



The Horses of Placitas: Methods of Integrative Living

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Planning Committee Member

Sandoval County Free Roaming Horse Advisory Council



Sandoval County Free Roaming Horse Advisory Council

- shall develop, oversee, and recommend legal, long-term, humane, sustainable solutions for the Free Roaming Horses in the Placitas area that effectively address the issue to the best extent possible
- may be multifaceted in nature and occur over time commensurate with available resources and in full compliance with relevant legal provisions



Our Current Situation

- Population in Placitas is growing
 - Horses
 - People
- Frequent contact has led to wanted and unwanted interactions
- Long-term sustainability is not achievable without change

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xe0ogXfIloU>



Long-term Sustainability for Placitas Horses

Solutions accepted by all Placitans for integrative living with free roaming horses

- Relief for Unwanted Interaction
- Established Rules of Engagement

Relief For Unwanted Interactions

- Natural barriers
 - Fence
 - Rocks/stone
- Clearance of common grazing materials
- Addition of prey animal deterrents
 - Predator scent applications
 - Motion operated lights or noise makers
- Negative Reinforcements
 - Water sprinklers
 - Conditioned response to a sound

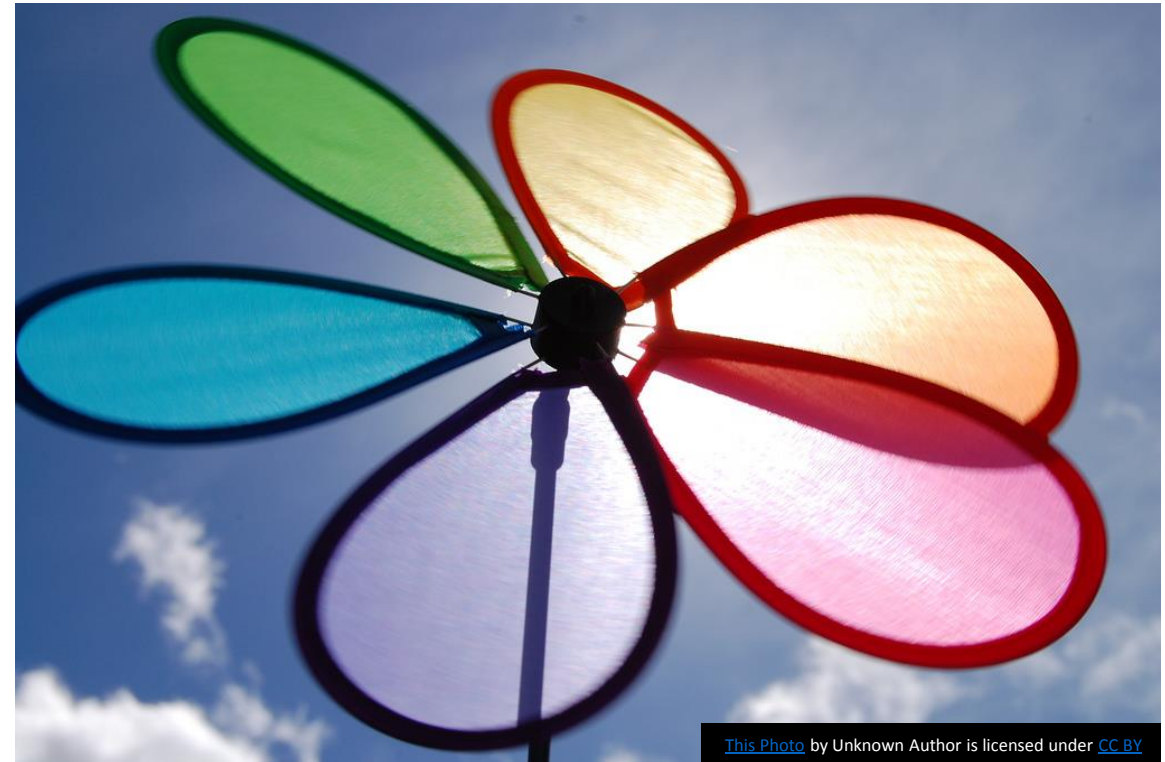


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Prey Animal Deterrents

Decorative Negative Reinforcements



Operant Conditioning

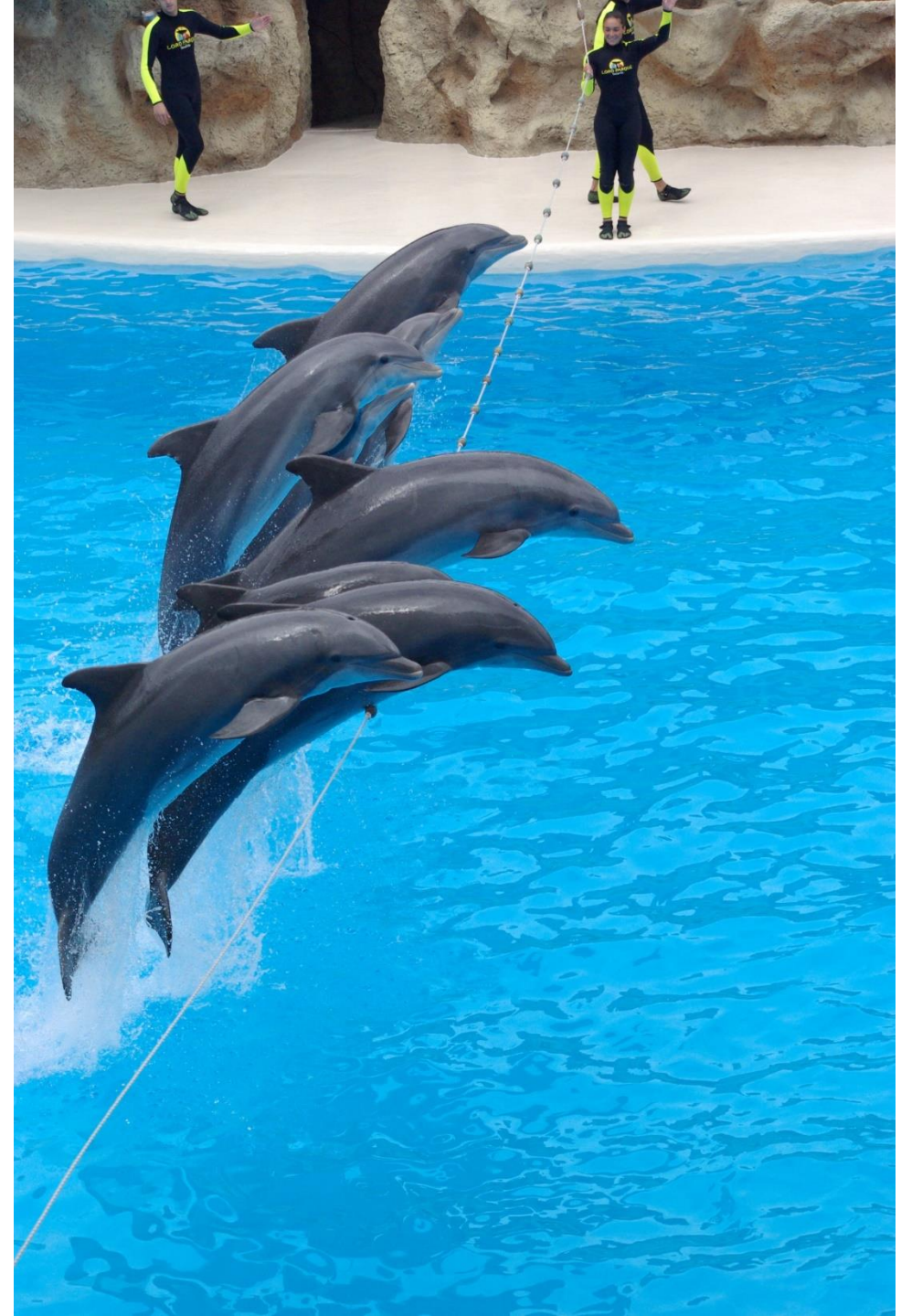
- Reinforcement to Encourage Correct Behaviors

POSITIVE: Add pleasing stimulus following desired behavior

NEGATIVE: Escape- Remove unpleasing stimulus following desired behavior

Active Avoidance- Behavior done to avoid unpleasing stimulus

Stimulus → Pressure → Release



Rules of Engagement

Objectives

Establish behaviors that allow for sustainability over time

Create an environment that is fair for horse and landowner

Develop a sustainable pathway to interaction that provides safety for horse and landowner



Rules of Engagement

Human interaction level

- In human care
- Sensitized to human contact
- Untamed and untouchable

Supplemental feeding and watering

- Never
- Only in times of environmental stress
- Always



Rules of Engagement

Medical intervention

- Follow wildlife management guidelines
- Euthanize only in the presence of pain, distress and suffering
- Manage trauma, injury and common ailments with veterinary intervention
- Management through preventative/medical/surgical veterinary care

Rules of Engagement

Management

Observational interaction only

Observation interaction and indirect population control

Gathering, sorting and maintenance

Active adoption and interventional herd population development



What Lies Ahead

The Placitas community must come together to discuss all options for the horses. Discussions must be direct, informational and respectful of all opinions. A majority opinion, once determined, should be honored with “opt-out” actions defined for those who dissent.

The horses of Placitas should be operant conditioned using negative reinforcement not punishment to conform to the rules of engagement decided on by the community.

A sustainable funding source to support these chosen rules of engagement must be found.



Questions?

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