

ANIMAL CARE ANNEX A

A1. Purpose, Situation, and Assumptions

A1.1 Purpose

The purpose of this Animal Care Functional Annex is to guide and coordinate agencies and organizations in providing care for animals during a disaster, emergency, or incident within Park County. Many people consider their animals to be family members, or in the case of livestock, an important part of their livelihood. Disasters, emergencies, and incidents can threaten the safety and well being of animals. Providing for the basic care of animals can make important life-safety decisions easier for individuals and a disaster or emergency situation more tolerable.

A1.2 Situation Overview

Many residents of Park County have animals, either as pets and/or livestock. Decisions to leave pets or livestock behind during an evacuation or when a structure is compromised can be excruciating for owners, as most shelters do not allow pets or animals, with the exception of service animals. In some types of disasters, emergency responders may encounter lost or injured animals. Providing an animal care option may make emergency decisions easier for residents and emergency responders.

Based on USDA agricultural census data, the following provides data on the number of livestock animals in Park County:

- 42,000 cattle/cows, including calves (2010)
- 3,488 horses and ponies (2007)
- 2,904 honey bee colonies (2007)
- 2,100 sheep, including lambs (2010)
- 800 chickens (2007)
- 221 mules, burros, and donkeys (2007)
- 201 llamas (207)
- 200 bison (2007)

Source: US Department of Agriculture, 2011.

The number of domestic pets is somewhat harder to quantify, but the American Veterinary Medical Association provides the percent of households owning dogs, cats, birds, and horses and the average number owned per household (of those owning) in the United States. Using these statistics, an estimate for Park County can be generated based on the 2000 census figure of 6,828 households in Park County. Note that based on the rural nature of the county, these estimates are likely low, as shown by the USDA census figures for horses.

- 4,867 cats
- 2,542 dogs

- 666 birds
- 430 horses

Sources: US Census Bureau, 2011; American Veterinary Medical Association, 2011.

An important concept to recognize is that in many types of incidents where individuals are displaced from their homes, a large majority of individuals may take their animals elsewhere, usually to family or friends in unaffected locations.

A1.3 Planning Assumptions

- An incident that displaces a significant number of individuals from their homes, either because of damages or evacuation, may create a need for animal care.
- Facilities or locations exist within or near Park County where animal care services can be provided.
- Emergency shelters and evacuation centers do not allow pets or animals.

A2. Concept of Operations

The decision points that follow are the responsibility of incident management. Note that not all decision points may be necessary and some decision points may be combined during rapidly escalating situations.

- Decision Point: *Animals need to be moved from a potential hazard area.*

Generally, when animals need to be moved from an area due to an approaching hazard, such as a wildland fire or hazardous material release, the owners carry the responsibility for moving the animals. Personal vehicles and trailers are used, or livestock may be led to pastures outside of the hazard area, if available. In situations where the owner is not able to move the animals to safety in a timely manner, friends, neighbors, and community volunteers may step in to assist. Emergency responders should remain focused on managing the incident; however, responders may facilitate the evacuation of animals by communicating the need for assistance to other organizations and allowing the movement of related vehicles to and from the area. Note, however, that such efforts must be stopped if compromising the safety of responders or the owners, always a top priority.

- Decision Point: *Animals are in need of shelter.*

American Red Cross shelters do not allow animals, with the exception of service animals, so when a public shelter is opened, potential shelter residents are faced with uncertainties regarding animal care, in addition to the concerns related to the disaster. Fortunately, most disasters are not so extensive that the entire region is impacted. In these types of disasters, most individuals displaced from their homes elect to stay with and take their animals to unaffected family or friends.

In larger-scale disasters where public shelters are needed, an animal shelter may also be necessary in order to adequately care for members of the communities. The following should be considered when opening an animal shelter:

- **Location:** Is the space or facility adequate to care for the number and types of animals expected? Is fresh water available? Is there dedicated space for separation of animals and exercise? Can animal waste be adequately collected and disposed of? Is the animal shelter in close proximity to the public shelter? Can existing animal care facilities be used?
 - **Staffing:** Is staffing needed for the animal shelter or is owner-care adequate? Are those staffing an animal shelter trained in animal care? Is a veterinarian available for medical needs and advice? Can volunteers and organizations such as 4-H be used?
 - **Equipment/Supplies:** Have owners been advised to bring a crate or kennel, food, and other items necessary for the care and protection of their animals? If not, where will such supplies be obtained?
 - **Safety/Security:** If not managed by owners, what level of identification and paperwork will be required for the animals and their owners? What vaccinations, if any, are required of the animals? Can owners check in/out their animals for interaction and play time?
- **Decision Point:** *Animals in impacted areas are in need of rescue and veterinary care.*

Following a disaster, emergency responders may encounter animals in distress. While rescue and care of humans is the primary concern, the impacts to animals cannot be ignored. If possible, animal rescue teams should be established using local volunteers or mutual aid. In either case, team members should be vaccinated and trained for animal rescue. A process for treating injured animals should be established, including procedures for when euthanasia is necessary. A system for initial care and identification of the animals should be established along with procedures for reuniting the animals with their owners. Animal rescue groups may be able to assist with temporary foster care and/or placement of unclaimed animals.

A3. Organization and Assignment of Responsibilities

The responsibilities listed here are specific to this function. Note that all entities, whether listed or not, are also responsible for their basic disaster and emergency responsibilities as outlined in the [Base Plan, Section 3.2](#), as applicable.

The following entities are not specific to jurisdiction. Therefore, in an emergency, the jurisdiction(s) affected will have the responsibility for these roles, and other non-affected jurisdictions may also be involved through mutual aid.

Disaster and Emergency Services

- Identify, contact, and coordinate with private organizations and/or volunteers needed to support animal care functions.
- Establish emergency animal shelters, as needed.

Public Health

- Support animal care needs through the Veterinarian on the Board of Health.
- Provide technical assistance on health risks, including vaccinations recommended for those working with animals.

Voluntary Organizations Active in Disasters (VOAD)

- For those organizations with an animal care mission, provide animal care services, as requested.

Veterinary Providers

- Identify and assist with animal sheltering locations.
- Provide guidance and support on animal specific issues.
- As available, assemble initial animal care and rescue teams.

Other Entities

- Request animal care services, as needed.
- Perform other duties as needed and assigned.

A4. Direction, Control, and Coordination

In the absence of a specific agency responsible for animal care, Park County Disaster and Emergency Services would likely be utilized to establish and coordinate animal care needs through volunteer organizations. Additional information on the direction and control function can be found in the [Direction and Control Annex](#) and [Base Plan, Section 4](#).

Local plans related to this annex (horizontal coordination) include:

- Park County Health Department, Agricultural Emergency Preparedness Plan

A5. Information Collection and Dissemination

A5.1 Information Collection for Planning

Table A5.1A lists the key information needed and possible sources for animal care activities.

Table A5.1A Possible Information Sources

<i>Information Type</i>	<i>Source</i>
Estimates of the types and numbers of animals needing care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Incident Command / Unified Command – Planning Section – Operations Section – Emergency Operations Center
Animal shelter statistics and resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Shelter Manager – Disaster and Emergency Services

A5.2 Public Information

Information regarding the public information function can be found in the [Public Information Annex](#).

When providing information on animal care to the population, the following details should be included in the statements, as applicable:

- Description of the animal care services being provided
- Animal shelter location(s), if applicable
- Items to bring to the animal shelter (crate or kennel, food, bedding, water dish, medications, other comfort items, etc.)

A6. Communications

See the [Communications Annex](#) for more details on emergency communications in Park County.

A7. Administration, Finance, and Logistics

A7.1 Finance/Administration

For additional information on the Finance/Administration function, particularly the importance of recordkeeping, see the [Base Plan, Section 7.1](#).

A7.2 Logistics

For additional information on disaster and emergency logistics, see the [Base Plan, Section 7.2](#).

A8. Plan Development and Maintenance

See the [Base Plan, Section 8](#) for additional information on annex development, review, revision, and exercise.

A9. Authorities and References

A9.1 Authorities / References

None.

A9.2 Acronyms

See the [Base Plan, Section 9.4](#) for the list of acronyms used in this plan.

A10. Attachments

None.