

## Background – April 11<sup>th</sup> Workshop on Animal Services

- In the past 4 months, the county Board of Supervisors (BOS) held two workshops on Animal Services and plans a third for April 11. The Board has discussed the roles and responsibilities of Animal Services, the animal shelter facility, and approved a fairly significant increase in the fee schedule to help cover more of the county costs of providing Animal Services. These workshops are in preparation for the FY 11/12 budget discussions scheduled for May/June.
- During these workshops, a few of the Supervisors have questioned whether the county should be in the business of providing **any animal services beyond what is mandated by law**. They have stated that a “nonprofit” should take over non-mandated functions. We believe they are referring to sheltering and caring for adoptable animals, which they see as “nice to do”. And we also believe that their thinking is: if they can shift this work to a “nonprofit”, there would be no need for the county to build the planned permanent animal shelter for the Western Slope.
- Here are some facts that demonstrate the common sense foundation for these **public** services.
  1. Animal Services provides essential public safety services and responds to over 10,000 calls/complaints a year (animals running loose, potentially dangerous dogs, animal bites, barking dog complaints, neglect cases, etc.).
  2. Animal Services responsibilities are established in a variety of State Codes and County ordinances. These are legal responsibilities based on public health and safety; mandates. For a listing, see “Animal Services Quick Facts”.
  3. As these responsibilities and mandates are carried out by Animal Services, they result in some animals coming into the custody of the division (about 3,000 animals a year must be temporarily sheltered).
  4. Animal welfare non-profits and volunteers make a significant contribution to the County Animal Services Division, but **no animal welfare non-profit exists currently in El Dorado County that has the capacity to take over sheltering responsibilities from the County.** Note that the adoptable animals in the shelter (these would be the likely focus for this non-profit take over concept) are a small portion of the total operation. The stray/hold, protective custody waiting court cases, potentially dangerous dogs, and quarantined animals still must be sheltered.
- See our “Animal Services Quick Facts” for what the Division does and why.
- **Animal Services Division Budget:** (Field Services and Sheltering Operations) - Both West Slope and Tahoe locations: About \$2.6million in Expenditures; About \$1.2million in contract revenue and fees. **Net County Cost about \$1.3million. A division that’s mostly enforcement oriented brings in about HALF THEIR BUDGET FROM OTHER THAN THE COUNTY’S GENERAL FUND. Animal Services Net County Costs are only 1.3% of the Total Net County Costs.**