



COLUMBIA COUNTY
ANIMAL CONTROL DIVISION
2084 Oregon Street
St. Helens, Oregon 97051
Phone: (503) 397-3935 Fax: (503) 366-3990

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Thursday, February 25, 2010

PRESS RELEASE

INFORMATION CONTACT: Roger Kadell, Animal Control Officer at 503-397-3935

RIBAYA DOGS FIND SANCTUARY.

The story of pit bull dogs involved in the attack of farm animals has come to an end, but it was not the end that many thought would happen to the animals in this case. The dogs were seized from a farm in Scappoose July 3rd, 2009 after attacking and seriously wounding a calf. After the seizure of the dogs, it was determined that the dogs were owned by Mr. Ribaya, who has long history of being involved in animal fighting.

After a public hearing on the matter, the County Board of Commissioners imposed the maximum fine possible on Mr. Ribaya and ordered the two dogs to be euthanized. The dogs were held and cared for by the Columbia County Animal Control during the several month long appeals period. During that time, the dogs demonstrated highly aggressive behavior to other animals, but not to humans.

In January 2010, The Columbia County Circuit Court ruled in the favor of the County Board of Commissioner's order to have the animals euthanized pending a 30-day grace period for Mr. Ribaya to file an appeal of the Circuit Court order. During this appeal time, Ms. Bethany O'Driscoll with Ananda Farm Sanctuary of Saint Helens, Oregon offered to try and locate a suitable Sanctuary for the animals. After consideration of the offer, the Board of Commissioners agreed to allow for additional time for Ms O'Driscoll to locate a suitable placement for the dogs. Because of the characteristics of the dogs, this task was not easy.

A suitable location for placement of the dogs was found. On February 24th, 2010, after being spayed and neutered, the dogs were transferred to the Olympic Animal Sanctuary in Forks Washington. This Sanctuary

was found to be experienced in sheltering dogs with similar histories as the Ribaya dogs. The Sanctuary plans for life time care of the dogs and does not re-place the dogs.

This case has raised public awareness of the issue of animal fighting in Columbia County and the need for coordination between the Columbia County Sheriff's Office, the Columbia County Animal Control Program and Oregon Humane Society Investigators on incidents involving possible dog fighting and other animal abuses. These agencies are in the process of developing a coordinated strategy for responding to future incidents involving aggressive dogs and the training of dogs and other animals for the use and participation in illegal animal fighting events.

This incident underscores the fact that Columbia County is not immune from the problem of dogs and other animals being trained for fighting purposes. But the County's experience with this incident has provided the basis for better agency cooperation in response to future incidents and awareness of resources available for the humane placement of even very aggressive dogs and other animals.