



GRAND COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

BRETT D. SCHROETLIN
SHERIFF

WAYNE SCHAFFER
UNDERSHERIFF

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

JANUARY 14, 2022

HORSE SEIZURE IN GRAND COUNTY

GRAND COUNTY, CO- On January 11, 2022, the Grand County Sheriff's Office in coordination with partner agencies including the Colorado Humane Society, executed a search warrant at the Snow Mountain Stables located at 1101 CR 53 near Granby, in unincorporated in Grand County, in reference to ongoing allegations of animal cruelty and neglect. The on-scene investigation by officials and initial veterinarian assessment by Dr. Courtney Diehl, DVM for the Dumb Friends League Field Services, resulted in officials seizing a total of 144 horses and transporting them to the Dumb Friends League Harmony Equine Center located in Franktown, Colorado. Unfortunately, due to extreme emaciation and severe, untreated injuries, one horse was unable to make the trip safely to Harmony without continued pain and suffering. Therefore, the veterinarian on site decided it was in the best interest of the horse to be humanely euthanized on scene. This operation took place across a two-day period on January 11 and 12.

The seized horses will remain in the care and custody of the Colorado Humane Society throughout the investigation and the Judicial Process and/or state law will be involved in the future placement or return of the animals. Each horse is being evaluated for injuries, illness and malnutrition. Horses with serious conditions are receiving immediate veterinary care. Currently, all horses are safe, secure, and being provided lots of food and water. Many of these horses have a long road to recovery.

"The Colorado Humane Society and the Harmony Equine Center have been assisting the Grand County Sheriff's Office with an investigation at Snow Mountain Stables, where more than 100 horses were removed from the property over a span of two days," said Bobbi Priestly, Dumb Friends League Director of Field & Equine Services. "This operation would not have been possible without the assistance of multiple agencies from around the state of Colorado."

The Grand County Sheriff's Office is appreciative to the following partner agencies for providing compassionate care and support to all involved: Grand County Animal Control, 14th Judicial District Attorney's Office, Colorado Humane Society, East Grand Fire Protection District, Grand Fire Protection District, Jefferson County Sheriff's Office, Gilpin County Sheriff's Office, Humane Society of the Pikes Peak Region, and the Dumb Friends League Harmony Equine Center.

The veterinarian evaluating the horses on January 11 and 12 made the determination that 38 horses were in adequate condition and were released to the owner with direction to arrange immediate follow up veterinarian care.

The stables at this location are operated through a private vendor formerly under contract with the YMCA of the Rockies, and are not owned or operated by the YMCA of the Rockies.

This active case and respective investigation is very complex and ongoing. It is imperative that a comprehensive investigation into the allegations on all sides be allowed to transpire for the safety of the animals and to ensure that the facts of the case are preserved. Any additional information or charging decisions will be released when available.

Sheriff Brett Schroetlin stated, "It is heartbreaking to acknowledge, that this is unfortunately our second significant animal welfare investigation this week. We all know how harsh our weather can be during winters in Grand County. It is imperative that we as individual animal owners and the community as a whole, recognize these conditions and follow appropriate standards of care for these animals in this environment."

The case remains under investigation. Anyone that was a direct witness to this case is encouraged to contact the Sheriff's Office at 970-725-3343 or send an email to so_investigations@co.grand.co.us and provide an official statement if they have not already.

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