



NATIVE AMERICAN  
HUMANE SOCIETY



# Healing our sacred circle

The Native American Humane Society's  
2025-2027 Strategy

**“Whenever I visit tribal communities, I am always on the lookout for my relatives, the rez dogs. I want to know their stories: How did they get to where they are today? How did they survive? What happened to their babies, their parents, their friends, and their culture? What do they dream about? What hopes do they have for the future? What can they tell us about the fate of the human race and the planet?”**

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**Dr. Michael Yellow Bird, PhD, MHA Nation**  
President, Native American Humane Society



# A Bold New Chapter

## A message from our Executive Director.

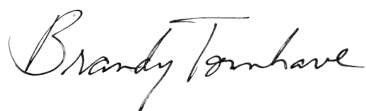
Caring for animals has always been part of who we are as Native people. Our four-legged relatives have shared our homes, stories, and ways of life for generations. They are our relations.

But with no veterinary services or animal welfare infrastructure in Indian Country, Tribal communities face significant risk to human health and safety.

This year marks a new chapter for the Native American Humane Society (NAHS). As we enter our second decade we're expanding our mission to end the suffering of families and their companion animals on reservations. The well-being of our animals is deeply tied to the health and safety of our Tribal Nations, and this connection drives our renewed purpose.

Today, we're creating lasting systems of change—honoring Native traditions, respecting Tribal knowledge, and improving opportunities for our people and our pets.

We invite you to stand with us.



**Brandy Tomhave, J.D., Choctaw**  
Executive Director

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# Who We Are

Led by and with Native Americans.

The health of rez dogs and cats is integral to human health, but there are no animal health or welfare systems on Indian reservations. NAHS works directly with Native families and Tribes to create community-based change.

## Our Mission

To restore, protect, and honor the human-animal connection within Native communities.

## Our Vision

Decolonize animal welfare on Indian reservations.



**“I salute the light within your eyes where the whole Universe dwells.** For when you are at that center within you and I am that place within me, we shall be one.”

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**Crazy Horse, Oglala Lakota Sioux**

# The Heart of our Work

We honor Indigenous knowledge, traditions, and sovereignty with strategies and decisions that reflect our core values.

## Transformative Decolonization

Repatriate Indigenous life ways, ethics, beliefs and values that honor and respect the relationships between people and animals.

## Courageous Creativity

Use originality, utility, aesthetics and authenticity to promote strength-based solutions.

## Innovative Collaboration

Promote partnerships that end suffering.

## Radical Compassion

Honor, through deep contemplation, all living beings and perspectives by providing care and love to the communities with whom we engage.

## Native First

Conversations, programs and policies are centered within Tribal communities so that concepts and messages are all framed by Tribal culture and priorities.



# Our Strategic Priorities

## Care

We answer Native families' calls for help by partnering with Tribes to create free transport and veterinary care services for sick or injured pets.



## Education

We teach Native American children how to be safer around dogs and become pet owners and veterinarians.

## Infrastructure

We help Tribal governments create their own animal welfare and management systems.

# Access to Care

Most Indian reservations have no veterinarians. Access to off-reservation veterinary care is often too far away and expensive.



## Goal

Be the organization Native families can count on for pet care.

## Objectives

- Codify a process for intake and tracking of dogs and cats we help Tribes provide care for.
- Create an automated notification system for pet health reminders.
- Build winter shelters and train Native builders on the Wind River Reservation.



## Impact

- Increase in the number of Native families receiving animal care services for their dogs and cats.
- Reduction in the financial stress for families with pets.
- Healthier and longer living animals on reservations.

**The median wealth of families in Indian Country in 2022 was \$5,524, making the wealth gap between White and Native households 32 to 1.**

# Access to Education

Native children face the highest risk of dog bites in the U.S., growing up in communities with limited animal control, at a time when just 1% of veterinarians are American Indian.



## Goal

Encourage compassion and inspire careers in companion animal care.

## Objectives

- Create curriculum for local schools and children’s groups on the reservation.
- Launch a public awareness campaign using storytelling and multimedia.
- Establish a veterinary partnership for the first paravet program.

## Impact

- Increase in children and families using pet safety education.
- Reduction in dog bite incidents on reservations.
- Healthier relationships between animals and people.
- Increase in number of Native American veterinarians.
- Job creation on the reservation.



**Our curriculum includes books, films, coloring books, and dog training workshops. Our lessons are mostly restatements of traditional indigenous knowledge that colonization nearly destroyed.**



# Access to Infrastructure

The federal government has failed to provide basic animal welfare services to Indian Country that are essential to human health and safety. But this fundamental failure presents Tribes with their own nation building opportunity.



## Goal

Enable Tribes to take care of their own dogs and cats.

## Objectives

- Establish working relationships with pilot Tribes in Year 1.
- Provide technical assistance to Tribes developing new programs.
- Facilitate partnerships to address resource gaps.
- Advocate for funding opportunities through Tribal allocations.

## Impact

- Increase in Tribal-led animal welfare resolutions.
- Agreement in principal about shared vision.
- Captured best practices in Indigenous animal welfare.
- Partnership and funding agreements.



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**Animal welfare represents the opportunity for tribes to develop their self-governance capacity. It is a chance for them to create systems that reflect their priorities and traditions, which is every Tribe's sovereign right.**



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# Thank You

We couldn't do this vital work without our teams, donors, partners, and friends. Thank you for standing with NAHS.