



## Dane County Humane Society Board of Directors Position Statement

*Date Last Modified: February 19, 2014*

### **Private Ownership of Wild Animals**

Dane County Humane Society (DCHS) supports sensible regulatory efforts that limit the possession of native and exotic wild animals to experienced, qualified, and professional individuals or institutes who are certified by accreditation organizations like the Association of Zoos and Aquariums. DCHS' position on this issue stems from its concerns about animal welfare, husbandry, infectious diseases, public health and safety, and environmental impacts relative to the ownership of wild animals.

Wild animals, especially those deemed dangerous predators (e.g. bears, big cats, alligators, and apes) should not be accessible to the general public not only because of the physical threat of injury they can present, but also due to the potential threat these animals can pose to the health and welfare of the public, domestic animals, native wildlife, and ecosystems.

Any regulatory laws banning the ownership of wild animals should not prohibit DCHS from finding permanent placement with an accredited organization or sanctuary for those animals surrendered or seized. Other organizations, such as recognized conservation and research programs, as well as wildlife sanctuaries should also be permitted to place previously owned wild animals.

#### **References:**

American Veterinary Medical Association. Ownership or Possession of Wild Animals or Their Hybrids. <https://www.avma.org/KB/Policies/Pages/Ownership-or-Possession-of-Wild-Animals-or-Their-Hybrids.aspx> . Accessed on 11 Aug 2013