



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Reward Offered in Possible Turkey Poaching on Martha's Vineyard

(June 29, 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 identification, arrest and conviction of the person or persons responsible for shooting a turkey with a bow and arrow in Vineyard Haven, Mass.

The Case:

According to the Massachusetts Environmental Police, residents have reported multiple sightings of an injured turkey near Greenwood Avenue and Franklin Terrace. The bird has an arrow protruding from his back, but is still mobile. Officers are seeking the public's help to capture the animal. Turkey hunting season ended on May 22, and it is suspected that this turkey was shot illegally.

"We appreciate the public's help in locating this injured animal," said Environmental Police Officer Sgt. Matthew Bass. Sgt. Bass added that people should not approach injured wildlife; instead, they should contact the Environmental Police, who are trained to respond to wildlife-related incidents and handle injured wild animals.

"The public plays an incredibly vital role in reporting poaching crimes, and we urge anyone with information about this incident to come forward," said Elise Traub, deputy manager of The HSUS' Wildlife Abuse Campaign. "We are extremely grateful to the Massachusetts Environmental Police for their diligent work to find the person or persons responsible."

The Humane Society of the United States' Cape Wildlife Center in Barnstable has the facilities and expertise to treat the turkey if he is captured.

Poaching:

- 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 injure or kill wildlife anytime, anywhere and sometimes do so in particularly cruel ways. Wildlife officials report that poachers often commit other crimes as well.
- The HSUS works with state and federal 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 or the current location of the turkey is asked to call Massachusetts Environmental Police officer Sgt. Matt Bass at 1-800-632-8075. Callers may remain anonymous.

The Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs' Office of Law Enforcement – known also as the Massachusetts Environmental Police – is the primary agency responsible for enforcing the Commonwealth's fish and game and boating and recreational vehicle laws. MEP officers enforce laws and regulations related to the protection of natural resources and public parks and land; boat and recreational vehicle use; and hazardous waste disposal. MEP officers serve as stewards of the state's natural resources, patrolling forests, parks, inland waterways and coastal waters throughout the Commonwealth.

The HSUS Media Contact:

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The HSUS works to curb poaching across the country. Visit 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.

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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, 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.

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