Your Community & Emergency Response for Livestock & Pets

Agriculture and Forestry

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Objectives

• Review the Government and Community lessons from dealing with animals during community evacuation

• Encourage Community pre-event planning to deal with pets and livestock
Focus

- Owned animals
  - Pets, companion animals and livestock
  - Excludes: wildlife and stray animals

- Emergency Management Priorities
  - People
  - Property
  - Environment
Emergency Events, Pets and Reality

• Human behavior
  – Some people will not be separated from their pets.
  – People will take big risks for animals often putting
    themselves and others at risk.
  – Well intended people can exhibit “rogue” behaviour.
  – Responders can be distracted and traumatized.

• Emergency response planning is evolving to include pets
Emergence Events, Pets and Reality

• Evacuation notices are often limited:
  – Slave Lake 15 – 30 min., High River/Fort McMurray 1 hr.

• With pets, there are a host of other issues
  – Health concerns/allergies ... with diverse evacuee’s
  – Fear of animals
  – Risk of animal disease spread through commingling

• Expect the unexpected
  – unusual pets and a variety of needs – **Horses, snakes, reptiles, sled dogs**
Legislation and Legal Authorities

• **Public Health Act**: separation of pets, people and food

• **Emergency Management Act**: outlines authority & scope of authority in an emergency

• **Animal Protection Act**: enforced by appointed peace officers, police and RCMP
  – Animals in distress, abandon or lacking care

• **Veterinary Professions Act**
  – AB Veterinary Medical Association licenses veterinarians & ensures practice standards are met. Permission to treat.
Livestock Emergency Preparedness and Response
Realities

• Livestock move around but it takes organization.
• On short notice … challenging to make arrangements:
  • Trucking sector very spread out and it takes time to get trucks on site.
  • Farms are generally larger than in the past. More animals = More trucks
  • Biosecurity is a concern.
  • Moving animals is not always in their best interest.
• Farmers have 3 choices
  • Shelter animals in place (stay with them / come in/out)
  • Leave stock to fend for themselves
  • Evacuate people and animals
The Community Role & Livestock in Emergencies

• Encourage operators to have an emergency plan & be aware of their plan.
• Your community needs to decide what it will or will not do to support livestock owners during a disaster.
• Manpower or support to producers
• Powers under State of Local Emergency (SOLE)
• Allow access after evacuations
• Identify alternate locations
Assistance to Communities

• Support from local groups
  – Agriculture Societies
    • Rodeo Grounds, Community Halls, Connection to other farmers and resources
  – Industry Associations
    • Poultry, Dairy, Swine, Beef, Equine
  – Who else can help farmers in your community?
PET EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE
Pets, Evacuations and the Community Response

• Experience has demonstrated - 2 distinct activities
  1. People leave with their pets and go to Reception/Evacuation Centre

  2. People are forced to leave pets behind
      • Home entry and collection (either as part of emergency/fire/flood response or as part of a community planned support to evacuated residents).
      • Care and Sheltering of pets inside the community.
      • Evacuation of pets separately from people to a place where appropriate care can be provided.
Pets and Your Reception Centre

- Safety for all
- Registration – pets first
- Record keeping – avoid multiple systems
- Physical separation – btw pets and people

- Communication – if pets are welcome & the rules of engagement.
- Training
- Staffing & supplies – to accommodate both
- Alternate place?
Extracting Pets from Homes

- What kind of pets are in your community? (pet stores)
- Which homes have pets?
- How will you register pets? Which pets?
- Does the owner want you in their house?
- Who has appropriate skills to enter, capture and transport?
- Highly visible, potentially contentious activity...
  - Home security systems connected to peoples remote devices.
  - What if you find/suspect illegal activity?
  - Damage or mess from entry and responders.
Sheltering in Community of origin – (separate from Reception Centre)

- Facility
- Staff
- Supplies, food, etc
- Veterinary care
- Connected into EOC
- On-going risk and operational period
- On-going communication with public and owners
Evacuation of Pets

- To where? Under who’s authority?
- Who is accountable for the pets?
- Appropriate care enroute & during temporary sheltering
- Reunification with owners who may still be displaced
  - Secondary care options
Current Best Practices
Your Reception Centre cannot handle Pets - Lessons from Community (no pets)

- Need a place where evacuee’s can be close to their pets
- Use same registration process for pets as for people
- Some people chose to live in vehicles rather than be separated.
- Have an excellent working relationship with local kennels and animal boarding facilities. Adopted out temporarily if you have robust relationships and clear authorities for care and control.
- If you have a plan, do a quick read through when you start.
Reception Centre can handle pets - Lessons from Community

• Key lessons:
  – Need a detailed registration system for pets
    • Electronic records allow for easy retention of information and forwarding if animals moved to care or other community
  – Clear information on owner (contact, location, etc.)
  – Access to veterinarian/vet services
  – Cleaning schedule and staff
  – Good communication with rest of reception centre
  – Restricted access to pet area.
Example of Pet Registration Form

Athabasca Evacuee Reception Centre – Pet Care Centre

To Whom It May Concern,

Due to the wildfires in the Lesser Slave River area and subsequent evacuation, I am currently unable to house my animal(s) at my current accommodations. As such, I require foster assistance for my animal(s). This service will be provided by FCSS in Athabasca, who have contracted this service out to the Second Chance Animal Rescue Service (SCARS).

I agree to have my animal(s) cared for by a foster family and agree to allow the foster family to make appropriate care decisions for my animal while my animal(s) is/are in their care. I understand that when my accommodation circumstances allow for me to care for my animal(s), that my animal(s) will be returned to my care immediately. In order to recover my animal(s), I need to call the FCSS.

If I am unable to care for my animal(s), I will contact FCSS in Athabasca to advise them that I am surrendering my animal and it can be place up for adoption.

Owner Information:

Name: ____________________________________________________________

Address: __________________________________________________________
Postal Code: ________________________________

Home Phone: ________________________________ Cell Phone: ________________________________

Type of Pet(s): ____________________________________________________

Name of Pet(s): ____________________________________________________

Gender of Pet(s): ____________________________________________________

Spayed/Neutered (which animals), ____________________________________________________

Vaccinations Due: ____________________________________________________

Current Vet Clinic: ____________________________________________________

Name of Owner: ________________________________ Date: ________________________________

Signature of Owner: ________________________________ Staff signature: ________________________________
Managing Pets inside the Evacuation Zone - Lessons from Slave Lake 2011

- Edmonton Humane Society (EHS) – deployed a team that worked with a group of volunteers:
  - request for assistance came through an unusual chain.
  - EHS never seemed to be integrated with the EOC
    - Logistic support was minimal/inconsistent
    - No formal way to raise issues up to Incident Management Team
    - The entry into homes to check on pets left behind needs to be coordinated with local authorities (???)

- Need a clear request/tasking process
- Could be integrated with local ESS as a subunit.
- Needs to be resourced and supported like any other operational activity re: safety.
Community Evacuation - Extraction of Pets/Home

Entry Considerations — Lessons from High River and Fort McMurray

- Use Peace/Police/Bylaw Enforcement Officers wherever possible
  - Used to legal aspects of taking control
  - Documentation usually better
  - Authorities for care and control of the animal in and out of zone
    - Pictures of animals connected with address
    - Documentation of conditions
    - Moral high ground if anything untoward happens on the property.
      - E.g. previous break in, deceased pet, etc
Community Evacuation – Care, Stabilize and Evacuate Pets – Lessons from Fort McMurray

• Collect and Stabilize
  • Cannot/should not transport animals in distress.

• To Where and into Who’s care and Control?
  • Does the group that you are sending animals to have the skill/authority to care for the number of animals you are sending.... Legal risk back on community, if not.

• Method of Transport
• Documentation
  • Prior to departure
  • On arrival at drop off point.

• Plan for Enroute challenges
  • Aggressive or erratic behavior
  • Vehicle issues
Detailed considerations - Lessons Learned

• Key lessons:
  – Establish job descriptions & authorities (extraction through to reunion).
  – Use a simple electronic registration system
    • multiple users & locations, follows the animal, security & privacy settings, record of treatment & movement, contact & owner info, animal description and particulars.
  – Veterinary Services
    • Triage, shelter medicine/ rounds, referrals, records
Detailed considerations - Lessons Learned

• Key lessons:
  – Animal Transport
    • Consider time in transit and fitness for transport
    • Special or critical cases
    • Clean, climate controls
    • Food, water and support staff enroute
    • Consider crate / cage sizes
Detailed considerations - Lessons Learned

• **Animal Reception Site**
  • water, washing stations, dimmable lights, sealed flooring, climate control, power, noise, parking, exercise area
  • animal receiving & triage, medical room, owner reception, storage & procurement, multiple rooms/areas by type of animal.
  • restrict access to pet area
  • donations can be overwhelming

• **Feeding, cleaning, exercise and husbandry**
  • protocols & records (access to veterinary products)
  • equipment (dishes, leashes, enrichment, etc.)
  • garbage & laundry
Detailed considerations - Lessons Learned

- **Staff & volunteer coordination**
  - Scheduling, food, safety & training, liability/waivers

- **Procurement**
  - Ordering, financial controls, assigned

- **Communication** (more is better)
  - within the reception, with EOC and with the owners and public
  - directing donations - $ and stuff

- **Protocols for contact with owners and key messages.**
  - When and who contacts owners

- **Secondary care**
  - How long will you operate
  - Criteria for secondary shelter
Plan Templates – *some communities have plans*

- E.g. Town of High River
  - Table of Contents

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**EOC Response Plan**

**ESF: Animal Rescue**

**2015-07-23**

**High River**

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** Alberta**

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Plan Templates

• Ontario groups created - Animal Care Emergency Response Plan
  • Fill in the blanks template.
  • Planning team includes local veterinarians and SPCA.
  • Local animal shelters part of Municipal Emergency Plan.
  • Supplies and personnel to set up temp housing.

• Disaster Animal Response Team of Nova Scotia (DARTNS) – Shelter Manual
  • Three levels of response – added to municipal animal staff.
  • Has a number of Standard Operating Procedures – how to set-up a temporary shelter, feeding, cage cleaning, etc.
Links


- American Veterinary Medical Association - [https://www.avma.org/kb/resources/reference/disaster/pages/default.aspx](https://www.avma.org/kb/resources/reference/disaster/pages/default.aspx)

- US Department of Health and Human Services – links to other sites:
  - [http://sis.nlm.nih.gov/enviro/animals.html#a4](http://sis.nlm.nih.gov/enviro/animals.html#a4)
Conclusion

- A community evacuation will involve a number of animals – companion or otherwise.

- At least 62 percent of all US households have a pet & spending on pets exceeds $60B in the US.

- Farm animal evacuation requires the farmer to plan & participate.

- Anticipate, plan ahead, be flexible
Guiding Principles

• As much as possible, use your day to day approach.

• Use & develop community relationships to address animals in emergencies.

• Prior planning and decision making is preferable to reacting in the heat of the moment.
Questions?

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