



SARVAC

Search and Rescue Volunteer Advisory Council

American Veterinary Medical Foundation
1931 North Meacham Road, Suite 100
Schaumburg IL 60173-4360

I am Bill Gillespie, current President of the Washington State Search and Rescue Volunteer Advisory Council. I am writing this letter on behalf of the Washington State Animal Response Team (WASART) and their grant application to your organization.

I would like to tell the value of this organization to the State of Washington. I have had the privilege of working with WASART for several years on many responses and projects. They have always been available to provide direct assistance or technical advice. This is very important and I cannot stress it enough. Many organizations say they will be there when needed, but not all are. During an incident is not the time to find out an organization cannot help. WASART has always been there when asked, and provided the support they committed.

WASART and SARVAC have begun a project to inform law enforcement and emergency management organizations about the resources WASART can provide. We are doing this by presentations and classes at the Washington State Search and Rescue Conference. WASART put together outstanding presentations for the 2012 and the 2011 conferences. They are now working as members of the State Conference Steering Team to develop classes for the 2013 conference. They have also provided the Steering Team and the conference host county invaluable guidance regarding animal issues that we have needed to address for several years. WASART has joined SARVAC and are active participating members.

They have responded to assist in many disaster incidents and other situations. During the devastating fires that Washington State suffered this year WASART was ready and provided assistance when asked. They also provided technical consulting on best practices for animal shelters. In a very different scenario WASART was called to assist in an equine abuse and seizure case. Working with law enforcement WASART is providing extended shelter care. This has provided a much-needed resource to the sheriff's department and animal control.

I hope you see the value that WASART brings to SARVAC, law enforcement, and the emergency response community. This is a tremendous resource that did not exist 8 to 10 years ago. But WASART is 100% a volunteer organization, and equipment and training are expensive. It is grants like the one they are applying for that allow these dedicated, professional volunteers to help the people of the State of Washington. I hope that your organization can see the value of WASART and the services they provide and will assist them with a grant.

Respectfully,

Bill Gillespie

W. O. (Bill) Gillespie
SARVAC President
301 Rogers Street NW
Olympia, WA 98502

360-352-4864 (H) – 360-349-7688 (C)