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Don't Let it Loose: Aquatic Pet Rehoming Event at University of Montana

Encouraging responsible pet ownership through aquatic pet rehoming Tuesday, April 29, 2025.

Missoula, Montana – Do you have a pet that you are no longer able to care for? Are you a recent or soon-to-be college graduate with a pet that can't move with you? Don't Let It Loose into the wild! Instead, you can surrender your pet at the upcoming Aquatic Pet Rehoming Event hosted at University of Montana on Tuesday, April 29, 2025, from 10:00am – 3:00pm. This event is hosted by Invasive Species Action Network (ISAN) and will take place at the West Atrium inside the University Center building. At this event, local pet stores and animal rescues will be accepting fish, turtles, frogs, aquatic plants, and other aquatic pets for rehoming. Non-aquatic species, venomous animals, waterfowl, or domestic pets, such as dogs, cats, rabbits, pigs, birds, and chickens will not be accepted. There will also be knowledgeable volunteers able to discuss prohibited species, other pet rehoming options, and the impacts of invasive species on Montana's waters.

Since pets rely on their human companions to care for them, many unwanted pets released into the wild do not survive. They struggle to find food and shelter, are often an easy meal for other creatures, and many ultimately suffer. On the other hand, if your pet survives, it could become an invasive species. Invasive species outcompete native wildlife for food and shelter, and aquarium pets are notorious for spreading diseases in areas where they have been released. Not only can invasive species cause irreversible harm to the environment, but they can also disrupt local economies and infrastructure. It's a lose-lose and never the right thing to do!

"As pet owners, it's our responsibility to ensure that we are not contributing to invasive species issues. The Don't Let It Loose program is centered around providing outreach to and rehoming resources for pet owners. Pet rehoming events, such as this, are one way we work toward mitigating potential impacts to our favorite places and provide a safe avenue for pets in need of rehoming," says Sara Ricklefs of ISAN.

To register to surrender a pet and view an event map, please visit dontletitloose.com/event. Registration is highly encouraged, but walk-ins will be accepted on a first come, first served basis. If you are unsure if your pet meets these requirements or have a non-aquatic pet that needs to be rehomed, contact info@stopais.org. You can also visit dontletitloose.com/rehoming-a-pet/ for specific rehoming information and options across the country.

The mission of Invasive Species Action Network is to reduce the human-caused spread of invasive species by promoting voluntary behavior change. ISAN programs focus on creating and implementing practical solutions for people and providing educational resources. This event is in partnership with ZooMontana and is supported by Montana Invasive Species Council. ISAN is a 501c3 nonprofit conservation organization based in Livingston, MT. For more information visit www.stopais.org.