



## AKC Canine Health Foundation 2013 Grants

The AKC Canine Health Foundation (CHF) announced approval of 17 research grants to 13 research institutions and universities. These grants, totaling more than \$1.7 million in funding for researchers studying canine health, will provide better treatments, more accurate diagnosis, and a deeper understanding of the mechanisms that cause disease in areas such as oncology, cardiology, infectious disease, and musculoskeletal health. The projects are categorized into research program areas that allow for support of research broadly through funding of program areas rather than single grants.

One of the six oncology grants continues study and research of Hemangiosarcoma by Dr. Jaime F Modiano, VMD PhD, University of Minnesota through December 31, 2015.

Hemangiosarcoma is a rapidly fatal disease. The lifetime risk is alarmingly high for some breeds like Golden Retrievers (~20% will die of this disease) and Portuguese Water Dogs (~15% will die of this disease). Furthermore, the risk of hemangiosarcoma is not limited to a single breed. In fact so many dogs are at risk to develop hemangiosarcoma that 40 Breed Clubs designated it as a research priority for 2012. Despite considerable efforts to find effective treatments, the outcome for dogs with hemangiosarcoma has changed very little over the past 30 years. We believe this is because our understanding of this disease is still rudimentary, but that is changing. Recent evidence suggests hemangiosarcoma conforms to the "cancer stem cell" model, where a defined subset of cells is responsible for initiating and maintaining the tumor. These cells are resistant to conventional therapies and they also are very adaptable, being able to survive in a variety of niches. In the case of hemangiosarcoma, the cancer stem cells also retain or acquire the potential to differentiate along several different lineages. For this project, we will use this property against the tumor by modulating factors that support the self-renewal of the stem cell compartment and by inducing their terminal differentiation along alternate pathways that have reduced malignant potential. We propose that disrupting the interactions between hemangiosarcoma cancer stem cells and their microenvironment will enhance the sensitivity of these cells to conventional and targeted therapies and improve the outcomes of dogs with this disease.

01759: Targeting Multipotency to Arrest Hemangiosarcoma Progression and Improve Outcomes. Grant Amount: \$233,914

Full list of grants, video, and options for funding are posted at AKC CHF <http://tinyurl.com/be6hub4>

Hemangiosarcoma causes and treatment, National Canine Cancer Foundation <http://www.wearethecure.org/the-road-from-despair-to-hope>

# California Egg Producers Sue Over Cage Law

FRESNO, Calif. (AP) -- California's Proposition 2 said chickens in cages must be able to stand up and stretch their wings without touching cage walls. Whether that means one chicken at a time or a bunch at once is the impetus behind the third lawsuit filed by egg farmers since passage of the ballot measure.

A group of egg farmers sued California late Friday in Fresno County Superior Court, saying the statute is unconstitutionally vague. "If we can't get clarity on what Prop 2 means, the number of producers will go down significantly and then the cost of eggs will go up," said attorney Dale Stern, who is representing about three-quarters of state producers in the Association of California Egg Farmers (ACEF).

The HSUS 2008 ballot initiative listed as Proposition 2, or "Prop 2," required that all farm animals, "for all or the majority of any day," not be confined or tethered in a manner that prevents them from lying or sitting down, standing up, turning around or fully extending their limbs without touching another animal or an enclosure such as a cage or stall. The law, which goes into effect in January 2015, says chickens must be able to engage in natural behaviors — such as roosting and scratching — and should be able to stand up and stretch their wings.

Since its passage, farmers have complained that the measure lacks specific language designating appropriate cage size and as a result puts them at risk of misdemeanor charges and fines up to \$1,000. They first went to court two years ago when Modesto-based producer J.S. West asked a Fresno County judge to decide if the company's new system met the requirements. The judge declined to issue a ruling. Earlier this year, a Riverside County egg farmer challenged the law as being vague, but U.S. District Court Judge John F. Walker upheld it.

In its court filing, ACEF said the Prop 2 language clearly means that California egg producers must change the kind of housing that they currently have in place, i.e., conventional cage housing, but provides "no ascertainable guidance" as to acceptable densities and dimensions of the enclosures that should be adopted.

ACEF noted that the California egg industry houses 19 million hens and that egg producers will need to remodel or replace their housing within the next two years at an estimated cost of \$400 million. Without any specification as to Prop 2's requirements, it's "untenable" for producers to arrange for that financing and make that investment, ACEF said. According to ACEF, "The continued viability of the California egg industry is in jeopardy."

Sources: California egg farmers file Prop 2 suit. Feedstuffs. <http://tinyurl.com/c64cfsw>; Manufacturing.net <http://tinyurl.com/blelsuv>

## New Python Study

New Study Contradicts USGS Python Climate Projections; growing evidence suggest struggling Florida pythons won't expand north

By [awyatt](#) USARK on November 26, 2012

A new study published in Integrative Zoology examines the impacts of cold temperatures on Burmese pythons. The study, 'Environmental, physiology and behavior limit the range expansion of invasive Burmese pythons in southeastern USA' (Jacobson et al. 2012), was prompted by a USGS climate prediction (Reed Rodda 2008) claiming feral Burmese pythons in the Everglades could expand as far north as the southern third of the US. Since the USGS report was published, there have been three cold weather python studies published in scientific journals that contradict USGS claims of the python's ability to tolerate temperate climates outside of southernmost Florida (Avery et al. 2010; Dorcas et al. 2011; Mazzotti et al. 2011).

Now the new study, a collaborative work between University of Florida, USDA Wildlife Services and python experts, identifies the fundamental flaw in the USGS study and details why it is unlikely feral pythons can survive north of the Everglades.

The USGS study sought to create a climate match comparing the python's native range to a potential range here in the US. The methodology was to use median temperatures from the native range of the python, and overlay that data to create a climate matching map across the southern third of the US. The flaw in the USGS work revealed by Jacobson et al revolves around the erroneous idea that median temperatures are an accurate way to determine range. They are not. Temperature extremes, especially the low temperatures reached in a given climate are much more important. As tropical species, pythons are morphologically, physiologically and behaviorally ill-equipped to tolerate low temperatures commonly reached north of the Everglades during the winter. In other words, pythons can barely tolerate cold temperatures in south Florida let alone central and north Florida, or outside of the state.

The National Geographic Society's Resident Herpetologist, Dr. Brady Barr, has stated, "Climate data reveal that temperatures found in southern Florida simply are not conducive to the long term survival of large tropical snakes. When it gets cold, these snakes die". Dr. Barr goes on to say, "Feral Hogs are a bigger problem for the Everglades than pythons. The press has sensationalized this story to the point that people think the sky is falling. Hopefully comprehensive research such as Jacobson et al. will put an end to the hysteria."

The US House Natural Resources Committee, Subcommittee on Fisheries, Wildlife, Oceans and Insular Affairs will hold a hearing on H.R. 511 on Thursday November 29th. The bill known as the 'Python Ban' seeks to add nine constricting snakes to the Injurious Wildlife list of the Lacey Act. The Subcommittee Chair is Representative John Flemming (R-LA). The hearing will be held in the Longworth House Office Building at 10:00 AM. The United States Association of Reptile Keepers opposes the addition of any constricting snakes to the Injurious Wildlife list.

## **Deer Ticks Harbor More Than Lyme Disease**

An emerging tick-borne disease that causes symptoms similar to malaria is expanding its range in areas of the northeast where it has become well-established, according to new research presented November 12 at the annual meeting of the American Society of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene (ASTMH).

Researchers from the Yale School of Public Health reported that from 2000 to 2008, cases of babesiosis -- which invades red blood cells and is carried by the same tick that causes Lyme disease -- expanded from 30 to 85 towns in Connecticut. Cases of the disease in Connecticut, where it was first reported in 1991, also have risen from 3 to about 100 cases per year.

The findings on babesiosis presented at the ASTMH annual meeting were accompanied by discussions of a range of other investigations into newly emerging tick-borne diseases, which include afflictions that can cause fatal encephalitis, an inflammation of the brain.

"Today's findings underscore the shifting landscape of tick-borne diseases, whose rapid emergence can challenge the best efforts of science and medicine to diagnose, treat, and prevent their occurrence," said Peter Krause, MD, a researcher at the Yale School of Public Health in New Haven, Connecticut.

Lyme disease -- with 20,000-30,000 cases reported each year in the United States -- is still the best known example of a recently emerged tick-borne disease. But research points to a growing number of pathogens carried by the deer tick, all of which are expanding their range.

*Source: ScienceDaily (Nov. 12, 2012) <http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2012/11/121112135510.htm>*

# College Alarmed by Animal Rights 'Extremists'

By ELIZABETH WARMERDAM

DETROIT (CN) - Wayne State University is exempt from answering a FOIA request about its use of dogs in medical research, because the last time it did "animal rights extremists" threatened its researchers with "torture and death," the university claims in court.

The university sued the Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine, in Wayne County Court. Wayne State claims it released records in 2011 to the Physicians Committee, which sought information on the university's use of dogs in cardiovascular research.

"After WSU responded, PCRM launched a public attack against WSU, falsely accusing it of 'inhumane' and 'cruel' treatment of dogs in research," the complaint states.

"Animal rights extremists quickly seized upon PCRM's inflammatory accusations and began a campaign of harassment and intimidation against [one scientist], his family, WSU students and officials, including threats of injury, torture and death. One such extremist was subjected to a personal protection order by this court. The order was repeatedly violated, leading to citations for contempt and felony charges, including one for aggravated stalking.

"Despite the direct link between the release of [the scientist's] animal research records and substantial threats to the personal safety of [the scientist] and others, PCRM has persisted in its requests for such information through FOIA."

Wayne State says the information requested is exempt from disclosure under the state's privacy exemption.

"The privacy exemption protects the privacy of individuals by allowing a public body to withhold information that, if released, would present a realistic risk of being used to identify the personal safety and security of those individuals," according to the complaint.

Wayne State researchers use dogs to conduct cardiovascular studies on the relationship between heart failure in humans and reduced blood flow to the body's muscles, including the heart itself.

The university claims that after it released records to PCRM in 2011, after redacting names and identifying information about research staff except for the lead scientist, PCRM used the records to "grossly misrepresent to the public that WSU had treated its canine animal subjects inhumanely."

"For example, PCRM stated on its website that a particular canine subject experienced 'constant pain and suffering' and was subjected to 'inhumane' and 'cruel' experiments. It alleged that the dog had incisions that 'constantly seeped large amounts of fluid' and that 'her face and paws were swollen.' Experimenters were accused of 'dodging bites' while collecting data."

Around this time, the PCRM filed a complaint against Wayne State with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, which conducted a three-day, on-site investigation and exonerated the university and the scientist, according to the complaint.

The PCRM, however, refused to remove defamatory articles from its website until Wayne State's general counsel demanded it, in April this year, the complaint states.

"PCRM thereupon modified its website content. The damage, however, had already been done."

For instance, in October 2011, an animal rights extremist organization, Negotiation is Over (NIO), using the information PCRMA had acquired through its FOIA request, and posted on its website, published an article on its own website under the headline: "[Scientist's Name]: Federally Funded Sadist Tortures Shelter Dogs to Death at Wayne State," according to the complaint.

"The NIO website disclosed [the scientist's] picture, home address and telephone number. He was listed as 'NIO's Most Wanted' who were 'WANTED DEAD OR ALIVE.'

"Following the article were posts from different people threatening [the scientist's] life. One described in grotesque detail the torture and death of the researcher," the complaint states. "A true and accurate copy of the post is attached as Exhibit 1.

"On Oct. 22, 2011, the administrator of the NIO website, Camille Marino, sent an email to [the scientist] wishing him 'a slow and painful death.'"

Marino's continued harassment caused her to be charged with aggravated stalking, a felony, the university says. It says the scientist's family and other researchers, students and officials at the university were also subjected to threats.

"Under these circumstances, continued release of [the scientist's] Animal Research Records, which has previously imperiled the safety and lives of WSU's researchers, constitutes a disclosure of 'information of a personal nature,'" the complaint states.

"The disclosure of [his] Animal Research Records is an 'unwarranted invasion' of the researcher's privacy. Such disclosures have jeopardized the safety of [the scientist] and other WSU researchers and have added little to the public interest in enforcing laws regulating the care and use of animals in research."

The university says its research and experiments involving animals are already monitored by more than one organization and are highly regulated by federal law.

Wayne State seeks declaratory judgment that it is exempt from the defendant's FOIA request. It is represented by Thomas Cavalier.

*Courthouse News Service* <http://www.courthousenews.com/2012/11/27/52559.htm>

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## **HSUS Wants to Join Ohio Exotics Lawsuit**

November 27. The Associated Press reported that HSUS asked Judge George Smith to allow them to intervene in the lawsuit. The organization says it has a significant interest in defending the law that it strongly supported, as well as an interest in the lawsuit's outcome since the organization is pushing similar laws nationwide. The lawsuit filed earlier this month in Columbus federal court by four owners of exotic animals contends the restrictions on exotic animal ownership imposed by the state threaten their First Amendment and property rights.

*North Carolina Responsible Animal Owners Alliance, Inc. (NCRAOA) is a statewide organization of animal owners and professionals dedicated to animal welfare, responsible animal ownership, and maintaining the rights of responsible citizens to breed and own animals. NCRAOA, a 501(c)3 organization, provides education and information to the public and supports reasonable and humane animal welfare laws. Permission granted to copy and distribute NCRAOA News and Views in its entirety as is.*

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