

WILD FOR LIFE FOUNDATION

A Public Benefit Corporation

Euthanasia Policy

It is the policy of the Wild For Life Foundation that humane euthanasia is only considered for an animal if we have exhausted all options of saving the animals' life or if in the opinion of a competent veterinarian that an animal's illness or injury is an irreversible or severely painful condition, wherein the quality of life for that animal has become substantially impaired and cannot be medically treated. Our policy is to never euthanize a healthy but difficult animal to make room for more, or as a management tool. Our organization will NOT euthanize a healthy but difficult animal.

Wild For Life Foundation (WFLF) believes that all animals deserve a humane end to life and we consider lethal injection by a qualified veterinarian humane euthanasia. WFLF believes that no healthy or otherwise treatable animal should be euthanized when alternatives exist to save them. The term "euthanasia," by definition, means an act of mercy. Therefore, it should be reserved solely for ending the suffering of an animal who has experienced serious and irreversible reduction in his/her quality of life. WFLF does not consider population control by any lethal means, including lethal injection, to be euthanasia by definition. Any healthy or treatable animal who has his/her life ended to make space for other animals, or for some other reason, such as treatable medical conditions or old age, should be considered to have been killed.

WFLF's policy stipulates that if Euthanasia is deemed necessary in the opinion of the treating veterinarian, that it is performed by injection administered by a trained, compassionate and competent veterinarian, to assure that it's done with the highest degree of respect and with an emphasis on making the death as painless and distress free as possible.

Wild For Life Foundation will euthanize animals in our care if they are irremediably suffering and our veterinarians advise that there is no chance of recovering an acceptable quality of life. While this is a difficult choice, we approach this decision from the perspective of what is in the best interest of the animal.

Any of these four conditions are sufficient to recommend euthanasia:

1. An inability of the animal to breathe on his/her own without distress that cannot be treated medically or surgically
2. Extreme physical pain that cannot be managed with medication or surgery and that seriously compromises the animal's ability to enjoy life
3. End-stage organ failure
4. Uncontrollable seizures

The following conditions are red flags that require further investigation and are not usually sufficient on their own to justify euthanasia, depending on severity:

1. If the animal's desire and/or ability to take in adequate water or food is very low for more than a few days, this could indicate significant suffering. If not already done, a veterinarian's advice should be obtained.
2. The animal is unable to move about in relative comfort.

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3. The animal is unable to enjoy the activities that he/she did before. The animal's overall enjoyment of life appears minimal to nonexistent.
4. The animal has extreme emaciation for which a cause cannot be found.

At our sanctuary and in our local programs, it is not WFLF's policy to euthanize animals for aggressive behavior. We instead prefer to find or create an environment and management protocol that will protect the animal and his or her human handlers and offer the animal a reasonable quality of life. In the event that the aggression is so severe or has un-relievable physical suffering as its underlying cause and/or the necessary management protocol is so restrictive as to seriously compromise the animal's quality of life, then WFLF would consider euthanasia an acceptable method for relieving that animal's suffering and poor quality of life. Such a decision would need to be made by animal care management and a veterinarian, after careful consultation with the animal's caretakers.

The only method of euthanasia that WFLF finds acceptable is that recommended by the American Veterinary Medical Association, specifically the use of veterinarian prescribed sedatives and FDA-approved euthanasia solutions administered in as comforting and loving a situation as possible. We do not support the use of the gas chamber.