

Lack of Rescues May Hinder First Dog Search

Portuguese Water Dog Club of America says PWD rescue puppies are very rare.

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The Obamas may have trouble finding a Portuguese Water Dog rescue, according to an official with the Portuguese Water Dog Club of America.

“There are not many of these dogs and very few rescues,” says Mary Harkins, rescue coordinator for the PWD Club of America, in an interview with the Milwaukee Journal-Sentinel. “Most of those are older. It is very, very rare to get a rescue puppy.”

Earlier this week, Michelle Obama told People that she was leaning toward a PWD rescue.

“Temperamentally they’re supposed to be pretty good,” Obama said. “From the size perspective, they’re sort of middle of the road – it’s not small, but it’s not a huge dog. And the folks that we know who own them have raved about them. So that’s where we’re leaning.”

PWD lovers fear the media attention may backfire on the breed.

“The gene pool is so small that the next thing you know you have unscrupulous breeders that can ruin the breed,” says Lesley-Ray Karnes, one of the top retriever trainers in the U.S. “They’re wonderful dogs, but there aren’t many of them.”

- More about the search for the Obama dog -