

Deer and Fawn Policy

Adopted by the PWC Board of Directors on February 8, 2011 as Continuing Resolution Item 15:

Deer and Fawn Policy: PWC is not licensed, equipped nor able to deal with adult deer cases. All cases of injured or nuisance adult deer should be directed to the CA Department of Fish and Wildlife. For cases involving spotted fawns, volunteers are asked to do everything possible to encourage the caller to either leave the fawn alone or return it to (or close to) where it was found. In the event that it is certain that the doe is deceased then senior rehabilitation staff should be contacted. Currently those contacts are:

- ☒ Kelly Vandenhuevel, email: arentandkelly@aol.com, phone: (805) 471-1046 or (805) 995-3645
- ☒ Terry Ann Willingham, email: dragonhaven@wildblue.net, phone: (805) 438-3066 or (805) 674-5011

How to handle questions and issues about deer & fawns

Here is the list of some of the questions and answers pertaining to deer and fawns that seem to come up on a regular basis. We are happy to help the you work through the problem anytime.

Kelly Vandenhuevel H:805-995-3645, C:805-471-1046 or
Terry Ann Willingham H:805-438-3066, C:805-674-5011
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Questions to ask a caller who finds a fawn or young deer, and calls the Hotline.

Is the fawn injured?

- If a fawn is by itself, and is not injured, leave it alone. Do not try to handle it or move it, just leave the area.
- If someone has already taken a fawn from the location it was found, ask them to return it as soon as possible.

Is the mother deer present?

- If she is, and she is not injured, leave the area.

Is the mother deer injured? How bad is the injury

- If it is life threatening, the local warden is Todd Tognazzini, who can be contacted directly at 805-610-3916 or contact the Fish and Game Dispatch Center at 831-649-2817. The PWC phone volunteer should arrange for a transporter to pick up the fawn. NOTE: SLO County Animal Services should not be called unless there is a domestic animal involved.

Is the mother deer deceased?

- If the mother deer is deceased, and the fawn is still very young with prominent spots, the PWC phone volunteer should arrange for a transporter to pick up the fawn.

How long has the fawn been alone>

- If less than a day would indicate less (if any) urgency than if it's been there overnight or longer.

Why does the caller think the fawn needs rescuing (ie, does it appear ill or injured, & in what way).

- Note any responses to in CTS if referred to another agency or another person information. More information is better than less.

Please note: adult deers can NOT be successfully rehabilitated and our license DOES NOT allow PWC to deal with them. If an adult deer is found with a life threatening injury, the local warden with Fish and Game at the previously list numbers.

As a reminder:

We need to encourage the public to leave fawns alone under all circumstances unless they absolutely know the mother deer is dead.

Most people who come across a fawn by itself believe it has been abandoned which is usually not the case. The mother deer will leave the fawn alone while going off to forage for food, but will always come back to the fawn. It is important that the public understands that when they take a fawn away from the area it was left at by its mother is like kidnapping the fawn.

The mother deer will not return to the fawn if people are nearby watching, and checking on it. It is best to leave the fawn where it is, and to stay away from the area. It is also important to keep pets away from the area. If a fawn is found near the road, it can be moved to a safer place, but not too far from the location where it was found.

The exception, of course, is if a fawn is found with a dead adult female deer nearby. If the person finding the fawn is absolutely sure the mom is dead we will have a transporter pick up the fawn.

Summary that can be read verbatim:

PWC does not handle injured adult deer and juvenile deer without spots because:

- It is illegal for us to do so. We hold permits from the California Department of Fish & Wildlife and the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service that allow us to perform our services, and our permits specifically exclude us from handling adult deer along with bear, wild boar, elk and mountain lions.



- It is dangerous to do so. Older deer have tremendous strength in their legs and their hooves are quite sharp. Since they don't understand that we're trying to help them and they are a prey animal, they believe we are predators trying to eat them and they will defend themselves vigorously. Someone will get hurt, guaranteed.
- It is often pointless to do so. Once deer grow beyond the young, spotted stage, they become very stressed by any human contact. An injured deer requiring medical treatment applied by a human will injure itself even more seriously trying to avoid that contact or, very likely, will die of stress before the healing is complete. Even if the deer does not die outright, stress and other negative affects of captivity and treatment will leave the deer without full physical and/or mental capabilities and therefore unsuitable to be released into the wild.

Keep in mind that deer, like all wild animals, are tough creatures and are built to survive many injuries. If the injuries are not too debilitating, the deer may survive. If the injuries seem too severe for recovery to be likely, the best alternative may be to call Animal Control or the Sheriff and have the deer euthanized to avoid further pain.