

**County of Mendocino**  
**Emergency Operations Plan**

**Mendocino Operational Area**  
**Domestic Pets Care Plan**

**Annex**

**July 2010**

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## List of Acronyms

CACC	County Animal Care Coordinator
CARES	California Animal Response in Emergency System
CERT	Community Emergency Response Team
DSW	Disaster Services Worker
EOP	Emergency Operations Plan
ICS	Incident Command System
NIMS	National Incident Management System
OA	Operational Area
PIO	Public Information Officer
SEMS	Standardized Emergency Management System

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## Section 1 - INTRODUCTION

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### General

In disasters, the first priority is the protection of life, property, and the environment. Prior to Hurricane Katrina, this priority did not include a coordinated response for the evacuation, care, and sheltering of animals. Although the protection of human life is the highest priority in emergency response, recent disasters and research have shown that proper preparation and effective coordination of animal issues enhances the ability of emergency personnel to protect both human and animal health and safety. It is much more efficient, effective, and inexpensive to develop plans to address animal issues prior to an incident than during one. The following issues highlight why animal preparedness is necessary:

1. **Refusal to Evacuate and Early Return to Unsafe Areas** – Since human evacuation shelters do not allow pets in facilities, pet owners requiring sheltering must choose between deserting their animals, refusing to evacuate, or evacuating their animals to a pre-determined site. Without advanced planning, this can be a difficult decision. The 10-25% of individuals who refuse to evacuate, or attempt to return to the evacuated areas because of their animals, risk injury, exposure to hazardous materials, and their own lives, as well as those of emergency response personnel who may be called rescue them.<sup>1</sup> The most effective and efficient way to minimize human and animal health and safety risks is for individuals and responding agencies to be properly prepared to address animal issues well in advance of a disaster.
2. **Public Health and Safety Risks Caused by Animals at Large** – Animals that are not cared for by their owners during a disaster may become a public health and safety risk. Loose and displaced animals are possible carriers of disease (such as rabies and plague) and can become a nuisance or danger to people. Animals “at large” are the responsibility of local animal control officials.
3. **Public Health and Safety Risks Caused by Animal Carcasses** – Another public health and safety risk is the presence of animal carcasses. Decaying carcasses can contaminate water sources or lead to outbreaks of diseases such as cholera or anthrax. In the 1997 Yuba County flood, 218 dairy cows drowned. This created substantial cleanup costs for the county and delayed residents’ return to their homes. Timely carcass removal is critical. The methods for environmentally acceptable disposal of animal carcasses are limited, and become particularly difficult and expensive when there are many large animal carcasses.
4. **Public Relations Considerations** – Society views animals as dependent upon human care and support. Many pets are considered integral parts of families. Animals and animal issues attract media attention. This is particularly true during a disaster. One case that attracted national attention was that of Snowball, a small white dog made famous by

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<sup>1</sup> Some estimates claimed that 80% of the 1.3 million residents of the greater New Orleans metropolitan area evacuated, leaving behind substantially fewer people than remained in the city during the Hurricane Ivan evacuation. (Brown, Aaron. "Hurricane Katrina Pummels Three States (Transcript of CNN Newsnight with Aaron Brown)." CNN. August 29, 2005. Retrieved on 2006-06-05.)

coverage of an Associated Press reporter, who said, "[W]hen a police officer confiscated a little boy's dog, the child cried until he vomited. 'Snowball, Snowball', he cried."<sup>23</sup> The story of "Snowball" became a centerpiece in fundraising appeals by welfare organizations and various ad-hoc websites were created by people soliciting funds to help locate Snowball and reunite him with the boy.<sup>4</sup>

The failure to deal with animal issues in disasters not only results in utilizing more resources and placing additional human lives at risk, but also can result in significant public outcry and negative media coverage.

5. **Control of Self-Responders and Misuse of Donations** – Experience has shown that when animals are impacted by disasters, a large number of self-responders will attempt to address the situation. These well-meaning, but untrained and emotionally driven individuals, can be very disruptive and create many law enforcement challenges. Additionally, these situations may encourage the arrival of "rescue groups." Some of these groups are well-trained and helpful, and some are not. In 1997, there were serious problems with misappropriation of collected donations and inappropriate disposition of animals linked to some of these groups. Effective management of self-responding individuals and rescue groups is critical. This can occur only when a well-coordinated official response is in place. A county animal plan allows for appropriate identification and utilization of all available resources within the structure of the county animal response plan. This will minimize the intrusion of untrained and unsolicited volunteers in a crisis situation.

This plan has been developed to address these concerns and to reinforce the need for all pet owners to understand their part in the overall scope of Domestic Animal Care planning.

### **Definition of “Animal”**

For the purposes of responding to animal issues during disasters, Mendocino County and the state response agencies define “animals” as, “companion animals, exhibition animals, captive wildlife, exotic pets, and affected commercial livestock.”<sup>5</sup> This definition excludes non-captive wildlife. Animal Care Services, will address the sheltering and care of pets and companion animals during an emergency. Animal Control, within the Sheriff’s Department, is responsible for evacuation of all animals during an emergency.

### **Emergency Plan Management and Updates**

The Office of Emergency Services will be responsible for updates and maintenance of this plan.

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<sup>2</sup> Foster, Mary. September 1, 2005. [Superdome Evacuations Enter Second Day](#) Associated Press. Accessed August 30, 2007

<sup>3</sup> [Snowball, Snowball, the little dog who broke the nation's heart!](#) September 7, 2005. PR Leap Business News. Accessed August 30, 2007.

<sup>4</sup> See, for example, [Snowball Fund](#).

<sup>5</sup> This plan, however, focuses on emergency response for domestic pets.

## **Authority Citations**

The authority for Emergency Operations and Disaster Preparedness used in development of this annex of the Mendocino County Operational Area EOP are found in the **Mendocino County EOP, Part 1, Basic Plan**. This plan augments the Mendocino County Operational Area Emergency Operations Plan, dated September 2006.

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## **Section 2 – PLAN OVERVIEW**

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### **Concept of Operations**

This plan or the applicable portions of this plan will be implemented as directed by the County Chief Executive Officer, Sheriff, or Incident Commander as appropriate. Guidance for implementation is in the Emergency Operations Plan (EOP).

The Federal Department of Homeland Security has established that the National Incident Management System (NIMS) will be used during an emergency/disaster. The State of California, through Executive Order S-2-05, has established that the implementation of SEMS/ICS substantially meets the requirements of NIMS. For more information on NIMS refer to the Mendocino County EOP Basic Plan. During a disaster or emergency, this plan will be implemented in accordance with the Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS) and the National Incident Management System (NIMS).

Personnel assigned to the organizational levels of SEMS will follow checklists/SOPs established by the EOP or the appropriate annex to the EOP. The Emergency Services Director or Incident Commander will determine communication equipment usage and any equipment issued to an emergency worker will be documented and tracked to ensure proper accountability of the asset. Coordination of public or media information releases will be through the PIO. The Management function of SEMS will determine what information is to be released and when the appropriate timeframe for such a release will occur.

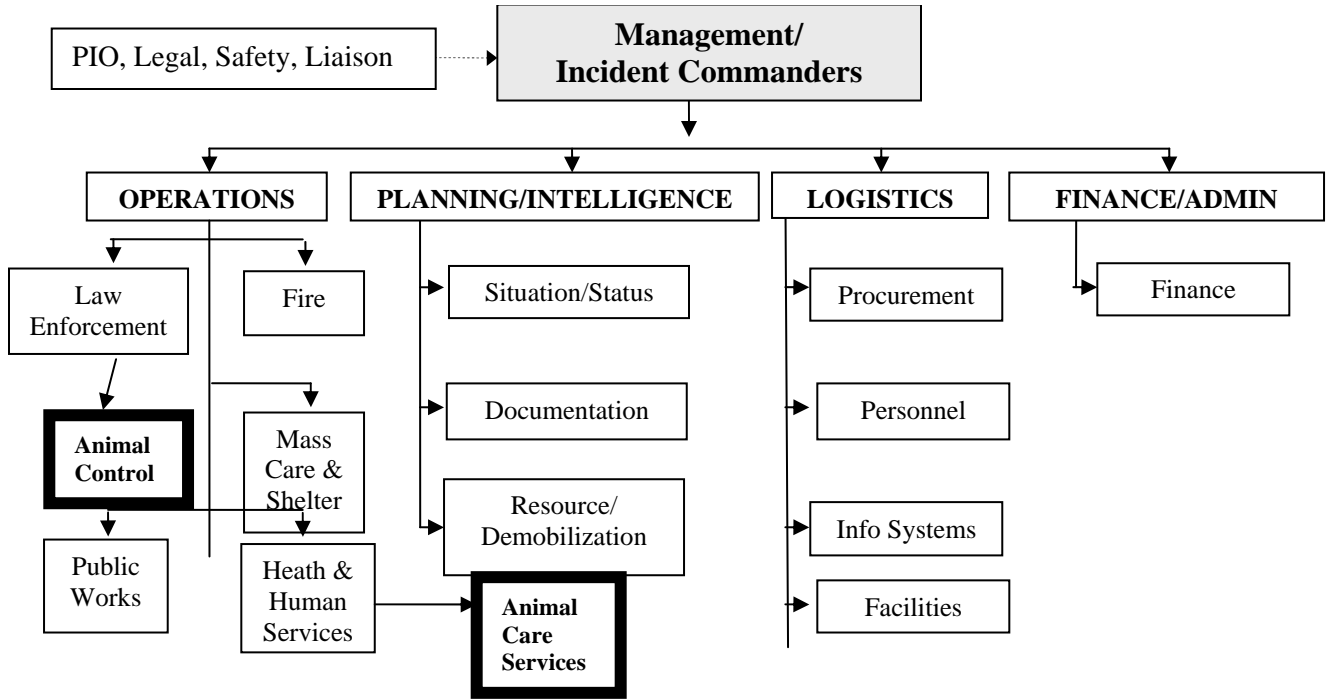
### **Emergency Organizational Structure**

During an event/emergency requiring an activation of this plan, the Emergency Services Director will normally activate the Emergency Operations Center (EOC). SEMS/NIMS provides the operating structure in an emergency, with the Emergency Services Director providing managerial leadership. The management function provides command and control to the EOC staff. EOC staff may change based on the nature of the emergency.

When the EOC has been activated, a “single point of contact”, the County Animal Care Officer, will coordinate issues regarding domestic animal care. The on-duty County Animal Control Officer will be the Supervising Animal Control Officer, or designee, and assigned to the Law Enforcement Branch – Animal Control Unit.

The following Emergency Operations Center/Incident Command System (EOC/ICS) chart is representative of a Level 3 Activation of the EOC for a large-scale event.

Figure 1. Emergency Operations Center/Incident Command System



<b>I. Operations Section</b>
<i>Law Enforcement:</i> Field Ops, Detention, Animal Control, and Dispatch
<i>Fire:</i> Fire, HazMat Response, and Rescue
<i>Mass Care &amp; Shelter:</i> Care and shelter, Red Cross, and Medical Transport
<i>Health &amp; Human Services Admin.:</i> Social Services, Mental Health, Public Health; Environmental Health, HazMat Response, and Animal Care
<i>Public Works:</i> Reconnaissance, Engineering Support, and Heavy Equipment Support
<b>II. Finance &amp; Administration</b>
<i>Finance:</i> Invoice Processing and Payroll Tracking
<b>III. Planning &amp; Intelligence</b>
<i>Situation/Status:</i> Planning & Forecasting, Field Observation, and Info Collection/Display
<i>Documentation:</i> Written and Visual/Graphic
<i>Resource and Demobilization:</i> Personnel, Equipment, and Material
<b>IV. Logistics</b>
<i>Procurement:</i> Supplies, Equipment, and Communications
<i>Personnel:</i> County Employees and Volunteers
<i>Facilities:</i> EOC, Off-Site Work Areas, and R&R Areas
<i>Information Systems:</i> Technicians

## **Section 3 – SITUATION ANALYSIS FOR ANIMAL CARE/SHELTER**

### **General**

In the general scope of animal care/shelter, the animal owner is ultimately responsible. Good planning on the part of the owner in conjunction with information provided by local agencies, when properly executed, will lead to a successful outcome. *Simply put, if the animals are family, plan like you would for family members – make arrangements in advance of the disaster/emergency.*

### **Planning Guidelines**

To facilitate better planning for pet owners, the following guidelines—a combination of tips from the Humane Society of the United States and the Federal Emergency Management Agency should be read and adhered to.

([http://www.hsus.org/hsus\\_field/hsus\\_disaster\\_center/resources/disaster\\_preparedness\\_for\\_pets.html](http://www.hsus.org/hsus_field/hsus_disaster_center/resources/disaster_preparedness_for_pets.html)) (<http://www.fema.gov/plan/prepare/animals.shtm>)

### ***Before an emergency***

1. Contact your local animal shelter, humane society, veterinarian or emergency management office for emergency preparedness recommendations for pets. Find out where the shelters, boarding facilities, or veterinarians may be set-up to take pets in an emergency.
2. Although you should take your pet(s) with you in an emergency, if for some reason you must leave your pet behind, decide on safe locations in your house where you could leave your pet in an emergency.<sup>6</sup> Never leave your pet chained outside. Place notices outside in a visible area, advising what pets are in the house and where they are located. Provide a phone number where you or a contact can be reached as well as the name and number of your vet.
3. You will need a pet carrier that allows your pet to stand up and turn around inside. Put familiar items such as the pet's normal bedding and favorite toys inside. Train your pet to become comfortable with the carrier. Use a variety of training methods such as feeding it in the carrier or placing a favorite toy or blanket inside.
4. If your pet is on medication or a special diet, find out from your veterinarian what you should do in case you have to leave it alone for several days. Try to get an extra supply of medications.
5. Keep your pet's shots current and know where the records are. Most kennels require proof of current rabies and distemper vaccinations before accepting a pet.

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<sup>6</sup> The type of emergency will dictate whether residents will have to leave their pet(s) behind. Hazard analysis summaries for the California Pacific North Coast Region, Mendocino County are described beginning on page 12 of the Mendocino County Emergency Operations Plan (2006), with an “Incident Likelihood of Occurrence” summary on page 39.

6. Consider getting your pet micro-chipped. If your pet is micro-chipped, be sure it is registered to you with the micro-chip company. Have the micro-chip number written down and keep it with your pet's medical records.
7. Prepare a "pet survival" kit, which contains an emergency supply (at least 72 hours) of pet food, bottled water, and medications. With these supplies, include veterinary records to make sure all vaccinations are current, a cat litter/pan, can opener, food dishes, first aid kit, and a photo of your pet.
8. Make sure your pet has a properly fitted leather or nylon collar that includes current license and rabies tags and an identification tag that has your name, address, and phone number. Do not leave your pet alone with a chain link "choker" collar. Make sure you have a current photo of your pet for identification purposes.
9. Contact motels and hotels in communities outside of your area and find out if they will accept pets in an emergency.
10. Trained Guide Dogs – Trained guide dogs for the blind, hearing impaired or handicapped will be allowed to stay in emergency shelters with their owners. Trained guide dogs should be clearly identified as such.

### ***During an emergency***

1. Bring your pets inside immediately.
2. Animals have instincts about severe weather changes and will often isolate themselves if they are afraid. Bringing them inside early can stop them from running away. Never leave a pet outside or tied up during a storm.
3. Separate dogs and cats. Even if your dogs and cats normally get along, the anxiety of an emergency situation can cause pets to act irrationally.
4. Keep small pets away from cats and dogs.
5. If you evacuate, plan to take your pets, remember to bring your pet's medical records and medicines with your emergency supplies. Pets most likely cannot survive on their own; and if by some remote chance they do, you may not be able to find them when you return. For public health reasons, many emergency shelters cannot accept pets. Find out which motels and hotels in your area allow pets—well in advance of needing them. (A list of campgrounds that will take pets in an emergency is included in Attachment A.) Include your local animal shelter's number in your list of emergency numbers—they might be able to provide information concerning pets during a disaster. If it is impossible to take your pet with you to a temporary shelter, contact friends, family, veterinarians, or boarding kennels to arrange for care. Make sure medical and feeding information, food, medicine and other supplies accompany your pet to his foster home. *NOTE: Some animal shelters will provide temporary foster care for owned pets in times of disaster, but this should be considered only as a last resort.*

6. Birds must eat daily to survive. In an emergency, you may have to take your birds with you. Talk with your veterinarian or local pet store about special food dispensers that regulate the amount of food a bird is given. Make sure that the bird is caged and the cage is covered by a thin cloth or sheet to provide security and filtered light.

### *After an emergency*

1. If after a disaster you have to leave town, take your pets with you. Pets are unlikely to survive on their own.
2. In the first few days after the disaster, leash your pets when they go outside. Always maintain close contact. Familiar scents and landmarks may be altered and your pet may become confused and lost. Possible dangers may be present as well, such as downed power lines.
3. The behavior of your pets may change after an emergency. Normally quiet and friendly pets may become aggressive or defensive. Watch animals closely. Leash dogs and place them in a fenced yard with access to shelter and water.

The primary responsibility, before, during, and after a disaster, lies with the pet owner. As with any disaster preparedness planning, you should ensure you and your pet can be self-supporting for at least 7-10 days (and in some cases longer). Attachment A lists organizations that can provide more information/assistance to improve a pet owner's plan.

Section 4 of this Annex addresses what may occur if the pet owner's plan is overcome by events and assistance is required from the state or local government.

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## **Section 4 – SITUATION ANALYSIS FOR EVACUATION/RESCUE (The Chain of Command in an Emergency)**

### **General**

The responsibility of evacuating animals during an emergency rests with the animals' owner. At some point, due to lack of planning or being overwhelmed by the event, governmental agencies may be called upon to assist the animals' owner. This usually occurs during an evacuation/rescue of domestic animals/livestock. Such assistance can be rendered only after the situation is assessed, threats are minimized, and if sufficient numbers of resources are available. As stated in Section 1 of this Annex, the first priority is to the protection of human life, property, and the environment.

### **Animal Rescue and Evacuation within a Wider Emergency Response**

Animal issues, like all other disaster response activities, is part of Mendocino County's Emergency Operations Plan (EOP). Development of a plan to address specifically animal welfare in a disaster situation allows the County to more effectively respond to animal issues during a disaster, to organize local resources, to facilitate mutual aid activities relating to animal issues, and to utilize broader regional and State resources.

**California Animal Response in Emergency System (CARES)** – organizes resources within the state, in support of local government responding to animal issues, during a state level emergency in accordance with SEMS/NIMS. During a disaster, if local resources are insufficient to meet existing needs, local government may request state assistance. When this assistance is requested, the California Emergency Management Agency will activate CARES, with the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) as the lead agency. The ability to respond effectively at the state level largely depends upon planning accomplished within each operational area prior to a disaster. Since the majority of volunteers, resources, and organization during a disaster originate in the local area, it is essential that counties and local agencies have animal response plans in place in order for CARES to function effectively. The CARES Plan is intended to facilitate mutual aid between counties.

**County or Operational Area (OA) Planning** – During a disaster/emergency the OA through its EOC will provide information to the Public about the emergency. The information will be provided in timely fashion to enable animal owners to make decisions on how best to execute their own emergency plans. It will not be the responsibility of the County/OA to decide when best for households to execute their plans; this responsibility rests with each household.

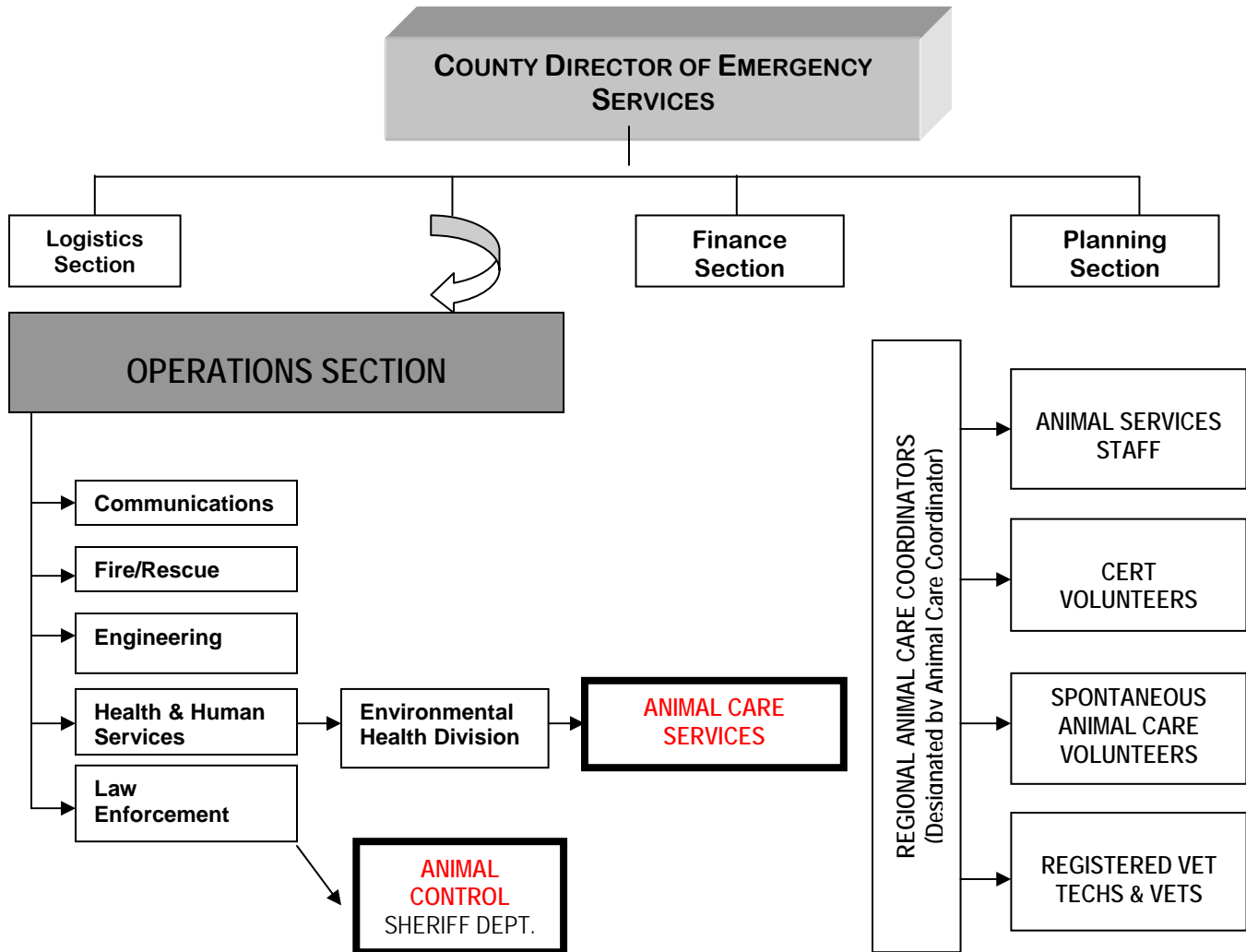
Animal services are managed at the County EOC level, within the **Operations Section**.<sup>7</sup> The Operations Section consists of a number of Coordinating branches including; the Fire & Rescue

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<sup>7</sup> The Operations Section is one of four emergency management teams that operate directly under the County Director of Emergency Services in the event of a countywide emergency. The Operations Section is responsible for coordinating support for local government's emergency response, coordinating inter-jurisdictional responses, and coordinating countywide activities through implementation of the County Incident Action Plan *Mendocino County Emergency Operations Plan*, p. 66.

Branch Coordinator; Law Enforcement Branch Coordinator; Engineering Branch Coordinator; Health and Human Services Branch Coordinator; and the Communications Branch Coordinator. According to the Mendocino County Emergency Operations Plan, “The Law Enforcement Branch Coordinator will be responsible for coordinating the movement of persons and animals from hazardous or threatened areas to lower risk reception areas” (p. 121). The Animal Care Coordinator, who also serves within the Operations Section, is responsible for the welfare of small animals/pets in an emergency. Responsible personnel at the **Field Level** report to the Animal Care Coordinator, as depicted in Figure 2 below.

Figure 2. Animal Welfare Chain of Command



During a disaster/emergency that requires activation of this plan, the County/OA may respond as follows:

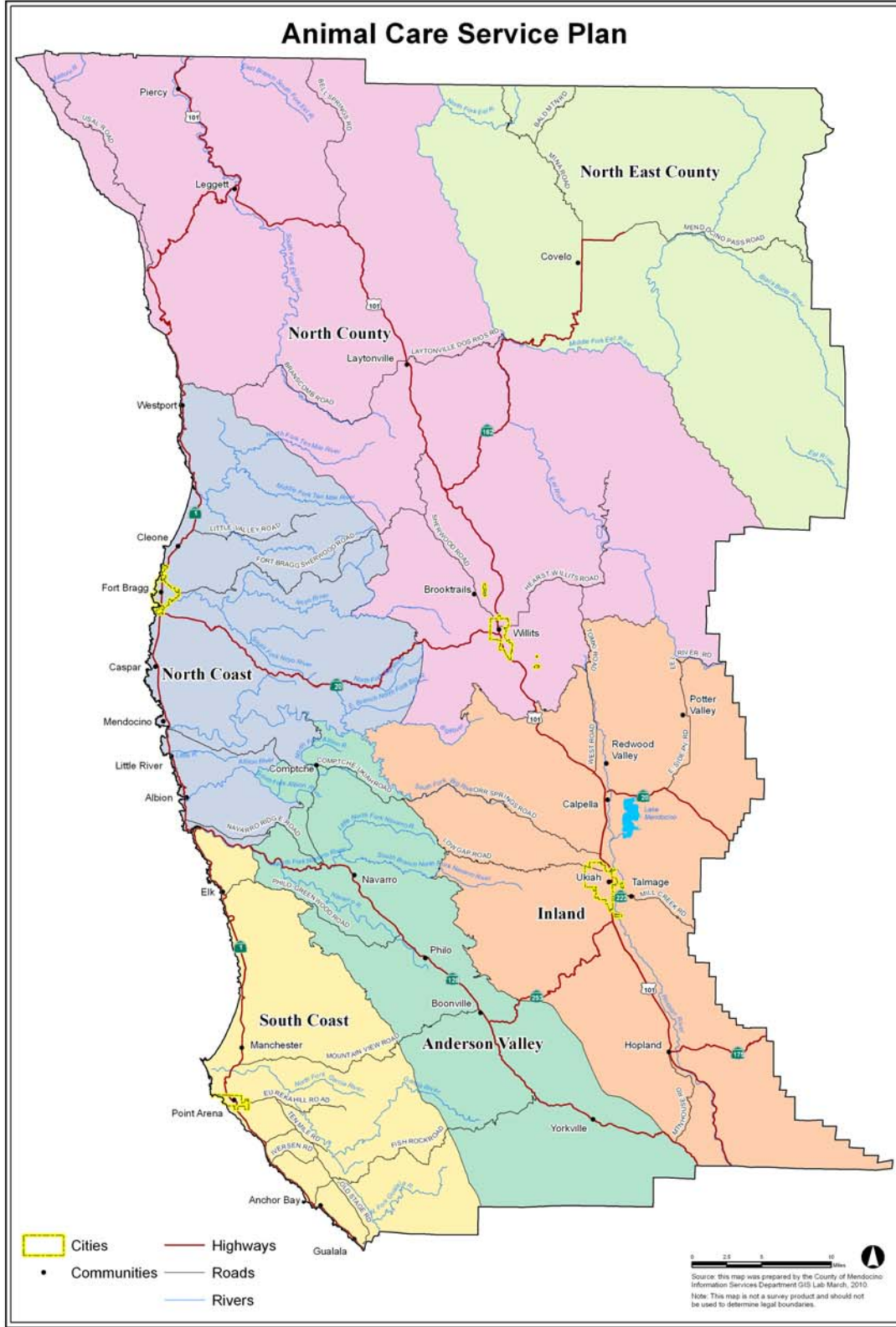
1. County/OA opens the EOC in response to the disaster/emergency or impending disaster/emergency. The Public Information Officer provides information to the public.
2. Local Emergency would be declared due to the disaster/emergency. If the disaster/emergency affects County Agriculture concerns, the Agriculture Department may request the EOC be activated.
3. The Animal Care Services Administrator, or designee, will be the County Animal Care Coordinator (CACC) during the disaster/emergency.
4. County Animal Control will coordinate evacuation/rescue of animals/livestock efforts, as needed, from the EOC. This coordination will primarily be with identified animal rescue/shelter organizations (listed in Attachment A) and the Law Enforcement Branch of the EOC to secure access into the disaster areas. No organizations will be allowed to enter an evacuated area if it is deemed unsafe by the EOC.
5. County Animal Control will coordinate animal/livestock removal if needed. Volunteers may be used and such volunteers would be designated as Disaster Service Workers (DSW).
6. The Agriculture Department will provide information in the case of animal/pest disease control.
7. Disposal of dead animals may be required. With the approval of Environmental Health, dead animals may be buried in areas above the water table or burned. Alternatively, a list of dead animal haulers is provided in Attachment B of this annex.

### **Animal Care Coordinator**

The County Animal Care Coordinator is Mendocino County's Animal Care Services Administrator. He/she will act as the single point of contact for animal care issues. As needed, this individual may staff the Emergency Operations Center during a disaster.

### **Animal Care Disaster Regions**

To facilitate disaster response, the county has been divided into six geographic regions: North East County, North County, North Coast, South Coast, Anderson Valley, and Inland, as seen in the map included. **In the event of an emergency/disaster, the Animal Care Coordinator will designate a Regional Animal Coordinator for each affected region.** Reporting to the Animal Care Coordinator, the Regional Animal Coordinators will direct emergency shelter activities in their regions using volunteers such as Animal Care Services staff, CERT volunteers, registered veterinary technicians, veterinarians, and spontaneous volunteers.



## Private Organization Response

An organization or individual who notifies the Mendocino County Office of Emergency Services in writing of his/her desire to provide assistance to animals will be listed in Attachment A of this Annex. By listing the organization, the county does not assume any liability for the actions of the organization. Those organizations performing response activities (rescue, evacuating, etc.) will understand the principles of the Incident Command System (ICS) and will follow the direction of the Operations Area (OA) Emergency Operations Center (EOC) during the course of a disaster/emergency. Organizations providing care and shelter for domestic animals will do so with the understanding that there may be no financial recovery of costs after the disaster/emergency.

During a disaster/emergency, an organization will follow all access control restrictions and be subject to the penalties of law for failing to do so.

## Animal Owner Response

As already noted, the primary responsibility of evacuation of animals lies with the owner. (Please see Planning Guidelines.)

Not only are pets affected by disaster, but other animals in the disaster area are affected as well. The Humane Society of the United States offers these **basic tips for people who encounter wildlife** on their property:

1. Wild animals often seek higher ground when low-lying areas become submerged and animals may become stranded on an “island”. If the island is large enough and provides suitable shelter, you can leave food appropriate to the species. Animals have a fight or flight response, so exercise caution, especially with wild animals. If the animal threatens to rush into the water, back away from the island or you may frighten the animal into jumping into the water to escape from you.
2. Wildlife often seek refuge from flood waters on upper levels of a home and may remain inside even after the water recedes. If you meet a wild animal face to face, be careful but don't panic. Open a window or other escape route and the animal will probably leave on its own. Never attempt to capture a wild animal unless you have the training, protective clothing, restraint equipment and caging necessary to perform the job.
3. Be aware of an increased number of scavengers.
4. Often, during natural disasters, mosquitoes and dead animal carcasses may present disease outbreaks. Contact your local emergency management office for help!
5. If you see an injured or stranded animal in need of assistance, or you need help with evicting an animal from your home, please contact your local law enforcement animal control office.

The Humane Society of the United States offers these basic tips for people who have livestock on their property:

1. **EVACUATE LIVESTOCK WHENEVER POSSIBLE.** Arrangements for evacuation, including routes and host sites, should be made in advance. Alternate routes should be mapped out in case the planned route is inaccessible.
2. The evacuation sites should have or be able to readily obtain food, water, veterinary care, handling equipment and facilities.
3. Trucks, trailers, and other vehicles suitable for transporting livestock (appropriate for transporting each specific type of animal) should be available along with experienced handlers and drivers to transport them. Whenever possible, the animals should be accustomed to these vehicles in advance so they're less frightened and easier to move.
4. If evacuation is not possible, a decision must be made whether to move large animals to available shelter or turn them loose. This decision should be determined based on the type of disaster and the soundness and location of the shelter (structure).
5. All animals should have some form of identification that will help facilitate their return.

A personal disaster plan should include a list of emergency phone numbers for local agencies that can provide assistance in a disaster; including veterinarians, state/county veterinarian, animal control, county extension service, local agricultural schools and the American Red Cross. These numbers should be kept with the disaster kit in a secure, but easily accessible place.

### Evacuation Care Requirements (by region)

Table One: Pet Population Estimates by Region\*

Region	# Households** (population)	Dog Estimate	Cat Estimate	Bird Estimate	Reptile Estimate	Pocket Pet Estimate
North East County	981 (2,452)	620	699	96	<i>Not available</i>	<i>Not available</i>
North County	7,071 (17,678)	4,472	5,040	689	“	“
North Coast	7,977 (19,942)	5,045	5,686	778	“	“
South Coast	1,753 (4,383)	1,109	1,250	171	“	“
Anderson Valley	1,432 (3,580)	906	1,021	140	“	“

Region	# Households** (population)	Dog Estimate	Cat Estimate	Bird Estimate	Reptile Estimate	Pocket Pet Estimate
Inland	16,999 (42,498)	10,750	12,117	1,657	“	“

\* According to The American Veterinary Medical Assoc. ([www.avma.org/reference/marketstats/ownership.asp](http://www.avma.org/reference/marketstats/ownership.asp)) the:  
 % of households owning dogs is estimated to be 37.2%, with an average of 1.7 dogs/household.  
 % of households owning cats is estimated to be 32.4% with an average of 2.2 cats/household.  
 % of households owning birds is estimated to be 3.9%, with an average of 2.5 birds/household.

\*\* The number of households was estimated by dividing the population figures for each region—from the 2000 Census, plus a 4.6% increase through 2009 (California Dept. of Finance)—by 2.5, which is the U.S. Census Bureau’s 2006 estimate of the average number of persons per household.

Shelter and care needs for these most common types of pets include the following:

- Transportation (trucks, trailers, caging, boats, planes, helicopters, snow vehicles)
- Feed delivery to isolated areas.
- Power source (generator)
- Medical Care (veterinarians, veterinary technicians and assistants)
- Mobile clinics

Table 2: Resource Needs by Region

Animal Items		PetSmart Estimate (500 pets)	North East County	North County	North Coast	South Coast	Anderson Valley	Inland
General Animal Crates	kennel cabs, plastic/small	44	26	264	264	53	53	660
	kennel cabs, plastic/large	56	34	336	336	67	67	840
	kennel cabs, plastic/x-large	54	32	324	324	65	65	810
	wire crates, 24"	200	120	1,200	1,200	240	240	3,000
	wire crates, 36"	72	43	432	432	86	86	1,080
	wire crates, 48"	60	36	360	360	72	72	900
	wire crates, 42"	50	30	300	300	60	60	750
Portable Shelter		n/a	1	2	2	2	1	5
Bowls		200	120	1,200	1,200	240	240	3,000
Dog Feed	(1lb/day/dog x 3 days)	n/a	450	4,500	4,500	900	900	22,500
Cat Feed	(0.25 lbs/day/cat x 3 days)	n/a	113	1,125	1,125	225	225	2,813
Cat Needs	litter boxes, disposable (3/pack)	120	72	720	720	144	144	1,800
	litter, clay (20# bag)	25	15	150	150	30	30	375
	plastic cat carriers	30	18	180	180	36	36	450
Leashes & Collars	leashes	100	60	600	600	120	120	1,500
	nylon collars (various sizes)	100	60	600	600	120	120	1,500
Medical Supplies								

This table assumes supply needs for approximately 1/3 of pets (rounded to the nearest five-thousand) in each region. Estimates are based upon PetSmart Charities’ “Emergency Relief Waggin” supply list for 500 pets. [www.petsmartcharities.org/programs/emergency-relief.php](http://www.petsmartcharities.org/programs/emergency-relief.php) (PetSmart Manager of Emergency Grants (800) 423-PETS, ext. 2840.

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## **Section 5 – GENERAL PLAN RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **Emergency Operations Center**

As described in Section 2 of this Annex, the EOC is the location in which the Emergency Services Director coordinates the response of multi-jurisdiction and/or multi-agency responders during large-scale emergencies or disasters.

EOC activation and staffing levels are found in the EOP, Part 2.

The following is a general guide to the responsibilities for key functions in an emergency:

### **Management**

Management assignments will follow the SEMS/NIMS structure.

### **Operational Structure**

The County of Mendocino will activate the appropriate SEMS/NIMS functions based upon the level of the disaster/emergency.

### **Coordination of Disciplines**

Mendocino County will use multi-agency, multi-discipline coordination for evacuation and mass care/shelter during a major emergency/disaster.

### **Inclusion of Non-Profit Agencies/Organizations**

Non-profit organizations and individuals interested in the care of animals during an emergency will be involved in disaster/emergency planning. Mendocino County will contact the appropriate individuals in the event of a potential threat or actual event. A list of some of these individuals and organizations, by geographic region, is found in Attachment A of this Annex.

### **Public Information**

The Public Information Officer (PIO) will be activated as soon as practical during an emergency. The PIO will coordinate with media for news releases.

News release procedures will be agreed upon, and established for the Mendocino County EOC, the Unified Command, and other interested parties.

### **Emergency Response Information Management System (RIMS)**

RIMS is a statewide automated system which is used by the State, Counties (Operational Areas) and cities to track general information, rapidly changing situations, over all conditions and track request for mutual aid assistance.

## **Safety and Security**

During a potential threat or actual event, employee safety and operational security will be key concerns for Mendocino County.

During actual emergency operations, heightened safety and security procedures will be in force and will be followed by county personnel. Security and safety procedures will also be implemented for all command posts and other operational sites. The Sheriff's Department will serve as lead for security functions.

## **Information Sharing and Dissemination**

During an actual emergency or disaster the release of information raises significant issues regarding information sharing and dissemination. Security and confidentiality concerns must be weighed against operational needs and public interest.

The notification of an event and any subsequent updates will be made verbally through the most secure form of landline available. Written confirmations of notification and updates will be used. Emergency response personnel will observe communication security procedures. Sensitive information will not be communicated by cell phone or radio.

Mendocino County will have scheduled briefings for EOC staff and other emergency response personnel and will coordinate briefing times, reporting approaches, and news releases as much as possible with other SEMS/NIMS levels.

## **Sheriff's Office**

The Sheriff, or designee, will determine and establish Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) required for the operation and deployment of law enforcement assets controlled by his Department and as authorized by Local, State, and Federal Statutes/Regulations.

Within the EOC, the Sheriff's Office (SO) will assume the security function.

The Sheriff Office and/or California Highway Patrol will be the lead for perimeter security, access control, traffic/crowd control, evacuations, and notifications. The Sheriff Office will also coordinate coroner issues and assist with damage assessment and fatalities management. Existing procedures may be modified as necessary depending on the situation. The Sheriff Office will request law enforcement mutual aid if needed to accomplish these functions.

## **Fire Services**

The Fire/Rescue Mutual Aid Coordinator, or designee, will determine and establish SOPs required for the operation and deployment of OA Fire assets as authorized by Local, State, and Federal Statutes/Regulations.

Fire Services will be the lead for fire response, hazardous materials events, and medical/rescue operations. Fire Services will provide support, if possible, to the Sheriff's Office for evacuation activities. Existing procedures may be modified as necessary depending on the situation.

Additionally, the Fire/Rescue Mutual Aid Coordinator will request fire and rescue mutual aid if needed.

### **Emergency Services**

The primary mission of the Office of Emergency Services is to coordinate response, relief and initial recovery operations during multiple jurisdictional and/or multiple agency emergencies or disasters.

### **Operations**

The Law Enforcement Branch will coordinate animal evacuation/rescue with appropriate agencies. The SO Animal Control unit in coordination with the County Animal Care Coordinator, will provide situation/status reports through the EOC. Evacuations/rescues will be coordinated when threats to responders' lives have been assessed and minimized. Access to areas by organizations affecting evacuation/rescue will be coordinated through the Law Enforcement Branch by the County Animal Coordinator, or designee.

### **Public Works**

Public Works will serve as lead for damage assessment and will be the representative for utilities concerns. Potential public works activities include:

- reconnaissance of public infrastructure (roads, bridges, facilities, and utilities)
- alternate route identification
- building access
- utility access re-routing

Public Works will assist with access and crowd control and fatalities management. The Director of Public Works will request public works mutual aid if needed. They will coordinate with the Sheriff Office on security issues if needed.

### **Planning/Intelligence**

Planning/intelligence includes situation status, documentation, demobilization, and resources units. Planning/intelligence will follow the SEMS/NIMS structure.

### **Logistics**

Logistics is responsible for identifying and procuring supplies, services, equipment, and facilities that will be required for Emergency Operation activities.

During emergency operations, particular emphasis will be placed on maintaining OA capabilities of computer systems, telecommunications, including land line and radio.

### **Finance**

It will be necessary to track costs associated with an event or potential event. Within Finance/Administration Branch there may be a separate Cost Unit to track the costs of the event.

### **Mutual Aid**

The California emergency system is built upon the California Emergency and Civil Defense Master Mutual Aid Agreement. Most cities and counties are signatories to this agreement. The agreement states that mutual aid is freely given without either the giver or receiver expecting reimbursement. The system is designed to ensure that additional resources are made available to a jurisdiction when their own resources are nearing exhaustion. Mutual aid is a voluntary system. The Governor can make it mandatory under a state of emergency. Requests for mutual aid are to be made first to the EOC Operations Chief, the request will then be passed to the State Regional Emergency Operations Center (REOC). Depending upon the size and magnitude of the disaster the state may elect to request federal assistance and ask for the implementation of the National Response Plan.

### **Continuity of Operations**

It will be necessary to ensure continuity of day-to-day operations during a potential threat or actual event. This includes payroll processing, contracts management, personnel actions, and file security.

### **Training and Exercises**

Training will be coordinated as necessary to ensure safe, secure, and effective operations of equipment and procedures. The Office of Emergency Services will notify departments, jurisdictions, and agencies of training opportunities, as they are available. Any Operational Area grant funds identified to be expended for exercise/training will be coordinated with the Office of Emergency Services to ensure proper allocation/tracking of the funds before expenditure occurs.

Exercises are important for the successful response of personnel during an emergency or disaster. If an exercise interferes or otherwise hampers normal operations the exercise will be terminated and not resumed until the problem is corrected.

**Attachment A  
Animal Care, Shelter, and Rescue Organizations by Region**

*(Attachment A is 16 pages.)*

## **Attachment B Dead Animal Haulers, Rendering Plants, and Collection Centers (Statewide)**

[http://www.cdfa.ca.gov/ahfss/ah/haulers\\_renders\\_collection\\_centers.htm](http://www.cdfa.ca.gov/ahfss/ah/haulers_renders_collection_centers.htm)

### **Dead Animal Haulers**

- Alfred Kuck Livestock 707-762-7688 (Petaluma)
- Sisk Tallow Recycling Co., Inc. 209-667-1451 (Turlock)

### **Rendering Plants**

- Darling International 415-647-4890 (San Francisco)
- Darling International 209-667-9153 (Turlock)
- Florin Tallow 209-522-7224 (Modesto)
- North State Rendering 530-343-6076 (Orville)
- San Jose Tallow 408-452-8777 (San Jose)

### **Collection Centers**

- Eureka Protein 707-442-3440 (Eureka)
- Petaluma By-Products 707-763-9181 (Petaluma)
- Sisk Recycling Co., Inc., 209-667-1451 (Turlock)

### **Priority of disposal options:**

- Render
- Burial
- Compost
- Incinerate



**Attachment C**  
**ANIMAL EMERGENCY CARE**  
**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING**

This Animal Emergency Care Memorandum of Understanding (“MOU”) is by and between the County of Mendocino, a political subdivision of the State of California (“County”) and \_\_\_\_\_, whose business address is \_\_\_\_\_ (“Provider”).

WHEREAS, the Board of Supervisors of the County of Mendocino has declared a local emergency; and

WHEREAS, Provider is an organization providing rescue and/or evacuation of domestic pets and livestock in emergency situations; and

WHEREAS, County desires to receive the assistance of Provider in rescuing and/or evacuating domestic pets and livestock from areas of County; and

WHEREAS, Provider desires to provide assistance to County in the rescue and/or evacuation of domestic pets and livestock.

NOW, THEREFORE, the parties agree as follows:

1. **Term:** The term of this MOU is from \_\_\_\_\_ until the Board of Supervisors terminates the local emergency.
2. **Service:** Provider shall provide the services for the rescue and/or evacuation of domestic pets and/or livestock described in the attached Exhibit A (“Services”), which is incorporated herein by reference. Provider shall provide the Services to County at no cost to County. Provider shall be responsible for all of its own expenses and shall not seek any reimbursement for costs and expenses of any kind from County.
3. **Operations:** Provider agrees to abide by the Incident Command System. Provider shall coordinate its operations through and follow any directions given by the County Emergency Operation Center (“EOC”).
4. **Contact Information:** The following are the contact individuals for County and Provider:

County:                    **Before and After Declaration of Local Emergency**

**During Declared Local Emergency**

Provider:    Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
                 Title: \_\_\_\_\_  
                 Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
                 \_\_\_\_\_  
                 Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
                 Fax: \_\_\_\_\_  
                 E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_

5. **Indemnification:** Provider shall indemnify, defend, and hold harmless County and its officers, employees, and agents against all liabilities, claims, demands, damages, and costs (including reasonable attorneys' fees and litigation costs) that arise in any way from Provider's acts or omissions while performing under this MOU. Provider's obligations under this section cover, but are not limited to liabilities, claims, demands, damages, and costs arising from injury to, or death of, any person (including County's and Provider's officers, employees, and agents) and from damage to, or destruction of, any real or personal property (including that of the County or Provider).

County shall indemnify, defend, and hold harmless Provider and its officers, employees, and agents against all liabilities, claims, demands, damages, and costs (including reasonable attorneys' fees and litigation costs) that arise in any way from County's acts or omissions while performing under this MOU. County's obligations under this section cover, but are not limited to, liabilities, claims, demands, damages, and costs arising from injury to, or death of, any person (including County's, Provider's, or its officers, employees, and agents) and from damage to, or destruction of, any real or personal property.

6. **Insurance:** Without limiting Provider's indemnification of the County, Provider shall provide and maintain at its own expense, during the term of this MOU, or as may be further required herein, the following insurance coverages and provisions:

- a. Prior to commencement of this MOU, Provider shall provide Certificates of Insurance certifying that all coverage as required herein has been obtained and remains in force for the period required by this MOU. Any required endorsement shall either be attached to the Certificate or certified as issued on the certificate or with an attached amendatory endorsement. All Certificates of Insurance shall be sent to the following address:

Mendocino County General Services Agency  
841 Low Gap Road  
Ukiah, CA. 95482

Provider shall not proceed with the work or occupancy under this MOU until it has obtained all the insurance required and Certificates of Insurance have been provided to County. All Certificates of Insurance shall provide that the County will receive thirty (30) days' prior written notice of cancellation or major modification before the expiration date.

b. Should, consistent with the terms of the MOU, any of the work or premises under this MOU be sublet, Provider shall require each of its subcontractors to provide the insurance required herein, or Provider may name the subcontractors as additional insureds under its own policies.

c. Insurance Required:

(1) Comprehensive General Liability Insurance for bodily injury (including death) and property damage which provides limits of not less than one million dollars (\$1,000,000) each occurrence and written on an occurrence basis. If the insurance has a General Aggregate, it must be no less than two million dollars (\$2,000,000). Each type of insurance shall include coverage for Premises/Operations, Products/Completed Operations, Contractual Liability, Broad Form Property Damage, X/C/U Hazards and Personal Injury.

For either type of general liability insurance, coverage shall include the following endorsements:

(i) Additional Insured Endorsement: Insurance afforded by this policy shall also apply to the County of Mendocino, and members of the Board of Supervisors of the County of Mendocino, and the officers, agents and employees of the County of Mendocino, individually and collectively, as additional insureds.

(ii) Primary Insurance Endorsement: Insurance afforded by the Additional Insured Endorsement shall apply as primary insurance, and other insurance maintained by the County of Mendocino, its officers, agents and employees shall be excess only and not contributing with insurance provided under this policy.

(iii) Notice of Cancellation or Change of Coverage Endorsement: Insurance provided by this policy shall not be cancelled or changed so as to no longer meet the specified County insurance requirements without thirty (30) days prior written notice of such cancellation or change being delivered to the County of Mendocino at the address to which the Certificate of Insurance is sent as specified above.

(iv) Severability of Interest Endorsement: Insurance provided by this policy shall apply separately to each insured who is seeking coverage or against whom a claim is made or a suit brought, except with respect to the policy's limits of liability.

(2) Professional Errors and Omissions Liability Insurance in an amount not less than one million dollars (\$1,000,000) and written on an occurrence basis.

If coverage is written on a claims made basis, such policy shall provide that:

(i) The policy retroactive date coincides with or precedes Provider's start of work (including subsequent policies purchased as renewals or replacements).

(ii) If the policy is terminated for any reason during the term of this MOU, Provider shall either purchase a replacement policy with a retroactive date coinciding with or preceding the retroactive date of the terminating policy, or shall purchase an extended reporting provision of at least two years to report claims arising from work performed in connection with this MOU and a replacement policy with a retroactive date coinciding with or preceding the expiration date of the terminating policy.

(iii) If this MOU is terminated or not renewed, Provider shall maintain the policy in effect on the date of termination or non-renewal for a period of not less than two years there from. If that policy is terminated for any reason during the two year period, Provider shall purchase an extended reporting provision at least covering the balance of the two year period to report claims arising from work performed in connection with this MOU, or a replacement policy with a retroactive date coinciding with or preceding the retroactive date of the terminating policy.

All Professional liability policies maintained pursuant to this section shall either be endorsed to name the County of Mendocino, members of the Board of Supervisors of the County of Mendocino, and officers, agents, and employees of Mendocino County, individually and collectively, as additional insureds, or endorsed to provide that the insurance provided by the policy shall apply to liability assumed by Provider under a written contract with the County.

(3) Automobile Liability Insurance for bodily injury (including death) and property damage which provides total limits of not less than one million dollars (\$1,000,000) combined single limit per occurrence applicable to all owned, non-owned, and hired vehicles.

(4) Workers' Compensation and Employer's Liability Insurance with statutory California Workers' Compensation coverage and Employer's Liability

coverage of not less than one million dollars (\$1,000,000) per occurrence for all employees engaged in services or operations under this Agreement.

7. **Termination:** Either party may terminate this MOU upon ten days' notice to the other party. Upon termination, Provider will cease obtaining any new animals from locations in County and will continue to provide care, boarding, and feeding for any animals already in its possession and the return of those animals to the owners.

8. **Licensing/Certification:** Provider will possess and maintain any licenses and/or certificates required by any licensing authority for its operations as an animal rescue and evacuation organization. Provider will immediately notify County of revocation or cancellation of any such required licenses or certifications.

COUNTY OF MENDOCINO  
PROVIDER: \_\_\_\_\_

By \_\_\_\_\_

By \_\_\_\_\_  
Title \_\_\_\_\_

APPROVED AS TO FORM  
MENDOCINO COUNTY COUNSEL

By \_\_\_\_\_

**ANIMAL EMERGENCY CARE  
MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING  
EXHIBIT A**

Provider will provide the following services to County:

1. Coordinate with EOC to rescue and evacuate domestic pets and livestock in areas of County designated by EOC to locations supplied by Provider and approved by EOC.
2. Supply all equipment, personnel, and supplies necessary for the rescue, evacuation, feeding, medical care, boarding and return to owners of any domestic pets and livestock rescued and/or evacuated by Provider.
3. Establish systems for the tagging and identification of animals and of the addresses and locations from which animals were rescued and/or evacuated in order to enable a prompt and organized return to owners of their animals.
4. As soon as safe and appropriate, as coordinated through EOC, arrange for and return all domestic pets and livestock to their respective owners.
5. Coordinate with Mendocino County Animal Control the adoption or sale of any domestic pets or livestock whose owners cannot be located.

## **Attachment D**

# **INTERIM GUIDELINES FOR ANIMAL HEALTH AND CONTROL OF DISEASE TRANSMISSION IN PET SHELTERS**

*(NOTE: These Interim Guidelines have been developed by consultation between the American Veterinary Medical Association and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and are advisory in nature.)*

Animals arriving at shelters as a result of an evacuation need special care. Because they have not had access to safe food and fresh water, many are stressed and dehydrated and some may be injured and/or ill. Stressed animals may or may not show signs of illness and may also exhibit behavioral disorders. Following some simple animal management and disease control guidelines can help improve animal health and reduce the risk of disease transmission and injury between animals and people.

What follows are some recommendations for pets arriving at animal shelters.

### **Animal Health History, Examinations, and Identification**

- Each animal should be examined at a triage site. Particular attention should be paid to hydration status, cuts and abrasions, paw/hoof/foot health (e.g., pads and claws, area between toes), ear health (e.g., redness, discharge), oral injuries (may have occurred if animal was foraging for food), vomiting and/or diarrhea, respiratory disease, and evidence of parasite infestation.
- Animals should be bathed upon entry, particularly if they may have been in contact with contaminated flood water. Dawn™ dish soap can remove petroleum and some other toxic chemicals, but care should be taken during its use on sensitive species (e.g., horses). Those bathing the animals should wear protective clothing (e.g., rain suits, ponchos), gloves, and a face shield or goggles with a surgical mask to avoid mucous membrane contact with droplets and splashes that may contain toxic materials.
- Intake personnel should ask whether the pet has been in the custody of the owner since the beginning of the evacuation and should inquire about the animal's health and vaccination history, paying particular attention to any current medical needs or chronic health problems (e.g., diabetes, which would signal a need for insulin injections). In addition, owners should be questioned about the animal's usual temperament (e.g., whether the animal can safely be housed with others of the same species, whether it might be aggressive toward caretakers).
- A health record for each animal should be created and updated as needed. Identification information for the animal should correspond to that for the owner, so that animals and their owners can be reunited. Owned animals should be clearly marked as “owned” and not “abandoned” to reduce the risk of mix-ups. Photographs should be taken, if possible. Collars (leather or nylon, not choke chains) containing readily legible identification information should be placed on all animals. Ideally, all animals should be micro chipped.
- Cages should be clearly labeled so that newly arriving personnel are easily apprised of the health status and temperament of sheltered animals.

- Animals arriving without owners should be scanned for microchip identification. Microchips are most often placed between the shoulder blades, but earlier models were prone to migration, so animals should be scanned from the shoulder blade down to the ventral chest. All scanners are not capable of reading all microchips, so if multiple types of scanners are available, scan with each type before declaring an animal to be microchip-free. Animals without microchips should be checked for other forms of identification such as a tag or tattoo. Tattoos on dogs may correspond to an AKC registration number and this information should be used to trace the animal, if possible.

## **Animal Health Management and Prevention and Treatment of Zoonotic and Nosocomial Diseases**

### **Intestinal Parasitism**

- Dogs should be treated prophylactically for internal parasites including *Giardia*, roundworms, hookworms, and whipworms.
- Exposure to mosquitoes in flood-ravaged areas presents an increased risk of heartworm disease. If possible, dogs should be tested for heartworms and appropriate preventatives or treatment administered.

### **External Parasitism**

- Dogs and cats should be examined for flea or tick infestation, and treated appropriately.
- Preventive flea and tick treatments should be considered for all dogs and cats housed in shelters.

### **Vaccinations**

While the American Veterinary Medical Association normally recommends that vaccination programs be customized to individual animals, in disaster situations vaccination status may be difficult, if not impossible, to determine. For this reason, administration of “core” vaccines to animals upon admission to shelters when vaccination status is unavailable or not current is considered appropriate. Vaccines take some time to become effective and will not address pre-existing exposures, so personnel are cautioned to be alert for clinical signs of disease.

- A rabies vaccination should be administered to dogs, cats, and ferrets. This is especially important for dogs and cats housed in group settings. Personnel should be aware that rabies vaccines may take as long as 28 days to become effective.
- Additional core vaccinations for dogs include distemper, hepatitis, and parvovirus.
- Additional core vaccinations for cats include feline viral rhinotracheitis, panleukopenia and calicivirus. Vaccination against feline leukemia should be considered for young kittens that will be housed in contact with other cats.
- Vaccination (intranasal) against *Bordetella bronchisepta* and parainfluenza should be considered for all dogs to reduce the incidence of kennel cough.

- Because leptospirosis risk is higher in flood-ravaged areas and because the disease is zoonotic, vaccination should be considered. Personnel are cautioned that leptospirosis vaccines are serovar-specific, and that the potential for adverse reactions may be higher than for some other vaccines.

### **Diarrheal Disease**

- Animals presenting with (or developing) diarrhea should be separated from healthy animals (see Facilities Management below).
- Nosocomial agents of concern that may be transmitted by feces include parvovirus, panleukopenia, *Giardia*, and intestinal parasites.
- Zoonotic agents of concern for small animals include *Campylobacter* and Salmonella, which are highly infectious and have been associated with outbreaks in shelters and veterinary clinics.

### **Ill Birds**

- Ill birds are usually lethargic, depressed, and inappetent. Care should be taken when handling ill birds because they may be infected with the zoonotic bacteria *Chalmydophila psittaci*, which causes psittacosis. Face masks should be worn when handling birds of unknown origin that are exhibiting signs of illness.

### **Behavioral Concerns**

- Fear, panic, separation anxiety, noise and storm phobias, and other behavioral disorders are common problems in displaced animals. Animals that have never had these problems may develop them and pre-existing problems are likely to worsen.
- Providing housed animals with fresh food and water on a regular basis and establishing other familiar routines will assist animals in adjusting to their new environment. Food and water should be provided at multiple smaller and dispersed stations, rather than a few large clumped stations, to minimize fear competition and fighting among unfamiliar animals.
- Animals without a prior history of aggression may snap, bite, or hiss as a result of fear or uncertainty. Shelter personnel should approach rescued animals calmly, but cautiously. Only experienced personnel should handle animals that exhibit significant behavioral disorders.
- Behavioral exercises and behavioral medications may be administered short- or long-term, as required, to help animals recover. Shelters are encouraged to seek assistance from qualified animal and veterinary behaviorists who can assist them in meeting these needs.

### **Euthanasia**

- Animals that are irreversibly ill or exhibiting intractable signs of aggression should be euthanized. Records should be kept of animals euthanized.

### **Medical Use, Storage, and Recordkeeping**

- Veterinarians are responsible for making clinical judgments regarding the health of the animal and the need for medical treatment. Use of prescription drugs may be authorized only by a veterinarian.
- Drugs and vaccines should be stored under conditions recommended by the manufacturer. Products should be examined periodically to ensure cleanliness and current expiration date.
- Records of individual animal treatments should be kept, including animal identification, date of treatment, name of product administered, name of the individual administering product, and the name of the supervising veterinarian.

### **Personal Protection for Caretakers**

- Wash hands with soap and water
  - Before and after handling each animal
  - After coming into contact with animal saliva, urine, feces, or blood
  - After cleaning cages
  - Before eating meals, taking breaks, smoking, or leaving the shelter
  - Before and after using the restroom.
- Wear gloves when handling sick or wounded animals.
- Wear gloves when cleaning cages.
- Consider use of goggles or face protection if splashes from contaminated surfaces may occur.
- Facemasks should be worn when handling ill birds to minimize the risk of contracting psittacosis.
- Bring a change of clothes to wear home at the end of the day.
- Bag and thoroughly clean clothes worn at the shelter.
- Do not allow rescued animals to “kiss” you or lick your face.
- Do not eat in animal care areas.
- Whenever possible, caretakers should have completed a 3-dose prophylactic vaccination series for rabies.
- Pregnant women and immunocompromised persons will not be allowed to serve in positions involving direct animal contact.

### **Avoiding Bites and Scratches in Pet Shelters**

- Use caution when approaching any animal that may be sick, wounded, or stressed.

- If available, use thick gloves, restraints, or sedation to handle aggressive animals.
- If bitten or scratched, thoroughly wash wound with soap and water and seek medical care. Notify a supervisor as soon as possible after the incident.
- Because the exposure histories of these animals are unknown, bites from dogs, cats, and ferrets may be considered a potential risk for rabies, even if the animal appears healthy and has been vaccinated. Therefore, personnel who are bitten should be evaluated for rabies risk. Dogs, cats, and ferrets that bite a person should be quarantined for 10 days and observed for signs of rabies. If an animal develops signs of rabies or dies during the 10-day period following the bite, it should be tested for rabies. Persons bitten during pet shelter operations do not require rabies postexposure prophylaxis unless the animal is diagnosed as rabid.
- If a person is bitten by a dog, cat, or ferret that is available for quarantine, adequate identification records and contact information must be kept for both the animal and the person bitten, so the exposed individual can be contacted in the event the quarantined animal does prove to be rabid. Persons exposed to an animal confirmed with rabies, or to an animal that is unavailable for a 10-day quarantine or testing, should receive rabies post exposure prophylaxis in accordance with the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices Guidelines.

## Facility Management

### Separation of Animals

- Animals should not be housed or permitted in food or break areas.
- Separate newly arriving animals from animals that have been housed one week or longer.
- Animals of different species should not be housed together (e.g., do not place a ferret and a rabbit in the same cage)
- Avoid caging animals from different households together. If animals of the same species come into the shelter together and the owner requests that they be caged together, this should be considered as it may reduce an animal's stress if it is housed with a companion. This should not be done if the owner indicates the animals do not get along with one another.
- If animals of unknown origin must be housed together, care should be taken to not mix genders for unneutered animals.
- Routinely monitor animals for signs of illness. Separate sick animals from healthy animals, especially animals with diarrhea or signs of upper respiratory disease. If a separate room or area is not available, animals with diarrhea or signs of respiratory disease should be housed in bottom cages.
- People assigned to care for sick animals should care for those animals only, and should not move between sick and healthy animals.

- Limit contact of young children, the elderly, pregnant women, and immunocompromised people with rescue animals, particularly animals that are ill.

### **Cleaning and Disposal**

- Thoroughly clean and disinfect cages between animals.
- Remove and dispose of animal waste in a timely manner.
- Double bag and remove dead animals shortly after death. A log of animals that have died or have been humanely euthanized should be kept. This log should include, for each animal, its identification and/or descriptive information and where the animal was brought in from.
- Identify an area separate from the shelter for carcass storage and disposal. Dead animals may be buried in areas high above the water table or burned. A list of dead animal haulers is provided in Attachment B.
- Arrange for waste removal from the pet shelter.
- Pet shelters should have adequate lighting, water, and wastewater disposal.

### **Environmental Security**

- If at all possible, devise strategies to prevent wild rodents from mixing with shelter animals.
- Keep wild rodents away from food supplies.

### **Additional Recommendations for Exotic Animals (including pocket pets, reptiles, amphibians, and birds)**

- Exotic animals should be micro chipped for accurate record keeping, unless they are identified by other means, such as well-secured leg bands or legible permanent tattoos. Leg bands are a reliable means of identifying birds and often will allow ownership to be traced. For this reason, these bands should be left in place unless they pose a hazard. Photographs of birds' feet may also be used to identify them.
- House each species of animal in separate areas to reduce stress from strange noises and environments. Do not house birds in the same area as mammals or reptiles because the presence of these animals can cause undue stress and may present a risk of infectious disease to avian species.
- Make sure that diets are appropriate for each species. If the species is unfamiliar to the handler, then consult a veterinarian or handler who is experienced with the housing and husbandry of that species.
- Ill birds must often be force-fed. Birds should only be force-fed by experienced handlers or veterinarians.

- Minimize handling of exotic pets to reduce stress and risk of injury for animals and handlers.
- Do not house more than one exotic animal in a cage unless the animals have previously been housed together.
- Exotic pets should not be taken out of their cages except during cage cleaning.
- Confine exotic animals to other cages or escape-proof containers when cleaning permanent cages.
- To prevent transmission of Salmonella and *Chlamydomphila* , designate a separate area for cleaning cages. Do not clean cages in sinks or bathrooms that will be used for food preparation or bathing of infants or other immunocompromised persons. After cleaning chores are completed, thoroughly disinfect the area
- It is extremely important to follow appropriate hand washing techniques after handling and feeding exotic animals or cleaning their cages, bowls, toys, or other cage furniture.
- To avoid transfer of fecal matter, feathers, food, and other materials from one cage to another, bird cages should not be stacked.
- Many exotic pets, especially reptiles and amphibians, have special environmental needs; these needs should be an important consideration during sheltering.
- Exotic pets tend to be escape artists. Ensure that caging is properly constructed and sufficiently secure to prevent destruction and escape.
- Do not release exotic animals into the wild under any circumstances.

### **A Note on the Human-Animal Bond and the Well-Being of Pets and Owners**

Separation of pets and owners is a difficult issue. Media coverage of hurricanes Katrina and Rita is replete with examples of people who refused to be evacuated from affected areas without some assurance that their pets would be saved and cared for as well. When people have lost everything, their pets can be an important source of emotional support. This is particularly true for those without family or a strong human social network. Removal of this last remnant of normality and comfort can be psychologically traumatic.

Despite the importance of the owner-pet relationship, limited availability of suitable housing, as well as animal and public health and safety concerns, will make housing pets in animal shelters or foster homes not only necessary, but in the best interest of many pets and their owners. Foster homes are an alternative that can provide some semblance of routine and reduce crowding and stress in animal shelters that might otherwise predispose animals to injury and disease.

For additional information about rescue efforts and animal health and welfare, particular diseases or conditions or infection control, please call these organizations or visit their web sites:

- California Department of Food and Agriculture – Animal Health Branch:  
<http://www.cdfa.ca.gov/ahfss/ah/>

- CDC Healthy Pets Healthy People: <http://www.cdc.gov/healthypets/>
- American Veterinary Medical Association: <http://www.avma.org/>
- Veterinary Medical Assistance Teams: <http://www.vmat.org/>
- Association of Shelter Veterinarians: <http://www.shelternet.org/>
- The Center for Food Security and Public Health: <http://www.cfsph.iastate.edu/brm/>

## Safe Handling of Exotic Animals

Many exotic pets have unique features that need to be considered when handling these animals. Some basic guidelines for handling common exotic species follow.

### Rabbits

- Grasp loose skin over the neck and shoulders while directing the head away from your body.
- Support the lower part of the rabbit's body with the other hand.
- Never restrain or lift a rabbit by the ears.
- If the rabbit begins to struggle or kick violently, immediately place on a solid surface and calm the animal. Struggling often results in fractured spinal vertebrae and subsequent euthanasia.

### Mice

- Mice are generally caught and handled by their tails.
- Grasp the tail between its midpoint and the mouse's body
- For more control, grasp the loose skin over the mouse's neck and shoulders using the thumb and fingers.
- Do not drop mice into cages. Rather lower them into the cage and release upon contact with bedding.

### Guinea Pigs

- Gently, place one hand on the shoulders or chest of the guinea pig.
- Use the other hand to support the animals' hindquarters.
- Wrap the guinea pig in a towel or hold the animal against your body to reduce any struggling.
- Do not attempt to restrain guinea pigs solely by grasping the skin. Guinea pigs lack an ample amount of loose skin to do this safely and handling them in this manner may cause hair loss.

### Birds

- Pet birds, such as parrots and finches, may be restrained by capturing in a towel. Darkening the room prior to entering the cage will assist the handler in the capture process and calm the bird. Care should be taken with wild birds, such as birds of prey. These species should only be captured and restrained by qualified handlers.
- Quickly grab the bird's neck from behind the animal. Your hand should gently encircle the neck to elongate the neck between the head and shoulders.
- Once the animal is under control, grasp the legs from the front of the animal and stretch the animal as much as possible without causing injury.
- The weight of the towel will keep the wings at the bird's side.
- Ensure that the bird's ribcage is not restricted and do not hold the bird around the body.

- Small birds may be caught without using a towel. First, capture the bird from the rear by encircling the neck. Then grasp the feet with the other hand.

### **Lizards**

- Hold the head firmly by grasping behind the jaw with your thumb and first finger while wrapping the other fingers around the lizard's shoulders to control the front legs.
- Use the other hand to grasp the rear legs and tail just below the base of the pelvis.
- Do not grab the length of the tail. Many lizards have the ability to lose their tails as a natural defense mechanism.

### **Snakes**

- Hold the head gently by grasping behind the jaw. Allow your hand to move with the snake's head movement to prevent injury.
- Providing good support support for the rest of the snake's body will help ensure it feels secure. Multiple handlers may be necessary for large snakes.
- Do not allow the snake to wrap the end of its tail around you or other objects.

### **Turtles and Tortoises**

- Grasp the shell midway between the front and rear legs.
- Prevent bites by not reaching across the front of a turtle or tortoise that is unrestrained.
- Frightened animals will often urinate on handlers as the animals are being picked up.

### **Amphibians**

- Fine mesh nets or small plastic containers may be used for catching and transferring animals.
- If the animal must be handled, protect the animal's skin by using moistened gloves and/or a moistened paper towel or dishcloth.
- Large amphibians, such as giant salamanders, large toads, and hellbenders, should have their heads restrained to prevent biting. Place their head between your thumb and first finger.

### **Ferrets**

- Grab the loose skin around the back of the neck firmly.
- Hold the ferret up so the hind feet cannot touch the ground.
- Stroke the animal's underside from top to bottom to aid in relaxation.

**The following references provide additional information about handling exotic animals:**

- The University of Iowa Animal Research Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee:  
<http://research.uiowa.edu/animal>