



## LEAST RESISTANCE TRAINING CONCEPTS

PROCEDURE GUIDE No. 20-14

### SICK OR INJURED RANGE HORSES

Issue Date: 1-13-2020



This Procedure Guide supersedes all previous guides in order to comply with the latest Lyon County and state training and operational standards.

#### **Discussion:**

On occasion we receive reports of sick or injured horses found in public areas. In most instances, the injuries are not significant. This Procedure Guide applies to those instances where reports received suggest that intervention may be necessary. Wild Horse Connection (WHC) and American Wild Horse Campaign (AWHC) each hold separate Cooperative Agreements with the Nevada Department of Agriculture. Responses to emergencies or suspected emergencies fall under the WHC agreement and its hierarchy.

LRTC will respond to legitimate requests for service. Persons engaged in such activities shall be limited to credentialed LRTC Rescue Technicians and authorized Support Staff. LRTC members can request assistance from non-credentialed citizens provided that the member making such a request has made "reasonable efforts to determine the ability of the participant (citizen) to engage in the equine activity safely" and that the assisting citizen is "aware of the inherent risks of that activity." (Compliance with NRS 41.519)

#### **Responder Qualifications:**

IS-100.c, IS-700.b, TLAR Emergency Horse and Livestock Handling and TLAR Operations Level Modules

#### **1. Safety Policy:**

- 1.1 Safety is the overarching priority in all responses. No procedure or protocol provided in this Procedure Guide shall supersede the use of sound judgment as may be appropriate to maximize incident safety.
- 1.2 All responders shall wear appropriate helmets at all times, and wear ANSI Class-II or Class-III vests or jackets whenever operating on or near any active traffic lanes.
- 1.3 In circumstances where responders cannot reliably communicate by direct voice, portable radios shall be utilized.

## **2 Incident Assessment:**

- 2.1 Removal of a horse shall be a last resort, necessary for the animal's welfare. A reasonable assessment shall be made of the animal, to the greatest extent practicable, before an action or treatment plan is put into motion.
- 2.2 Because reporting parties often insert subjective drama in their reports, animals will be assessed "in the first person" before any treatment or destination options are considered. Animals shall not be "diagnosed" long-distance or be based on the opinions of unqualified bystanders. This policy is not intended to preclude bringing potentially useful supplies and equipment to the scene in the event such items may be needed once a competent assessment is made and a treatment plan determined.

## **3 Incident Organization / Chain of Command:**

- 3.1 Each response shall have an Incident Commander (IC) who will direct the activities being undertaken. Operations that cannot be resolved in the field will be coordinated through the Range Manager or her designate, who will authorize relocation, veterinary care and related actions.

## **4 Treatment of Animals:**

- 4.1 Except for basic "first aid" that can be safely undertaken by field responders, definitive treatment of animals shall be coordinated with and approved by the Range Manager or her designate. <sup>Note 1</sup>

## **5. Trap, Treat and Release:**

- 5.1 On occasion there are circumstances where a horse can be temporarily confined, an issue attended to and the animal promptly released to its home territory without significant handling and desensitizing to humans.
- 5.2 Trap, treat and release operations require approval and should be conducted with the least interaction with the horse as is practicable.

## **6. Definitive Treatment and Long-term Rehabilitation:**

- 6.1 Definitive treatment and long-term rehabilitation will require the horse to be permanently removed from the range due to learned dependency on humans. Sound, objective evaluation of the animal's condition and needs should be exercised before requesting authority for removal of an animal for treatment.

## **7. Notification of Intake Facilities:**

7.1 Notification of Intake facilities shall not be made by field personnel unless specifically authorized by the Range Manager or her designate. (There is a protocol in place that Senior Staff may follow in exigent circumstances.) We shall not initiate a response by a receiving organization (e.g., veterinary facility) until a determination has been made that intake to a care organization is justified and has been authorized by the Range Manager or her designate.

## **8. Interference by Bystanders:**

8.1 Interference by bystanders can create distractions that can impact the safety and performance of field operations. Furthermore, allowing bystanders to interfere can create liability issues. If bystanders encroach into the operational area and refuse to step back or they otherwise create distractions, law enforcement should be called to remove them before continuing operations.

### **Note 1:**

Corenna relies on communication from the team to help make determinations.

She needs honest, clear input with some reasoning as to what is best for the horse. Most of the time she will need photos to be sent for review.

For horses found to be in a condition that is beyond any reasonable expectation of recovery, refer to Procedure Guide 20-15, Euthanasia.