



CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, SACRAMENTO

DEPARTMENT OF BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES

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Ferret Survey of North American Governmental Agencies Research Project – Second Quarterly Progress Report

Greetings Ferrets Anonymous,

I am submitting this Quarterly Progress Report to inform you of our progress on the Ferret Survey of North American Governmental Agencies; this report fulfills the second of four quarterly reporting requirements of the contract between Ferrets Anonymous and CSUS (University Enterprises, Inc.).

Start-Up

Dr. Graening hired CSUS Biological Sciences Dept. student Ms. Navneet Shah to serve as the research assistant on this project; Ms. Shaw is assisting in the literature review and management of the questionnaire distribution and data collection.

Task 1: Perform an exhaustive literature review; Update bibliography of ferret studies and natural history

The literature review has been initiated and will continue for the 9 months in an attempt to exhaust the literature. Pertinent information from acquired literature is being assembled into various report sections that document the presence or absence of issues of ferrets and human health, wildlife, and livestock. The literature does document some attacks by ferrets upon humans. Some published sources show these instances to be less prevalent than those for other pet species such as dogs.

Task 2: Prepare questionnaire; Research contact info at each state agency; Mail questionnaire

The questionnaire has been created, and exists as a hardcopy as well as electronic form (Adobe PDF and Microsoft Word). From early September to early January, questionnaires were distributed to every known wildlife agency, health department, and agricultural department in the 50 US states and Canadian Provinces by mail and email, with email being the preferred method of contact (to keep costs down, and to facilitate later data entry). See attached correspondence logs for a detailed summary of activity for USA and for Canada. We will attempt to send the questionnaire to Mexico if we can successfully translate the questionnaire and cover letter to Spanish at low cost.

Questionnaire response content to date has been rather benign; those agencies that have responded treat the ferret as a regulated or non-regulated pet. The exception is the State of Hawaii, which vehemently opposes importation or possession of ferrets. None of the questionnaires received to date have documented

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the establishment of any feral breeding populations, or negative interactions with wildlife, or significant impacts on human health or safety. Several agencies have attempted to quantify the number of domesticated ferrets in their State; this will assist us in creating a national estimate of ferret ownership, which is important baseline data for performing a future risk analysis of ferret ownership/legalization.

Task 3: Follow-up email and phone conversations (reminders, clarifications, etc.)

Various agencies from at least 37 States and 4 Canadian Provinces have already responded by sending back a completed (or partially-completed) questionnaire. A few agencies responded that they don't have any information on the subject or are unwilling to participate; we are still trying to obtain some information from them. See attached correspondence logs for a detailed summary of correspondence. We will be emailing and calling agencies over the next months to encourage them to respond to the questionnaire to attempt to receive a response from every State and Province.

We also received some information from the scientists at Marshall Pet Products. We have sent information requests out to professional associations of the pet industry, but none have responded with information yet. We have received some information from non-governmental organizations in other States such as humane societies.

Task 4: Enter response data into database

A Microsoft Access 2007 Database has been created to handle the data compilation in preparation for statistical analyses, which will consist of categorical data analyses such as contingency tables and logistic regression.

Sincerely,



G. O. Graening, PhD