
First Nation Veterinary Infrastructure Model Program

A Brief Overview

© Reserved 2006

First Nation Veterinary Infrastructure Model Program: A Brief Overview

Prepared by Dr. Richard G. Herbert B.Sc., D.V.M.

Christian **A**boriginal **I**nfrasturcture **D**evelopments
A Not-for-profit, Charitable NGO
Suite 203-1, 4109 Fourth Avenue, Whitehorse, YT Y1A 1H6
Canada
info@caid.ca www.caid.ca

First Nation Veterinary Infrastructure Model Program

A Brief Overview

Dr. Richard Herbert

Table of Contents	Page
Foreword	1
Background	1
Surplus Wild Deer Harvest/Retail Program:	2
Dog Control Program	2
Veterinary Support Service (VSS)	4
Funding	4
Acknowledgements	5

First Nation Veterinary Infrastructure Model Program

A Brief Overview

Dr. Richard Herbert

Foreword:

This brief has been written to bring the First Nation veterinary infrastructure program to the attention of the Anishinaabe Nation in Treaty #3. It was not written to detail the developing First Nation veterinary infrastructure program.

Background:

Over the last three years, an understanding of veterinary infrastructure services, and how the lack of these services affect Canada's Nation communities, has been introduced to the Anishinaabe Nation in Treaty #3 by veterinarian, Dr. Richard Herbert, and Mr. Percy Bird. The root causes of out-of-control dog populations, public health issues related to dogs (rabies, biting, mauling deaths, family violence, etc.), nuisance wildlife control problems, the lack of meat inspection structures to ensure disease-free traditional foods (wild meat and fish), and the root cause of the lack of negotiated protocols to enable Nations to manage, harvest, and retail wildlife as a part of a sustainable community economic infrastructure were introduced. At the centre of each of these problems was the lack of one or more veterinary services. These missing services form the infrastructure (framework) from which solutions for these problems can be built; they form a veterinary infrastructure.

In October of 2005, the Grand Council of the Anishinaabe Nation in Treaty #3 voted unanimously to support the development of a First Nation veterinary infrastructure in Treaty #3 (Resolution # CA0513). In the resolution, veterinary infrastructure was defined both by what it can do and by the result of its absence within the Nation. These definitions read as follows:

“WHEREAS a veterinary infrastructure is integral for developed nations to establish regulatory frameworks through which protocols allow for national and international meat strategies; provide for animal care and animal disease management strategies; be involved with all animal species in respect to care, inspection, regulation, use, transport, slaughter and consumption; and create the foundation for humane societies and dog pounds for use in the control of companion animal populations.”

“WHEREAS the absence of a veterinary infrastructure exposes the citizens of Treaty #3 to risks of eating uninspected meat and fish; exposure to preventable diseases from domestic and wild animals; increased dog attacks; and leaves the Anishinaabe Nation in Treaty #3 without the management tools to sustain and excel in traditional lifestyles; including the development of an international trade and commerce in wildlife harvest.”

First Nation Veterinary Infrastructure Model Program

A Brief Overview

Dr. Richard Herbert

Three interrelated programs had been identified for a Treaty #3 veterinary infrastructure; a surplus wild deer harvest/retail industry, a nuisance wildlife harvest/retail industry, and a dog control program. A decision was made to hold on the nuisance wildlife program.

Surplus Wild Deer Harvest/Retail Program:

First Nation communities have lived in relation with animals since the beginning. Before, deer and other animals gave food, tools, and clothing. These gifts were also used for trading. Today, our inherent and treaty rights guarantee access to these same animals to feed families and to use in trade. However, things have changed dramatically over the last few hundred years. The rest of the world has set safety standards for the harvest and trade of meat. They developed an entire infrastructure of services to harvest, process, inspect, and retail safe meat; including, a veterinary infrastructure. Unfortunately, these infrastructure services were not developed for the harvest, processing, inspection, and sale of meat traditionally eaten and used for trade by our Nation.

The ability of a Treaty #3 veterinary infrastructure to ensure safe wild meat for the Nation continued to evolve into a framework to manage our region's out-of-control deer population to the benefit of the Nation using an Elder-defined surplus harvest within an Elder-defined tribal-based trade and commerce system. This program's dividends promise safe traditional food, prosperity, and independence for the Nation; up to 250 million dollars of industry in Treaty #3 and up to 65 billion dollars in new industry revenue across Canada for Nation communities. Other wildlife meat and fish harvests can develop from this initial deer pilot project. Foundation frames within this program have been laid for:

- National Consultation
- Laws and Regulations
- Wildlife Resource Management
- Harvest
- Meat and By-product Industries
- Marketing
- Role Development
- Traditional Ownership
- Partnership
- Prosperity Sharing
- Traditional Corporate Structures

Dog Control Program:

Many feel that there were dogs living with our Nation pre-contact. However, today those dogs are gone and replaced with dogs that are foreign to the land. Today's dogs were changed, through breeding, in other areas of the world for specific purposes. Dachshunds were bred in

First Nation Veterinary Infrastructure Model Program

A Brief Overview

Dr. Richard Herbert

Germany to go into holes and kill badgers, foxes, and other pests; Karelian Bear Dogs were developed in Finland to hunt bears; Rottweilers and Dobermans were used as guard dogs by Nazi Germany; Siberian Huskies and Norwegian Elkhounds were bred in Northern Europe to pull sleds in the snow; and the list goes on. When dogs were changed through selective breeding, they also lost their ability to live in the wild and to control their own population. Today's dogs are a man-made problem imported into Nation communities. Uncontrolled dog populations and problems they cause are also an issue in the rest of the world. In response, the world developed humane societies (public education and the prevention of cruelty), veterinary services, bylaw regulations, and animal bylaw enforcement services as the infrastructure to control problems created by these changed dogs. Unfortunately, these infrastructure services and their teachings were never developed for our communities.

Early discussions in the Nation identified that dog-related public health crises were plaguing our communities. However, it is not just citizens and their communities that needed veterinary infrastructure services, the Treaty #3 police were also missing their veterinary infrastructure-related services. It appears that Treaty police can not fulfill their mandate and protect citizens from aggressive and dangerous dogs without harmonized laws and an animal control service system; including the development of dog pound, animal control officer, and related veterinary services. Many Nation communities have expressed serious public health concerns regarding out-of-control dog populations. These concerns include bites, pack aggression, mauling deaths, zoonotic disease transmission¹, animal suffering, and domestic violence. Our communities should not be held hostage by dogs and children should not have to suffer bite wounds or mauling deaths from our dogs at rates over 100 times above the rest of Canada.

Immediate interim solutions that are ready, but without funding to implement, include:

- In-community Dog Euthanasia Service
- In-community Rabies Vaccination Service
- In-community Dog Wellness Service
- Central Spay/Neuter Services
- Central Emergency Services
- In-community Rabies Education Program
- In-community Dog Public Health Issues Education Program
- In-community Bylaw Development Education Program
- In-community Dog Control Strategies Program

Permanent solutions to be developed include:

- Dog Pound Services

¹ Zoonotic diseases are diseases that can be spread from wild or domestic animals to people.

First Nation Veterinary Infrastructure Model Program

A Brief Overview

Dr. Richard Herbert

- Animal Control Services
- Standardized Bylaw Development
- In-community Spay/Neuter Services
- Police Officer Dog Issues Education Program
- Animal Control Officer Training
- Animal Health Technician Training
- Veterinarian Training

Veterinary Support Service (VSS):

The Treaty #3 veterinary infrastructure resolution has evolved into two distinct, yet interrelated, programs. They are distinct in that they fall within different governance portfolio jurisdictions. However, they are interrelated since it is the same Treaty #3 Veterinary Support Service, and its staff, that will develop and maintain harmonized laws and regulations, programs, and services for the Nation's veterinary infrastructure. The Treaty #3 Veterinary Support Service and its developed programs will be the Anishinaabe Nation in Treaty #3 veterinary infrastructure. The Anishinaabe Nation in Treaty #3 VSS does not yet exist. Until the VSS is created and it, and its programs, are integrated into the Nation, the VSS is an external veterinary consulting service whose programs simply offer solutions. The current external veterinary consulting service has committed to developing permanent solutions for the Anishinaabe Nation in Treaty #3. Services currently hub from a small interim veterinary hospital, a hospital essential to meet current law and regulation prerequisites for the development of dog-related solutions. This accredited hospital hub permits provision of developing community dog control program services while working on dog control and the surplus wild deer programs.

Elements of a future Anishinaabe VSS in place include:

- Licensed Veterinary Professional
- Native Advisor/Consultant
- Accredited Veterinary Hospital/Office
- Accredited Mobile Veterinary Service
- Trained Veterinary Assistant/Staff
- A not-for-profit aboriginal infrastructure building corporation which can build the VSS and its programs at no cost to Grand Council Treaty #3.

Funding:

Both Federal and Provincial agencies have been reluctant to support or release funds for the development of the First Nation veterinary infrastructure or its two developing programs. We have sent funding applications into Indian and Northern Affairs Canada and the Northern

First Nation Veterinary Infrastructure Model Program

A Brief Overview

Dr. Richard Herbert

Ontario Heritage Funding Corporation (Ministry of Northern Development and Mines). These funding processes were commenced in the 2004-2005 and the 2005-2006 fiscal years, respectively. Health Canada has permitted two Community Health Representatives (CHRs) to finance a community rabies education teaching and an in-community dog rabies vaccination visit. However, CHR funds are very limited. Another community was able to include an in-community dog euthanasia visit under a general funding stream. However, all development has occurred without funding. In-place dog programs and services have no direct funding to facilitate their implementation and provision. In this regard, animal-related public health crises continue.

We must address the animal-related public health issues and the cycle of poverty in our Nation. Services and programs provided through an Anishinaabe veterinary infrastructure can do this. We need committed support from our leaders and our Nation's resource personnel. Only with a concerted effort can we break through the "barrier" set up by Federal and Provincial authorities. We can easily help the Anishinaabe Nation in Treaty #3 become a safer and more prosperous place to live within a very short period of time.

Acknowledgements:

The introduction and input for the First Nation veterinary infrastructure program has followed a path of its own, breaking ground wherever it has been shared. We would like to thank Ida Linklater, then Health Director in Naicatchewenin First Nation, for initial input into program development and the Fort Frances Chiefs Secretariat for their initial support. We would like to thank Lac Des Milles Lac First Nation for bringing the veterinary infrastructure initiative to the Anishinaabe Nation in Treaty #3, and for spearheading, on behalf of the Nation, early program development. We would also like to thank the Office of the Ogichidaa, Grand Council Treaty #3, and the Treaty #3 resource staff for their input and support.

There are many other individuals and communities through which aspects of this veterinary infrastructure and its derivative programs have developed. Thank you and forgive us for not having kept a detailed list of contributors only the way. Special thanks to Percy Bird.

Miigwetch