



# Transferring Shelter Animals: Developing Data and a Data Driven Logistical Transport Solution for Safely and Humanely Transferring Shelter Animals Longer Distances and Between States

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## Background

In Washington State and the PNW region, animal shelters are predominantly non-profit organizations and a sizeable portion lack the necessary resources, infrastructure, funding, equipment, staff, and/or vehicle assets to address the logistical transport of shelter animals at a wider system level. Consequently, there exists a profound lack of data associated with animal shelters and optimal animal transfer. This is an important problem in Washington State and surrounding states as current shelter animal transport, especially for smaller less supported shelters in non-metro regions, is often ad hoc and impromptu. The current shelter situation is weakly connected between organizations and under supported with data for developing an evidence based analytical model to optimize animal movement with humane transport conditions.

Financial support across local community level shelter organizations is highly variable and mostly lacks dedicated reliable funding. Situationally, shelter organization funding relies, for the most part, on variable donations, gifts, and some local support from cities or counties. Contrary to popular belief, very little funding filters down from larger national animal non-profits such as the Society for Prevention and Cruelty to Animals (SPCA) for sustaining shelter operations. Shelter animal care and transfer relies on a small number of dedicated staff, who are often over worked, or fluctuating numbers of volunteers, who are often untrained and inexperienced as transport drivers and/or animal handlers. Additionally, vehicle assets at shelters can be lacking, requiring reliance on private vehicles, which



are often inadequate for safe travel for both the driver and the animals.

## Research Project

The overall purpose of this project as it relates to Washington State and the surrounding PNW regions is to improve and increase efficiency of intrastate and interstate transportation for moving shelter animals between shelters that have too many or more than they can care for, to those animal shelters that have available resources, or more people seeking pet adoption than they can supply. There is a need for an efficient logistical mobility system for shelter animal transfer that optimizes shelter resources, optimizes animal welfare, and improves connecting people to home animals. This project will combine survey data, shelter data, GIS, and qualitative interview data to inform pet transport capital purchase decisions and improve daily operations of pet transport programs.

This research aims to discover information and increase transportation data that can support a new mobility service system designed to improve the movement of shelter animals between shelters. This project will address how to best transfer animals safely and humanely between rural and metro shelters, and intra, and inter-state to ensure all animals have a chance to be adopted or live a safe life.

## ABOUT THE AUTHORS

The research team consisted of Danna Moore of Washington State University.

## ABOUT THE FUNDERS

This research was funded by the Pacific Northwest Transportation Consortium, with additional support from Washington State University.

## EXPECTED DATE OF COMPLETION

March 2023

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

<https://depts.washington.edu/pactrans/research/projects/transferring-shelter-animals-developing-data-and-a-data-driven-logistical-transport-solution-for-safely-and-humanely-transferring-shelter-animals-longer-distances-and-between-states/>