

# **Global Federation of Animal Sanctuaries**



## **Standards For Canid Sanctuaries**

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# INTRODUCTION

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## GFAS PRINCIPLES

The Global Federation of Animal Sanctuaries (GFAS) will designate an organization as “verified” or “accredited” based upon its substantial compliance with the standards listed below. GFAS recognizes that some organizations under consideration will operate valid rescue and rehabilitation programs with a goal of releasing wildlife to the wild pursuant to IUCN and/or other international or national standards. For those animals, lifetime sanctuary care may not be part of the organization’s mission. While the care for these animals may be provided on an interim basis only, the organization is still expected to meet the standards below with regard to all animals in its care and for purposes of these standards it will be identified as a “sanctuary.”

Consistent with GFAS’ philosophy and the standards below, it is expected that a sanctuary does not adopt policy positions that are in opposition to the welfare of the species of animals in the care of the sanctuary (for example, while it is not required that a primate sanctuary affirmatively promote a policy against laboratory research using primates, it should not promote a policy in favor of such research).

Note: Several standards make reference to a sanctuary’s “Director.” GFAS recognizes that a sanctuary may use a different title, and the term “Director” is intended to reference the sanctuary’s Sanctuary Director, who may be called an Executive Director or Chief Executive Officer, etc.

GFAS also recognizes that sanctuaries may rely on volunteers for certain functions, including some aspects of animal care (such as food preparation). Standards referencing “staff” may take into account appropriately qualified and trained volunteers as well as employees.

Appendix I of this document provides further guidance/suggestions on facility design and canid care. These are not requirements but rather provide sanctuaries with access to knowledge gained from experience at other sanctuaries/canid care facilities.

## ANIMALS COVERED BY THESE STANDARDS

Family / Genus/Species/Common Names

Family: Canidae

Genus/Species/Common Names

Genus	Species	Common names	Size
<i>Alopex</i>	<i>lagopus</i>	Arctic fox, polar fox	Small
<i>Atelocynus</i>	<i>microtus</i>	short-eared dog, short-eared fox, zorro	Small
<i>Canis</i>	<i>adustus</i>	side-striped jackal	Large
<i>Canis</i>	<i>aureus</i>	golden jackal, Asiatic jackal, common jackal	Large
<i>Canis</i>	<i>lupus</i>	gray wolf, Arctic wolf, common wolf, timber wolf, tundra wolf, Mexican wolf	Large
<i>Canis</i>	<i>lupus ssp dingo</i>	dingo, warrigal	Large
<i>Canis</i>	<i>latrans</i>	coyote, American jackal, prairie wolf	Large
<i>Canis</i>	<i>mesomelis</i>	black-backed jackal, silver-backed jackal	Large

Genus	Species	Common names	Size
<i>Canis</i>	<i>rufus</i>	red wolf	Large
<i>Canis</i>	<i>simensis</i>	Ethiopian wolf, Simien fox, Simien jackal	Large
<i>Cerdocyon</i>	<i>thous</i>	crab-eating fox common fox, common zorro, forest fox, savannah fox	Small
<i>Chrysocyon</i>	<i>brachyurus</i>	maned wolf	Large
<i>Cuon</i>	<i>alpinus</i>	dhole, Asiatic wild dog, Indian wild dog	Large
<i>Lycaon</i>	<i>pictus</i>	African wild dog, Cape hunting dog, painted hunting dog, wild dog	Large
<i>Nyctereutes</i>	<i>prycononoides</i>	Raccoon dog	Small
<i>Otocyon</i>	<i>megalotis</i>	Bat-eared fox	Small
<i>Pseudalopex</i>	<i>culpaeus</i>	Culpeo, Andean fox	Small
<i>Pseudalopex</i>	<i>fluvipes</i>	Darwin's fox	Small
<i>Pseudalopex</i>	<i>griseus</i>	South American grey fox, Argentine gray fox, Grey zorro	Small
<i>Pseudalopex</i>	<i>gymnocercus</i>	Pampas fox, Azara's fox, Azara's zorro	Small
<i>Pseudalopex</i>	<i>sechurae</i>	Sechura fox, Peruvian desert fox, Sechura desert fox	Small
<i>Psuedalopex</i>	<i>vetulus</i>	Hoary fox, Hoary zorro, Small-toothed dog	Small
<i>Speothos</i>	<i>venaticus</i>	Bush dog, Savannah dog, Vinegar dog	Small
<i>Urocyon</i>	<i>cinereoargenteus</i>	Grey fox, Gray fox, Tree fox	Small
<i>Urocyon</i>	<i>littoralis</i>	Channel Island fox, California Island fox, Island grey fox,	Small
<i>Vulpes</i>	<i>bengalensis</i>	Bengal fox, Indian fox	Small
<i>Vulpes</i>	<i>cana</i>	Blanford's fox, Afghan fox, Corsac dog, Steppe fox,	Small
<i>Vuples</i>	<i>chama</i>	Cape fox, Silver fox, Silver jackal	Small
<i>Vulpes</i>	<i>corsac</i>	Corsac fox, Corsac	Small
<i>Vulpes</i>	<i>ferrilata</i>	Tibetan fox, Sand fox, Tibetan Sand fox	Small
<i>Vulpes</i>	<i>macrotis</i>	Kit fox, Desert fox	Small
<i>Vulpes</i>	<i>pallida</i>	Pale fox, African sand fox, Pallid fox	Small
<i>Vulpes</i>	<i>rueppellii</i>	Ruppel's fox, Rueppell's fox, Rueppells, sand fox, Sand fox	Small
<i>Vulpes</i>	<i>velox</i>	Swift fox	Small
<i>Vulpes</i>	<i>vulpes</i>	Red fox, Cross fox, Silver fox	Small
<i>Vulpes</i>	<i>zerda</i>	Fennec fox, Fennec	Small
		All canid and wolf/dog hybrids	

**Version Updates:**

New and Updated content released on February 2015

- G-1 Nonprofit/ Non-Commercial Status, P-3 Disposition Ethics and Responsibility, P-4 Disposition of Live Canids, P-5 Euthanasia

New and Changed content released on July 2015

- V-7 Breeding/Contraception – section a.

## CANID STANDARDS

GFAS notes that there may be other acceptable ways of meeting the intent of each standard, aside from those detailed below, and that in some instances there may be legal, cultural or other significant barriers to meeting GFAS requirements. The standards are considered mandatory, but GFAS will consider specific exceptions to some of the listed requirements (e.g., exact enclosure size, manner of record keeping, legal requirements that impact a sanctuary's acquisition policy, etc.). GFAS encourages sanctuaries to offer feedback on the standards and to explain any reasons why it believes it cannot meet a particular standard, or why the standard is not applicable and/or appropriate to its situation. Sanctuaries are also welcome to indicate a timeline for meeting a standard if the standard is not yet met at the time of application for accreditation or for verification.

The exceeding of the standards is encouraged. In addition to meeting these standards, an organization is expected to comply with all applicable international, national, state/province, and local laws and regulations.

## CANID HOUSING

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### **H-1. Types of Space and Size**

**Unless otherwise directed by a veterinarian, canids are provided sufficient opportunity and space to move about freely and rapidly, and to exercise choice in location so as to reduce stress and maintain good physical condition.**

#### **General**

- a. The habitat and living conditions are species appropriate and replicate, in as much as possible, the canids' wild habitat with a balance between hygiene and the species' physiological and psychological needs. This includes adequate space, both vertical and horizontal, and appropriate space, in terms of diversity and complexity.
- b. The physical space provides varied opportunities for the canids to interact with the environment and key elements are changed often, resulting in a dynamic living space.
- c. Housing requirements all include a double entry system so that there are two doors between the canids and freedom at all times. The two doors are never open at the same time.
- d. Canids are provided access to as many areas of the enclosures as possible, except during staff maintenance activities, unless security concerns dictate otherwise. All enclosures interconnect without creating 'dead ends' to allow for freedom of movement of subordinate individuals.
- e. Outdoor enclosures are either covered, with minimum height to allow for natural behaviors, or open roofed, with cantilever angle, hotwire or sufficient height to prevent escape (see Housing Dimensions for appropriate measurements).
- f. The habitat provides appropriate visual, olfactory, and acoustic barriers.
- g. The habitat provides security from predators and unauthorized human access.

#### **Open Space Settings**

- h. Open space settings have enough acreage per animal to accommodate natural individual and group activities.
- i. Where open space settings are the primary enclosure, two other areas may also be provided:

- Indoor day/night rooms or other means of providing night housing and secure shelter during inclement and extreme weather. This space also provides alternate housing for sick or injured individuals while in close proximity to the social group.
- Shift yards for use while the primary enclosure is serviced and/or for animal management needs including introduction of new individuals to a group, or temporary separation for health or social reasons. Shift yards should be accessible from indoor housing with a minimum of one door to the main enclosure.

### **Controlled access settings**

- j. While not as extensive as an open space setting, in controlled access areas ideally three enclosures are also provided: outdoor enclosures as the primary living space; indoor day/night rooms; and a shift yard or lock out.

### **Indoor Housing**

- k. Indoor housing provides year-round protection from the elements. For sanctuaries located in northern climates (where freezing temperatures occur regularly during any part of the year and temperate or tropical species are housed), indoor space is insulated and is large enough to allow for all forms of species-specific behavior (running, playing, etc.).

### **Dimensions**

- i. Many factors influence the minimum space required for a pack, trio or pair of canids, including, but not limited to: group size, group composition, and enclosure complexity. The following guidelines are minimum recommendations. Facilities should provide as much space as is possible and/or practical. Sanctuaries meeting only the minimum requirements for enclosure space employ additional environmental enrichment, focusing on physical and mental exercise rather than food, to compensate for reduced space and complexity.
  - Outdoor enclosures for canids-Enclosure shape may be variable to take in natural features in the landscape such as rock formations, hills and trees, and there should be a minimum vertical dimension of 12 ft. (3.66 m). Space includes a minimum of two (2) animal transfer doors leading to the indoor enclosure. Enclosures are a minimum of:
    - 10,000 sq. ft. (929 sq. m) for large canids housed as a pack.
    - 5,000 sq. ft. (465 sq. m) for large canids housed as pairs or trios.
    - 1,000 sq. ft. (93 sq. m) for small canids housed as pairs or trios.
  - Indoor enclosures/shift yards for canids- A minimum of two rooms or one indoor room and one shift yard per pair of compatible canids. Room dimension is dependent on intended purpose and/or duration of confinement.
    - Rooms for are a minimum of 40 sq. ft. (3.72 sq. m) for large canids and 24 sq. ft. (2.2 sq. m) for small canids, with a minimum vertical dimension of 8 ft. (2.4 m).
    - Shift yards are a minimum of 90 sq. ft (8.4 sq. m) with a minimum vertical dimension of 12 ft. (3.7 m)
- m. Rooms and shift yards interconnect without creating 'dead ends' to allow for freedom of movement for subordinate individuals and include a minimum of one transfer door to the main outdoor enclosure.
  - Canids are familiarized with rooms and shift yards through routine feeding in or transfer through, or by being allowed continuous access.
  - Where possible, separated animals have visual and tactile access to group members to facilitate reintroduction.

## **H-2. Containment**

**Canids are safely contained.**

### **General**

- a. Other than when being transported or for medical reasons, canids are kept at all times in secure enclosures or other appropriate areas.
- b. Enclosures are designed to allow for canids' normal defense reactions and appropriate 'flight' or escape distances.
- c. All enclosures are designed, constructed and maintained to securely contain canids and to present no likelihood of harm to them.
- d. Distance or barriers between canids and between enclosures and personnel is sufficient to minimize stress to the canids, as well as reduce the risk of disease transmission.
- e. Enclosures are designed to allow for proper, safe cleaning and drainage.
- f. A regular program of sanctuary maintenance is in place.
- g. Materials are appropriate for their particular application and are maintained in good repair.

### **Outdoor Enclosures**

- h. Perimeter containment of outdoor areas is constructed so as to prevent digging under the barrier by native wildlife, domestic species and the enclosure residents.
- i. Fences and enclosures are inspected daily for signs of digging. Where fencing meets hard surfaces such as rock or concrete, the fencing is securely anchored in place.
- j. Design takes into account canids' ability to climb and jump, particularly in the design of corner areas.
- k. Corners have angles of >90° to reduce risk of subordinate animals being trapped.

### **Fencing**

- l. Barbed or razor wire are not used to contain canids.
- m. The supporting posts for fences are firmly fixed into the ground.
- n. Fence material is sufficiently secured to supporting posts in such a way that the weight of the canids could not detach it from the support nor dislodge the supporting posts.
- o. Gates and doors are at least as strong, and as effective, in containing the canids as the rest of the enclosure barriers. In particular gates and doors are designed and maintained so as to prevent animals from lifting them from their hinges or unfastening the securing device.
  - All containment barriers have a mechanism to prevent canids from gaining access to dig under gates.
    - Wire mesh buried under the substrate extending 2-3 ft. (0.6- 0.9 m) or a concrete apron extending 1-2 ft. (0.3-0.6 m) into the enclosure are recommended.
    - A concrete apron may also be extended 1-2 ft. (0.3-0.6 m) on either side of the gate.
- p. Gaps at gates, posts and other places do not exceed 1 in. (25.4 mm) and are designed to prevent noses, paws and tails from becoming trapped and from reaching into adjacent enclosures.
- q. Dimensions

- A maximum dimension of 1 in. x 1 in. (25.4 mm x 25.4 mm) for fennecs, 2 in. x 2 in. (50.8 mm X 50.8 mm) for all other canids, is recommended for chain link fence or wire mesh.
  - Where pens share common fence lines (to be avoided as much as possible) maximum dimension is 1 in. x 1 in. (25.4 mm x 25.4 mm).
  - Vinyl coated fencing is not used to reduce risk of canids chewing and ingesting the coating.
- Fencing of 9-gauge or higher chain link or wire mesh suspended on minimum 2 in. (51 mm) posts set in concrete is recommended for canids.
- Minimum vertical dimension of 8 ft. (2.44 m).
  - Additional 3 ft. (0.91 m) fencing cantilevered toward the enclosure at 35-40° if the enclosure is not covered with roof or fencing.
  - Corners of open-topped enclosures have angles of >90°.

### **Solid Barriers.**

- r. Solid barriers such as concrete block, poured concrete and artificial rock can be used as the sole method of containment or in conjunction with other types of barrier.
- s. Walls are secured in appropriate footings to ensure wall stability, and are of sufficient strength to anchor caging and furniture.
- t. Care is taken, especially with artificial rock, to ensure that contours in the rock do not provide escape routes from the enclosure.
- u. Height of the wall is the same as that for fences when measured above the nearest secure footfall.
- v. Design of areas using solid walls allows for sufficient air flow throughout an enclosure.

### **Moats**

- w. Water moats, if used, take into account the strong swimming capability of most canids.
  - Where water depth is 2 ft. (0.6m) or greater, there is no more than a 30° angle between the water and the adjacent substrate.
  - Hot wires are not used at the perimeter barrier as secondary containment.
  - There is a management plan for regions where water moats may freeze.
  - The moat does not serve as the primary source of drinking water. Acceptable water quality parameters are established and moat water is monitored on a regular basis.
  - Rescue equipment is readily available at the moat area in the event a human falls in the water.
- x. Moats are surrounded by fences, walls, hedges or shrubbery, to prevent others from approaching too close to the edge.
- y. Moats are a minimum of 18 ft. (5.5 m) wide for large canids, 10 ft. (3 m) for small canids, and have a smooth, non-climbable surface for at least the top 9 ft. (4.7 m) on the exterior side. Moats are designed to allow canids to escape back into their enclosure.
- z. Dry moats are accessible by skid steer or similar small tractor to repair erosion or grade issues to meet other service or repair needs in the enclosure.
- aa. Animal caregivers have safe and easy access to dry moats.

### **Indoor Enclosures and Shift Yards**

- bb. For mesh/chain link size and vertical dimensions see outdoor enclosure section.
- cc. Solid walls may be used, as described above, in conjunction with other types of barrier.

- dd. Shift yards are topped with mesh or roofing due to their small size, which increases the possibility of escapes.
- ee. A maximum mesh size of 1 in. x 1 in. (25.4 mm X 25.4 mm) is recommended in areas where canids share a common fence.
- ff. Walls are of sufficient strength to anchor caging and furniture.

### **H-3. Ground and Plantings**

**Ground cover indoors and out is healthy for canids. Plantings are appropriate and safe.**

#### **Vegetation**

- a. Any vegetation capable of harming canids is kept out of reach.
- b. Trees within or near animal enclosures are regularly inspected, trimmed or felled as necessary to avoid canids being harmed by falling branches, toxicity, or trauma.
  - Dens that threaten to compromise tree stability within an enclosure are filled in.
- c. Trees and climbing plants are pruned to prevent their aiding canid escape.
- d. Access to very tall trees which are useful for shade limited by electric wires, barriers etc. to prevent canids chewing bark, breaking branches or for climbing species to use them for escape.
- e. Any natural materials (e.g., plants and their products, such as seeds or fruit) are assessed for toxicity to the species held before use.

#### **Outdoor enclosures**

- f. All outdoor enclosures have a natural substrate consistent with the site.
  - The substrate can be amended with organic materials, including but not limited to soils, sand, leaf litter, bark mulch, grasses, straw and hay.
  - The substrate drains well.
- g. Climbing canid species are provided with appropriate three-dimensional environments to accommodate an array of locomotory and foraging behaviors, as well as appropriate sleeping and resting areas, including nesting and bedding materials.
- h. Canid species who naturally dig and root are provided with suitable substrates, nesting and bedding materials, as species appropriate.
  - Digging risks (e.g. soil collapse, flooding and caregiver access to animals) are taken into account in facility design.
- i. Where natural topography of an enclosure is not varied, it is created through the addition of natural and placed elements.

#### **Indoor enclosures**

- j. All indoor enclosures have a non-slip concrete floor and, provided adequate septic service is present, are sloped to a drain.
- k. For new construction, the indoor area is designed to accommodate a deep litter substrate.
  - Deep litter enclosures are designed to allow appropriate litter depth and drainage for proper functioning.
  - Litter is properly spot-cleaned and maintained.

- I. Existing construction ensures that all floors are sealed.
- m. Bedding materials are provided in sufficient amount/depth to prevent contact with the concrete.
  - Bedding material suitable for use includes, but is not limited to, bark mulch, leaf litter, wood wool, straw hay, shredded paper and wood shavings.
- n. All canids are observed regularly for signs of illness that may be related to ingestion of foreign objects, including wood shavings, bark mulch or other materials that may pose a hazard.

#### **Shift yards**

- o. All outdoor shift yards have a minimum of 50% of the surface area in natural substrate. The remaining 50% may be concrete as appropriate for drainage, sanitation and structural needs.
- p. The substrate can be amended with organic materials including, but not limited to, soils, sand, leaf litter, bark mulch, grasses, straw and hay. The substrate drains well.
- q. Bedding materials are provided in sufficient amount/depth to prevent direct contact with any concrete surfaces.
- r. Shift yards for digging species are secured with buried fencing or a poured concrete pad or apron.

### **H-4. Transfer Doors**

**Canid enclosure transfer doors are appropriately designed to ensure both animal and human health and safety.**

#### **General**

- a. Animal transfer doors are a key element of facility design.
- b. Doors are designed to allow transport crates to safely attach to them.
  - Transport crates should be able to be moved in and out of the enclosure through the transfer doors.
- c. Transfer doors are designed to remain functional under all circumstances and are maintained in good working order and free from any encumbrances that may prevent opening and closing.
- d. Doors are designed to allow caregiver view of enclosures while operating the doors.
- e. Minimum dimensions of transfer doors are such that canids can maintain normal posture when passing through the opening.
- f. Transfer doors are located at ground level.
- g. Doors are designed such that people are out of view when canids are being shifted. If not, no eye contact is made with the canids going through the doors.
- h. Doors and door hardware are properly maintained to ensure proper functioning.

#### **Security**

- i. Transfer doors and their frames are constructed of materials similar in strength to those used in the primary enclosure.
- j. Doors are lockable in both the open and closed positions.
- k. For pneumatic or hydraulic doors, pneumatic or hydraulic pressure is sufficient for keeping doors in the open position. A mechanical lock is, however, in place to lock the door in the closed position.
- l. Particular attention is given to preventing hay/shavings from affecting door mechanisms.

### **Animal Safety**

- m. Doors operated via remote control are visible from the control area.
- n. Guillotine doors are not recommended due to risk of animal injury. If used, a backup system should be in place to prevent door from free falling due to mechanical failure or operator error.
- o. Hydraulic systems use peanut or other food-grade oils to prevent risks to the canids in the event of leakage.
- p. Hydraulic and pneumatic door systems include backup systems to allow for door usage in the event of equipment failure.

### **User Safety**

- q. If door handles or locking mechanisms are in close proximity to the enclosure, a solid barrier is present to protect the user.
- r. Double door systems are used to prevent escape from canid holding areas.

## **H-5. Shelter**

**Canids have access to man-made shelter that provides each individual with protection from extreme weather (including, but not limited to, prevailing wind, snow, sleet, rain, sun, and temperature extremes).**

- a. Canids have space to seek refuge from sun, wind, inclement weather and enclosure mates.
- b. Shelter does not create or result in 'dead ends' in which individuals can be trapped by other group members.
- c. Shade and shelter are provided in multiple locations within enclosures to ensure that all canids have access to shade throughout the day.
- d. Shade and shelter can be created through natural and artificial means including hollow logs, rock overhangs, underground dens, den boxes, shade trees and shade fabric.
  - The minimum number of den boxes per enclosure is two (2), however, additional den boxes are provided for large packs.
  - Length, depth and location of den, and soil type are considered when determining whether to fill in a natural den or allow its continued used by the canids
- e. Shelter areas provide dry space during wet weather, as well as protection from wind.
- f. Shelter design does not result in dead ends in which subordinate individuals can be trapped by dominant animals.

## **H-6. Enclosure Furniture**

**Canids are provided with an appropriately complex and rich habitat to explore, to ensure the animals' physical, nutritional and stimulation needs are met.**

## **General**

- a. Enclosures are equipped in accordance with the needs of the canids with bedding material, water features, den/hide boxes, appropriate substrate, vegetation and other enrichment materials designed to aid and encourage normal behavior patterns and minimize any abnormal behavior.
- b. Appropriate complexity is provided through the use of various natural and artificial materials in the enclosure, using a combination of items including, but not limited to, those listed above.
- c. The date that items are placed in an enclosure is noted, and items are removed when they become soiled, damaged or novelty has diminished.
- d. Climbing canid species are provided access to the vertical space available within the enclosures.
- e. Digging/burrowing canid species have access to areas for digging and/or den boxes.

## **Outdoor Enclosures**

- Visual barriers can be used to avoid confrontation or aggression, and include climbing structures, fallen logs, culvert pipes, walls, shade structures, topography and large enrichment items.
- Areas for digging/burrowing are provided where possible and species appropriate. Burrows/dens dug are monitored for potential collapse and/or flooding.
- Climbing structures accommodate natural locomotion patterns for any climbing species housed. When multiple species are housed together, climbing structures created specifically for each species' unique needs are provided. Metal pipe is not used to construct climbers as it becomes dangerously hot in summer sun and can damage skin during cold weather. Climbing structures should be accessible by staff for routine sanitation, repairs and updates and should include:
  - horizontal and vertical elements
  - locations and/or mechanisms to provide enrichment above ground level;
  - resting platforms
  - soft substrate such as soil, bedding material, mulch or leaf litter is installed below climbers to minimize risk of injuries from falls, especially to youngsters and older individuals.
  - Water sources may be provided for species who enjoy water access. Permanent pool structures, where present, have an adequate filtration system to maintain institutional water quality parameters or are designed to allow easy draining, cleaning and refilling at suitable intervals to ensure water remains potable.
  - In excessive heat, fountains and misters may also be used to cool the air.
  - Other Materials
  - Ropes, if provided, are secured at both ends with sufficient tension to prevent an animal from becoming entangled. Frayed portions of rope are removed immediately.
  - Logs are placed and secured in a manner that prevents rolling or falling onto animals.

## **Indoor Enclosures/Shift Yards**

- To the greatest extent possible, all visual barriers, digging/burrowing areas and climbing structures meet outdoor enclosure criteria.
- f. Indoor furniture is constructed of materials that can be sanitized or easily replaced when they become overly soiled. Furniture is accessible to staff for routine cleaning and repair.
- g. Benches and other structures allow for climbing and for sleeping above ground level as species appropriate.
- h. Den boxes are provided, as species appropriate.

## **H-7. Sanitation**

**Proper sanitation is practiced to reduce pathogen transmission.**

### **General**

- a. Local, county, state laws regarding proper waste removal are observed.
- b. Canids are transferred from enclosures prior to cleaning, disinfection and/or sanitizing.
- c. As fomites (shoes, clothing, etc. which carry infectious materials) may be a source of zoonotic disease, all who may come in contact with such materials are made aware of these risks and trained accordingly. (See also Standard V-8, "Zoonotic Disease Program").
- d. Uneaten perishable food is removed within a timeframe appropriate for the type of foodstuff and size of enclosure, prior to molding or contamination.

### **Removal of Animal Waste**

- e. Animal waste is removed from the habitat as often as necessary to prevent contamination of the canids contained therein, to minimize disease hazards and to reduce odors. This also enables caregivers to collect fecal samples in a timely manner.
- f. Soiled bedding material and substrate are removed and replaced with fresh materials daily, or as needed to prevent buildup. If odorous, bedding is changed regardless of how long in place.
- g. Damaged and soiled enrichment items are removed daily, or as soon as the canids allow access to the area.
- h. Efforts are made to prevent native wildlife getting access to waste.

### **Tools**

- i. Each enclosure has dedicated tools to prevent cross contamination between enclosures. When resources restrict the ability to have dedicated tools, tools are disinfected between enclosures to prevent the spread of parasites and disease.
- j. Tools are labeled when use is restricted to specific areas.
- k. Sanitation tools or equipment, including wheelbarrows, are not used for transport or storage of foodstuffs or bedding.

### **Cleaning and Disinfection**

- l. Feeding areas, automatic water devices, water and food containers are cleaned and disinfected daily.
- m. Care is taken to minimize overspray of waste, directly or via aerosolizing, into adjacent cages during cleaning.
- n. Animals are not present in enclosures being cleaned using power hoses. Care is taken to prevent accidental spraying of animals in adjacent enclosures when power hoses are used for cleaning.
- o. Concrete floored enclosures are dried with a squeegee, and as needed fans, to ensure floors are dry before bedding material is replaced.
- p. All hard surfaces including walls, floors, ceiling, benches, climbing structures, cage mesh and caregiver work areas are sanitized regularly to the extent possible. Note that in large outside enclosures with plenty of exposure to sunshine and rain, there may not be a need for scrubbing and cleaning but areas must be monitored for potential sanitation problems.
- q. Cleaning and Disinfection Standard Operating Procedures are developed and followed to address:

- safe disinfectant use to prevent hazards to the canids, caregivers and the environment;
- cleaning and disinfecting protocols for food preparation and veterinary care areas using more powerful disinfectants on hard surfaces;
- daily, weekly, monthly and quarterly cleaning schedules for all hard surfaces including walls, floors, ceiling, benches, cage mesh and staff work areas designed to minimize the risk of disease transmission;
- disinfectants and other cleaning products stored separately from foodstuffs.

r. A Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) or equivalent is readily available for all cleaning products in use and all containers are properly labeled as to contents.

## **H-8. Temperature, Humidity, Ventilation, Lighting**

**Temperature, humidity, ventilation, and lighting are appropriately addressed.**

### **Temperature**

- a. The temperature is within an acceptable range for the species housed.
  - Weather is considered in addition to temperature.
  - Allowance is made to accommodate individual animals not able to tolerate temperatures above or below the usual range of comfort for the species.
  - For outdoor enclosures and shift yards, canids have access to heated or cooled areas when ambient temperature falls below 0°F (-17°C), adjusted for wind chill, or rises above 85°F (29.4°C) Great caution is taken with elderly, infant and disabled canids.
  - North American small canids, temperate zone canids, wolves, coyotes and wolf-dog hybrids can tolerate temperatures well below freezing but these species are provided adequate den space and sufficient bedding material during cold weather.
  - Fennec foxes are provided with heated areas when temperatures fall below 55°F (12.7°C).
  - Arctic foxes are monitored for signs of heat stress when temperatures reach 80°F (26.7°C) and provided with access to cooled areas, fans, misters, etc. as needed.
  - Windbreaks are sufficient in number to accommodate all canids simultaneously with consideration for social structure and relationships in a group.
  - Shade is available throughout the day in a number of areas and adequate size space to accommodate all canids simultaneously with consideration for social structure and relationships within a group.
  - Care is taken to prevent direct canid contact with heat sources. Note: Infrared bulbs or 'heat lamps' are not recommended as heat sources due to risks associated with bulb breakage and tissue damage in the canids.
    - Heating blocks/panels, if used, are installed and used so as to ensure they pose no risk to the canids.
- b. For indoor enclosures, an average ambient temperature range of 40°F (4.4°C) and 85°F (29.4°C) is recommended for North American canids. African canid temperature range for indoor enclosures is 60°F (15.6°C) to 75°F (24°C).
  - Heat can be provided by forced air or hydronic heating systems.
  - Cool air can be provided by refrigerant air conditioning, "swamp coolers", fans, or misters.

- Providing canids with opportunities to choose temperature ranges within an enclosure is preferred. This can be achieved by access to areas near heat vents, skylights, or hog warmers for example.
- Even when ambient temperatures are 'warm', bare concrete floors, especially damp floors, are too cold for many individuals and are not considered suitable substrate or housing for canids.
- Any climate control systems include back-up power in case of equipment or power failure.

### **Humidity**

- c. Optimal indoor humidity is between 40% and 70%. Humidity should not be kept above 80% in controlled environments to prevent fungal and mold growth. High humidity can be mitigated through proper ventilation or dehumidifier systems.
  - Prolonged periods of very low humidity may negatively affect coat quality in some species.

### **Ventilation**

- d. Proper ventilation of indoor enclosures is critical,
  - In these areas, Heat Recovery Ventilators and Energy Recovery Ventilators can provide fresh outdoor air with minimal heat loss.
- e. Indoor enclosures ideally have a negative air pressure, with regular exchange of non-re-circulated air.
  - A minimum of one complete air exchange per hour is recommended.
  - Where negative air pressure is not used, HEPA filters may be installed to maintain re-circulated air quality.
- f. To the extent possible, separate air handling systems are maintained between animal areas to prevent disease transmission.
- g. Proper window and door placement can ensure sufficient cross-ventilation in warm climates.

### **Lighting**

- h. Light, natural and artificial, is appropriate for the species housed in terms of intensity, spectrum and duration.
  - Indoor enclosures - Natural lighting is optimal and can be obtained using skylights, windows, roll-up doors and other means. Glass bricks may be considered, taking into account the fact that light intensity will be less than with clear glass.
  - Supplemental lighting is provided to ensure adequate light, both day and night, for caregivers to observe animals, clean enclosures and perform related animal care tasks.
  - When animals are confined indoors overnight, sufficient lighting is used to extend the daylight period to a natural diurnal rhythm for the species housed to allow animals time to eat and select sleeping sites.
  - Outdoor enclosures and shift yards - Supplemental lighting is available for use in outdoor areas in event of an emergency.

## **NUTRITION REQUIREMENTS**

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### **N-1. Water**

**Fresh clean water is available in sufficient quantity.**

#### **Quantity**

- a. Fresh clean water is available at all times to all individuals.

- b. Multiple water sources are available for group-housed canids to ensure high-ranking individuals do not dominate water sources.

#### **Quality**

- c. Water quality parameters are maintained at a generally acceptable level for canids in terms of turbidity, salts, etc.
- d. Potable water sources are tested for contaminants annually.
- e. All water sources (including water bowls) are cleaned at least daily, and more often if needed.
- f. If automatic water devices are not used in hot climates, water sources are shaded or changed multiple times to avoid overly hot water.
- g. If automatic water devices are not used, care is taken to ensure bowls are secured such that the canid cannot tip it over, play with it or hide it from view.

#### **Automatic Water Devices**

- h. Devices are tested daily to ensure water is available.
- i. Devices are easily disabled when animals must be fasted for medical purposes.
- j. When monitoring of water consumption is required, an alternative means of providing water is devised.
- k. In colder climates, steps are taken (such as installation of heat sources) to ensure water consumption does not decrease with lower ambient air temperatures.

## **N-2. Diet**

**A properly balanced and healthy diet is provided appropriately based on the needs of each canid, following veterinary instructions for special needs.**

#### **General**

- a. A veterinarian or qualified nutritionist periodically reviews all aspects of canid diet at the sanctuary.
- b. Diets of individual canids (including vitamin supplementation) are of a quality, quantity and variety to match the physiological and psychological state of the individual as it changes over time, with consideration for the age, life stage, species, condition, and size of the individual.
- c. Food is wholesome, palatable, free from contamination and of sufficient quantity and nutritive value to maintain all canids in good health.
- d. The sanctuary utilizes a feeding regimen that ensures each individual receives adequate nutrition regardless of status in social group.
- e. Where possible and appropriate, each canid's daily dietary needs are documented and made available to animal care staff.
- f. In open space enclosures, routine observation of feeding activity ensures all
- g. animals are able to access sufficient food.
- h. Other than commercial diets prepared specifically for canids, only food "fit for human consumption" is fed.
- i. Species specific dietary concerns:
  - Grey and crab-eating foxes benefit from a diet with a higher proportion of cereals and fruits than other canids.

- Raccoon dog natural diet consists largely of aquatic species (e.g. fish, frogs, mollusks and water insects) in addition to rabbits and rodents.
- Arctic and Culpeo fox and bush dogs are more strictly carnivorous than other small canid species.
- Fennec fox are regularly offered commercially available insects such as crickets, mealworms and waxworms.
- Mane wolves are fed a lower protein diet to reduce risk of urinary stone formation. Soy-based diets are avoided due to a tendency toward soy intolerance.

#### **Commercially Prepared Kibble/Dry Food**

j. Canids are omnivorous and generally offered a meat-based diet, supplemented with kibble, fruits, vegetables and insects.

- The kibble may serve as the core nutrition of the diet where access to balanced commercial meat products is limited.
- Canids on a kibble-based diet are supplemented with meat products as part of their balanced diet.
- A high quality, high protein dog kibble or similar product for wild canids is preferred.

#### **Animal Protein**

k. Commercially available meat products are preferred as the main dietary source.

l. Meat products are offered when the canids are most active and likely to consume the diet to reduce risk of spoilage.

m. Bones are offered regularly except when forming new packs/social groups or when canid groups are experiencing social tension.

- Type of bone offered is based on veterinary recommendation for the age and size of canids housed, to reduce the risk of mouth and tooth injury.

n. Rodents, quail or rabbits may be offered but are not considered a complete diet.

o. Carefully sourced (see Carcass Feeding below) whole or partial carcasses are also appropriate when adequately balanced and supplemented under the supervision of a veterinarian or animal nutritionist.

#### **Carcass Feeding**

p. Carefully sourced whole carcasses may be offered to canids. If hunted meat is offered, be aware that lead may be present and, if possible, remove it.

q. Uneaten portions of carcasses are removed from enclosures after 24 hours.

r. Meat from animals that have died from disease, are suspected to have been diseased or sick, or have died of unknown causes is not fed.

s. Animals euthanized with chemical agents are not used for food.

#### **Vegetables and Fruit**

t. North American fox species' diets include modest amounts of berries and vegetables as seasonally appropriate.

u. Small amounts of vegetables and fruit may be included in the diet of other species.

#### **Vitamins/Supplements**

v. Prior to offering supplemental vitamins, the health and condition of the individual canid, as well as the diet, is reviewed by a nutritionist experienced in canid care and/or the attending veterinarian.

#### **Treats/Enrichment items**

- w. Preferred food items from the basic diet can be reserved for enrichment.
- x. The calories in foods used as enrichment are considered when planning the overall diet.

### **N-3. Food Presentation and Feeding Techniques**

**Food is handled and prepared in an appropriate manner to retain nutritional value, freshness, and freedom from spoilage, invasive species or other forms of contamination.**

#### **General**

- a. Feeding and drinking receptacles are placed in positions that minimize the risks of contamination from soiling by the canids themselves, wild birds, rodents and other potentially invasive species.
- b. Food receptacles, where used, are appropriate for the species housed in terms of number, size and placement, and are cleaned daily.
- c. Receptacles for animal food and water are designed to minimize spillage and are not be used for any other purpose.
- d. Food items are placed in stainless steel buckets/bowls or other material that cannot be easily damaged by chewing, or on easily sanitized pads to minimize contamination from urine and feces. Kibble is not fed loose on the ground or floor.
- e. Canids fed a balanced commercial diet are fed a minimum of once daily during the active feeding time of the species housed. Canids are not fasted as part of a regular feeding program.

#### **Feeding Techniques**

- f. Food is provisioned at multiple feeding sites throughout enclosures to ensure all canids have access and to reduce or eliminate aggression that results from competition for food resources, especially preferred items.

#### **Diet Changes, Increases or Decreases**

- g. Adjustments made to an already formulated and nutritionally balanced diet are made to the entire diet to ensure continued nutritional balance.
- h. Considerations for diet increase include weight and condition of the canid, food consumption, activity level and other medical or behavioral considerations.
- i. Diet increases or decreases are made in modest increments with animal response to the change assessed for a minimum period before additional changes are made.
- j. Underweight individuals experiencing health or behavioral problems may be separated for supplemental feeding as needed to avoid undesirable weight gain in conspecifics.

### **N-4. Food Storage**

**Food is stored appropriately.**

#### **General**

- a. Separate and secure facilities are provided for proper and hygienic storage of food.

- b. Dry goods are stored in clean, dry storage areas in sealed containers or on pallets. Products are dated and rotated to use oldest stock first, and expired food, as well as bags damaged by pests, are discarded.
- c. Items frozen for use are dated and labeled, and no frozen items are thawed and refrozen. Items that are not fed frozen are thawed in a refrigerator to minimize risk of spoilage.

## **N-5. Food Handling**

**Food is handled and prepared in an appropriate manner to retain nutritional value, freshness, and freedom from spoilage, invasive species or other forms of contamination.**

### **General**

- a. Food is protected against dampness, deterioration, mold, and/or contamination by insects, birds, rodents or other animals.
- b. No food that is spoiled or otherwise contaminated is served.
- c. Diets are prepared in a safe and hygienic manner to reduce the possibility of contamination or spoilage.
- d. Separate cutting boards, utensils and food preparation surfaces are used when meats, fish and produce diets are prepared in a common kitchen area.
- e. Food preparation techniques meet all local, state/province, and national regulations.
- f. Food preparation surfaces are thoroughly cleaned after use.
- g. Staff and volunteers wash hands thoroughly prior to handling food, and wearing gloves during food preparation is recommended.

## **Veterinary Care**

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### **V-1. General Medical Program and Staffing**

**There is a written veterinary medical program, overseen by a veterinarian, with adequate support staff at the Sanctuary, with 24/7 veterinary care available on call.**

- a. The sanctuary has a written veterinary medical program, including long term preventative medical protocols and disease surveillance and containment procedures, that is developed and carried out under the supervision of a licensed veterinarian – the attending veterinarian - who has training or experience in providing medical care for the canids and other species housed at the sanctuary, and who is aware of specific concerns regarding the canids at the sanctuary.
- b. One or more full-time veterinarians specifically concerned with the veterinary medical program is highly recommended for sanctuaries whose budget will support the salaries of such trained personnel. Sanctuaries unable to employ a full-time veterinarian have access to a part-time

veterinarian, under a contractual or other similar arrangement, with training and appropriate experience with the canids housed at the sanctuary.

- c. Veterinary care is available 7 days per week and 24 hours per day for the sanctuary on an on-call basis when a veterinarian is not physically on grounds. When the primary veterinarian is unavailable, there are other suitably experienced veterinarians on call.
- d. There are support staff to carry out the following roles: (1) Husbandry (canid caregivers), (2) Technical (medical technologists, veterinary nurses, or individuals trained at the sanctuary), and (3) Clerical. The sanctuary has available properly trained and qualified professional and supporting personnel as necessary to implement these roles.
- e. A staff member is trained to serve as a medical program director, dealing with emergencies until a veterinarian arrives or is reached. He or she is able to direct any restraint of the canids, be responsible for administration of post-surgical care, and be skilled in maintaining appropriate medical records.
- f. Medications are stored appropriately on site, according to label directions. Medications requiring refrigeration are stored separately from food items.

## **V-2. On-Site and Off-Site Veterinary Facilities**

**Veterinary facilities are appropriately located, designed and equipped.**

- a. Any on-site veterinary facility at the sanctuary meets all local and state/province building regulations
- b. Surfaces in the on-site veterinary facility with which canids can come in contact are non-toxic and can be readily disinfected.
- c. The on-site facility is located away from areas of heavy public use to minimize the noise levels for hospitalized canids.
- d. The on-site facility has separate areas for any of the following veterinary functions performed on-site: physical examinations and medical treatments, enclosures for hospitalized canids, sterile surgery, necropsy, medical quarantine, laboratory, radiology and pharmaceuticals storage which includes, when necessary, a safe for narcotics that meets the standards set by applicable regulations (e.g., the Drug Enforcement Administration [DEA] in the United States).
  - Food preparation areas, storage areas and staff locker room/housing with showers are separate from the medical facility.
- e. If the sanctuary does not have an on-site veterinary facility, or only a partially outfitted veterinary facility it has a contract or similar arrangement with a nearby veterinary hospital for off-site treatment as needed. The hospital should have a sterile surgical facility with anesthetic equipment to include radiology equipment, a laboratory, and pharmaceutical storage. If necropsies are performed at the hospital, there is a separate area for necropsies and a separate storage refrigerator for storage of carcasses.
- f. See also Standard V-4 "Clinical Pathology, Surgical, Treatment and Necropsy Facilities."

## **V-3. Preventative Medicine Program**

**The sanctuary has a complete preventative medicine program.**

- a. Appropriate preventative medicine programs are in place to manage all canids, with special attention paid to geriatric animals.
- b. The preventative medicine program includes quarantine procedures, parasite surveillance and control, immunization, contraception, infectious diseases screening, dental prophylaxis, and periodic reviews of diets, husbandry techniques and invasive species control.
- c. When circumstances permit, and as appropriate for the individual animal, an overall examination is performed annually, blood is collected, serum banked as a baseline control and the results are recorded. The attending veterinarian, in consultation with the sanctuary director, determines any schedule for routine physical examinations, including ocular, dental and musculoskeletal assessment, and implements any necessary treatment.
- d. A veterinarian, veterinary technician, or other trained personnel performs regular fecal examinations to look for parasites, protozoa and bacteria (random enclosure sampling is adequate for group-housed canids). Results are recorded. Fecal examinations are repeated following treatment to evaluate efficacy.
- e. All canids are immunized as recommended by the attending veterinarian, using currently recommended procedures and products as appropriate for the country, species and individual. Where possible, killed vaccines are utilized to minimize the potential for adverse reactions. Schedules and products are dictated by the disease status of domestic and wild animals in the area surrounding the sanctuary and relevant local and national laws.
- f. When canids are immunized, the type, serial number, and source of product are recorded in the individual animal's medical record.

#### **V-4. Clinical Pathology, Surgical, Treatment and Necropsy Facilities**

**Clinical pathology, surgical facilities and services, medical treatment for sanctuary canids and necropsy are all high quality, humane, professional, legal, and safe.**

##### **Clinical Pathology**

- a. Diagnostic laboratory services are available on- or off-site to assist with the examination of canids and the diagnosis of disease.
- b. Diagnostic capabilities include cytology, microbiology, parasitology, complete blood count, blood chemistry, urinalysis, serology and other appropriate laboratory procedures.

##### **Surgical**

- c. The sanctuary has access to surgical facilities (either on-site or at a nearby veterinary hospital) that are clean, free from excessive noise and unnecessary pedestrian traffic, have adequate lighting, ventilation, and temperature controls, and that can be easily cleaned and disinfected. For sanctuaries utilizing off-site aseptic surgical facilities, an on-site area that can be adapted for occasional or emergency aseptic surgical use is available.
- d. Surgical facilities have access to appropriate anesthetics including injectable and inhalant anesthetics, reversal agents, etc. Where gas anesthetic equipment, including scavenger units, is used equipment is cleaned and calibrated and filters are replaced, annually at a minimum. Gas cylinders are safely stored and replaced regularly.
- e. Facilities have sterilized surgical packs, surgical preparation solutions, intravenous fluids, fluid administration equipment, pulse oximetry, heart monitoring equipment (e.g. electrocardiogram,

stethoscope), and emergency drugs on-site with appropriate maintenance and/or replacement schedules for each.

- f. Surgical facilities have access to gas anesthesia equipment with a gas scavenging system and oxygen, sterilized surgical packs, surgical preparation solutions, intravenous fluids, fluid administration equipment, pulse oximetry, heart monitoring equipment (e.g. electrocardiogram, stethoscope), and emergency drugs.
- g. If on-site, the sanctuary ensures that surgical equipment is maintained in good working order and is on a program of routine preventive maintenance.
- h. Only a licensed veterinarian performs surgery, using standard operating procedures. (Note: A veterinary technician appropriately trained by a veterinarian in states or provinces where such action is permitted by veterinary practice acts can perform surgical first aid.)
- i. The veterinarian uses aseptic surgical procedures whenever applicable.
- j. Veterinarians and support personnel are compassionate and knowledgeable about the humane aspects of canid treatment, including the proper use of anesthetics, analgesics, and tranquilizers.
- k. Surgical incisions are observed daily, or as frequently as possible while minimizing stress to the canids, for signs of dehiscence or infection. Analgesics are administered post-operatively when appropriate.

#### **Treatment**

- l. Medications are maintained and used in accordance with local, state/province, and national laws and regulations and are administered in accordance with the state veterinary practice act, or equivalent outside the US.
- m. The sanctuary has a pharmacy on-site where routinely used drugs, such as emergency resuscitative medications, antibiotics, antihelmintics, fluids, anesthetics, analgesics, tranquilizers, etc. are maintained.
- n. All medications are purchased, prescribed and administered under the guidance of the veterinarian.
- o. When distributed to canid caregivers, medications are properly labeled and packaged, with the contents identified and instructions for the amount, frequency and duration of administration as well as the name and identification of the canid to receive the medication, the expiration date of the medication, prescribing doctor and number of refills if any.
- p. All medical treatments and drug prescriptions are documented in the canid's medical record.
- q. Basic physical capture and restraint equipment to facilitate medical treatment is available at the sanctuary.

#### **Necropsy**

- r. Whenever possible, there is an isolated area on the grounds for performing necropsies, or appropriate storage facilities until the deceased canid can be transported to a facility for a postmortem examination as soon as possible, understanding that necropsies performed longer than 24 hours after death be of limited value due to autolysis. (Note: Any refrigerated area for holding dead canids is physically separate from live canid holding, treatment, and surgery areas and from food supply storage or preparation areas.)
- s. Disposition of dead canids and their parts meet all legal restrictions.
- t. Dead specimens not used are incinerated or disposed of as deemed suitable by the veterinarian in accordance with local, state/province and national regulations.

## **V-5. Quarantine and Isolation of Canids**

**Appropriate quarantine and isolation policies and accommodations are in place and utilized.**

- a. Upon arrival, all canids undergo quarantine for a minimum of 30-60 days or according to the protocol established by the attending veterinarian, or for a greater period if required by applicable law. The quarantine period should be longer (at least 60-90 days) for those canids that have received minimal screening prior to arrival, such as canids from the wild. Canids previously housed together may be quarantined together.
- b. If the sanctuary does not have an adequate quarantine facility, steps should be taken to have canids undergo quarantine under these guidelines prior to their arrival.
- c. Local, state/province, or national regulations regarding quarantine of newly arrived canids are followed.
- d. All utensils and outer clothing used in quarantine are restricted to that area.
- e. Protective clothing, boots and footbaths are used by all staff entering the quarantine area or areas containing quarantined animals. Quarantine clothing is not removed from the quarantine area, except in a sealed container for cleaning.
- f. Caregivers wear protective gloves and masks when cleaning or handling anything with which the quarantine canids come into contact.
- g. Where possible, staff working in quarantine areas does not work with other sanctuary animals. If this is not possible, work is done in the quarantine areas last.
- h. Quarantine staff cares for newly admitted canids in their quarantine area before caring for sick animals, which are housed in separate isolation enclosures.
- i. The quarantine area allows for daily cleaning and sanitation, either with removable catch trays or a drainage system that allows fecal matter to flush into a septic system; waste is otherwise removed and disposed of properly.
- j. In enclosures housing animals carrying infectious or transmissible diseases, to the extent possible, all surfaces of the enclosure are properly sanitized.
- k. Quarantine areas have adequate ventilation, heat and air conditioning, which are used to ensure optimum conditions, particularly in the case of young, elderly or sick canids who may be more sensitive to environmental changes.
- l. Quarantine animal waste is handled separately from all other manure or compost at the facility. Because of the risk of disease transmission, quarantine waste is not spread on pastures or composted.

## **V-6. Medical Records and Controlled Substances**

**Complete medical records are maintained, appropriate statistics maintained, canids have permanent identification, and controlled substances are prescribed and stored legally.**

## **Medical Records**

- a. An electronic database format is recommended for most record keeping, but in either case, the sanctuary has a back-up system for the records.
- b. Records that, if not required by law, are required by GFAS include but are not limited to:

### **Individual Records**

- Individual animal records showing origin, age, species, gender, microchip number, tattoo, photo, bio, etc.;
- Individual veterinary record;
- Reproductive history, if known;
- Contraception records;
- Weight, current diet and record of diet changes;
- Food consumption and preferred food items;
- Enrichment dates, items used and canid's response;
- Where applicable and appropriate, any positive reinforcement training records showing completed objectives and those in development;
- Current and historic enclosure mates, social groups and partners, including response to various phases of introduction and response to other individuals;
- Acquisition documents;

### **Group Records**

- Welfare assessment for the canids as a whole including measures of: disease prevalence, morbidity and mortality rates, and activity levels;
- Inspection Reports, as applicable, from international, national, state/province and local agencies, as well as accrediting organizations;
- Other animal documentation, as applicable, such as complaints or police reports pertaining to specific animal, and animal escape reports.

  

- c. Medical records are dated, legible and indicate examination findings, treatments (types of medication, dosage, duration), surgical procedures, anesthetic procedures (type of agent, dosage, effect), results of all laboratory tests (parasitological, hematologic, bacteriologic, etc.) pathology reports, plus immunization records with all relevant dates, canid identification and nutrition/diet information, and, where applicable, necropsy reports.
- d. Copies of medical records accompany any canid who is transferred to another sanctuary.
- e. Medical records are maintained under the direction of the veterinarian or trained canid caregiver. Where possible, duplicate record sets are stored at another site, or in a fire proof or theft proof safe on site or an online storage system.
- f. Statistics are tabulated regularly on the rates and nature of illness and mortality in the sanctuary.

## **Controlled Substances**

- g. Only a licensed veterinarian prescribes controlled substances used at the sanctuary, and all such substances are secured in accordance with any applicable laws.
- h. The sanctuary maintains appropriate records and logs for all controlled drugs used. All drug logs are kept up to date and comply with any national or other legal requirements (such as the Drug Enforcement Agency in the U.S.).

- i. Expired drugs are marked as such and stored separately.
- j. When disposing of drugs, they are discarded in accordance with applicable national, state, and local law and regulations (such as the USDA and DEA in the United States).

## **V-7. Breeding/Contraception**

**No intentional propagation of canids occurs, and sound practices are in place and implemented to prevent propagation and to properly care for infants born at the sanctuary.**

- a. Although GFAS recognizes the importance of appropriate “conservation breeding” programs, they fall outside the mandate of GFAS Accreditation programs unless they adhere to the following guidelines:
  - Animals are not brought into captivity for the purpose of breeding. Animals that are allowed to breed should enter a wildlife facility as a result of normal acquisition protocols such as surrender or government confiscation and be considered an endangered or threatened species with available release sites within the state/province, conducted with specific conservation goals, in accordance with local, state/province, national, and international law and regulations.
  - Breeding should not be forced – that is, not the result of artificial insemination or being placed in enclosures of insufficient size or otherwise not in keeping with GFAS standards.
  - Breeders – that is, the parent animals – should be released into the wild with their young. If breeding animals are deemed non-releasable, there should be documented evidence from a qualified professional that the animals cannot be released because of a physical condition or other reason that would make them unable to survive in the wild. Offspring of non-releasable parents should not be released until an age of species-specific maturity for survivability.
  - Non-releasable breeding animals should receive the care required of all animals under the GFAS standards and should not be maintained for the purpose of breeding if they have incurable or unmanageable pain or suffering and do not have an acceptable quality of life.
  - The facility should have an identified release site for the breeding animals and offspring, with any necessary permits or memoranda of understanding in place. While GFAS may consider whether a definite plan (such as ongoing surveys of land for potential release sites and a timeline for releasing animals) is sufficient, it will not be sufficient for a facility to simply say that it hopes or plans to be able to release the animals one day. Thus, a facility may not breed any animals in captivity, even highly endangered animals in order to create a sustainable population, without a definite release plan in place.
- b. The sanctuary has canid-appropriate contraceptive programs in place with the method of contraception used based on current best practice and attending veterinarian recommendations. (See Appendix 1 for further information on contraception methods for canids.).
- c. If females arrive at the facility pregnant, the sanctuary provides necessary care and the female is allowed to deliver unless there are valid health reasons for terminating the pregnancy, or unless the attending veterinarian feels the pregnancy is in such an early stage that aborting the fetus is an option, if so desired by the sanctuary. After delivery, reproductive control methods are applied after allowing adequate time for weaning as appropriate for that canid, provided there is no further opportunity for breeding during this period of time.

- d. Infants born at the sanctuary remain with the mother as appropriate for natural rearing, provided there is no further opportunity for breeding during this period of time. Infants are only removed from females for hand-rearing if there is a threat to the life of the infant or the mother.

## **V-8. Zoonotic Disease Program**

**The staff and sanctuary veterinarian are knowledgeable about zoonotic diseases that may affect canids at the sanctuary, and implement appropriate policies and procedures as needed to mitigate risk and deal with any exposures that occur.**

- a. The sanctuary's veterinarian is knowledgeable about zoonotic diseases that may affect canids at the sanctuary. All potential or emerging diseases have emergency procedures and a defined process to avoid transmission of diseases through bites, scratches, body fluids, direct contact with canids and other means. (Note: Additional precautions may be necessary for staff classified as increased risk of disease, including those who are immune-compromised.)
- b. Personnel have adequate training to understand the potential risk of disease transmission, including potential sources of disease, modes of disease transmission, and clinical signs associated with disease.
- c. All personnel are informed when a zoonotic disease occurs at the sanctuary.
- d. When a reportable disease is identified, all appropriate local, state/province, and national regulatory officials are contacted.
- e. All areas in which the staff has direct contact with canids have hand-washing facilities available in the immediate vicinity (or an equivalent; e.g., bactericidal hand-wipes)
- f. Human food consumption by the staff does not occur in the immediate area of canid contact.
- g. Rabies testing and vaccination protocols vary by location. Federal, state or province and local rabies prevention protocols supersede recommendations made in this document.

## **V-9. Euthanasia**

**Euthanasia is governed by an ethical written policy that includes identification of appropriate personnel and procedures.**

- a. The sanctuary has a written policy addressing the circumstances surrounding euthanasia decisions and procedures, including the following:
- b. Euthanasia is performed in compliance with any national or local law, administered under the strict supervision of a licensed veterinarian. In extreme circumstances of animal suffering when a veterinarian is unable to reach the sanctuary in a timely manner, a method such as the use of a firearm to euthanize an animal may be required and is performed by a trained and qualified staff member when no other humane option is available.
- c. Euthanasia is in the best interest of the individual animal only used as a final option, and is not used as management tool (such as a means to create space for more animals).
- d. Acceptable reasons for euthanasia include:
  - Incurable disease/injury that is likely to cause unmanageable pain or suffering;
  - Disease/injury where treatment is likely to cause unreasonable pain or suffering;

- Disease/injury where treatment will not be effective in restoring the canid to an acceptable quality of life;
- Disease/injury where treatment is beyond the normal community standards of monetary expenditure and would cause an excessive burden on the sanctuary resources, and no other sanctuary can step in, after reasonable efforts to locate such a sanctuary;
- The process of aging has resulted in an unacceptable quality of life;
- In the event of presenting an infectious disease risk to some or all of the residents.
- For facilities engaged in the rehabilitation and reintroduction of wildlife, it is determined in accordance with an appropriate protocol or other “decision tree” analysis that an animal cannot be reintroduced to its natural habitat and there is no appropriate (consistent with these standards) long-term care option.

e. Euthanasia is performed so that it avoids distress to the canid, and unless impossible, is performed out of view of other canids.

f. The species and ecosystems are carefully considered during disposition activities.

## Well-Being and Handling of Canids

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### W-1. Physical Well-Being

**All canids are routinely monitored to ensure their physical well-being. All aspects of husbandry, including veterinary care, environmental enrichment and diet are designed to optimize the canids' physical well-being.**

- a. The welfare of each individual canid is the overriding consideration in all sanctuary actions.
- b. Canids are able to enjoy lives that are as close as possible to that of their wild counterparts as regards stimulation and interest. This is achieved by adopting husbandry and management procedures, including appropriate housing and enclosure design, environmental enrichment programs, positive reinforcement training programs and a balanced diet to meet nutritional requirements.
- c. Canids are provided with species appropriate opportunities to dig, climb, bathe, forage for food, and play by providing species-appropriate climbing structures, burrowing/digging areas, water features, a variety of plants and substrates and other enclosure enhancements and there are places to hide and rest in comfort.
- d. Regular assessments are performed in an effort to quantify and measure the welfare of individual animals through monitoring of nutritional, physical and social conditions. Qualified personnel conduct daily observations of each canid to monitor for signs of physical abnormalities. Any unusual activities are recorded in a log at each inspection. Sudden changes in food consumption and other behaviors are immediately brought to the attention of supervisory staff. Note: In open space enclosures, it may not be possible to observe each animal on a daily basis. In such habitats, it is important to get an accurate count and to spend time observing all canids on a weekly basis.
- e. Where possible and appropriate, records of individual canids are kept to provide both behavioral and veterinary history.

- f. Where possible, each canid is weighed annually, either during a routine physical or through the use of a built-in scale, to monitor for signs of illness and to determine dosages for chemical anesthetics.
- g. The use of positive reinforcement training may be appropriate for canids who enjoy interacting with people, to provide additional enrichment and reduce the need for chemical immobilization and to reduce stress during medical intervention.

## **W-2. Social Housing**

**Canids are grouped appropriately with the safety of animals and staff in mind.**

### **General**

- a. Canids housed together are compatible and all canids have ample space to retreat and hide as needed while social tensions are resolved.
- b. Canids are not housed near animals that interfere with their health or cause them physical or psychological discomfort.
- c. Habitats are of sufficient size to allow appropriate space between individuals in social groupings and to allow for temporary isolation from conspecifics.
- d. Canids are housed so that no individual endures constant harassment or suffers physical injury, and so social behaviors do not prevent any individual from maintaining proper nutrition and hydration.
- e. Close attention is paid to canids in social housing, with age, species, and sex of animals housed together taken into account.

### **Species-appropriate Housing**

- f. Fox species are housed as pairs, and in some situations, as trios, depending on the tolerances of individual animals. Unrelated male-female pairs are established, as appropriate. Same sex pairs or trios, if established are monitored closely for problems.
- g. Wolf and coyote groups have varied composition, depending on compatibility and species-specific social needs. Groups may include adult male, adult female, litter from past one to two seasons or adult male, adult female;
  - Same sex packs, if attempted, are closely monitored for aggression.
  - Females with pups may be housed within a pack without problems.

### **Solitary Housing**

- h. Is temporary and reserved for situations including but not limited to quarantine, medical assessment or care, lack of appropriate social partners, or social tension resulting in disruption to the main group/pack or physical aggression leading to injuries.
- i. As possible and appropriate, canids housed alone temporarily are given visual, olfactory and auditory contact with their social group.

### **Mixed Species Housing**

- j. Mixed species situations are not recommended for canids.

## **W-3. Introduction of Unfamiliar Individuals**

**Introduction of any new canid to a social group is done according to techniques appropriate for each species, with staff safety ensured.**

### **General**

- a. Introduction of unfamiliar canids is carefully considered. Professionals with experience in social introductions, if not on staff, are consulted whenever possible during these considerations.
- b. As a first step, canids are given visual and olfactory contact prior to physical contact.
- c. Canid introductions are monitored closely for several days for tension, aggression, shifts in dominance, territoriality, etc.
- d. Food and water consumption is monitored carefully to ensure that all canids are able to access food/water. Staff ensures canids are not hiding in den/nest boxes, unable to approach/access food and water.
- e. Canids have access to separate shelter, ample room to move away from each other and no opportunities for an animal to be cornered.
- f. As needed and possible, information listed below is gathered for the introduction planning process:
  - A list of individual animals to be introduced, including all that the sanctuary ultimately hopes to integrate into a group.
  - Background of each individual, including but not limited to: age and gender; social experience with other canids; rearing history (hand-reared, parent reared, time spent with mother and siblings).
- g. As appropriate or needed, benchmarks or desired outcomes are identified for each step in the process. Examples include:
  - physical location of animals during visual/olfactory contact period;
  - behavioral goals of visual/olfactory contact period;
  - benchmarks for proceeding to physical introduction;
  - space and enclosures to be used for physical introduction;
  - reasons location selected: neutral space, ample run around, visual barriers, doors that can be closed to protect animals in trouble etc.;
  - set-up for physical introduction, enrichment etc.;
  - emergency equipment that might be needed;
  - time frame necessary to acclimate animals to presence of equipment;
  - criteria for separating animals if physical introduction does not proceed safely;
  - post introduction management and husbandry protocols.
- h. The plan is developed with involvement of all staff involved with care of the species and details a series of steps that will be taken to integrate the individual animals involved. Necessary modifications to enclosures are identified and completed prior to beginning the process.
- i. The plan establishes behavioral goals for introductions and is not driven by schedules, and is open to modification as introduction/integration develops and evolves.

- j. Only normally scheduled caregivers and animal managers are present to directly observe. Individuals who are not routinely present in the animal area, including veterinary and management staff, observe via remote video or receive reports from staff.
- k. All caregivers have a clear understanding of the plan including contingencies for problems that might occur, and are empowered to take appropriate action in the event of perceived emergency.
- l. If the introduction is not successful, no attempt is made to reunite the individuals until housing or social circumstances can be changed or other factors that may have contributed to the problems, such as breeding season, have been resolved.

## **W-4. Behavioral/Psychological Well-Being**

**The behavioral/psychological well-being of each canid is evaluated and addressed, and a welfare plan and report is part of each canid's file.**

### **General**

- a. There is a formal, written enrichment program that promotes species-appropriate behavioral opportunities and ensures the captive canids' psychological well-being. A complete environmental enrichment program includes the following:
  - Structural enrichment - Enclosure design and furniture that add complexity to the environment and promote species-specific behavior.
  - Object enrichment – Objects that encourage inspection and manipulation and promote species-specific behavior.
  - Food enrichment - Varying food choices and food presentation.
  - Social enrichment - Affiliative interactions between caregivers and canids may be appropriate in some instances. The decision to include social enrichment with caregivers should be made on an individual basis, considering only the social needs of the animal, such as solitary animals, particularly those hand reared by humans with no conspecific contact or neonatal and juvenile animals in situations where appropriate.
- b. All canid care staff are trained to recognize abnormal behavior and clinical signs of illness. Measures of well-being that are assessed include:
  - species appropriate behavior and interaction with other animals;
  - the animal's ability to respond appropriately to variable environmental conditions, physiological states, developmental stages, and social situations as well as adverse stimuli.
- c. Stereotypic behavior, self-injurious behavior, and inappropriate responses to various stimuli not previously documented or witnessed may be evidence of compromised well-being and are investigated. A welfare plan to address the concerns is developed.
- d. Where possible and appropriate, a behavioral/psychological profile is maintained for each individual canid and updated annually and a copy is kept in the canid's permanent file.

## **W-5. Canid-Caregiver Relationships**

**Positive relationships between canids and caregivers are maintained. Canids are not fearful or aggressive in response to human presence or routine care procedures.**

### **General**

- a. Canids arrive at sanctuaries with a variety of previous experience with caregivers, which caregivers take into account in their interactions with these species.
- b. Facility design plays a key role in caregiver-canid safety and the ability to maintain a positive relationship.
- c. A protocol for introducing canids to new caregiver staff has been developed. Where possible, new caregivers accompany a trusted caregiver until the canids become comfortable with the new individual.
- d. A positive relationship between the canids and regular caregivers, animal managers and veterinary staff is one in which the canids are given the freedom to integrate with their conspecific social group with minimal human interference or to interact regularly with caregivers if they choose.
- e. Where possible and appropriate, animals become familiar with the veterinary staff, allowing close observation. Individual canid preference for interaction with caregivers, animal managers and veterinary staff is taken into account.
- f. The animals do not become fearful or overly aggressive in response to human presence or routine care procedures.
- g. Interactions with canids do not cause overheating, excessive cooling, physical harm, or unnecessary discomfort, and minimizes physical and psychological stress or trauma as much as possible.
- h. Negative interactions are avoided. However, when they occur, efforts are made to recover trust and a positive relationship if the canid enjoys regular interaction with people
- i. Physical abuse, deprivation of food or water, aversive spraying with a hose, and other forms of negative reinforcement or punishment-based training are never used to train, shift or otherwise handle canids. Note: This does not preclude the use of hoses or other watering devices in caring for the canids who enjoy this form of enrichment.

**Any necessary handling and restraint is done safely and appropriately, with minimal distress to canids, and staff are trained in canid-specific safe handling techniques/practices.**

## **W-6. Handling and Restraint**

### **General**

- a. In general, humans do not enter enclosures with canids. Direct physical interaction is limited to protected forms of contact, by experienced personnel, to minimize the risk of injury.
- b. Handling for veterinary care is done as expeditiously and carefully as possible in a manner that does not cause trauma, overheating, excessive cooling, physical harm, or unnecessary discomfort, and minimizes physical and psychological stress as much as possible.
- c. In general, manual restraint is not used on canids and is not attempted when multiple animals are present in an enclosure.
  - Manual capture and restraint of adult wolves, wolf-dog hybrids or large coyotes using nets is not recommended
  - African wild dogs are never manually restrained.

- d. If physical restraint or drug delivery systems must be used, the lightest and least stressful methods that are appropriate are chosen, bearing in mind the safety of staff and animal.
- e. A written policy for the humane chemical restraint and safe capture of animals housed at the sanctuary is in place, to include:
  - Training and certification in the equipment, humane chemical restraint, immobilization process, and the use of drugs for veterinarian purposes or emergencies;
  - Procedures listing at a minimum those persons authorized to administer animal drugs, situations in which they are to be utilized, location of animal drugs in a safe and secure place, and those persons with access to them, and an emergency procedure in the event of accidental human exposure.
- f. All chemical restraint equipment is cleaned after each use, maintained in good working order and tested on a regular basis.
- g. Canids are chemically immobilized by qualified personnel when direct handling is necessary (i.e., physical exams). Chemical immobilization is performed only by a licensed veterinarian or by trained staff under the guidance of a licensed veterinarian, or other qualified individuals authorized by the sanctuary director or veterinarian, following the laws and regulations of country where the animals are housed. Specific anesthetic protocols, including record-keeping, are followed.
- h. Chemical restraint is not used when multiple animals are in an enclosure except in an emergency situation. In such cases, all possible precautions are taken to prevent threats to the handlers and the animal being sedated.
- i. Multiple staff members are trained to use a dart gun and other restraint equipment, and to employ safe capture techniques. The staff, and volunteers where appropriate, are aware of who is trained and authorized to use restraint equipment.
- j. As part of their training, staff members are instructed to report any medical conditions or physical limitations that may hinder their ability to employ safe capture techniques.
- k. Where possible and appropriate, Positive Reinforcement Training is used to minimize the need for chemical immobilization and to reduce stress during procedures.
  - With appropriate training, many procedures can be performed cooperatively and without anesthesia, such as examination of body parts, treatment of superficial injury, heart rate monitoring, injection administration, etc.
  - Some canids may be conditioned to enter a squeeze cage or lockout area. Where this method of restraint is used, attachments for crates and squeeze cages are included in facility design or modifications.

## **W-7. Animal Transport**

**Canids are appropriately transported to maximize safety and minimize stress and in accordance with all local, state/province, national, international requirements and**

### **General**

- a. Canids are transported only when necessary, such as when being transported to the Sanctuary, to a medical facility for care or to another accredited Sanctuary for reasons as described in acquisition standards.

- b. Pre-transport health examinations ideally include a complete physical exam with attention to parasite checks, necessary vaccinations, and completion of any tests required by regulations of the receiving state/province or country.
- c. Health certificates and any required transport permits accompany the canid when being transported interstate or internationally. All transport abides by local, state/province, federal and international law. A veterinarian is responsible for preparing and signing the health certificate.
- d. Prior to transport, the sanctuary ensures that adequate facilities are available at the receiving end and food items that are familiar to the animal are available.
- e. Where possible and appropriate, canids are acclimated to shipping crate prior to transport. Capture, restraint, and transportation methods consider the canid's temperament and behavior in order to minimize injury, and distress.
- f. At a minimum, transport enclosures meet appropriate animal welfare standards (e.g., IATA, US Animal Welfare Act Transportation Standards or similar).
- g. Transport crates and vehicles are in good condition and meet federal and/or international standards. Equipment suitable for lifting, crating and transportation of animals kept within the sanctuary is readily available.
- h. Transport containers:
  - have impervious surfaces, which are cleaned and disinfected after use.
  - are designed to permit safe transfer into a secondary enclosure.
  - are designed to minimize the risk of the canid being able to make contact with personnel.
  - are placed within a secondary container or closed compartment on the transport vehicle.
- i. Any canid taken outside the sanctuary, for an approved reason such as medical treatment or transfer to a more appropriate sanctuary, is in the personal possession of the sanctuary director, or of competent persons acting on his/her behalf and adequate provision is made for the safety and well-being of the animal and public safety.
- j. All canids taken outside the sanctuary are kept securely at all times. Canids are managed outside the sanctuary in such a way that the animal is under control and not likely to suffer distress, cause injury or transmit or contract disease.
- k. Complete medical records, diet and husbandry information, and identifying papers (e.g., describing tattoos, or other identification methods) accompany all transported canids.

## **CANIDS BEING RELEASED TO THE WILD**

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GFAS strongly supports the efforts of wildlife rehabilitators and sanctuary managers to return wildlife to its natural environment, provided appropriate steps are taken to ensure that the animals released are likely to survive in the wild.

Facilities releasing canids to the wild must also make every effort to reduce risk of their having a damaging impact on ecological resources, including other animal species, found naturally in the release area. Examples of risk factors include but are not limited to:

- Displacement of indigenous animals;
- Transmission of novel pathogens;

- Disruption of local human communities, including damage to livestock and dwellings and injury to local inhabitants;
- Alterations to the environment that disrupt the ecological niche of other species.

For a more detailed discussion of the potential risks, as well as time and financial commitment involved in creating a quality re-introduction project, see the International Union for the Conservation of Nature Species Survival Commission (IUCN/SSC) Reintroduction Specialist Group's "Guidelines for Re-Introductions".

## **R-1. General Considerations**

**The sanctuary has policies, agreements and plans in place to optimize the chances for successful re-introduction of canids into the natural environment.**

- a. The facility has a written policy regarding the handling of any potential problems involving released animals. The policy should include but is not limited to:
  - a plan to minimize the risk to human life and property, including livestock, in the area of release;
  - a plan for compensation for or mitigation of damages incurred by the released animals;
  - a deterrent plan to discourage inappropriate activities, i.e., spending time around human habitation or livestock damage.
  - a plan for management or removal of animals who fail to integrate appropriately or who become habitual 'problem animals.'
- b. In as much as possible, using the latest available information on potential health concerns regarding other species found in the area of release, animals are tested and treated for pathogens that might pose a threat to other wildlife.
- c. The facility has agreements in place with any and all appropriate authorities to allow the release process to proceed as smoothly as possible.
  - The facility complies with any and all local/state/national policies regarding care and release of native wildlife.
- d. Ideally, permissions, any necessary documentation, site determination, etc. begin as soon as it is determined that there are animals in care that are likely to be suitable for release.
  - In particular, facilities obtain any permits or other forms of authorization needed to proceed with the release.
  - Potential release sites are identified and evaluated as early in this process as possible.
- e. Cooperative agreements are in place prior to animals being released which may include, but are not limited to:
  - veterinary and scientific involvement in post-release monitoring;
  - community acceptance of the project and involvement in habitat protection and awareness raising;
  - landowner agreements enabling release, including the addressing of specific permissions and permits;
  - involvement of NGOs with similar or conflicting interests that may impact (positively or negatively) the project.

## **R-2. Rescue Of Canids**

**The sanctuary has developed guidelines for rescue work, taking into account staff and animal safety, contingencies for caring for the animal once rescued, and any local, state or national regulations or agency cooperation required.**

- a. Facilities accepting canids from the illegal trade have policies and procedures (ideally in writing) in place with the appropriate authorities that allow for rapid transfer of the animals to the sanctuary or rescue center. These policies and procedures are designed to reduce the risk of:
  - disease transmission;
  - habituation;
  - Inappropriate or inhumane treatment, due to lack of knowledge, by personnel involved in seizure of wildlife from the illegal trade.
- b. In as much as possible, while respecting local or national cultural/religious tenets, a euthanasia policy is in place to address situations where the animal's prognosis for survival is too low to warrant attempting treatment.
  - In situations where field euthanasia is being considered, where possible and appropriate (e.g., the animal is reasonably safe from further human interference and the stress of capture would outweigh the benefit of humane euthanasia), the option of leaving the animal in situ may be considered.
  - See also Standard V-9, "Euthanasia."

## **R-3. Evaluation Of Suitability For Release**

**Canids admitted into sanctuary are evaluated for their potential suitability for release.**

- a. The sanctuary has a protocol in place (ideally in writing) to evaluate potential release candidates and to determine which canids are given priority for potential release.
  - Animals who have spent little time in captivity and/or who have had little human contact are given priority for potential release.
  - Animals found to be free of diseases and/or parasites of potential concern to the health of the population, particularly in the intended release area, are given priority for potential release.
- b. All canids are treated as potential release candidates, particularly those who have not been kept long term as pets. If canids admitted into sanctuary are determined to be potential release candidates, every effort is made to protect them from exposure to human disease and to keep them as wild as possible.

## **R-4. Quarantine And Prerelease Housing**

**The sanctuary has appropriate quarantine facilities and prerelease housing for canids, with consideration given to sick and injured canids.**

**(See also Standards H-1 to H-9, “Canid Housing,” and V-5, “Quarantine and Isolation of Canids”)**

### **General**

- a. Non-quarantine housing for canids being considered for release provides as close to natural a setting as possible. The space allows for foraging, digging, climbing, nesting/denning and other actions naturally performed in the wild.
- b. Quarantine facilities and prerelease housing for canids intended for release are situated a minimum of 66 ft. (20m), giving consideration to factors such as wind direction, from resident canid populations to protect them from exposure to pathogens present in the sanctuary population that could compromise their return to the wild. A wall surrounding the quarantine area reduces pathogen transfer risk and aids in restricting access to authorized personnel.
  - Where this is not possible, sanctuary residents are screened for potential pathogens of concern, and pathogen-free animals are housed closest to the animals intended for release to the wild.
  - Sanctuary animals being used as surrogates are screened for pathogens prior to introduction to any dependent canids.
- c. Where possible and appropriate, sanctuaries follow International Wildlife Rehabilitation Council guidelines (<http://www.nwrawildlife.org/content/minimum-standards>) in dividing housing into three types:
  - Restricted activity/mobility – for the initial stages of rehabilitation where the illness or injury requires the animal be treated and/or prevented from activities that would slow the rehabilitation process. At a minimum, the animal is able to maintain normal upright/alert posture and to stretch the body.
  - Limited activity/mobility – for the recovery stage of rehabilitation where the animal is regaining mobility and building strength, and staff does not need access to the animal on a daily basis. The animal is able to move short distances and perform some climbing and perching activities.
  - Unlimited/Prerelease – the final stages of rehabilitation where the main concern is ensuring that the animal is fit for release. In this phase, the enclosure provides the canids with opportunities to demonstrate the skills necessary for survival in the wild.
- d. Quarantine Housing Sick or injured wildlife is quarantined in such a way that the rehabilitation process is begun during the quarantine phase.
- e. Quarantine facilities have appropriate housing for the treatment of injured or ill canids.
- f. Quarantine facilities are designed to allow for monitoring and, as needed, modification of behavior of canids intended for release.
- g. Healthy canids admitted to quarantine have as large an enclosure as possible to help maintain natural locomotion and foraging behaviors.
- h. Upon arrival, canids are quarantined for an adequate number of days, ideally for a minimum of 60 days. In some situations, a longer quarantine may be advisable.
- i. The attending veterinarian works closely with regional, national and international experts and authorities to determine appropriate quarantine timing based on health risks to which the newly admitted canids may have been exposed.

- j. Orphaned canids particularly those who have been kept as pets and potentially exposed to human pathogens, are isolated until any potential health risks are evaluated.

#### **Initial Housing for Orphaned, Ill or Injured Canids**

- k. Animals admitted requiring treatment for illness or injury are housed in enclosures that allow for ease of care. These initial care enclosures can be smaller than that which is acceptable for long-term care.
  - Dependent on illness or injury, either Restricted or Limited activity/mobility housing may be utilized.
- l. Enclosures provide visual and acoustic barriers to minimize stress.
- m. Orphaned canids are housed in nursery units, preferably with conspecifics, as species appropriate.
  - Where possible, safe, and appropriate, adult canids are utilized as surrogates to care for the orphans, thus reducing human contact. Where this is not possible, human caregivers act in a manner that replicates the behaviors of adult, wild canids as much as possible.

#### **Intermediate Housing for Orphaned Canids**

- n. As soon as the orphaned canids have been weaned, they are moved to intermediate housing, where human contact is decreased and interaction with conspecifics is increased. Where possible, the animals are moved to the release site and cared for in a soft release enclosure.
- o. Animals are provided with adequate opportunity for climbing, nesting/denning and foraging as species appropriate.
- p. In as much as possible, conspecifics are used to teach natural behaviors, as species appropriate. Where appropriate releasable conspecifics are not available, and where possible, safe, and appropriate, resident animals with strong natural skills who do not present a disease risk to the wild population, may be used to teach these behaviors.
- q. Intermediate housing is isolated from resident animal areas, ideally within a natural habitat which allows the orphans to adjust to a more wild environment.

#### **Intermediate and Prerelease Housing for Sick or Injured Canids**

***(Note: Adult and independent subadult animals, dependent on their admitting condition, may not require intermediate housing.)***

- r. Animals suffering from injuries that may affect their suitability for release are moved to intermediate housing while regaining strength. Animals are regularly evaluated to determine whether they are likely to be releasable. Once the canids are deemed fit, they are moved to prerelease housing.
- s. Independent animals brought in for rehabilitation who can be released back into the environment from which they came are returned as soon as it is determined that the animal has recovered sufficiently to resume its presence in its former area.
  - Consideration is given to social and territorial issues that may affect safe return to the original habitat.
- t. Prerelease housing for adult and independent subadult animals is ideally situated at the intended release site, allowing the animals to acclimate to their new environment before release.
- u. In both intermediate and prerelease housing, sufficient vertical as well as horizontal space is provided, as species appropriate to allow the canids to develop strength and display normal wild behaviors.

## **R-5. Diet, Nutrition And Foraging Skills**

**Canids are fed an appropriate diet that approximates that which will be found in the habitat to which they are released, and foraging behavior is encouraged.**

- a. As early in the rehabilitation process as possible, canids are exposed to the types of foods found naturally within the environment where they will be released and assessed for their ability to find appropriate foods and avoid inedible or poisonous foods
- b. Release candidates are fed in such a way as to encourage natural foraging behaviors.
- c. Rescued canids admitted in poor physical condition may require specialized diets to recover their health. Nutritional deficiencies are assessed and diets modified to address those deficiencies. Once the canids are back on a normal nutritional plane, any foods not found in their planned release area are no longer fed.

## **R-6. Husbandry And Health**

**All aspects of care, including caregiver-canid relationships, introduction to social groups and overall health evaluation, are focused on preparing the canids for return to the wild.**

- a. Once a canid has been evaluated as a potential release candidate, all aspects of care are focused on preparing the animal for the wild.
  - Human activities and noises are minimized in areas housing canids being prepared for reintroduction.
  - Apart from dependent young with no suitable conspecific surrogates, human interaction with canids being prepared for release to the wild is restricted to those activities that will enhance the canids' ability to live in the wild.
- b. The animal is placed in an appropriate social group or paired with a compatible conspecific, depending on species. Where appropriate surrogate conspecifics are not available, dependent young may be reared by human caregivers using approved best practices for the species housed.
  - Care is taken to balance the need to nurture these young animals with their need to develop appropriate survival skills as well as intraspecific social behaviors.
  - Animals are integrated into an appropriate social group, ideally comprised of other conspecifics intended for release, as quickly as possible.
- c. Introductions follow Standard W-3 "Introduction of Unfamiliar Individuals."
- d. Opportunities to explore, climb and learn skills in the natural environment are provided.
- e. Canids admitted into care from the wild at the stage where they are already independent, with recoverable illness or injury problems, are treated and released as quickly as possible, taking into account the potential for the animal not being accepted back into its previous social group or territory.
- f. Caregiver-canid relationships for animals intended for release to the wild, while ensuring the animals' psychological well-being is met, focus on:
  - avoiding any types of interaction that may compromise the canids' chances for release;

- encouraging the canids to develop appropriate relationships with conspecifics for their social needs.

g. Veterinary staff evaluate overall health including:

- recovery from the initial cause for admission to the facility;
- pathogen surveillance to ensure the animal does not present a risk to the wild population as a result of exposure during the rehabilitation process.
  - In as much as possible, using the latest available information from the OIE-World Organization for Animal Health (([www.oie.int](http://www.oie.int)) and the IUCN's Conservation Breeding Specialist Group (<http://www.cbsg.org>), animals are monitored for human pathogens not found in the wild population.

h. Canids being cared for in sanctuary for later release back to the wild are managed in such a way as to optimize their chances for successful return to the natural environment.

## **R-7. Health And Safety Of Caregivers Working With Releasable Canids**

**No caregiver begins work with releasable canids until routine testing has indicated he or she poses no risk to the canids' release to the wild.**

*(See also Standard V-8, “Zoonotic Disease Program”)*

- a. Caregivers working with canids intended for release to the wild are routinely monitored for potential anthroponoses (diseases that have potential to be transmitted to the animals).
- b. Testing, vaccinations and fecal cultures for pathogens may be utilized, as appropriate for the region, to ensure the health of both the canids and their caregivers. New caregivers should not have contact with the canids for the first two weeks of employment.
- c. Provision of adequate nutrition for staff is considered as a possible contribution to the continued well-being of both staff and canids.

## **R-8. Assessment of Health and Skills**

**Canids are fully assessed for health and appropriate skills prior to release.**

- a. Canids who have completed the rehabilitation process and have been successfully integrated into a social group or pair, as is species appropriate, are further evaluated for release, with attention to health and the skills attained.
- b. Each animal's skills (e.g. foraging, nesting/denning, appropriate interaction or avoidance behaviors in the presence of conspecifics, avoidance of dangers including poisonous foods or predators) are evaluated.
- c. A complete health assessment is performed including:
  - Overall fitness as relates to being able to survive in the wild, keep up with a conspecific group, avoid predators, etc.

- Injuries and limitations that originally caused the animal to be brought into care are resolved, either completely, or to the extent that the canid has a reasonable chance for long term survival.
- d. Canids have been tested, and found free of pathogens that have potential to harm the wild population in the planned release area, based on the latest current knowledge.
- e. Genetic assessment has been done to ensure that the canids being released are of an appropriate subspecies/population/subpopulation for the release site.
- f. Canids are exposed to post-release monitoring equipment prior to release to allow them to acclimate to its presence.

## **R-9. Determining Appropriate Release Sites**

**Release sites are evaluated for health and other threats and for appropriateness for the species.**

- a. The potential release site is evaluated for the presence of appropriate and adequate food sources.
- b. The area is evaluated for potential health concerns.
- c. The potential release site is surveyed to ascertain whether any wild canids are present, either permanently or seasonally.
- d. The area is evaluated to establish carrying capacity for canids to be released. This includes taking into consideration others releases that may have already taken place and issues of territoriality. Animals are released in an appropriate habitat where carrying capacity for the species has not been reached.
- e. The area is evaluated for instances of potential human-wildlife conflict.
- f. IUCN guidelines are, in as much as possible, followed when determining release sites for rehabilitated canids.
- g. Animals are released away from areas where there is potential for or has been a history of human-animal conflict.

## **R-10. The Release Process And Post Release Monitoring**

**Canids are supported as needed to adapt in their new environment and are monitored post release.**

- a. Once it is determined that the canids have the basic skills for foraging in their new environment, supplemental care is discontinued.
- b. A post-release monitoring program is in place to ensure the rehabilitation program is providing the animals with the skills necessary to survive, that the habitat is adequate and that, as is species appropriate, canids have integrated into the wild.
  - Use of radio and satellite telemetry is recommended whenever possible.
- c. Ideally, canids are returned to the wild using a soft release process wherein they are housed in an enclosure within the release area or spend time with caregivers in the release area where supplemental food may be provided as needed and observation of their acclimatization may be observed.

- d. Post release monitoring, in conjunction with outside veterinary and scientific personnel, continues for a minimum of one year.
  - Level of monitoring may decrease over time as canids are determined to be acclimating to the environment.
  - Longer term monitoring of the animals and their impact on the habitat is preferred.
  - Practices used and results obtained, both positive and negative, are shared both within the facility and with others involved in canids reintroduction to aid in the continued improvement of the program.

# Appendix 1

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## General

### **Small canids**

Small canids are typically secretive, nocturnal and/or crepuscular animals who require spacious enclosures to accommodate natural activity patterns. The small canids typically hunt alone or in pairs, a significant difference from the larger canids with implication for husbandry. Caregivers must invest time to observe and understand these needs and relationships to facilitate safe and appropriate care.

The fennec fox is the smallest canid species, therefore its vulnerability to predation must be considered when designing or modifying facilities for the species. The temperature range tolerated by fennecs is significantly narrower than that for the temperate zone species in this group.

### **Large canids**

The social environment for large canids is as important as the physical environs. While social organization varies among the canids, they share in common complex social structures and relationships. Caregivers must invest time to observe and understand these relationships to facilitate safe and appropriate care. Insightful knowledge of the intra-group relationships is a core element of canid husbandry.

### **Shelter**

Well-designed den boxes can make the tasks of finding, catching, relocating or monitoring canids safer for caregivers and the animals.

- Dens made by canids can be both dangerous and difficult to access.
- There is also the possibility of the canid-made den collapsing, being flooded or creating other problems.

### **Diet and Nutrition**

A small overhang/shelter placed above food buckets helps keep kibble dry in outdoor enclosures.

Offering diets in shift yards and indoor enclosures may increase comfort levels with those areas and reliability of transfer from one area to another.

### **Contraception Information**

***(Note: The information provided here is the latest knowledge available at the time the standards were written. Attending veterinarians are encouraged consult with canid specialists for present best practice recommendations.)***

While there are chemical options for contraception of canid species, castration and ovariohysterectomy present the fewest potential secondary health problems and ensure that no pregnancies occur. Ovariohysterectomy negates the risk of uterine cancer and can reduce the risk of mammary cancer when performed early in the canid's life.

Single-sex groups do not require contraception. In most situations where canids are to remain captive, however, males are castrated or vasectomized to allow for flexibility in future social groupings.

Vasectomy or castration of males will not prevent potential adverse effects to females from prolonged, cyclic exposure to endogenous steroids associated with the obligate hormonal pseudo-pregnancy that follows ovulation in canids. Endogenous steroids and steroid contraceptives cause similar side effects

Progestin contraceptives are associated with progressive uterine growth that can result in infections and, in some cases, uterine cancer in canids. If a progestin is used, treatment should only be short term, due to the increased likelihood of side effects with prolonged exposure and should start well BEFORE any signs of proestrus, since the elevated endogenous estrogen can exacerbate side effects of the progestin. Progestins should only be administered to females confirmed non-pregnant since they may suppress uterine contractions necessary for normal parturition.

MGA Implants not recommended for more than a total of 4 years (Female use only). Non-fertile ovulatory cycles do not substitute for pregnancy in reversing deleterious effects on the uterus.

Depo-Provera® injection (5 mg/kg body wt. every 2 months) (Female use only).

Megestrol acetate for seasonal breeders, but for no more than 2 consecutive seasons (Female use only).

Mibolerone, a synthetic androgen, is sometimes used in female domestic dogs; however, because it can also increase aggression, it is not recommended for exotic canids.

PZP vaccine efficacy and safety have only been demonstrated in pinnipeds and bears among the carnivores. In other carnivores, there is mounting evidence that anti-PZP antibodies do not cross-react with the sperm receptor on the ovum, or may cause depletion of ovarian oocytes. PZP is contraindicated in species in which pseudopregnancy is common.

GnRH Agonists - Gonadotropin Releasing Hormone Agonists are considered the safest reversible contraceptive. Dosages and duration of efficacy are not well established for all species; side effects are generally similar to those associated with gonadectomy, especially the potential for weight gain unless diet is controlled. Availability and cost of GnRH Agonists may limit their use.

### **Social Housing**

When attempting to develop same sex packs, time of year is taken into consideration.

Littermates are often successfully housed together.

### **Wolf/dog hybrids**

Many wolf sanctuaries care for a combination of wolves and wolf/dog hybrids. All wolf/dog hybrids are regarded as wolves in terms of compliance with all GFAS standards. For wolf/dog hybrids that were raised by humans and crave human interaction, specific attention should be paid to W-4 Behavioral/Psychological Well-Being a. "Social Enrichment."

"Affiliative interactions between caregivers and canids may be appropriate in some instances. The decision to include social enrichment with caregivers should be made on an individual basis, considering only the social needs of the animal, such as solitary animals, particularly those hand reared by humans with no conspecific contact or neonatal and juvenile animals in situations where appropriate."

Every effort should be made to try to socialize wolf/dog hybrids with conspecifics. A documented individualized social enrichment plan includes why the animal needs affiliative interactions with caregivers. Caregivers engaged in direct contact with wolf/dog hybrids do so with full knowledge of the risks involved, sign a waiver that acknowledges potential risks and complete an appropriate orientation program. Affiliative interactions between caregivers and wolf/dog hybrids occur out of public view to the extent possible and in cases of emergency as per standard P-8.

### **Captive Breeding**

Additionally, GFAS has recently received a number of applications from sanctuaries that are involved in captive breeding programs for endangered species. As more and more animal species around the globe are becoming critically endangered due to loss of habitat and other factors, the role of sanctuaries in endangered species breeding programs is becoming more crucial. GFAS recognizes the importance of

this role and while accrediting conservation breeding programs as such falls outside of our mandate, we have changed our breeding/ contraception section to clarify our guidelines that allow for the breeding of endangered species in a sanctuary, rescue or rehabilitation facility under certain conditions (Refer to standard V-7).