

New Hampshire Considers Chinook as State Dog

A group of seventh-graders are behind the push for the legislation.

Posted: January 8, 2009, 5 a.m. EST

If a group of dedicated schoolchildren in New Hampshire get their way, the Chinook will be named the Granite State's first state dog.

Seventh-graders from Ross A. Lurgio Middle School in Bedford have lobbied State Sen. Sheila Roberge to sponsor a bill that declares the rare breed – only 800 or so Chinooks are found in the U.S. – New Hampshire's state dog.

"The kids are really thrilled," said Roberge in an interview with the Union Leader. "It was a wonderful idea for their teacher to have."

The Chinook, a mix of Siberian Husky, Mastiff, and Saint Bernard, was first bred by explorer and author Arthur T. Walden on his New Hampshire farm on Jan. 17, 1917.

The students' teacher, Jen Wells, the president of Chinooks of New England, said the proposed legislation is a good way for students to learn about government.

"It'll be fun for them," Wells said. "They will remember this for the rest of their lives."

Nine U.S. states, including Virginia with the American Foxhound and Pennsylvania with the Great Dane, have official state dogs.