INTRODUCTION
Alaska has a long and intimate history with rabies. There have been 3 confirmed human rabies cases in the State, with many confirmed cases of rabies in an assortment of different mammals through the years. The rabies virus can cause acute encephalitis in all warm-blooded hosts, including pets, wildlife and humans; the outcome of an infection is almost always fatal. In Alaska, rabies is endemic (always present) among the fox populations along the northern and western coastal areas, including in the Bering Strait Region.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION
In order to help protect the health of the people living in the Bering Strait Region, Norton Sound Health Corporation-Office of Environmental Health (NSHC-OEH) manages a Rabies Prevention and Control Program as part of their standard scope of services. The following services and activities are included in this Program:

- Disseminate relevant information to the public, Lay Vaccinators, City/Tribal leadership, and health care providers. (i.e. confirmed cases of rabies, SOA post-exposure prophylaxis updates, education outreach about rabies and the need for pet vaccinations, etc.)
- Participate in the State of Alaska’s (SOA) Lay Vaccinator Program, maintain full reporting compliance.
- Recruit/train/certify/support Lay Vaccinators in all the villages + provide all vaccination supplies.
- Maintain a full stock of rabies vaccination supplies. (i.e. vaccine, needles, certificates, tags, etc.)
- Conduct animal bite investigations for the villages.
- Coordinate with Nome’s Animal Control Officer, as needed, for Nome animal bite investigations.
- Coordinate with SOA Virology Lab for specimen submittals.
- Coordinate with SOA’s Section of Epidemiology and NSHC medical staff with any potential outbreaks.
- Provide rabies vaccinations throughout the region.
- Coordinate with NSHC medical staff and SOE for post-exposure prophylaxis needs.
- Recruit and coordinate Veterinarian group travel to the villages.