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## Animal Welfare Organizations Provide Midwest Tornado Rescue Aid

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By [Yahaira Cespedes](#) May 05, 2011 at 11:34AM

The devastation caused by the tornado outbreak in the Midwestern United States last week mobilized some of the nation's largest animal welfare organizations to action. States including Alabama, Mississippi, Missouri, and Tennessee continue to receive emergency care and rescue efforts for lost or injured animals impacted by last week's wild weather.

In Alabama and Missouri, the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) is helping locals search for lost or injured animals. HSUS is organizing volunteers, setting up staging areas to help reunite pets with their lost owners, distributing pet food and heading into devastated areas to continue search efforts.

HSUS also set up a Birmingham- and Tuscaloosa-area hotline (205-397-8534 – answered from 8 AM to 5 PM daily) to help reunite owners with their lost or found pets.

In Tennessee, the International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW) dispatched animal sheltering and water search and rescue teams after the Mayor of Memphis asked the American Society of the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA) for assistance.

IFAW set up an emergency animal mega-shelter in Memphis, which is expected to house around 1,000 animals. The organization's 36-foot animal rescue trailer is also on the way to Tennessee to provide operational support.

Joining IFAW's rescue efforts in Tennessee is the Red Star Animal Emergency Services on behalf of the American Humane Association (AHA). In Tennessee, AHA is providing emergency rescue, sheltering and vital care to the animals affected by the tornadoes. Nationwide, AHA has offered assistance to over 20 Midwest states including Alabama, Kansas, Nebraska, Oklahoma and Wisconsin.

The Red Star team, which consists of 15 staff and volunteers, is en route to Tennessee in their 82-foot-long "Rescue Rig" emergency response vehicle, and expected to arrive later this week. Once there, the Red Team's mobile veterinary clinic will join forces with their Shelter Team and Animal Search and Rescue team to provide much-needed care to injured or lost animals.

"Our hearts go out to the thousands of human and animal victims of this developing disaster," says Dr. Robin R. Ganzert, president and CEO of American Humane Association. "This is one of the most devastating series of storms in this part of the country in the past century and to those in need we will bring a century of experience and all of our resources in animal rescue. Help is on the way."

For more information about these rescue efforts and how to keep animals safe during severe weather conditions, visit the [HSUS](#), [IFAW](#), [ASPCA](#), and the [AHA](#).

Image: [Tabitha Kaylee Hawk](#) / via Flickr