

# Animal Annex

## Lead & Support Agencies

OEM is the lead agency for Emergency Animal Response in Douglas County. The lead position for animal assistance is the Douglas County Animal Response Team Coordinator. During an emergency that requires animal response, the coordinator will report to the Emergency Operations Center (if activated) or will support virtually. In Douglas County the shelter location will typically be the Douglas County Fairgrounds, although others have been identified as alternate sheltering facilities.

Support agencies include:

- DCSO Animal Control (Humane Society of the Pikes Peak Region, HSPPR)
- Denver Dumb Friends League
- Douglas County Facilities, Fleet & Emergency Support Services (FFESS)
- Douglas County Fairgrounds
- Douglas County Open Space
- Douglas-Elbert County Animal Response Team
- Douglas-Elbert County Horse Council

Local Planning Matrix for Animal Issues					
	Large Animal Sheltering/ Veterinary Care	Small Animal Sheltering/ Veterinary Care	Animal Evacuation	Intermediary Transportation	Animal Search & Rescue
OEM	U	U			
Denver Dumb Friends League		L		S	S
Douglas Elbert County Horse Council	L			S	
Douglas-Elbert County Animal Response Team	S	S			
Douglas County Sheriff's Office Animal Control (HSPPR)	S	S	L	L	L
	Lead (L)	Unified Lead (U)	Support (S)		

## Purpose & Scope

The purpose of this annex is to provide an ongoing, coordinated framework for the prevention, protection, preparedness, response and recovery efforts as they relate to management of companion, service and large domestic animals (non-commercial livestock) during an emergency event.

The Animal Emergency Response annex will be activated when an emergency situation dictates the evacuation of residents and visitors and their associated companion, service and large domestic animals (non-commercial livestock). This annex addresses the response and coordination of animal rescue due to natural or technological emergencies such as a wildland fire or a hazardous materials incident.

Emergency Incidents with an animal evacuation component can be a challenge for first responders, citizens and their respective animals. Communicating the importance of pet owners to prepare for emergencies will aid significantly when the evacuation of animals becomes necessary.

## Planning Assumptions

- Prioritized concerns for emergency management include life safety for people; protection of property (which includes companion, service and large domestic animals); and protection of the environment.
- Animals are often considered by many families and individuals to be their highest property priority.
- Animal evacuations will occur if the DCSO deems conditions for animal rescue to be safe and appropriate, and there is a known rate of spread that provides enough time for animal rescue responders to enter the threatened area, rescue the animals and evacuate the animals and themselves safely.
- Failure to evacuate may both endanger citizens who attempt to rescue their animals and the emergency responders who attempt to protect those citizens.
- Service animals must be treated as an extension of a disabled person and must receive all needed services per the American's Disabilities Act.
- While many owners of companion, service and large domestic animals will take reasonable steps to evacuate, shelter, and provide for their animals, others cannot or will not take adequate actions. In some cases the protection of their animals is challenged by limitations to their access & functional need. This would include those with limited mobility, the elderly, the number of animals in their possession, language and/or cultural barriers.
- Some state agencies such as the Colorado Division of Wildlife or the Colorado Department of Agriculture may have certain statutory responsibilities. Local emergency annexes are designed in cooperation with these agencies.
- Douglas County is a traditionally rural area with livestock making up a large component of the animal population housed in the area. Additional populations include equids (horses, ponies, mules and donkeys), Camelids (llamas, alpacas and vicunas), poultry, and "backyard/non-commercial" livestock.
- Commercial livestock is not included in this Animal Annex. If a disaster is declared, commercial livestock owners may receive governmental assistance during an emergency incident, but are ultimately responsible for their herds including evacuation, transportation and sheltering.

## Authorities

- Colorado Disaster Emergency Act, 24-32-21 creates the Colorado Division of Emergency Management and 24-32-2107 charges each political subdivision with creation of a local emergency management agency.
- The Colorado Department of Agriculture, Division of Animal Industry has statutory authority related to animal health (State Veterinarian 35-50), in the prevention of animal cruelty and neglect (Colorado Bureau of Animal Protection, 35-42), the regulation of companion animal industry (Pet Animal Care Facilities Act, 35-80) and the supervision of branded livestock identification, movement and ownership issues (Colorado Brand Board, 35-41).
- The Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (multiple sections under Title 25, CRS) has authorities related to public health that will intersect with animal health and local jurisdictional public health authorities.

## Activation

- OEM will serve as the lead agency in the development and supervision of the Douglas County Animal Response Team (CART) program. The CART Coordinator serves as the primary contact for the CART network resources.
- This annex will be activated by OEM.

- The CART Roster is maintained and updated annually by the CART Coordinator based upon the annual CART meeting participation and related activities for training and live incidents requiring animal response and rescue assistance.
- Once activated, the CART Coordinator is duly authorized to manage and coordinate the animal response during an incident. This includes call-out and coordination of the responders for animal evacuation, search and rescue, management of the volunteers at the primary animal evacuation point, and management of the animal volunteers at the Douglas County Fairgrounds, or other designated facilities, should animal sheltering become necessary during the incident.
- For incidents requiring sheltering, the Denver Dumb Friends League (DDFL) will be activated to manage sheltering for companion animals. The Douglas-Elbert County Horse Council (DECHC) will be activated to manage sheltering for large animals.
- For incidents requiring the transportation of animals and Search & Rescue components during an evacuation, animal rescue and animal sheltering in place, the DCSO Animal Control Unit (HSPPR) will be alerted and will coordinate with DCSO Patrol Division. The Patrol Division will determine if it is safe to conduct such missions.

## Concept of Operations

- The Douglas Elbert County Animal Response Team (CART) is a network of community animal agencies, organizations, businesses and volunteers organized to assist Douglas County in addressing animal issues during emergencies.
- The CART Coordinator is the lead organizer for animal resources deployment. The CART Coordinator will assist with the following:
  - Preparedness through Community Outreach & Training
  - Participation during Exercises & Live Incidents
  - Recommending necessary Equipment and Supplies needed for the Douglas CART Trailer
  - Response, including assistance with evacuation, sheltering, and animal search and rescue (DDFL, DECHC, DCSO, HSPPR, OEM Mutual Aid, [Colorado Veterinary Medical Reserve Corps](#), State, National Animal Rescue & Shelter Coalition, EMAG, etc.)
  - Recovery
- Command and management:
  - The activation and deployment of any resources will follow the Incident Command System (ICS) structure.
  - ***Self-deployment of unauthorized resources is not allowed under any circumstances.***
  - Emergency animal response and resources will be coordinated through the CART Coordinator, assigned to the DCEOC or located virtually during an incident.
- Communications:
  - Telephone, Internet, or direct communications with CART support groups (animal sheltering, search & rescue, etc.) and the CART volunteers will be coordinated through the CART Coordinator. This includes radios for the volunteers to use in the field and at shelters.
  - CART affiliated organizations and volunteers will maintain appropriate contact with the Emergency Support Functions Animal Issues (ESF 11) and Mass Care (ESF 6) in the EOC if and when these positions are established. Until ESF 11 is activated in the EOC, the Logistics Branch in the EOC is the contact for coordination purposes.
- Public information and warnings pertaining to animal issues:
  - All incident information will be communicated to the public through the Public Information Officer in coordination with Incident Command and the DCEOC. Once an incident expands

beyond normal resource capabilities, the Joint Information Center (JIC) will be established and tasked with this responsibility.

- Individual organizations may communicate organizational information to the public directly (contact, mission, etc.), however, information concerning public instructions, incident updates and public resource requests must be managed through the PIO/JIC.
  - Communication distribution will include the Douglas County Website, the Douglas County Sheriff's Office website, traditional television and radio media, and social media.
- Animal-related Donations management during an emergency event:
    - In the event that donations are needed for animal support, cash/check donations for animal-related issues are preferred.
    - Animal-related donations such as hay, dog and cat food, etc., will be processed through the Animal Issues Desk at the Douglas County EOC. Offers for this type of donation may be declined.
    - All public information releases requesting financial donations only will be routed through the Joint Information Center and coordinated with Incident Command, Douglas County Finance, and the Douglas County EOC.

## Organization and Responsibility

1. Animal Evacuation, Transportation - During an evacuation, evacuee transport will allow for service animals to be transported with their owners. Should evacuee transport be necessary for those with companion animals, all efforts will be made to evacuate the animals to the same evacuation point as their owners.
2. Animal Search & Rescue and Animal Sheltering In Place - Animal Search & Rescue will be activated for assistance with "requests for rescue" by evacuees who wish to retrieve animals left behind or provide care for those animals if the animals are sheltered in place. The HSPPR Animal Control Officers will coordinate with the DCSO Patrol Division. If conditions are determined to be safe by the Patrol Division, the HSPPR or their designees will conduct the missions. Animal retrieval and/or care will be provided only by HSPPR Animal Control Officers or their qualified designees.
3. Animal sheltering - In Douglas County, the Douglas County Fairgrounds is the primary evacuation point and can accommodate sheltering services for humans and their small companion & service animals, as well as large animals. The Animal Response Team volunteers will assist the DC Fairgrounds staff during activation by staffing the check-in/check-out process, identification of animals associated with their owners and care for those animals that are brought without identification until they can be reunited with their owners. Animals will be well-cared for by the qualified partner volunteers from the Denver Dumb Friends League and Douglas-Elbert County Horse Council. Owners are encouraged to visit their animals as their time allows, but are not required to do so. Should there be a period of time that an animal is unidentified, the animal in question will be cared for. Additionally, partners may be asked to help provide appropriate food and/or veterinarian care during this period. The lead agency for animal sheltering is OEM. During an evacuation affecting large animals, a Brand Inspector will be included in the call-up.
4. Animal control/stray management - Basic animal control functions should be maintained during disasters to the extent possible. Such functions include responding to public reports related to stray animals or animal problems, animal bites, and collection of stray animals. The lead agency for this is the DCSO Animal Control (HSPPR).
5. Veterinary medical care and services - During an emergency event, there may be a need to care for injured or ill animals, administer infection control programs and coordinate with public health relating to zoonotic disease and animal disease management, especially at shelter sites. The lead agency for coordination of this is OEM.
6. Animal/owner reunion and recovery - Animal/owner reunification can be a difficult task following an evacuation. Lost & Found management procedures will be documented through the check-in sheets completed by transporters. During an evacuation of many large animals, the Brand Inspector will be activated for identification purposes. OEM will be the lead agency for coordination and management of this process.

## **Animal Shelter Locations**

The primary animal shelter location for large and small animals is the Douglas County Fairgrounds (500 Fairgrounds Drive in Castle Rock, CO 80104). Iron Horse Open Space (I-25 and Tomah Road) may be utilized as an initial gathering point for large animals until the Douglas County Fairgrounds is readied. Other large animal shelter locations include but are not limited to:

- Elbert County Fairgrounds (95 Ute Avenue in Kiowa, CO 80117)
- Adjoining and Available County Fairgrounds

## **Douglas County Animal Response Trailer**

The Douglas County Animal Response Trailer is a resource trailer stocked with animal support gear such as wire cages, halters and lead ropes, and other non-perishable items needed during an incident requiring animal evacuation and sheltering. The trailer is housed at the Douglas County Fairgrounds. In addition to the DC cache trailer, there are 9 cache trailers, 2 panel trailers and 1 mobile shelter available for support and located throughout the North Central Region (NCR).