

NWT SPCA Response – Cherish Winsor – Kam Lake Candidate

1. The NWT is in second last place regarding Animal Protection Laws. Animal abuse and neglect continues throughout the Territory with few charges and even less convictions. How will you promote and work toward better animal rights in the Territory?

The NWT has two animal protection acts – the *Dog Act* and the *Herd and Fencing Act*, as well as the overall animal cruelty provisions in Canada’s Criminal Code. Updated laws that provide more specific parameters around animal cruelty within the context of the NWT should be considered. As with other areas that need improvement, the GNWT could do better in collaborating with appropriate stakeholders to ensure all needs and viewpoints are considered.

2. Northern Communities are continually asking the NWT SPCA for help regarding animal care, supplying pet food and removal of unwanted or nuisance dogs. It is important to the health and safety of their neighbourhoods. The NWT SPCA helps members and community governments by sending pet food as well as removing dogs from their community. The alternative is starvation and shootings as a means of control. Will you support the NWT SPCA and advocate for Annual Core Funding from the GNWT so the organization can continue its many programs and necessary services to assist NWT Communities?

Established domestic animal protection organizations should be able to access core funding equal to the base costs of providing care per animal, per night and should be pursuant to applicable oversight from a relevant GNWT department. With a set funding formula established, organizations could apply for core funding for three to five years at a time, relieving the need to constantly fundraise and focus instead on the care of the animals.

3. Most Northern Communities have limited access to vet care. It is a major reason for the over population and the suffering of thousands of dogs in the North. Communities continue to ask the NWT SPCA to visit their community with the mobile spay and neuter clinics. Will you support funding for the NWT SPCA to increase the number of animal health and wellness clinics in the NWT communities? What steps will you take to ensure this Government support?

The GNWT needs to reframe domestic animal management as a wildlife issue and provide funding to communities to relieve the financial burden of caring for and removing these animals. With this funding, communities can choose how to manage their domestic animals which could include support from the NWT SPCA, ultimately removing the financial burden from this organization.