

# Healthy Pets, Healthy Communities



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# The Problem

- No regular onsite access to veterinary care in rural AK
- Extremely expensive to get care
  - Travel, lodging, expenses and surgery
  - Rural AK is home to several of the poorest census areas in the USA



# Survey results to date:

- 150 Respondents – 56 communities
  - 64% said they cannot access vet care
  - 72% said most animals in their community are not spayed or neutered
  - 71% said their animals don't receive vaccinations/deworming
  - 83% said that stray dogs are a problem in their community
  - 62% said people in their community fear strays
  - 46% said they aren't sure if dogs can make them sick
  - 78% said dogs spread waste and garbage around their communities
  - 91% said they see dogs in their community not properly cared for



There is an surplus of unwanted and  
unkempt dogs in rural Alaska and  
across Northern Canada



What effect does this lack of animal control options have on the health of a community?



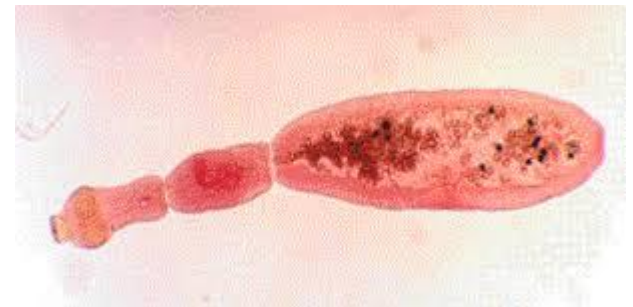
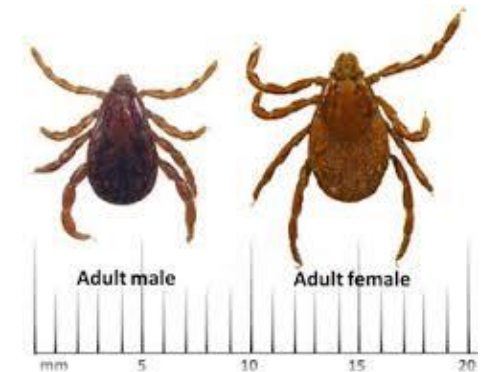
# Human Health

- AN children hospitalized at double the rate of U.S. Children for dog bites
  - AN Males have 3 times the rate of incidences when compared with general US population
- Between 2007 – January 2017
  - 1013 reported dog bites in YK Delta
  - 7 children mauled to death in the YK Delta since 1994



# Human Health - The Unknowns

- Sanitation issues
- Zoonotic illness
  - Parasites, Rabies, Echinococcus
- Risk to subsistence resources?
  - Ticks
- Social and Psychological effect



# Animal Welfare

- Some animals are left to suffer, starve, freeze and perish with no proper care.





# Not A Cultural Issue

- Alaskans have a unique shared history with dogs
- Negative press, unfair standards
- **This is an access to care issue**
  - Think Health Aides and Dental Health Aide Therapist programs
- Similar issues in other rural areas



# Healthy Pets, Healthy Communities Pilot Project

- Cooperation between:
  - ANTHC Community Environment and Health
  - Alaska Native Rural Veterinary Inc
  - Tribal Health Partners
- Program Activities:
  - Conduct several spay and neuter clinics
  - Conduct research
    - Stool samples, Ticks
    - Non-invasive sterilizations
    - Community surveys
  - Create a current best practice guide for animal care and control for rural Alaska

# What's the end game?

- Continue organizing volunteer vet clinics?
- Travel vets based out of hub communities?
- Tech program with hub based vets?
- Something resembling the Health Aide Program?





# Feedback?

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