



**THE NOVA SCOTIA SOCIETY FOR THE PREVENTION OF CRUELTY TO ANIMALS  
(THE NOVA SCOTIA SPCA)**

**ABOUT THE NOVA SCOTIA SPCA**

The Nova Scotia Society for the Prevention of Cruelty (Nova Scotia SPCA): Protecting animals from cruelty since 1877, the Nova Scotia SPCA is a registered charity, comprised of 11 Branches, which relies primarily on volunteers and donations to fund animal protection; care and rehabilitation; advocacy; and humane education. An Act to Protect Animals and to Aid Animals in Distress mandates the Society to enforce animal cruelty laws, making the Nova Scotia SPCA unique among animal welfare organizations in the province. For more information visit [www.spcans.ca](http://www.spcans.ca).

**WHITE PAPERS**

**White Papers** (also generally referred to as Position Statements) are public documents prepared to address a specific topic or issue. The enclosed manifest contains statements on the Society's position for certain critical animal welfare issues. These issues have been determined to be topical, relevant and in some instances, newsworthy. These documents may be requested at times, when the organization is called upon to offer an opinion or act as an intervening authority. Topics are generated as a matter of public inquiry, media coverage, or as a result of an emerging interest raised to or by animal welfare stakeholders.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

These White Papers express the views of the Nova Scotia SPCA on matters relating to a variety of critical animal welfare issues. Some topics address issues that may lack proper attention to an animal's physical, social, behavioural, or psychological needs. These views are well-established and in compliance with other views expressed by animal welfare leaders across the country.

The Nova Scotia SPCA is an animal welfare organization committed to the protection of animals from cruelty. The Nova Scotia SPCA opposes any activity where an animal may be caused to suffer. Providing for an animal's physical, social, behavioural and psychological needs is essential. The Nova Scotia SPCA disregards the approaches of more radically-mandated organizations, instead preferring to work within existing regulatory systems, effectively consulting, advising and promoting change and improvement to issues affecting animal health and treatment.

## KEY MESSAGES

The Nova Scotia SPCA is opposed to:

- Activities in which an animal may suffer physically or psychologically.
- Animals being kept in environments that do not provide for their physical, social, behavioural and psychological needs.

The Nova Scotia SPCA supports and promotes:

- Humane education
- Protection for all animals from distress and cruelty
- The No-Kill Equation, whereby euthanasia is only considered for mercy or aggression

The Nova Scotia SPCA is a no-kill animal welfare organization that follows the principles of the No-Kill Equation as published by Nathan J. Winograd. The No-Kill Equation means that animals in the care of the Nova Scotia SPCA will not be killed for reasons other than mercy or aggression. It is the Society's belief that euthanasia has adopted a broad definition within the animal welfare community and as a result has become a convenient alternative to taking a more aggressive approach with programs that seek to place and keep animals in loving home environments. The no-kill equation is a progressive and multi-layered animal care philosophy that has no tolerance for euthanizing animals due to lack of space, age, treatable medical conditions or ongoing special needs that may have otherwise characterized an animal as "un-adoptable". Program considerations include: TNR (Trap-Neuter-Return) for feral cats, low-cost, high-volume/high-quality spay neuter services, foster care programs, rescue group collaboration initiatives, pet retention programs, comprehensive adoption strategies and enhancing volunteer resources. For more information on the No-Kill Equation and Nathan Winograd, see his book *Redemption* or visit his website: <http://www.nathanwinograd.com>.

## **NOVA SCOTIA SPCA POSITION STATEMENTS**

### **PUPPY AND KITTEN MILLS**

The Nova Scotia SPCA is opposed to mass breeding mills. Puppy mills and kitten mills are a concern because of the mass numbers of animals involved and the degree of cruelty that these animals are subjected to through filthy living conditions, malnutrition, mass breeding and lack of veterinary care. Mills are not operated by reputable breeders. They are profit driven, clandestine operations that disregard the welfare of the animals. Many mills are located in remote, rural areas, where their activities can be more easily hidden. Some operate through social networking sites or online classifieds. Mill operators manipulate an unknowing public who think that they are buying animals from reputable breeders.

### **PET STORES / RETAILERS**

There are numerous pet stores throughout Nova Scotia that make a significant and positive contribution to the animals and pet owners within their municipality. Reputable stores often decide not to sell animals, particularly dogs, due to the need for a more enriched environment during a dog's critical socialization and development period. Other reputable stores maintain a high standard of care for the animals they keep. Sadly, there are a large number of disreputable pet stores, flea markets and other pet retailers whose practices have a negative impact on the animals, their community and even other municipalities. Problems with substandard facilities occur as a result of cheap animal suppliers (such as mills) and substandard conditions of care, resulting in illness. Additionally, retailers are not required to keep records or supply information. The Nova Scotia SPCA is mandated to inspect facilities where animals are kept for sale and enforce minimum standards of care as outlined in provincial legislation.

### **ANIMAL TESTING**

The Nova Scotia SPCA agrees with the common animal welfare view, which promotes the universal adoption of humane, non-animal, biomedical testing methods. The Nova Scotia SPCA is opposed to all forms of research that inflicts injury, pain or distress to animals. Non-animal, more reliable, more applicable, widely available and less expensive testing alternatives exist. The common belief of most countries where animal testing is not yet banned is that there are still ethical, economic and scientific obligations not to use animals unnecessarily. Some forms of animal testing and/or genetic research include: RBGH, biomedical and cosmetic testing and xenotransplantation. The CCAC (The Canadian Council on Animal Care) has developed guidelines for the care and use of experimental animals and has also established assessment panels to oversee the use of animals in universities, government laboratories, and commercial laboratories. There are several federal laws relating to cosmetics: The Food and Drugs Act, the Cosmetic Regulations, and the Consumer Packaging and Labelling Act and Regulations.

### **PETS AS GIFTS**

The acquisition of a new pet should always be a deliberate and conscious decision, where the well-being of the animal is the primary consideration. A pet should never be a surprise. Those considering adoption should take into account their motivation and commitment; the expense; the suitability of the pet being considered; and if they can be a responsible caregiver.

## **SHELTER ANIMALS USED IN RESEARCH**

The Nova Scotia SPCA does not support the use of shelter animals being turned over to research facilities or educational facilities for the purposes of research or education. The SPCA advocates that animal services and pounds also do not supply animals for research or education. One exception would be with respect to notable teaching institutes that provide shelters with veterinary services in preparation for adoption, such as vaccinations, spay/neuter surgery, grooming or dental care.

## **BREED SPECIFIC LEGISLATION**

The Nova Scotia SPCA opposes the establishment of regulations and statutes that declare recognized breeds as vicious or dangerous. Breed specific legislation aims to punish breeds without addressing the specific issues that may contribute to animal aggression. The Society believes that inappropriate behaviour is more a product of lack of proper training and socialization, which are the responsibility of the owner and not necessarily breed characteristics. Demonstrated behaviour, not apparent breed type, forms a more appropriate basis for characterizing an animal as vicious or dangerous.

## **ANIMAL FIGHTING**

The Nova Scotia SPCA opposes all forms of animal fighting. The injuries inflicted and sustained by animals participating in dog fights, cock fights or even cat fights are frequently severe, even fatal. Animals who survive a fight often die of blood loss, shock, dehydration, exhaustion or infection, hours, or even days after the fight. In dog fights, other animals are often sacrificed, including smaller animals such as cats, rabbits or small dogs (often stolen) and used for 'bait' during training. The typical cases involve terrible conditions for the animals, disregarding their social, behavioural, physical and psychological needs. These animals are often medicated with steroids or other substances designed to alter behaviour and increase aggression. These activities are often well hidden, characterized as underground, taking place in remote areas, such as farms. In urban environments, dog fighting typically takes the form of "brawls" or "rumbles", which can be characterized as impromptu contests between two dogs. The animals that are selected to participate in these activities are the result of selective breeding, designed to take breeds with favourable characteristics (such as strength) and stimulate their aggressive tendencies. Those animals that do not achieve the desired behaviours are disposed of by violent means. In particular, dogs are born and raised in environments designed to increase anxiety and promote aggression. Kennelled for long periods can lead to physical vulnerability, such as a depressed immunity, pressure sores and muscle atrophy.

## **PEPPER SPRAY AS ANIMAL REPELLENT**

The Nova Scotia SPCA believes that caution should be considered regarding the use of pepper spray (Oleoresin Capsicum or capsicum spray) for the purpose of protection against animals. In research done with R.C.M.P. dogs on the effects of pepper spray used against them in the line of duty, a number of side effects were noted. These included: increased aggression, extreme discomfort with self inflicted injuries and sustained irritation causing prolonged distress.

## **ENTERTAINMENT & DISPLAY**

The Nova Scotia SPCA is concerned for animals involved in display or travelling exhibits, including circuses as they may be deprived of a normal life. Certain practices involving prolonged confinement, restricted exercise, isolation or the inability to express natural behaviours, is contrary to well-established animal welfare principles. Training techniques, devices or agents employed to cause an animal to perform, can be abusive, cruel and stressful. The administration of any drug for non-therapeutic purposes, employed to alter the performance or behaviour of an animal is inappropriate. Travelling or prolonged confinement impairs an animal's physical, social, behavioural and psychological needs. Confinement also restricts exercise and inhibits the expression of natural behaviours and appropriate socialization. Many activities involve animals in Nova Scotia and some have rich heritages and cultural significance. It is not for the Nova Scotia SPCA to determine if these activities should continue, but the Society is mandated to ensure that animals are protected from cruelty and relieved from distress.

## **RODEOS**

The Nova Scotia SPCA recognizes that rodeos continue to be a regional tradition in some parts of Canada; however, there is no established history for rodeos in Nova Scotia. The Nova Scotia SPCA is opposed to the proliferation of rodeos and rodeo events into regions where they are presently not held, or where there is no established tradition. The Nova Scotia SPCA opposes the use of any device likely to cause pain, suffering, or injury and which may be solely employed to alter an animal's natural behaviour. The Society opposes events that involve the throwing or catching of animals with ropes, or events involving wrestling or fighting with animals. Further, the Nova Scotia SPCA opposes the continuance of any event, if an animal has been injured during said event.

## **HORSE SLAUGHTER**

There are no horse slaughter facilities in Nova Scotia, but the Society is aware that buyers do attend auctions in the province with the purpose of exporting horses for slaughter and consumption. Horse slaughter facilities are not currently illegal in Canada, nor is the consumption of horse meat by humans. Horse slaughter procedures follow the same, well established criteria as other livestock slaughter facilities and are inspected and monitored by the Canadian Food and Inspection Agency (CFIA). The Nova Scotia SPCA recognizes many Nova Scotians view horses as pets as well as livestock.

## **FARM AND AGRICULTURAL ANIMALS**

The Nova Scotia SPCA partners with the Minister of Agriculture on the welfare of farm and livestock animals. The Nova Scotia SPCA strongly advocates for the agricultural industry to adopt humane farming methods. The Society accepts the raising or husbandry of agricultural food animals where all possible means are taken to alleviate stress and suffering and when close confinement (factory farming) is not practiced. Factory farming does not provide for the physical, psychological, social or behavioural needs of the animals. Additionally, overpopulation does occur with farm animals. Overpopulation can result in incidents of abuse and neglect.

## **ANIMALS IN CAPTIVITY**

Some zoos play a pivotal role in animal welfare through conservation, education and species preservation. Zoo facilities range in size and focus. The Society accepts the use of zoos and aquaria only where the needs and welfare of the animals, birds, fish and reptiles take precedence. All animals must be provided with an environment that fulfills their physical, psychological, social and behavioural needs. The Society strongly opposes the capture of any wild species for display in zoos and aquaria. Only captive bred offspring permanently injured or nuisance wildlife should be used or displayed. Critical issues in unsafe and substandard zoos that put animals at risk include: animals not provided with fresh, clean water; inadequate shelter or shade; poor care and/or condition of the animals; signs of stress and/or boredom; undernourished or overweight animals; a lack of cage enrichment; poor containment safety.

## **HUNTING**

Hunting, for purpose of personal consumption, carried out in a humane, responsible and sustainable manner by qualified and experienced hunters abiding by applicable laws and regulations, is not contrary to the Nova Scotia SPCA's mandate. Hunting should involve a minimal infliction of pain, suffering and distress. Hunting should not involve: endangered or threatened wild animals; remote-controlled devices; leg hold traps; snares; the use of dogs (where the dogs are used to harass wild animals); controlling agents that cause animal suffering (e.g., poisons, chemical agents, certain traps, etc.); the use of fenced compounds. Live capture of animals should only be carried out when required to prevent injury or further injury to wildlife, under the advice or supervision of a recognized wildlife expert. The Society opposes the trapping of fur bearing animals and trade and merchandising of wildlife parts (i.e. fur).

## **HUMANE PET CARE**

The Nova Scotia SPCA asserts that companion animals should: receive human supervision and presence on a daily basis; be provided with adequate shelter, protection from injurious weather, fresh food and clean water; be provided with daily exercise; not be continuously tethered; be provided with appropriate immunization; be spayed or neutered; be licensed and provided with appropriate identification; be supplied with consistent and routine veterinary care.

## **PINCH, PRONGED, CHOKE OR SHOCK COLLARS**

The Nova Scotia SPCA opposes the use of pinch, pronged or choking collars due to the physical damage that can occur to the trachea, oesophagus, vertebrae and brain of the dog, in addition to the psychological damage from pain and stress associated with such devices. The Nova Scotia SPCA is also opposed to shock collars used for training or containment, because they cause pain and generate a fear based response (verses positive-reinforcement based training). The Nova Scotia SPCA advocates for the use of humane alternatives such as simple flat buckle collars, properly fitted harnesses or pressure/control harnesses that do not encourage pulling (fitting flat to the body), limited slip collars (martingale slip and quick release) or head halters also referred to as halti head collars or gentle leaders (attaching under the chin and controlling the dogs nose to point down).

## **EUTHANASIA**

When euthanasia is performed, it should be carried out by a licensed veterinarian, a veterinary technician, or certified staff, preferably under the direct supervision of a veterinarian. The method employed should produce a rapid and painless death and be appropriate for the species and its condition.

## **ANIMAL TRAINING**

The Nova Scotia SPCA recognizes that a wide variety of training aides and equipment is available to trainers and owners. Any equipment that is used abusively or neglectfully and causes harm to any animal is unacceptable. Positive reinforcement should always be employed over punishment-based techniques. Training equipment should be humane and training should be carried out with humane instruction. The Society promotes the humane treatment and training of companion animals. Trainers and owners should practice positive, motivational and humane methods and techniques. No training technique should frighten, inflict pain, be abusive or have the potential to cause injury. Additionally, the Society does not support the use of shock collars for containment or training as there are other viable, safe and proven training and containment options available.

## **SURGICAL ALTERATION**

The Nova Scotia SPCA is opposed to the surgical alteration of animals for cosmetic or convenience purposes. Additionally, the Society recommends that breed associations change their breed standards.

## **IDENTIFICATION**

The Nova Scotia SPCA advocates for the proper identification of companion animals by methods such as a collar, tags and microchip insertions and often a combination of the three is best. The Society also encourages all municipalities to adopt licensing bylaws for dogs and support TNR groups in their efforts to help and feed free roaming cats.

## **EXOTIC PETS**

The Nova Scotia SPCA strongly supports the banning of the sale or importation of any exotic creature or wildlife for the use as a pet or display and urges the federal and provincial governments to enact supporting legislation. Further, in the absence of provincial or federal legislation, the Nova Scotia SPCA encourages municipalities to adopt animal ownership restrictions for exotic pets and wildlife. The Nova Scotia SPCA strongly discourages the keeping of normally undomesticated species as pets, including hybrids, such as wolf/dog hybrids.

## **STERILIZATION**

The Nova Scotia SPCA believes that the most effective way to decrease the proliferation of unwanted dogs and cats is for all owners of companion animals to have them spayed or neutered. Each year, a staggering number of animals in Nova Scotia become homeless. The consequences are tragic. Tens of thousands of dogs and cats end up on the street or in shelters. Many more become neglected and abused. Spaying and neutering pets will reduce shelter intake and euthanasia. Spaying and neutering are safe and routine procedures and can significantly reduce health risks, physical stress and improve behaviour. Altered pets are also less likely to roam, thus reducing the risk of injury, accident and loss.

## **GREYHOUND RACING, HORSE RACING AND EVENTING**

The Nova Scotia SPCA is opposed to the administration of drugs with the intention of altering the performance of animals. The Society is opposed to the use of equipment, such as whips and spurs, in a manner that may cause distress or suffering. The Society is also opposed to the use of live lures, negative reinforcement training methods and the destruction of animals which are not potentially successful competitors. The Society is opposed to the inclusion of obstacles in competition, which may pose a risk to injury and may be deemed to be unreasonably difficult. The Society is also opposed to unreasonable and excessive demands (including training methods) being placed on any animal, resulting in distress or suffering. The Nova Scotia SPCA supports rescue organizations that seek to re-home retired competitive animals following typically short careers.

## **HOMELESS OR FREE-ROAMING COMPANION ANIMALS IN REMOTE COMMUNITIES**

The Nova Scotia SPCA acknowledges that a lack of humane education regarding animal welfare and reasonable pet ownership, coupled with a high rate of homeless animals, a lack of available veterinary care, poor social resources and struggling economies has resulted in severe animal abuse cases in some remote communities. Long-term solutions to improve public safety and animal welfare in remote communities across the province are advocated.

## **ANIMAL CLONING**

While the Nova Scotia SPCA recognizes that cloning may someday reduce the number of animals needed for food and fiber production, it could also have adverse effects on animal welfare. The risks to animals include: a high failure rate with cloned embryos, oversized fetuses, a low frequency of live normal births, neonatal respiratory failure and heart disease. Repeated exposure of individual animals to invasive procedures to harvest oocytes for SCNT is also likely to cause pain and distress. Cloning is an imperfect science and potentially dangerous for the animals involved. Many animals cloned thus far have had a wide range of medical complications and short life spans. The cloning of companion animals is quickly emerging as a profitable industry. However, given the large number of animals available for adoption at any given time in shelters, the cloning of pets has no social value and in fact may lead to increased animal suffering.

## **NEW ANIMAL RESEARCH**

The Nova Scotia SPCA advocates that where any new research is concerned involving animals that appropriate guidelines for the care and use of experimental animals be established, in addition to the establishment of expert and industry specific assessment panels to oversee the use of animals in universities, government laboratories and commercial laboratories. Some examples include stem cell therapy and hybrid embryos.

## **FERAL CATS AND TNR POPULATION CONTROL PROGRAMS**

The Nova Scotia SPCA believes ignoring the feral cat problem is inhumane. The Nova Scotia SPCA advocates the humane treatment of all cats including those that are stray and those that have become feral. A "feral" cat is one that has never had contact with humans and that is the offspring of abandoned or unaltered free-roaming cats. Feral cats are at least one generation removed from domestication and therefore, if not sufficiently socialized with humans by a certain age - typically 6 weeks old - may not suitable candidates for adoption. Recognizing the over-population crisis of companion animals in the Nova Scotia, the Nova Scotia SPCA supports public and private humane efforts in controlling feral cat colonies and their population. The Nova Scotia SPCA believes that being proactive is the solution. Because feral cats are the end result of owned (or once owned) pets that were not spayed or neutered, unsterilized cats directly contribute to the overpopulation of cats. As a community-generated problem, we feel the responsibility is on all pet owners to have their pet spayed or neutered. The Nova Scotia SPCA believes that successful management of the feral cat population can be done through Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) Population Control Programs. The objective of Trap-Neuter-Return is to gradually eliminate colonies by a process of "aging out." Feral cats are humanely trapped, tested for infectious disease, vaccinated, neutered and then returned to their colony. Kittens that are within the critical window for domestication are removed, socialized and adopted. Returning the sterilized cat to its colony is crucial to reducing the colony size as new members will not join a feral cat colony with a stable number of neutered cats. Trap-Neuter-Return Population Control Programs maintain the colony in a healthy and secure state leading up to the eventual attrition of members. The Nova Scotia SPCA believes that not feeding feral cats is not the solution because starving cats will still mate. Concerned residents who are interested in providing food for or managing colonies are encouraged to seek advice from local feral cat rescue groups or shelters.

## **HUMANE TRANSPORTATION**

The Nova Scotia SPCA advocates for the safe transportation of all animals. In particular, the Nova Scotia SPCA opposes the transportation of domestic companion animals outside the passenger compartment of a vehicle in any space intended to carry a load, unless the space is enclosed or has side and tail racks to a height of 46", or the animal is protected by a secured cage or prescribed animal restraint. The Nova Scotia SPCA is also opposed the transportation of livestock that is sick or injured and inadequate enforcement of applicable regulations.

## **BACKYARD BREEDING**

The Nova Scotia SPCA is opposed to backyard breeding. Backyard breeding is unplanned or purposeful breeding pursued usually by inexperienced persons who may be profit driven. The animals involved are generally not tested for health or genetic problems, and typically there is no thought to where the offspring will go.

## **PET HOARDING**

The Nova Scotia SPCA encounters pet hoarding on a regular basis in the province of Nova Scotia. Pet hoarding is a pathological behaviour that involves a compulsive need to obtain and control animals, coupled with a failure to recognize their suffering. Hoarders hide their activities, because they fear that their animals may be taken away or euthanized. Pet hoarders, by definition, fail to provide the animals with adequate food, water, sanitation, and veterinary care, and are in denial about their inability to provide adequate care. The presence of so many animals is dangerous both for the animals and the hoarders with the potential exposure to parasites and disease. Severe neglect is often associated with hoarding. The Nova Scotia SPCA will intervene on any case involving neglect and abuse and will attend to the needs of the animals involved and will work with outside agencies where social or community assistance is needed.

## **TETHERING OF DOGS**

The Nova Scotia SPCA believes that the practice of long term tethering is both inhumane and a threat to the safety of the dog, other animals and people. Long term tethering can cause significant stress with negative physiological and behavioural effects. Additionally, dogs that are tethered for long periods can also become aggressive. The Nova Scotia SPCA continues to advocate for tethering regulations to be adopted. Regulations should set limits for the length of time a dog can be tethered and should qualify that a chain/rope or similar tether should not be less than 5 metres or 16 feet long. Additionally, it should be ensured that the tether cannot get tangled around objects, such as trees or bushes. The tether should also permit the dog to have free access to appropriate and adequate shelter and water.

## **ADOPTION**

The Nova Scotia SPCA believes that the best way to acquire a pet is through adoption. Adoption actively seeks to re-home displaced animals, inclusive of those that have suffered abuse, cruelty or neglect. The SPCA also takes in stray, abandoned and surrendered animals. The Nova Scotia SPCA recommends that any prospective owner research carefully before making the decision to bring home a pet. Whether received from a shelter, pet store or breeder, an owner should be supplied with a medical history and vaccination certificate at minimum. Many pet stores receive their pets from puppy and kitten mills. Mills are also the source of many on line classifieds. Unsuspecting buyers may be lead to believe they are purchasing from a reputable breeder, when they might be inadvertently supporting mass breeding.

## **COYOTE CULL**

The Nova Scotia SPCA shares the concern of the wider community regarding human encounters with coyotes and, although rare, reports of aggressive coyote behaviour. The Society would like to remind our stakeholders and those with an interest or concern in this matter that coyotes, by nature, are generally fearful of humans and will seek to avoid human interaction. Cases of coyote attack, including the fatality in 2009, while disturbing and of concern to us all, remain extremely rare.

Effectively addressing the situation requires long-term solutions and consistent application of these solutions by everyone in the community, especially those living in regions where higher than normal coyote sightings or interaction have been reported.

The SPCA welcomes important elements of the Government of Nova Scotia's plan to reduce human-coyote interactions, such as:

- Hiring specialist staff with expertise in the area of human-wildlife conflict
- Enhancing education in our communities about coyotes and how to avoid unwelcomed and potentially dangerous encounters

However, the SPCA does not believe the proposed trapping scheme and bounty on coyotes will be effective in addressing the situation effectively in the long-term. Evidence suggests that bounties are not always effective as a wildlife management tool. There remains a lack of concrete evidence that coyote numbers have been reduced with these approaches, prompting wildlife biologists and the public to question their validity as a management option.

In fact, adapting human behaviours will be the most effective means of addressing bold or aggressive coyote behaviour; thereby decreasing the number of human-coyote interactions and helping to ensure human safety. Please visit <http://www.spcans.ca/community/wildlife.html> for more information.

## **SEAL CULL**

The culling of wild populations of animals from an animal welfare view is a complex and debated topic. The Nova Scotia SPCA is broadly opposed to the culling of wild animals for the purpose of population "management". We acknowledge however, that rare and exceptional circumstances may arise where the overall health and welfare of a wild animal population are at risk (i.e. fatal infectious disease). In such extreme circumstances, there may be no other viable option than a humane cull to address the welfare of a wild population of animals.

The SPCA applauds the Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) for its commitment to moving toward an ecosystem-based approach to the management of living marine resources. To that end, the SPCA does not support a cull of Sable Island Grey seals. A mass culling of grey seals spread out over several years is not consistent with a balanced, ecosystem-approach to managing the population and, in the Society's view, will not promote the long-term welfare of grey seals or the fisheries resources upon which they and the fishing industry depend.

The SPCA advocates a fulsome exploration of alternative options in order to address the situation in a more sustainable manner with a view to the long-term viability of the unique Sable Island ecosystem, and its animal inhabitants.

## **DOGS TRAVELLING IN THE BACK OF OPEN VEHICLES**

For the safety of your pet, the Nova Scotia SPCA strongly opposes the unsecured transport of dogs in open vehicles such as pick-ups and flat bed trucks. The law in Nova Scotia prohibits the transport of people outside of designated passenger compartments, because it is dangerous and leaves passengers extremely vulnerable to serious injury or death. Pets are no less vulnerable. In fact, dogs are highly susceptible to losing balance, even while in steady transit, and especially during sudden starts, stops or turns. The consequences can be tragic.

The SPCA welcomes the position of the Canadian Veterinary Association (CVMA) and encourages pet owners in Nova Scotia to refrain from unsecured transport of dogs in open vehicles such as pick-up or flat-bed trucks. Where dog-owners must transport their pet in an open vehicle and outside of passenger compartments, there are options. For example, is strongly recommended that:

- A secured kennel be used in the back of the truck; or,
- Cover the back of the vehicle with a topper or canopy to avoid your pet being ejected from the vehicle.

For more information:

<http://canadianveterinarians.net/ShowText.aspx?ResourceID=399>

[https://canadianveterinarians.net/Documents/Resources/Files/1664\\_Dog%20Transport%20Poster%20English%20May%202010.pdf](https://canadianveterinarians.net/Documents/Resources/Files/1664_Dog%20Transport%20Poster%20English%20May%202010.pdf)