

## Proposal on Solutions to Stray Dog Problem in American Cities

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### Abstract

With the development of cities, stray dogs have become one of the most serious public management problems in American cities, and a widespread concern by the public. Stray dogs have many negative impacts on city environment and human health. There are many causes for the stray dog problem. Strengths and weakness of each solution was analyzed. A Five Year Plan to better solve the stray dog problem was proposed by this proposal.

**Keywords:** Proposal; Solution; Stray dog problem

### Introduction

With the development of cities, stray dogs have become one of the most serious public management problems in American cities, and a widespread concern by the public. This proposal briefly introduces the serious status, causes, and impacts of the stray dog problem, proposed available options to solve the problem, then detail analyzed the strengths and weakness of each option, and proposed recommendations on solution, finally elaborated the plans for implementation and expected outcome. There were certain methods were taken to preventive the stray dog problems.

### Background

A large number data shows that stray dogs have become a serious public administration problem in American cities. Packs of wild dogs roam America's city streets. As reported in the Grand Forks Herald, stray dogs are an increasing problem on American Indian reservations, particularly in North and South Dakota reservations [1]. The city of Detroit is known to be one of the top cities for dog fighting [2,3] and Bloomberg News reported that up to 50,000 dogs roam in packs around the Detroit city. There also are an estimated 50,000 street stray dogs in Los Angeles [4]. What's more, in New Orleans, estimates are placed at 120,000 stray dogs post Katrina [5,6].

### Negative impacts of stray dogs

Stray dogs have many negative impacts on city environment and human health. Stray dogs cause noise pollution, feces garbage and traffic accidents. Among Detroit's many problems, this one tugs at the heart strings: thousands of stray dogs roaming the streets at night. And Michigan is ranked 23rd in the states caught in fighting dogs [4]. Stray dogs can cause a collision when dogs run into the road, which might even result in injury to other people and also to itself [5]. Moreover, stray dogs have become a bigger threat to human health and lives. Stray dogs can transfer and spread Rabies a deadly disease [7]. The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that there are more than 200 million stray dogs worldwide and that every year, 55,000 people die from rabies. Detroit ranked sixth last year for dog attacks in the U.S [8]. In Los Angeles County and City alone, about 200,000 residents were bitten by abandoned dogs in one year [4,5].

### Various causes of stray dogs

There are many causes for the stray dog problem. The most important reason is abandonment behavior by residents. A great numbers of dogs were abandoned by their owners for some reasons, such as family tragedies moving and getting married, sickness and intolerable physiological characteristics of pets, no money for

treatment, unwilling to continue feeding. In fact, many stay dogs in Detroit were abandoned, because their owners could no longer afford to keep them. Moreover, lost dogs are also increasing the quantities of stray dogs. Without sterilization, the multiplication of stray dogs is also an important cause [4]. From all of the above, everyone can see that stray dogs have become such a serious problem that needs to be solved urgently. The purpose of this proposal is to propose better solutions to solve this problem.

### Options to consider

The available options to deal with stray dogs mainly include: sheltering, killing, vaccinating and neutering, non-governmental rescue actions and programs. With the problem of stray dogs appearing, there are many spontaneous organizations and programs to rescue them, for example, the Detroit Dog Rescue (DDR), and the CNR (collect-neuter-return) program of stray dogs. However, according to the current situation, these options can't effectively solve stray dog problem in our cities. So, these options are not better solutions.

### Strengths and weakness of each option

Although the various solutions above can deal with the stray dog problem, there also exists weakness in each option. Sheltering looks like a good option for stray dogs, but the truth is it is not. Because there are so many stray dogs that need a huge amount of money for treatment. Shelters will occupy plenty of land and houses. It also needs many breeders, veterinarians to treat dogs. It also needs to be able to do appropriate quarantine, regular vaccinations, and deworming. In fact, money and resources will never be enough to meet the large demand of food and cost of stray dog management. What's more, disease can easily and quickly transfer among the sheltered dogs. Shelters cannot solve the homeless animal problem. So sheltering is not a fundamental solution, because the number of stray dogs is always increasing. Perhaps many people think that killing is a simple solution, but in fact, it is not an efficient and human solution. How to kill is still a big problem [9]. The most easy and efficient way is poisoning. But it's also a cruel and painful way. It will put the other animals and humans at

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Received May 13, 2015; Accepted September 24, 2015; Published October 05, 2015

Citation: Lyu P (2015) Proposal on Solutions to Stray Dog Problem in American Cities. J Pol Sci Pub Aff 3: 175. doi:10.4172/2332-0761.1000175

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risk, especially children. Shooting seem like a good idea, because it is efficient, quick and painless. But it's not easy to carry out. Shooting stray dogs on the street will bring risk to people. And it's also an inhumane and brutal act. Some dogs may be wounded instead of killed. Stray dogs in Romania have been hunted and killed for decades without results. The fact has proved that killing stray dogs is not a sustainable solution. Vaccinating and neutering are good options, but it also has weakness [9]. Vaccinating and neutering are helpful in controlling the transfer of disease and quantities of stray dogs. If every female stray dog is neutered, the number of breeding dogs will be largely reduced. Moreover, studies show [10] that spayed and neutered animals live longer, healthier lives with fewer medical and behavioral problems. But the difficult is implementation and lack of money. There are so many stray dogs on the street and other any places. Distinguishing sex of stray dogs and providing huge amounts of money to implement vaccinate and neutering still are big challenging jobs. Although vaccinate and neutering is a good option, the dilemma is without the support of government and law. Non-governmental rescue actions and programs have been springing up at recent decades. Many animal shelters and dog rescue groups have been built up. Animal rights activists organize many nonprofit organizations to help the reservation's strays. They try to offer free and low-cost spay and neuter services, but some residents just aren't interested. Detroit Dog Rescue also emphasizes education, owner assistance and spay-and-neuter programs [2]. Animal welfare advocates are attempting to pass a bill in Michigan that would require all adopted pets to be sterilized, which could save 250,000 dogs and cats from being unwanted. They have started collecting food donations for the homeless animals. [11] Despite the important role that non-government organizations and programs play, but they also faces many difficulties and challenges, such as lack of money, limited power, weak effect [12]. From the above all, the options to deal with stray dog problem have various weakness and shortfalls, which can't systematically solve the problem of stray dogs in long term [13].

## Recommendation

In order to improve environmental as well as public health, this proposal propose a Five Year Plan to better solve the stray dog problem. The core of the Five Year Plan is that a series of policies and programs have to be formulated and implemented to deal with stray dogs in cities by local government. The following is the main content of Five Year Plan:

Firstly, government has to formulate and enact animal rights law as soon as possible. The law has to clearly define the definition, feeding and management, legal rights for stray dogs. It is necessary that establish a sound system of monitoring and management of stray dogs. Secondly, government and related public sectors have to provide necessary and sufficient immunity, vaccinating and neutering, medical and rescue services with stray dogs. Public health and environmental emergency must improve services on stray dog disease prevention and treatment. Thirdly, government has to provide and increase the financial and political support for nongovernmental stray dog protection organizations and programs. The government has to enhance communication and corporate with non-governmental organizations on solutions. Finally, government and related public sectors have to develop and implement specific measures to deal with stray dogs, mainly establishing "dog farms", distribution of stray dogs, enhance monitoring and controlling, enhancing the advertising and education of pets' owners, improve stray dogs' welfare [14].

## Plans for implementation

According to the Five Year Plan, the quantities of stray dogs in each city will be reduced in three to five years. The stray dog problem will be basically solved in five years. The following is the detail implementations: Firstly, government has to formulate and enact animal rights law within two years. Meanwhile, a half year of survey on stray dogs has to be started to master the detail status of stray dogs, including the current quantities, birth and mortality rate, increasing rate, health condition, distribution and sex conditions, vaccination rate, etc. Secondly, government make special budget to the solution of stray dogs. Invest 0.5 million to provide immunity, vaccinate and neutering, medical and rescue services to stray dogs. Invest 0.5 million to environmental emergency to improve services on animal disease prevention and treatment. And invest 0.5 million per year to build up 20 big dog farms and 50 public stray dog aid stations within five years. Thirdly, government and related emergency should provide 5 billion dollars every year to fund the non-governmental organizations and programs, and sign agreements with the non-governmental organizations, establish information exchanging platform to public. Fourthly, the government should invest 5 million to implement series programs, such as stray dog rescue programs, distribution programs, education programs on pets' owners, stray dogs' welfare program, stray

| Time (mm/yy)    | Program                         | Description  | Inputs (million \$) |
|-----------------|---------------------------------|--|---------------------|
| 6/2015-8/2015   | Making budget                   | a. Fur-research and revise the plan, and make decision.<br>b. According to the plan, make special budget.  | 0.001               |
| 9/2015-2/2016   | Survey                          | a. Make survey plan and implementation.<br>b. Analyze and research the detail status of stray dogs, including quantities, birth rate, etc.   | 0.05                |
| 9/2015-8/2017   | Legislation                     | a. Make and submit legislative bill on stray dogs.<br>b. Formulate and enact stray dog related law and regulations before August 2017.   | 0.02                |
| 1/2016-5/2016   | Providing Service               | a. Provide and improve immunity, medical and rescue services, etc.<br>b. The vaccinating and neutering rate achieve to 90%.  | 0.5                 |
| 1/2016-5/2020   | Disease prevention              | a. Improve services on animal disease prevention and treatment.<br>b. Improve research on stray dog disease transferring.  | 0.5                 |
| 6/2015-5/2020   | Building Dog farms and stations | a. Built up 20 big dog farms and 50 stray dog rescue stations within five years.<br>b. Improve the condition of shelters.  | 0.5                 |
| 10/2016-12/2019 | Funding support                 | a. Fund the non-governmental organizations and programs.<br>b. Sign agreements with the non-governmental organizations.<br>c. Establish information exchanging platform to public.       | 5                   |
| 10/2016-12/2019 | Programs                        | a. Implement programs on education of pets' owners; improve distribution of stray dogs, etc.<br>b. Improve stray dogs' welfare and build up special funding.                             | 5                   |
| 1/2020-5/2020   | System building                 | a. Enhance and improve dog's breeding registration and license system.<br>b. Establish a sound system of monitoring and management of stray dogs.<br>c. Evaluate policy and form report. | 0.5                 |
| Total           |                                 |  | 12.071              |

Table 1: Timetables of Five Year Plan (June 1, 2015- May 31, 2020).

dog's protection programs, and so on. Fifthly, the government should enhance and improve dog's breeding registration and license system, establish a sound system of monitoring and management of stray dogs, make an achievement survey and evaluate the policy, summarize the experiences (Table 1).

### Expected outcome

Once the Five Year Plan in this proposal is implemented, it will get the desired results. A substantial budget and funding will be made. The survey will be started in the cities. The detail information of stay dogs will be mastered. The law and regulations on stray dogs will be formulated and enacted. The public service will be improved. The vaccinating and neutering rate achieve to 90%. The 20 big dog farms and 50 stray dog rescue stations will be built to provide shelter to stray dogs. Stray dogs' welfare will be improved. An efficient information exchange platform will be built up. The communication and cooperation between government and non-government organizations will be enhanced.

In short, the number of stray dogs will be effectively controlled by this proposal. And a sound systematic monitoring and management system of stray dogs will be built up. In 2020, the stray dog problem in cities will be fundamentally solved.

### Closing remarks

- This proposal believes that if our government and everyone united together, stray dogs will no longer be a problem. And author also believe that this proposal also can be successful in the future. All of

citizens will get and enjoy a more clean, healthy and harmonious city environment. Dogs are human's friends. Let stray dogs no longer stray.

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