Dear Roseann,

Thanks to your overwhelming response to help victims of Hurricane Katrina reunite with their missing pets, we have surpassed the original goal of $130,000 needed to send our emergency relief team and Mobile Command Vehicle to the disaster sites.

Upon arrival to a Houston animal shelter housing over 600 displaced pets, we quickly discovered that the magnitude of the situation is far greater than originally feared.

IFAW is continuing to help establish temporary shelters for the hundreds of animals still on their way from the battered areas in Louisiana and Mississippi, where many pets were either left to fend for themselves in the powerful winds or trapped in flooding cages as owners were forced to flee.

Yesterday ER Team member Gail D’Abrunzo assisted in the evaluation and intake of 60 dogs rescued from several Louisiana shelters with more animals expected today. The dogs were in good spirits but smelled badly due to the unsanitary conditions from which they were rescued. You can listen to a full audio account of the rescue operation here.
Situation in New Orleans Remains Grim

IFAW’s Emergency Relief Team has now established its rescue operations in Gonzales, LA — approximately 50 miles from New Orleans. Working with state authorities and other animal rescue groups, IFAW is conducting door-to-door search and rescue missions in New Orleans to evacuate as many animals as we can who have been left behind.

Words cannot describe the value of your contributions to these folks who have lost everything.

The Matuzzi family is just one of the families who were in New Orleans waiting on the roof of their flooded home to be rescued when they heard their Great Dane, Malice, trapped inside their attic. They broke a hole in the roof to pull Malice free, then swam to safety…only to be told they had to leave Malice behind in order to evacuate. They refused and were lucky enough to find a bus driver willing to take Malice with them to the Houston Astrodome for temporary shelter.

Upon arrival in Houston, thanks to your help, Malice was provided the care and shelter he needed at the local SPCA. Today, the Matuzzis and Malice were tearfully reunited.

Literally thousands of stories like Malice abound. From one owner’s successful smuggling attempt of their pet lovebird Lola in their clothes upon evacuation, to the reunion of one woman’s Chow, Angel, who swam with her through the floodwaters to safety.

But for every happy and hopeful reunion, thousands of pets remain lost or missing. Animal shelters are running out of room and we must try to reunite saved pets with their owners as quickly as possible.

I can’t thank you enough for the hope you have already provided for so many hurricane victims. But our work is just beginning. If you haven’t done so already, please consider making a gift to our Hurricane Katrina Animal Rescue Fund, and tell as many others as you can about the work we are doing to save the animal victims who were left behind.

Thank you for your generous response,

Fred O’Regan
President and CEO, IFAW

P.S. IFAW is collecting rescue requests from evacuees and others who are unsure of the whereabouts of their animals. Requests are being compiled with other organizations into a master database, which will then be forwarded to rescue teams. If you or someone you know needs to report a lost animal please visit

Hurricane Katrina Rescue Video

Watch as families evacuated from hurricane-ravaged areas are reunited with their pets.

Play Video
(Windows Media Player only)

Download Windows Media Player below:
Worried about Donating online?
I used to be too ... so I made sure our online system is safe, secure, and state-of-the-art. It also eliminates check-processing costs, so more money goes directly to saving animals. But if you prefer to donate by phone or mail, simply click here for address information.

NOTE: To make sure you continue to receive further emails from IFAW, please add fred@ifaw1.org to your email Address Book. If you use a spam filter program, please assign this address a status of “safe” or “trusted.” If you have an AOL, Hotmail, or Yahoo email address, this is particularly important as we receive many “bounce backs” from these email addresses.