

Some highlights from the discussion yesterday:

- We discussed whether a standard would be set at all, or whether setting a standard for dogs in all contexts would be adequate. We talked about how it would be helpful to have a standard, in part because it will help with public education and misunderstandings about mushing practices – e.g. that having dogs chained is a normal /healthy practice, and does not mean there's anything wrong with the care of the dogs.
- We talked about moving to an outcomes-based approach for animal welfare legislation generally. This means moving away from the current setup of requiring that dogs have food and water available – to instead requiring that dogs have adequate body condition score and hydration. In part, this will address concerns with pet dogs being overweight as being equally problematic for animal welfare, and to recognize that there are ways other than having water available to ensure adequate hydration for dogs (such as mixing water into food).
- We talked about using Mush with P.R.I.D.E. as a great starting point to build from, with the potential to make some changes in some areas to build a standard appropriate for Yukon.
- We talked about the standard being set as a minimum baseline that everyone should be able to meet (including those in Old Crow with no access to veterinary care, etc). As something that would be used for enforcement (once set, it would be an offence to not meet the standard), the idea is not to set the standard at the extreme high end of the industry. So, not setting a “gold” standard, and not requiring certification. Mushers who wanted to certify in a program to a very high standard for their own business or other reasons would be able to do so voluntarily through an existing organization (such as Mush with P.R.I.D.E, or a Yukon-specific standard set by volunteer associations in Yukon in future).
- We discussed that all the systems relevant for dog team owners should make sense together – e.g. not to have redundant permitting/licensing processes under wilderness tourism licensing processes and under new animal protection and control laws. We don't want to create a lot of administrative or regulatory work for mushers or other dog owners, particularly if one facility is serving multiple functions (boarding kennel business, commercial mushing tours, animal rescue/re-homing dogs, etc).

Some key issues identified for future discussion:

- Is the best approach forward to start with Mush with P.R.I.D.E. as a baseline for a standard?
- If yes, which changes or additions would be appropriate for applying Mush with P.R.I.D.E. as a standard in the Yukon?
- Whether there should be any requirements that apply to only some mushers – and if so, which requirements and how would we define which mushers they apply to? For example, are there any aspects where it would make sense to have a standard that applies only (or differently) to commercial operators / businesses, to recreational mushers, racing teams, or owners of pet dogs?
- What is fair to expect of an individual dog owner and a commercial operator when it comes to end of life planning and care for dogs? We discussed that there is a public expectation that it would not be acceptable for someone to shoot a whole yard of 100 dogs simply because they would like to get out of the business, but need to talk about what a reasonable expectation would be for how that should be addressed. This was

identified as one area within Mush with P.R.I.D.E. where some changes or additions would likely be included in the standard.

- Which aspects of a standard should apply just to dog owners period, regardless of whether the dogs are used for mushing or not?