countries. On all properties owned by the Trust or protected by the Trust's conservation easement, both here and abroad, we prohibit recreational and commercial hunting and trapping and restrict logging and development. The Trust's commitment to these principles will never change as we continue to assist caring landowners to make their property permanent, safe homes for wildlife. Join our online community at [wildlifelandtrust.org](http://wildlifelandtrust.org).*

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