WERLA

Wildlife Education and Rehabilitation of Louisiana, Inc.

P.O. Box 7462

Shreveport,
La 71137

318-405-2282

EIN: 46-
4035568

www.werla.net

werla@gmail.com

Caddo Parish Commission
Caddo Parish Animal Services
c/o Kelvin Samuel
1500 Monty St
Shreveport, LA 71107

February 16, 2022

Dear Mr. Samuel,

Please accept this letter as an overview of WERLA- Wildlife Education and Rehabilitation of Louisiana, the services we provide the Parish, and the growing needs of our organization.

WERLA was established in 2013 as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. We operate with a board of directors. Our mission is to rescue, rehabilitate, and release sick, injured, or orphaned wildlife back into their natural habitat, and to educate our community about the conservation and preservation of Louisiana wildlife. Our team strives to provide high quality care for each animal through individualized feeding regimens, documentation of medical treatment and progress, natural simulation of species' environment, and specialized care of species' needs.

We are licensed through the state by La Department of Wildlife and Fisheries for rehabilitating wildlife, as well as on the federal level through the US Fish and Wildlife Services for migratory bird rehabilitation and wildlife listed under the Endangered Species Act. Currently, we are the only fully licensed wildlife rehabilitation organization in northern Louisiana. We are also one of only two establishments who regularly intake endangered and high priority species such as Bald Eagles.

WERLA maintains relationships with other organizations such as Parish animal control agencies, city agencies, and LA Dept of Wildlife and Fisheries. Within Caddo Parish alone, we have assisted many departments, such as the police department, the fire department, the public library, Walter B. Jacobs Nature Park, and maintenance of animals at the duck pond. We support local businesses in our community by providing them our services. We have received wildlife from large businesses, like Calumet Lubricants and Walmart to small independent businesses, such as Aero Auto Salvage.

Since our establishment in 2013, we have substantially grown our brand and our presence among the community. Community members have grown to depend on WERLA to care for wildlife that they come across who need help. The number of animals we intake per year has risen from 650 in 2015 to more than 1,000 by 2018 and continues to rise each year.

WERLA educates the community through many different means. Each year, WERLA receives over 2,000 phone calls. Community members reach out to us for advice when encountering wildlife. Our advice includes informing them of possible diseases or illnesses a species can carry, and how to keep themselves, family members, and pets safe while getting help for the animal. WERLA educates through community events such as festivals, classroom visits, and professional presentations. Our social media platforms also aim to educate the public with informational and educational posts.

Part of the growing numbers of animals that WERLA intakes each year is due to our relationship with Caddo Parish Animal Services. Trapped wildlife is brought to CPAS by private citizens or Animal Control Officers. At this point CPAS contacts WERLA, and we make a trip over to assess the health and condition of the animal. We are then tasked with making a determination as to the viability and future of the animal. If the animal is determined releasable, or needs rehabilitation before release, we provide that service. If the animal needs to be euthanized, and there is not an authorized CPAS agent on duty to perform the euthanization, our veterinarian will use our resources to humanely euthanize the animal. The species we receive from CPAS and private citizens include rabies vectors and species that can transmit disease to both humans and domestic pets.

This brings us to the matter at hand. WERLA is fully a nonprofit organization, and our doors only remain open through donations. **In the past 2 years, WERLA has transported, evaluated, and provided appropriate care for an average of 137 wildlife cases per year from CPAS. The total average number of animals we took in each of these years was 1029. Therefore, animals from CPAS make up an average of 13% of the total animals we intake per year.** These efforts are both time and resource consuming. **Our yearly operating costs in the past two years average out to $49,805.** We appreciate the professional relationship with Caddo Parish Animal Services, and we ask that the value of our services be considered. **A contribution of 13% of our average operating costs, or $6,475, would help us continue our mission.**

WERLA provides a service to the facility itself when we take wildlife into our care and use our resources to appropriately handle each case. In addition to the tangible services that are seen, we provide citizens with knowledge and information that keep their families and pets safe. CPAS is held in high regard when team members speak with private citizens. Assisting WERLA to continue our mission with wildlife shows that the Parish has compassion for all animals and understands the

WERLA   Wildlife Education and Rehabilitation of Louisiana, Inc.

importance of environmental conservation. Our partnership in educating citizens gives the crucial knowledge needed to keep families safe, and illustrates the desire to make Caddo Parish a wonderful place to raise a family.

Thank you for your consideration in this situation so that WERLA can continue this very important work. We would be grateful for any support that the Caddo Parish Commission can offer.

Sincerely,

Gia C. Morgan, DVM
WERLA President
and the WERLA Team

Wildlife Education and Rehabilitation of Louisiana, Inc.

Average cost of Wildlife Rehabilitation in partnership with Caddo Parish Animals Services

2020 Animals from CPAS	140
2021 Animals from CPAS	+<u>133</u>
Total	273 ÷ 2 = 137 average
2020 Total WERLA Animals	1102
2021 Total WERLA Animals	+<u>956</u>
Total	2058 ÷ 2 = 1029 average
137 of 1029 = 13%	
2020 Operating Costs	55,840
2021 Operating Cost	+<u>43,770</u>
Total	99,610 ÷ 2 = 49,805 average
13% of $49,805 = $6,475	

Red Fox
Success Story

In 2020, the Shreveport community, WERLA, and Caddo Parish Animal Services teamed up to rescue, rehabilitate, and release a red fox and give her a second chance in life. In the spring, WERLA received numerous phone calls from concerned citizens in a Caddo Parish community. They reported a sick and malnourished fox in desperate need of help. WERLA gave advice on how to keep family and pets safe while they sought help for the fox. We referred to CPAS for assistance with trapping. Animal Control Officers from CPAS coordinated with the community and worked for 2 months to trap the fox. WERLA's veterinarian diagnosed her with internal parasites, flea infestation, bilateral eye infections, mange, and fungus patches covering most of her body. Her eyes were so crusted, she could barely see. She was frightened and weak from malnutrition. Team members treated her daily for mange and fungus by rubbing her entire body down with an antifungal solution. She was given medication for fleas and parasites and a diet that encouraged appetite and appropriate weight gain. After a few treatments, the crusted fungus began coming off and bright eyes emerged. She began gaining strength and soon gave team members a challenge during treatments! Soon her fur began growing back and her face began filling out. After more than a month of treatments, she was evaluated for release, and showed that she was more than ready to be wild again! WERLA invited an officer from CPAS to attend the release and share in the moment. After opening the door to the fox's crate, she sprang out and ran down the path. When she was a safe distance away from us, she paused and looked back at us, as if to say thank you, and then disappeared into the woods.
Successful rescue, rehabilitation, and release!