



ROCKY MOUNTAIN HORSE RESCUE

9190 Alkire St., Arvada, CO 80005

Phone: (303) 424-0037

Dedicated to the rescue, welfare, and care of
Horses, Ponies, Mules, and Donkeys



EUTHANASIA POSITION PAPER

The welfare of the horse must be the paramount consideration in determining the advisability of euthanasia. Implicit in the definition of “welfare” is quality of life. If a horse cannot be restored, within the available financial and material resources of Rocky Mountain Horse Rescue, to an acceptable quality of life—to be defined on an individual case-by-case basis—then euthanasia will be considered. Cases where Euthanasia may be appropriate are:

1. The horse is in extreme pain which cannot be alleviated in a satisfactory manner.
2. The horse presents neurological or behavioral problems of such severity that the animal is a hazard to itself, to other animals, or to its handlers. Such neurological or behavioral problems are not amenable to behavioral modification techniques or to medical/surgical interventions.
3. The horse is a carrier of a serious, life threatening communicable disease, and quarantine procedures are not feasible.

A minimum of two veterinarians must concur, after an evaluation of the horse involved, that euthanasia is appropriate, i.e., in the best interest of the horse. However, in an emergency situation, e.g. broken leg, untreatable colic, mortal wounds—the decision to euthanize immediately may be made by one veterinarian or the person in charge of the animal. Rocky Mountain Horse Rescue will provide moral support and, in extreme cases, financial support to the owners and, if appropriate, refer them for grief therapy.

No horse will ever be euthanized for “convenience” reasons, i.e., to make room for other horses or for any other reason not directly related to the welfare of that specific horse.