

Another horse dies in Sumner County

Published: 2/01 8:06 pm

Updated: 2/02 12:21 am

WICHITA, Kansas -- Last week KSN ran a story of a horse neglect investigation in Sumner County, after a horse was found dead in rural Conway Springs.

Wednesday, one of those horses had to be euthanized.

Comet is the only survivor of three starving horses in Sumner County.

"You can see his ribs here, he has shelving on the top of his ribs, his spine is up, his pin bones are out, his hip bones are out," said founder of Hope in the Valley Equine Rescue, Andee Miller.

Authorities have been checking up on the condition of the horses and warning the owners to take better care of the horses since September.

"We tried last night to call the vet and say hey, come out and lets re-check this because we are thinking they are not progressing the way you think," said Sumner County Sheriff Darren Chambers.

When one of the horses was found dead last week, the Sumner County Sheriff's Office sent a veterinarian to determine if the others needed to be impounded.

The vet's verdict was that their condition was good enough to stay, but when authorities sent a different veterinarian to check out the horses Wednesday morning, there was a different conclusion.

"He looks at him says the one needs to be put down," said Chambers.

Officials took the only survivor to the Valley of Hope Equine Rescue Center where horse experts gave him a new name and nursed him back to health.

"He is not in optimal condition at all, he definitely needs some food," said Miller.

Some viewers thought authorities should have taken the horses long ago, but while the District Attorney considers whether to file animal cruelty charges, Sheriff Chambers says there was nothing legally he could do.

"They have done everything they needed to do they have followed the laws of Kansas," said Miller.

Wednesday the owners agreed to relinquish ownership of the horses and the Sumner County Sheriff's Office was able to take the remaining horse to an equine rescue.

Miller says the laws on horse ownership need to change.

"Our laws state three things: the owner provides good drinking water, feed, shelter, as long as he has those three things, law enforcement and animal

controls hands are tied to a degree; it may not be good feed, but they have feed there," said Miller.

With no animal control in Sumner County, it was up to the sheriff's office to handle the situation.

"Until we do something about changing our laws, here in Kansas, to make it better for these animals, their hands are tied," said Miller.

Miller says it will take about six months to nurse Comet back to a healthy state.

Once he is healthy, Hope in the Valley plans to look for someone to adopt him.

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