

## **CUMBERLAND COUNTY ANIMAL RESPONSE TEAM DRAFT PLAN**

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

The public and private sectors throughout the country now recognize a pro-active need for disaster planning throughout all agencies, organizations, integrated companies, and individual citizens. This disaster planning was developed primarily with the safety of people in mind. It is only recently that disaster planners across the country have realized how the failure to plan for the animal population will drastically affect the viability of their disaster plans for people. For instance, if the disaster warrants an evacuation, many people will not evacuate without their animals, or will delay their own evacuation in an attempt to make preparations for their animals left behind (livestock and companion animals) to their own detriment. These refusals or delays begin a chain reaction which can seriously jeopardize or cause a total breakdown of the overall disaster plan.

In addition, failure to plan for animals creates serious public health concerns with injured or dead animals. Failure to plan for animals causes considerable public safety problems as animals roam unattended, causing automobile accidents and other injuries to people. And finally, failure to plan for animals will create a public relations nightmare for those agencies which the public perceives as “animal responsible” if animal issues are not properly addressed in the wake of a disaster.

### **1.1 PURPOSE STATEMENT**

The purpose of this plan is to develop the capacity to protect wild and domesticated animal resources, the public health, the public food supply, the environment, and to ensure the humane care and treatment of animals in case of all hazards and types of emergencies, including but not limited to hurricanes, tornadoes, floods, drought, fire, explosion, building collapse, commercial transportation accidents, chemical spills, nuclear power plant accidents, or other situations that may cause animal suffering.

### **1.2 SCOPE**

This plan is intended for use by local government and its public and private partners to take immediate action in providing a means of care and control to minimize animal suffering in the event of a large-scale emergency. This action will be aimed at all animals that may need help whether such animals are owned, stray, domestic or wild.

Cumberland County officials or an authorized representative may place into effect established plans and procedures, and direct both the emergency and recovery aspects of the incident. The official/representative may deviate from these procedures when, in their judgment, immediate and direct action is necessary to protect public safety.

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**2.0 AFFECTED AGENCIES/RESPONSIBILITIES**

**2.1 PRIMARY AGENCIES**

**County Emergency Management – LEAD AGENCY**

Activate the Emergency Operations Center (EOC), if necessary.  
Responsible for the overall coordination of the emergency incident.

**State Dog Law Office**

Provide guidance and support to ensure the safety of all citizens.  
Coordinate support agencies to manage animal protection in large-scale emergencies.

**Health Department (local office)**

Provide guidance and support to ensure the safety of all citizens.  
Coordinate support agencies to manage animal protection in large-scale emergencies.

**Penn State Cooperative Extension, Cumberland County**

Coordinate support agencies to manage animal protection in large-scale emergencies.  
Provide and coordinate personnel, equipment and shelter as required to aid in the protection of livestock during an emergency situation.

**County Soil and Water Conservation**

Provide support for mortality disposal.  
Provide personnel and support in locating displaced animals.

**2.2 STATE SUPPORT AGENCIES**

**State Animal Response Team (SART)**

Provide volunteers, assistance, information, supplies and expertise in caring for animals.

Provide funding

Administrative support

**PA Department of Agriculture**

Responsible for the enforcement of state regulations concerning livestock health and the movement of animals affected by those regulations. PADA will also assist in providing information and direction whenever possible with regard to the general health of livestock in these areas.

**Department of Conservation and Natural Resources**

Provide personnel and equipment as needed to protect and care for animals.

**2.3 LOCAL RESOURCES (See Appendix \_\_\_)** (all should have MOU's or letters of agreement with CART)

**Humane Society**

Provide personnel, resources, and equipment

**Livestock Association**

Provide personnel, resources, and equipment

**Integrated Poultry and Livestock Companies**

Provide personnel and equipment to protect, move and relocate animals.

**Equine Veterinary Service**

Provide veterinary care to equine

**Private Farms**

Provide shelter and supplies to care for displaced animals.

**Private Kennels, Stables, etc.**

Provide personnel, equipment and shelter as required to shelter and care for pets from evacuated citizens and in cases when established animal shelters are filled or destroyed.

**Private Veterinary Clinics**

Provide veterinary care to animals.

**Game Commission**

Provide personnel and equipment as required to protect wildlife.

**County or regional Veterinary Medical Association**

Provide personnel to aid in the medical treatment of animals. Activate regional Veterinary Medical Assistance Teams (VMAT).

**Farm Service Agency, Carlisle**

Provide personnel and services to relocate and care for animals.

**2.4 SUBJECT MATTER EXPERTS (SME'S)**

**Equine – Appendix \_\_\_\_**

**Domestic Pets (cats, dogs, etc.) – Appendix \_\_\_\_**

**Livestock – Appendix \_\_\_\_**

**Mortality Disposal – Appendix \_\_\_\_**

**Communications/Public Relations – Appendix \_\_\_\_**

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### **3.0 PLANNING ASSUMPTIONS**

The owners of pets or livestock, when notified of an upcoming emergency, will take reasonable steps to shelter and provide for animals under their care and/or control.

Farmers or agricultural producers are encouraged to have an emergency plan.

Natural, technological or manmade disasters could affect the well being of domesticated or non-domesticated animals.

CART should plan for both large and small scale emergency situations, and should plan to carry out response and recovery operations utilizing local resources. Outside animal care and rescue assistance would likely be available in most large-scale emergencies affecting Cumberland County.

Animal protection planning should ensure the proper care and recovery of animals impacted during an emergency. These plans may include measures to identify housing and shelter for animals, communicate information to the public and develop proper animal release forms and procedures to insure return of animals to their rightful owner(s).

Public information statements will be issued through the various media outlets. This information should include locations where domestic and non-domestic animals (including livestock) may be accepted during emergency situations.

A large-scale emergency may warrant immediate response from state, county and local personnel, agencies and organizations. However, depending on the nature of the emergency, some situations may require activation of additional specialized agencies through mutual aid.

Through effective animal protection planning and organization, disaster relief efforts will be more expedient.

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### **4.0 CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS**

#### **4.1 GENERAL**

The primary and support agencies will manage and coordinate local animal protection activities. These agencies will use established animal protection and support organizations, processes and procedures. Responsibility for situation assessment and determination of resource needs in the event of a large-scale emergency lies primarily with appropriate local officials in cooperation with incident managers.

Requests for animal-related unmet needs, assistance and resources such as food, medicine, shelter material, specialized personnel and additional veterinary medical professionals, will be transmitted through county Emergency Management officials to the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency, which will arrange for both State and Federal assistance as may be necessary.

Animal protection activities will be managed under the County Emergency Operations Plan. Add ESF here Public health concerns will be managed in Coordination with the PA Department of Health local office as prescribed.

Animals included under the plan:

The sheltering and protection of domestic and non-domestic animals (including livestock) are the responsibility of their owners.

Domestic and non-domestic animals that are lost, strayed, incapable of being cared for by their owners, or a danger to themselves or the public will be the responsibility of County Animal Response Team. These animals will be sheltered, fed and if possible returned to their owners. If the animals cannot be returned to their owners, they will be disposed of in accordance with established animal control procedures.

Wild animals should be left to their own survival instincts. Wild animals out of their natural habitats that are a danger either to themselves or the public will be the responsibility of Game Commission personnel in cooperation with local animal control officials and will be returned to their natural habitat, if possible.

**Wild animals kept as pets???**

## **4.2 NOTIFICATION**

This plan will be activated in the event of a large-scale emergency causing a significant need for animal protection. The appropriate County official will determine when the plan will be activated and notify the appropriate primary, support, and mutual aid agencies. A call down notification system will be maintained by the County Office of Emergency Preparedness.

## **4.3 COMMUNICATIONS**

Communications between the primary and support agencies will occur primarily through telephone, facsimile and cellular telephone transmission. Amateur radio will be used as a backup system if other communication is impossible due to the nature of the emergency situation.

## **4.4 PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER (P.I.O.)**

A spokesperson from Cumberland County OEP Public Safety Information team will be responsible for the coordination of all media activities and press releases associated with the protection of animals. The team responsibilities may include:

Notifying the public of appropriate shelters accepting lost/stray animals, animals that they cannot care for, or animals that need immediate medical assistance.

Delivering instructions to the public to prepare their pets for an impending emergency.

Delivering relevant information to the agricultural community regarding livestock.

## **4.5 RESPONSE**

The owners of pets or livestock, when notified of an emergency, will take all reasonable steps to shelter and provide for animals under their control.

### **Equine**

#### **Search and Rescue:**

Equine loose or in need of assistance due to the emergency or to the death or evacuation of their owners will be the responsibility of the CART Equine Committee in so much as all reasonable steps will be taken to provide assistance.

### **Evacuated Equine**

Private Resources:

Equine from evacuated citizens will be sheltered at private facilities, at the owner's expense. Cumberland County Office of Emergency Preparedness will maintain and update a list of participating shelters and veterinary clinics. See Appendix\_\_\_\_

A representative of the Equine Committee will provide assistance in the transportation of the evacuated livestock to either the shelter facility or veterinary hospital, ensuring that a tracking system is in place to unite sheltered Equine with their rightful owners.

Transportation is to be provided by individuals who do local transport of equine. The equine owner is responsible to reimburse transport and sheltering individual(s). Other private horse owners may also be available to assist with transport.

Equine Evacuation Shelter:

If the need arises, the CART may open an Equine shelter. Equine will be evacuated and sheltered by the owner or the owner may request assistance from the Equine Committee.

Cumberland County has no equine show facility. Evacuated equine would need to have shelter at private boarding barns or with private individuals. This list of people will be kept by the Equine Committee but may change according to available space. Feed, hay, bedding, etc. can be obtained through resources list in Appendix\_\_\_\_.

Additional supplies, including corrals and panels may be requested from SART.

Equine Committee volunteers, SART personnel and private individuals will be trained in equine management and will help maintain facilities.

### **Stray/Lost Equine**

Due to the size of most equine and the inability to transport large numbers of equine, owners are expected to develop shelter and/or evacuation plans for their own animals. Private farms located throughout the county may be used as shelter facilities for equine. In the event of an emergency situation, the Equine Committee will contact prearranged farms and request their assistance in the sheltering operation. See Appendix\_\_\_\_  
The owner will be responsible to reimburse the private farms for all expenses incurred during sheltering of equine.

SART may be contacted for boarding assistance of equine at possible locations such as: veterinary hospitals or other sites with the capacity to house horses. (Farm Show Complex, racetracks, etc.)

## **Recovery of Equine**

CART Equine Committee will support efforts to identify owners of stray/lost equine. If owners cannot be found, representatives will attempt to adopt or sell the animals according to their established procedures.

Equine for which no owners can be found and which cannot be placed in adoptive care or sold, will be disposed of in accordance with established animal control procedures.

## **Domestic Pets**

Domestic pets in need of assistance due to the emergency or to the death or evacuation of their owners will be the responsibility of the Small Animal Committee in so much as all reasonable steps will be taken to provide assistance.

## **Evacuated Domestic Pets**

### **Private Resources**

Domestic pets from evacuated citizens will be sheltered at private boarding kennels and veterinarian hospitals as close to the evacuation shelters as possible, or co-located with a mass care center, at the owner's expense.

Upon the activation of evacuation shelters for citizens, a representative from the CART Small Animal Committee will be contacted by the county mass care coordinator and requested to initiate the opening of prearranged private boarding kennels and veterinarian hospitals as boarding facilities or co-located shelter. List of shelters and vet clinics - See Appendix \_\_\_\_

Each of the citizens' evacuation shelters will have available caretaker volunteers on the premises to evaluate the pets of evacuated citizens. Pets with significant injuries or illnesses will be transported to an animal treatment facility.

A representative of the Small Animal Committee will provide assistance in the transportation of the evacuated pets to either the shelter facility or hospital and in ensuring that a tracking system is in place to unite sheltered pets with their rightful owners. Transportation will be coordinated by the CART Transportation Committee.

### **Animal Evacuation Shelter**

If the need arises, the CART may open an evacuated pet shelter. Pets of evacuated citizens will be transported to this shelter as citizens arrive with their pets at the citizen's evacuation shelters.

The shelter location will be designated as the need arises. Cages will be requested from SART if an un-met need arises.

Cat and dog food may be obtained through the CART resources, Appendix \_\_

The CART data system will be responsible for maintaining tracking records for billing purposes after the shelter is closed.

Volunteers for maintaining the shelter will be trained by SART/CART members. See Appendix \_\_\_\_

### **Evacuated Citizens with Special Needs**

Citizens with special needs (individuals with mental or physical handicaps who require evacuation assistance) may require assistance in evacuating their pets. If special needs individuals are unwilling or unable to make special arrangements for the sheltering of their pets, then the individuals and their pets will be transported to the evacuation shelter. Upon arrival at the shelter, pets not trained specifically to assist the individual (e.g. Seeing Eye dogs) will be transported to a private boarding facility or other appropriate facility. Boarding will be provided at owner's expense.

### **Stray/Lost Domestic Pets**

All stray/lost domestic pets recovered by emergency workers/CART will be sheltered at temporary shelters set up for this purpose. Any pets who cannot be provided proper care by their owners, or domestic pets found will also be sheltered at these locations. Private boarding kennels and veterinarian clinics may serve as overflow shelters and may be requested to open through the Small Animal Committee representative as necessary. Unclaimed animals will be disposed of according to county procedures.

### **Recovery of Domestic Pets**

CART Small Animal Committee will support efforts to identify owners of stray/lost animals. If owners cannot be found, representatives will attempt to adopt or sell the animals according to their established procedures.

Animals for which no owners can be found and which cannot be placed in adoptive care or sold, will be disposed of in accordance with established animal control procedures.

## **Livestock**

### **Search and Rescue**

Livestock loose or in need of assistance due to the emergency or to the death or evacuation of their owners will be the responsibility of the Livestock Committee in so much as all reasonable steps will be taken to provide assistance.

### **Evacuated Livestock**

#### Private Resources

Livestock from evacuated citizens may be sheltered at private facilities, at the owner's expense. See Appendix \_\_\_\_

A representative of the Livestock Committee or authorized volunteer will provide assistance in the transportation of the evacuated livestock to either the shelter facility or veterinary hospital and ensuring that a tracking system is in place to unite sheltered livestock with their rightful owners. See Appendix).

### **Livestock Evacuation Shelter:**

If the need arises, the CART may open a livestock shelter. Livestock will be evacuated and sheltered by the owner or the owner may request assistance from the Livestock Committee. The county has no livestock show facility. Evacuated livestock will need to have shelter at private boarding barns or with private individuals. This list of people will be kept but will change according to available space. See Appendix \_\_\_\_\_. Feed, hay, bedding, etc. can be obtained through resources listed in Appendix \_\_\_\_\_

Additional supplies, including corrals and panels may be requested from SART. Livestock Committee volunteers, SART personnel and private individuals will be trained in livestock management and will help maintain facilities.

### **Stay/Lost Livestock**

Due to the size of most livestock and the inability to transport large numbers of farm animals, owners are expected to develop shelter and/or evacuation plans for their own animals. Private farms located throughout the county may be used as shelter facilities for livestock. In the event of an emergency situation, the Livestock Committee may contact prearranged farms and request their assistance in the sheltering

operation. The owner will be expected to reimburse the private farms for all expenses incurred during sheltering of livestock. A list of volunteering farms, their capacity and health requirements - See Appendix \_\_\_\_

If necessary SART may be contacted for boarding assistance of livestock at possible locations such as: veterinary hospitals, Farm Show Complex, racetracks, etc.

### **Recovery of Livestock:**

Livestock Committee will support efforts to identify owners of stray/lost animals. If owners cannot be found, representatives will attempt to adopt or sell the animals according to their established procedures. Animals for which no owners can be found and which cannot be placed in adoptive care or sold will be disposed of in accordance with established animal control procedures.

### **Incapacitation of Shelters**

In the event that established shelters are destroyed or incapable of functioning due to the nature of the emergency situation, assistance from private boarding kennels, veterinarian hospitals, stables, adjacent facilities, may be requested to open as boarding and/or medical facilities. In rare cases, during large-scale emergencies, animals may be moved outside the County for care and protection.

### **Shelter Staff and Supplies**

#### **Staff**

Private boarding kennels and veterinarian hospitals will be responsible for the staffing of their own boarding facilities and will be compensated by the citizens who use the animal shelter according to the established policies of the animal shelter. CART animal shelters will be staffed with available personnel from CART; assistance from SART and associated agencies may be requested. Each shelter will be responsible for developing the work schedules.

#### **Supplies**

CART Resource Committee will identify resources for potable water, food, medical, cleaning and shelter supplies in advance of an emergency situation. Prearranged domestic and non-domestic animal food companies, medical suppliers, water suppliers, and cleaning product

suppliers will be contacted and requested to begin the shipment of supplies to an established delivery point. The delivery point will serve as a storage center and a distribution center for the various shelters and hospitals. If the need arises, resource agencies (e.g. kennel clubs) may be requested to donate cages and other various shelter supplies.

### **Medical Assistance:**

#### Hospitals

The Domestic Committee will coordinate the resources for a medical facility for domestic animals and equine which cannot be accommodated by the various shelters due to the animal's injuries. The local Veterinary Association will identify private veterinarian hospitals and other locations that may serve as alternative medical facilities and medical shelters as space permits.

#### Staff

Volunteers from the University of Pennsylvania's School of Veterinary Medicine and others will assist in providing the medical care in these medical shelters. Depending on the extent of the emergency situation, volunteers or Veterinary Medical Assistance Teams (VMAT) from the American Veterinary Medical Association may be requested to assist in the medical treatment of domestic and non-domestic animals.

#### Bites/Disease Control

The local County Health Department or the State Health Department will make vaccinations available to rescue and shelter personnel and will insure that treatment of bites and injuries is available to affected persons. Outbreaks of rabies and other infectious disease are a serious threat during an emergency situation.

## **4.6 RECOVERY**

### **Disposal of Animal Carcasses**

Disposal of deceased animals will be coordinated by the Mortality Disposal Committee. They will arrange for disposal of euthanized animals and animals killed in the emergency situation.

### **Dealing with dead animals**

Photograph the animal for future identification by the owner. If wearing a tag, photograph tag before removing from the animal.

## **Farm Plan**

Each producer should have a disaster plan that consists of the following:

Identify evacuation route and equipment to move animals.

Identify on site designated land for burial

Site needs to be adequate size and depth to accommodate population.

Site should be accessible to trucks (i.e. culverts over ditch)

Spray fields can be used but spraying can not resume until foliage has covered burial site.

Determine a contact person to report damages and requests assistance. See Appendix.

## **County Plan**

Listing of all premises containing large populations of animals. See Appendix

Contact person for administering dead animal emergencies. See Appendix.

Identify commercial clean out crews (people to remove dead animals and wet/destroyed bedding material). They typically have supplies such as bobcats, loaders and spreader and dump trucks. See Appendix.

## **Considerations on handling dead animals**

Rendering - Must be done rapidly (24-48 hours) following a disaster.

Burial - See Attachment (Include state DEP directives)

Composting - Primarily for poultry. High maintenance, Possible used for cover until burial arrangements could be made.

Incineration - Worked poorly in the past. Consider last option due to past track record of improper fuel, costly, create logjam, air quality problem, inefficient, poorly trained personnel and ash disposal. Plan for rapid restoration of power to rendering facilities, feed mills and processing plans.

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**5.0 REVIEW AND UPDATE**

On an annual basis, this procedure will be reviewed and updated as appropriate by appropriate local government officials and the partner organization. This procedure will be periodically tested by an appropriate exercise method.

**6.0 APPROVAL**

**Suggest a local approval process be established by the CART.**