

# NEWS RELEASE



Attorney General Edmund G. Brown Jr.  
California Department of Justice  
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **Attorney General Brown Distributes \$4 Million for Animals of Katrina-Ravaged Area**

NEW ORLEANS – California Attorney General Edmund G. Brown Jr. today announced that Noah's Wish, a nonprofit organization founded to help animals harmed by natural disaster, has transferred \$4 million in charitable assets to the Department of Justice, to be distributed for the benefit of the animal victims of Hurricane Katrina. This action follows a state investigation which found that contributions raised by Noah's Wish for that purpose were improperly classified and some of those contributions were used for purposes other than helping animals harmed by Hurricane Katrina.

Noah's Wish, Inc. was formed to respond globally to the needs of animals affected by disasters. After Hurricane Katrina, this small organization, whose budget normally averaged \$210,000, issued multiple press releases in which they specifically sought donations to assist the animal victims of the hurricane. Although more than \$8 million was raised as a result of this solicitation campaign, only \$1.5 million of that amount was expended on Katrina rescue efforts.

Attorney General Brown said: "The funds will now fulfill the donors' intent—to aid the animal victims of Hurricane Katrina—starting with a complete reconstruction of the animal shelter in Slidell."

Prior to the attorney general's investigation, Noah's Wish pledged funding to rebuild the destroyed City of Slidell Animal Control, an animal shelter in Slidell, Louisiana. As such, the first distribution from the restitution fund will be \$3 million to rebuild the destroyed animal shelter. Remaining funds will be distributed through a charitable foundation to assist other animal victims of Katrina.

Louisiana Attorney General Charles C. Foti, Jr., who has agreed to assist in overseeing distribution of the funds in the Gulf Coast region, said, "We sincerely appreciate Attorney General Brown's efforts on behalf of Louisiana hurricane victims and their pets. The settlement with Noah's Wish will go a long way to provide a safe haven for animals during a disaster. I pledge my support to the implementation of the settlement and look forward to working the local groups to ensure that the funds are properly spent."

Attached is a copy of the settlement agreement entered into between the Attorney General's office and Noah's Wish in July. Under the settlement terms, the founder of Noah's Wish was removed from the board, is no longer employed by Noah's Wish, and has agreed not to serve in a fiduciary capacity with any nonprofit for a period of 5 years. In addition, corporate policies and procedures have been changed and the board will be expanded and will receive governance training.

| The settlement agreement is attached.

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