Don’t Let It Loose
Reducing the release of pets to the wild

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Invasive Species Action Network
Program Goals

- Educate pet owners that releasing pets is never acceptable
- Encourage *independent* pet stores to promote a no-release ethic
- Provide alternatives to release for pet owners
Designing the Program

• Don’t Let It Loose originally developed in Everglades in 2009
• Western AIS Coordinators preferred over other choices
• Don’t Let It Loose has been adopted (and adapted) by Alberta & British Columbia
Designing For Success

• Program provides incentives for participants
  – Stores recognize the need and are grateful to join a program
  – Stores enhance their image
  – Materials provide significant value to stores
  – Program promotes participating stores via website

• Primary message is delivered by trusted source
Designed With Partner Cooperation

- Prior to material development store owners interviewed to establish their needs and concerns.
  - Pilot project = every store visited and interviewed first, then deliver materials second
  - Now new stores are visited to deliver materials
Vinyl Decals

- Logo only on clear vinyl
- 2 sizes
  - 2” x 3”
  - 4.5” x 6.5”
- Large size available as “positive” or “negative”
- Shops encouraged to use liberally
Fish Bags

• 2 mil bags printed in single color
• 2 sizes
  – 8’ x 16”
  – 5” x 14”
• 1,000 per box
• Provided free of charge to participating stores (6,000 per store per yr.)
Posters and Stuffers

• Same graphic for both items
• 11 x 17 printable pdf poster
• 8.5 x 5.5 printed stuffer
DON'T LET IT LOOSE

BE A RESPONSIBLE PET OWNER

DON'T LET IT LOOSE

Releasing a pet to the wild is never the right thing

Why this is important
For the health of your pet and the safety of our native wildlife, it’s never OK to release animals.

Can't care for a pet?
If you can no longer care for a pet, there are resources to help you find a place for your pet.

More information
Additional resources to learn more about the importance of keeping exotic species out of the wild.

Why releasing a pet into the wild is never the right thing
WHERE TO GET HELP IN FINDING A NEW HOME FOR YOUR PET

If you have a dog, cat, rabbit or other small animal, check with your local animal shelter. Click for a directory of all shelters and adoption centers in Montana.

Montana Pets on the Net

If you have a reptile, amphibian or unusual pet, you can often get assistance from:

Dave Pauli
Humane Society
Wildlife Capture and Field Project Specialist
4216 Zapfyl Lane, Billings, MT 59106
dpauli@humsociety.org
406-679-4257 (email is best contact)

Check with your local pet store

Local pet stores will almost always try to help you find a home for your pet. In many instances, the store itself may be willing to accept your pet. If not, they are often a great place to get assistance.

The following pet stores are all members of the Don't Let It Loose, Montana pet turn-in network.
Don’t Let It Loose

Home
About
Photos
Posts
Community

Create a Page

Posts

Don’t Let It Loose
September 5 at 11:03 AM

The best way to make sure no one releases a pet to the wild is to make sure they know all of the laws that relate to the animal they want to own. Unfortunately, one California resident did not learn the law!
http://www.sandiegouniontribune.com/.../ed-utbg-wildlife-traff...
New in 2019
- Nevada
- Arizona
- New Mexico

State Supported
- Hawaii
- Oregon
- Washington
- Idaho
- New Mexico
- California
Additional Value

• No perception of agenda
• Follow up creates new agency relationships
• Strong agency/retail relationship benefits all
Expansion with companies

Inclusion of **Don’t Let It Loose** messages within packaging
Do you want to join the effort?

If you already are doing **Don’t Let It Loose**, then we can add you to the website.

If you do not have an existing program, then we can work together to address your needs.
Questions?

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