



Volunteer Handbook

Whitewater Therapeutic & Recreational Riding
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Volunteer Coordinator

Welcome volunteers, we are delighted to have you join us!

Volunteers drive the WTRRA program, a 501C3 not for profit organization founded in 1994. They are indispensable at all levels of the organization and need not be equine oriented. Some do bring skills in horsemanship; others bring leadership skills, while others bring understanding and acceptance in helping others. Volunteers also bring many new ideas and insight to the program and frequently enlist their friends! Ask any WTRRA volunteer and they will readily state that they gain as much, or more, than they give.

At WTRRA we follow generally accepted horse practices. At times, however, for safety or efficiency reasons we may do things differently than you are used to. These practices are often a requirement of PATH,-Intl. policies. Consistency is important so please adhere to our practices while volunteering at WTRRA. Feel free to ask the instructor after class if he/she could explain the “why” of the procedure. You are invited to contact the Executive Director, Joyce Scott, at 208-469-0617.

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Current Board members can be found on our website.

Executive Director/Instructor	Joyce Scott
Lead Instructor & Equine Manager	Katie Cooper
Instructor/Mentor/Facility Coordinator	Merry Logan
Instructor	Robin Lamley
Instructor	Suzanne Nebeker
Instructor in Training	Kim Browne
Facilities Caretaker	Steve Drippon
Volunteer Coordinator	Jill Henry
Intake Specialist	Ann Kossler
Program Coordinator/Intake	Melissa Burley

Contact Information & Communication

Volunteer coordinator, Jill Henry, is responsible for scheduling volunteers. If you are unable to make your volunteer commitment, please let the volunteer coordinator know with as much advance notice as possible so a substitute can be located.

Mission

To improve the quality of life for individuals with physical, cognitive, educational, mental and behavioral disabilities, youth at risk, abused and neglected children and the elderly through equine assisted activities and therapy (EAAT)

Vision

To serve Lemhi County by providing a quality equine facility where the benefits of horses are promoted through education recreation, and therapeutic activities.

Benefits of Equine-Assisted Activities and Therapies

Physical: The rhythmical walking motion of the horse closely simulates a person's walking gait. Participants experience improvements in muscle strength, flexibility, balance, coordination, endurance, sensory registration, visual/spatial orientation, motor control, rhythm/timing, physical arousal and attentiveness.

Cognitive: Equine-assisted activities offer a motivational opportunity to improve concentration, attention span, memory, communication, decision making, problem, solving, sequencing, patience, judgement, and insight development.

Emotional: As participants experience the unconditional trust and patience of a therapy horse, changes are seen in self-confidence, self-awareness, mood regulation, hopefulness, goal setting and positive risk taking. Participants become able to deal with both successes and failures as positive learning opportunities.

Behavioral: The positive horse and human interaction experienced through equine-assisted activities can result in a greater sense of teamwork, responsibility, impulse control, limit setting, self-discipline, regulation and relaxation.

Social: The therapy horse's ability to model kindness and respect to the participant fosters positive interaction between humans. When working with other participants, improvements are seen in teamwork, cooperation, trust, respect, leadership, responsibility and empathy.

Volunteer Orientation Checklist:

Paperwork

- Application, interest form
- Emergency medical treatment release
- Health history, liability release, photo consent
- Confidentiality agreement
- Acceptance of policies.

Overview

- WTRRA is a not for profit organization founded in 1994.
- The facility and property are owned by WTRRA.
- Without volunteers, participants do not ride.
- WTRRA serves over 50 clients a week with your help.
- Membership donations, fund raising and grants fund the programs.
- Staff and instructors are all volunteers. Volunteers perform all duties of the organization including classes, barn work, facility work, horse care and maintenance, fund raising, public relations, etc.

Facility Orientation

- Sign in/out procedure for riders and volunteers
- Name badges
- Lesson Roster and volunteer assignments
- Emergency information—telephone/emergency information. First aid kits, fire extinguishers
- Facility Tour:
 - Barn/tack area
 - Equipment Room
 - Parking areas
 - Restroom

- Office

****Cell phones must be turned off while on volunteer duty.**

Volunteer Job Choices

Administration Volunteers: Serve to assist in the administrative function of the organization. This includes copying, data entry, filing, mailing, grant writing, public relations, photography, video and computer support.

Special Events Volunteers: Provide assistance with the variety of special events that Whitewater facilitates throughout the year. Volunteer opportunities include event planning, setting up or breaking down events, helping on the day of the event, helping with horse shows or fundraisers.

Program Volunteers: provide assistance with the regular operation of the lesson program. This includes grooming and tacking horses, horse handling and sidewalking in lesson, barn duties, schooling horses, facility repairs, construction and hospitality. Minimum age is 14.

Barn Worker: Arena Clean-up, cleaning stalls, maintaining tack, cleaning helmets, boots, organizing equipment. Catch horses the morning of classes and put in stalls (may leave after that duty)

Sidewalker: The sidewalker (either 1 or 2) walks or jogs to the side of the rider during class. The sidewalker's main responsibility is for the safety of the rider. They also are responsible for:

- Greeting the student as he/she arrives at the registration counter.
- Escorting the student to the rider waiting area.
- Remaining with the student and get his/her helmet fit.
- Assisting the student in balancing on the horse, using special holds.
- Following the directions of the instructor during class.
- Assisting the student only when needed to promote independence.
- Understanding the special needs of each student.
- Mounting assists as trained.
- Understanding safety and emergency procedures.

Horse Handler: The primary job of the horse leader is to deal with the horse. Duties may include:

- Grooming and tacking the horse before class.
- Maintaining control of the horse.
- Understanding horse body language.
- Inspecting the tack for damage and cleanliness.
- Understanding safety and emergency procedures.
- Untack the horse after lesson.
- Return the horse to the field after the day of lessons.
- Cue the horse during lessons.

Arena Assistant/Spotter/Gatekeeper: The primary job of the arena assistant is to help the instructor with special needs during class (i.e. bringing items into the arena, helping with games, providing extra supervision during different activities occurring in the arena.) The primary job of the gatekeeper is to open/close the appropriate gates during class, and be ready, if an emergency occurs, to follow the directions of the Instructor. This is an extremely important task. Closed gates are a mandatory PATH standard. If a gate is left open, the horse can get loose and create a safety concern. Gatekeeper is responsible for keeping unauthorized persons from entering the arena. This person may be asked by the Instructor to call 911 in the case of an emergency. They may also act as an additional ring assistant or spotter in some situations.

Horse Schooler: Therapy horses perform best when they are also ridden outside the therapeutic riding setting. Schoolers are competent riders and horse handlers who work with the Equine Manager to improve fitness, balance and suppleness of the Whitewater herd. Schoolers must be at least 14 years of age. Qualifications include:

- Demonstrate their abilities to the Equine Manager during an evaluation ride.
- Demonstrate a solid understanding of balance, contact, and introductory lateral work.
- Be able to participate in at least one group lesson as needed with another staff member.
- Demonstrate understanding of difference between an 'exercise ride' (ride where solely aerobic activity is achieved for the horse) and a 'schooling ride' (ride that focuses on activities specific to horse's lesson requirements, be it actual lesson activities and/or strength training for these activities) .
- Demonstrate ability to verbalize and record observations of each ride and get that information to the Equine Manager in a timely fashion.
- Demonstrate ability to adopt Whitewater's philosophy in regards to our horses and their mental and physical health and well-being.

Volunteer Continuing Education

From time to time, Whitewater provides opportunities for volunteers to deepen their knowledge and expertise. Continuing Education opportunities will be posted on the website calendar, communicated via email, and at the check-in area. Opportunities include:

Horse Handler/Leader Training

- Mounting/dismounting training
- Tack and Tacking
- Horse Care
- CPR classes
- Advanced Sidewalking Techniques
- Medical Issues/Disabilities Overview

General Volunteer and Facility Information

Commitment of Volunteers

WTRRA is committed to strengthening the relationship between the volunteers and the organization. We have found that taking the time and care in training and supervising volunteers' results in "repeat" volunteers. We believe it is important to develop and maintain a relationship of mutual respect for our volunteers.

- WTRRA asks that volunteers commit to 6-8 weeks. Each class is typically a two hour commitment.
- Volunteers keep their commitment and are on time for the assigned class.
- Volunteers listen to Instructors and understand that the Instructor is in charge in the class.
- Volunteers accept feedback from instructors.
- Volunteers remain alert, listen and learn from other volunteers and instructors
- Volunteers remain positive about WTRRA programs and participants.
- Volunteers communicate their needs, interests and comments to the appropriate person.
- WTRRA commits to provide a safe, rewarding environment and experience for volunteers. We hope you will enjoy your time with the participants and understand how important you are to their successes.

Attendance

WTRRA asks that volunteers be willing to commit themselves to a regular day and time for 6-8 weeks. WTRRA sessions run 6-8 weeks with a break between sessions. Three sessions per year are typical.

WTRRA asks that the Volunteer Coordinator be notified as soon as possible if illness or time conflicts prevent the volunteer from attending the assigned class. We request that you notify the Volunteer Coordinator with as much notice as possible—at least 24 hours—prior to your schedule time if you have to cancel. This notification is critical in order that a substitute may be found in time. Participants will not ride if trained volunteers are not available. Sometimes, "Murphy's Law" applies: If one volunteer does not give ample notice or locate a substitute, several more may do the same for that particular lesson. Do your best to contact someone and not just leave a message on the machine. Please call the volunteer coordinator (not the instructor) to cancel. You may email the coordinator if you are pre-arranging an absence.

In the event we know in advance of a student's absence, we will attempt to reach you by phone as best we can, considering the amount of notice we are given. There are always miscellaneous but important tasks at WTRRA a volunteer could do which are also very valuable to the program. Once you commit to 6-8 weeks WTRRA volunteer coordinator will only contact you if the class is cancelled and will assume you will attend the assigned class unless you have given prior notice.

Understand that cancellations cause an enormous ripple effect.

Attire

WTRRA asks that volunteers use good judgment in selecting appropriate clothing. When choosing your clothing-consider “Safety First” –inquisitive hands can pull off your jewelry, excessively baggy clothing can get caught on things, etc.

What to wear:

- Comfortable clothes-appropriate to the season-that you don't mind getting dirty
- Sneakers, hard toed shoes or boots
- Sunscreen, bug repellent, sun glasses, hat or visor
- Long hair needs to be tied back
- WTRRA Name tag

What NOT to wear:

- Open toed shoes or flip flops
- Jewelry (necklace, bracelet, hoop/dangling earrings (stud earrings are ok)
- Excessively tight or baggy clothing
- Perfumes that can attract stinging insects
- Bare midriff or other revealing clothing
- Clothing with inappropriate slogans, decals, etc.
- **We ask that Volunteers do not answer their cell phones while working with the students or horses. Please turn off all cell phones when in the barns or riding arena.**

Confidentiality

WTRRA is a professional organization. We are bound by a policy to maintain confidentiality of information regarding our students, staff, and volunteers. Any personal information you may become privileged to through your work at WTRRA must NOT be shared with others.

Emergencies

An emergency is defined as any unexpected occurrence or set of circumstances resulting in a real or potential safety hazard, demanding immediate attention.

Please familiarize yourself with general safety procedures, which are posted in the arena. Also, know the locations of the following:

Telephone for emergency use is in the equipment room

Human and equine first aid kits are in the clearly marked cabinet in the waiting area

Fire extinguishers are located in the southeast equipment room, in the barn and in the office.

Occurrences/Incidents

Incidents will occur that are not emergencies, such as a horse stepping on a volunteer's toe, a rider falls off a horse but does not require emergency treatment or a gate is shut on an individual's finger. While these are not medical emergencies they require attention and documentation. Incident or Occurrence

reporting forms are in the equipment room. These forms must be completed that day and witnessed by those observing or involved in the incident or emergency. These forms are then kept on file.

Gates

All gates, with the exception of the main entry gate, are to be kept closed and latched. If you see an open gate, please close it. The arena gates **MUST** be closed during classes or at any time a horse is in the arena.

Heaters/Lights

Instructors, Facility Manager, Arena Host ONLY may operate the heaters in the arena.

Logging Volunteer Hours

Please log all volunteer hours in the logbooks located in the registration area of the arena. You may include your travel time and be aware that you may be allowed to deduct your mileage on your tax return. Tracking volunteer hours is very important to our organization. The information assists us in applying for grants and recognizing your contributions to WTRRA.

Before leaving the property please log your hours, return your nametag and read any announcements or notices on the bulletin board located in the stall barn and registration area.

Nametags

We ask that Volunteers wear a nametag at all times. These are available at the volunteer sign in table on the North end of the arena.

Parking

Volunteers will park on the west side of the WTRRA arena. Please park as near to the next car as possible and do not block access to the handicapped access to the arena or office. Do not park on the east or north side of the arena. This area is reserved for horse traffic and staff only. Enter the arena through the north end man door where you will sign in and pick up your name tag.

Smoking

For the safety, health, and pleasure of all who spend time at the facility, smoking is only allowed off the premises on Cemetery Street or in your vehicle. Please do not throw cigarette butts on the property. Alcohol is not allowed on the facility grounds.

Spectators

Family members and friends of riders and volunteers are always encouraged to visit and observe quietly. Guests are required to remain in the spectator/observation area and should always enter and exit through the designated area (North end man door).

Dogs

For the safety of the horses and riders dogs **are not allowed on WTRRA property**. Dogs must remain in the owner's vehicle. (Exception: Some staff dogs are allowed onsite, but only with permission). Working Service dogs are allowed. This is an insurance and safety policy.

General Barn Safety Guidelines:

Barn Rules:

1. NO SMOKING ANYWHERE ON SITE. Smoking is prohibited at the facility at all times. For the safety of the participants, equines, staff and volunteers, while volunteering any use of illegal drugs, alcohol or prescription drugs taken not in accordance with a prescription is prohibited.
2. Non-independent individuals, children under the age of 14, those dependent on others for transportation and those requiring other types of supervision to be safe are to be attended by a parent/guardian or other designated adult at all times.
3. No running, roughhousing, screaming, musical instruments or loud noises allowed.
4. After signing in, all participants should proceed directly to and wait in the bleachers until directed by their Instructor or designated volunteer to do otherwise. Supervising adults, family members and guests must remain in the bleachers area or in their cars. Wandering around the stalls and/or property is not allowed.
5. Everyone in the barn area must wear proper footwear. If an individual is not wearing proper footwear, they may go directly to the bleachers area only, unless accompanied by staff or designated volunteer. Proper footwear excludes open-toed or open-heeled shoes.
6. Dogs and other pets need to remain at home or in the car. They may not roam the property, even on a leash. Some staff dogs are allowed onsite, but only with permission. Working Service dogs are allowed. This is an insurance and safety policy.
7. NO FEEDING THE HORSES. Treats may be placed in the horse's gratitude buckets which will be given to the horses at the end of the day. At no time should horses ever be fed by hand.
8. Drive Slowly. Observe 10 mph speed limit approaching and leaving the parking area. We need to be able to keep the road and parking areas in good condition and make sure the participants, horses and other volunteers remain safe.
9. Respect all posted off-limits areas

Equine Management Philosophy and Horse Care Standards:

WTRRA is a PATH Intl. Premier Member Center. Path Intl. defines industry standards for operation that are divided into the following categories:

- Business and Administrative Standards which include emergency procedures, safety regulations, and written policies and procedures.
- Facility Standards which include safety and maintenance of buildings, pastures and grounds.
- Equine Management Standards which include equine management, health and welfare, and conditioning.

Our entire organization is centered on a commitment to excellence encompassing not only service to our clientele, but also to our horses. Our horses are closely monitored for physical health and well-being, and their needs are addressed on a daily basis by our Equine Manager. We enjoy comprehensive professional horse care services including veterinarians, equine massage therapists and body workers, an equine chiropractor, equine dentist and a farrier.

In many cases, WTRRA's own horse care standards exceed the standards outlined by PATH Intl. as our philosophy is to give the best possible care to our horses while keeping them in the most natural environment we can provide.

This philosophy has resulted in such management practices as daily turn out in pasture that allows the horses time to decompress and participate in the normal herd behavior so critical for their mental and physical health. The horses always have access to water and free-choice salt and mineral licks. We closely monitor our horse's weights and body condition to ensure they are receiving the best possible nutrition. Maintaining a strong commitment to comprehensive horse care means being flexible and catering to each horse's individual needs.

WTRRA handles each therapy horse daily to check for any physical or behavioral issues. Horses are regularly exercised by our PATH Intl instructors and trained volunteers, utilizing a comprehensive, individualized conditioning program that enriches and benefits them both physically and emotionally. This practice keeps their bodies fit and their minds fresh. When used in therapeutic riding classes, PATH Intl Standards limit each horse to no more than 3 consecutive hours with a total of no more than 6 hours per day, which entails walking, trotting and light cantering. WTRRA improves upon these standards and strives to limit horses to no more than 2 consecutive hours of work and rarely more than 3 total hours of total class time per day. The Equine Manager, with input from the Instructors, determines horse use based upon the needs of our clients and appropriate availability of the horses, in relation to the program schedule. Horse usage is planned and tracked daily, and is regularly examined by our Equine Manager, who works to make certain no horse is being overused, resulting in a low burn out rate among our herd. Our equine management program and horse care standards have been proven to maintain our horses in the best condition possible and also possibly extend some of their lives while still being useful.

WTRRA Policy for Dismissal of Volunteers:

Volunteers may be asked to leave the program for a number of reasons, including, but not limited to:

- The use of alcohol or illegal drugs on the grounds or at a WTRRA event
- Breach of the confidentiality policy
- Verbal or physical abuse or sexual harassment or other inappropriate behavior toward participants, other volunteers and or staff members
- Disrespect of instructors and not following WTRRA rules and guidelines
- Making critical comments about instructors, volunteers and/or participants
- Mistreatment of the horses
- The use of vulgar language, inappropriate jokes, or disrespectful language
- Frequent missed work volunteer times, without prior notification and or explanation
- Smoking on facility grounds (other in their own vehicle)
- Persistent disruption of staff during lessons or special events
- Allowing their dog to run loose at the facility
- Any behavior deemed inappropriate by WTRRA staff

The Executive Director will handle all dismissals. The Executive Committee will be informed of the situation and act only if needed.

Complaint Policy:

Complaints will be communicated to the class instructor or Lead Instructor who will follow WTRRA policies and procedures per the Board of Directors handbook.

Dismissal of Volunteers and Guests Policy:

Any volunteer or guest that does not adhere to Whitewater's policies and procedures, barn/lesson safety procedures, or PATH Intl. standards or who are not able to participate in a constructive group dynamic supportive of the Whitewater mission will be asked by the staff to modify his/her behavior. If the volunteer or guest is unable to do so, he/she will be asked by the instructor in charge or Lead Instructor to cease participation in all program activities and/or leave the premises. The Executive Director will be informed of the concern and the action.

Class Procedures:

Helmets:

A safety helmet is the single most important piece of equipment. It is important to understand that posture and balance of the rider will be directly affected by the fit of the helmet. An ill-fitting helmet will make proper balancing more difficult and will fail to protect the head during a fall. Overly large helmets are dangerous and uncomfortable. They may slip, obscure vision or fall off. A properly fitting helmet should be snug. The well-fitted helmet should stay on the head when harnessed without rocking or moving. A good way to check a helmet's fit is to have the rider bend down at the waist and shake his/her head. With the manufacturer's suggested adjustment, the helmet should feel secure to the rider.

All participants in classes are required to wear a helmet once they enter the waiting area. Participants must wear helmets during groundwork activities as well as riding. All personnel and volunteers are required to wear helmets when mounted on WTRRA program horses.

How to help a student with his/her helmet:

Place the helmet on the head sliding it front to back. It should sit level on the head right above the eyebrow level. Allow it to rest so there are two fingers between the eyebrows and the edge of the helmet.

Make sure the helmet is centered correctly and fasten the chin strap. Just be sure it is tight enough so the helmet does not slip or fall either forward or backward. Adjust the Helmet tightness with the rotary knob at the back of the helmet. Make sure the straps fit correctly under the ear. Ask the rider how the helmet feels but understand they may want it looser than guidelines will allow. Ask for help from another volunteer if you are uncertain of the fit.

Sidewalkers:

The side walker's responsibility is the rider (not the horse). Be prepared to give the rider your undivided attention. Get to know him/her. If you ever feel your rider is 'not himself or herself' or are concerned about him or her, notify the Instructor privately. At every lesson, reinforce what has been learned. Ask the student what they remember.

Prior to class:

- Arrive ½ hour earlier than class time to be prepared for your assignment.
- Review the lesson plan, horse and rider assignments.
- Greet the rider at the registration counter if applicable.
- Escort the rider to the rider waiting area.
- Make sure the rider has signed in and has the correct helmet and is wearing boots. If not:
 - Assist the rider with helmet fit.
 - Assist the rider with putting on boots if necessary.

During Class:

- Only the Instructor or trained volunteer are allowed to assist the rider mount. Generally, the rider does not put his feet in the stirrups until he is fully away from the mounting block/ramp. Follow the instructor's directions.
- Never leave your rider's side. If an object falls to the ground, such as a glove, etc. leave it and tell the Instructor who will then pick it up or ask a spotter or gatekeeper for help.
- The sidewalker's position is always at the rider's knee. If possible, ask your rider what pressure is comfortable if you are using manual contact.
- If your rider has only one sidewalker, it is best for the sidewalker to be positioned on the rider's weaker side. If both sides are the same, you should walk on the opposite side of the horsehandler. Avoid putting a hand on the rider's back (unless told to do so). Avoid resting hand(s) on the horse as it will impede movement.
- Reinforce the Instructor's directions. When two sidewalkers are with one rider, they can share the task of communication with the rider, but be careful not to confuse the rider with too much verbal stimulation. Have the rider carry out tasks, allowing time to react to the instructions. Encourage the rider to do the exercise, games and reinforce the use of new skills. All interactions should be at the request or direction of the instructor.
- Do not try to teach the rider a different method of holding reins, directing or stopping the horse other than what the Instructor has taught or directed.
- Do not talk to the rider other than to reinforce the Instructors directions, encourage or praise.
- The sidewalker should ask the rider and handler to halt the horse any time an emergency stop is needed. Some examples are: the rider is off balance and cannot regain balance, the saddle pad has slipped or the cinch is loose, the stirrups need readjusting, the rider's helmet needs adjusting, the rider is fatigued, in pain or needs to stop for any other reason. (be discreet when discussing a rider in his presence) or if you need to change sides because you are having some difficulty and cannot carry out your job in comfort and safety. When changing sides, one volunteer changes at a time. If there is only one sidewalker, ask the Instructor for assistance.

Manual Contact used with Riders:

The Instructor will instruct the sidewalker in the extent to which their assigned rider needs support. The amount of manual contact required by riders varies. To assist a mounted rider, a sidewalker often has to touch the rider. Always speak to the rider first, asking permission to touch him/her and giving the location you wish to touch. Most rider assistance can be given from the waist down. The following is a list and discussion of the manual contacts used in therapeutic riding.

Ankle Support:

Often riders only need stabilization at their ankles so they can achieve a balanced riding position. The volunteer grasps just above the rider's ankle from behind using the arm closest to the horse, if that arm is not being used for the thigh hold. When the ankle hold is being used in conjunction with the thigh hold, the volunteer can use the hand farthest from the horse to hold the rider's foot by placing his/her hand over the arch.

Thigh Hold:

The volunteer uses his/her arm nearest to the rider and grips the front edge or flap of the saddle in a spot that allows his/her forearm to rest midway on the rider's thigh. You may even press down and inward when needing to provide greater security for the rider. Do not lean on the horse or rider.

Horse Handler:

The horse handler's responsibility is the horse (not the rider). Handling of horses outside of the therapeutic riding classes must be cleared through the Equine Manager.

Prior to class:

- Arrive one hour to 45 minutes earlier than class time to locate your assigned horse, catch, groom, exercise if requested and tack him/her for class. Read the 'Horse Information' card for any information you need to know prior to working with the horse. (Located on the front of the stall). All horses MUST BE HALTERED when being led into and out of pastures, or stalls. All horses must be tied using a quick release knot or attached to a quick release tie in stalls. Horses are NOT TO BE TIED in arena or stalls at any time unless to appropriate hitching rail.
- Notify Instructor of concerns you see with the horse during this process.
- Tacking: Check class chart to see what tack is to be used for the class and your horse. Check the saddle fit chart for any notes about the tack to be used. Place the saddle on the horse behind the shoulders. The seat of the saddle needs to be level. Always pull the saddle pad up into the gullet of the saddle. The Instructor will check all tack before the rider mounts. Cinch should be only as tight as needed to keep the saddle from sliding. Cinch will be tightened by INSTRUCTORS (for class) prior to rider mounting. ONLY INSTRUCTORS, or trained volunteers designated by instructor WILL PUT ON THE BRIDLES. Once the bridle or reins are on do not leave the horse unattended.
- At least 15 minutes prior to class and until the class begins, warm up the horse by allowing the horse to investigate some of the toys and props, practice leading the horse while maintaining your own space and that of the horse, stopping, backing, turning to the left and right and trotting. Once the horse is warmed up, return to the horse waiting area until your rider is ready to mount.

Leading:

- Hold the lead rope about 8-10 inches from the snap and with your right hand.
- Fold excess rope in a butterfly (figure eight) loop with your left hand. NEVER wrap the rope around your hands. Be sure the lead rope dangles between the reins.
- MAINTAIN YOUR SPACE
- Look up to where you are going, do not look at the horse.
- Keep the horse at your side with their eye about even with your shoulder
- Do not allow the horse to GET AHEAD OF YOU
- Do not allow the horse to fall too far behind you
- Do not allow the horse to walk right behind you

During Class:

- The Instructor always assists the mounts and dismounts for the rider. Pay attention to the Instructor. The Instructor will address the rider, but as the horse leader you need to know what the instructions are as well. Whenever the horse is stopped, stand at an angle in front of the horse's shoulder facing the horse. Your body language will tell the horse to stay put. This is during anytime the horse is stopped for extended periods. During mounting, dismounting or emergencies, horse handler should stand directly in front of the horse. Maintain a steady, even pace and avoid sharp turns or abrupt changes of gait. Follow the rail unless otherwise directed. Maintain two horse lengths between horses.
- Allow the horse's head freedom of movement! As they walk, all horses bob their heads up and down. This rhythmical movement starts at the head and moves all the way down the horse's spine. This movement is what makes horseback riding therapeutic. Reinforce the rider's attempts to control the horse. Keep an eye and ear on your rider's commands. Don't give a free ride. Allow the rider time to process the information given by the Instructor and to make an effort to comply—be patient and listen to the instructor's directions as to what to do and when. Don't drag the horse along. Encourage the horse to move out with the energy of your upper and lower body. Your movement and energy influences the horse's movement. If you are sluggish and dragging, the horse will follow your lead.
- When the rider is controlling the horse, you may allow a little more slack in the lead, do not influence the horse. (The horse may get confused if he feels tugs on both reins and the lead.) This may, at times be difficult if the horse tends to follow you. Allow the horse's head to point forward, not pulled towards you. This is especially important at a trot.

- Remember: with sidewalkers your horse is much wider. Be sure to leave enough room around barrels, etc. for the sidewalker to pass without running into items in the arena. This is particularly IMPORTANT when leaving the mounting area. The sidewalker on the horse's left side MUST have clearance as they go through the gate. During volunteer training at the arena you will have the opportunity to practice leading the horse away from the mounting area. This can be a safety hazard for participant as well as the sidewalker. Take your time and be AWARE of the sidewalker.
- Be aware of the rider's uncontrollable body movements, vocalizations, and behaviors. Handle the horse to avoid problems. NEVER discipline a horse while the horse is in class, from the time of mounting to dismounting. If the behavior is causing a safety issue for you or the rider, notify the instructor immediately.
- Bring the horse to the center of the arena anytime the rider or sidewalkers need to make any adjustments. Avoid stopping on the rail.
- At the end of class, wait for the Instructor to dismount the rider. After all of the students have left the arena, lead the horse to the tacking area.

After Class:

- Untack and groom the horse; placing everything back in its proper location. After grooming is complete, please return the grooming kit to the tack room. Horses should have halters removed prior to releasing in the stall.
- If the horse came to class with a fly mask or blanket, please make sure they go back with these items. Return the horse to the assigned stall or pasture per Instructor's directions. Bridles and saddles should be inspected after each class/ride. Inspect the tack for weaknesses, wear, tears, etc. If the tack is dirty, it should be wiped down. Report any concerns to the instructor immediately.

EMERGENCY DURING CLASS:

IMPORTANT: The Emergency Information card is posted on the side of the Helmet/Boot room in the rider waiting area, near the phone. It is the policy of WTRRA to call an ambulance, without delay, if there is any doubt as to the seriousness of an illness or injury.

If an emergency occurs with your rider or horse, such as: the rider having a seizure, the rider falls or is falling, the horse is frightened, or any other emergency requiring an emergency dismount: Stop your horse (turn him towards the wall, if necessary, as an aid for a quick stop) and stand in front of the horse to keep him stopped, then soothe him while the side walkers assist the rider. DO NOT LEAVE THE HORSE OR LET GO OF THE LEAD ROPE FOR ANY REASON. When the rider is off the horse, move the horse straight away from the rider. When the horse is away from the rider, halt the horse and wait for instructions. Sometimes horses need to be kept moving if frightened of weather or turned towards the

issue for them to calm down. Please communicate with the instructor if you are unsure of the best action.

The word “**HALT**” is called out alerting everyone in the arena to stop. The Instructor proceeds to the emergency situation and assesses the incident. If necessary the Instructor designates a volunteer to call 911. If the incident is not serious, the class resumes. If the incident is serious, the Instructor designates trained volunteers to dismount the remaining students and stays at the incident site until Emergency Personnel arrive.

REMEMBER: If an emergency occurs during class, the Horse Handler is responsible for the horse and the Sidewalkers are responsible for the student. If the injury should involve a horse, the Instructor designates a volunteer to call the Vet., dismounts the rider and a volunteer leads the horse from the arena if possible.

EMERGENCY Dismount:

If you are side walking next to a horse involved in an emergency, shout “HALT” to alert your Instructor and horse handler of the situation. If an emergency dismount becomes necessary, the side walker on the side the rider is falling away from needs to remove the rider’s foot from the stirrup and remove the reins from the rider’s hands. The side walker towards whom the rider is falling needs to remove foot from the stirrup then hug the rider around the trunk and under the arms, pulling the rider off and away from the horse. If the side walker feels he cannot bear the full weight of the descending rider, a controlled fall can be initiated, taking care to protect the rider and side walker’s heads and roll with the fall as much as possible. It is important that the side walkers break the rider’s fall and does not fall on the rider.

Universal Precautions:

Universal precautions are used to minimize contact with blood and body fluids by taking steps that may prevent non-intact skin exposures of individuals to specific organisms such as Hepatitis B and Human Immune-Deficiency Virus (HIV/AIDS). When you follow Universal Precautions, you assume that all persons are potentially infected with blood-borne pathogens.

Wear disposable latex or vinyl gloves when it is likely that clothing will be soiled with bodily fluids. Protect clothing with an impervious material when it is likely that clothing will be soiled with body fluids. Wear masks and/or eye protection when it is likely that eye and/or mucus membranes will be splashed with bodily fluids. Wash hands often, before and after client care, paying particular attention to around and under fingernails and between the fingers, even if gloves are worn, If unanticipated contact with these body substances occurs, washing should be as soon as possible.

The Human First Aid Kit is located in the well-marked cabinet next to the Locker room in the corner of the participant waiting area. The kit contains gloves, sterilized material, CPR mask. The basic Equine First Aid Kit is located in the same cabinet while additional equine first aid materials are located in the plastic cabinet in the south end of the arena.

Site Specific Hazards and Off-Limits Areas

There are many areas within the main facilities compound that are hazardous and off limits. All areas are clearly marked with signs and include: trained volunteers only in the stall barn, hay storage area, all around the tractor storage area(s), and fuel storage area, and pastures.

There are many areas outside the main facilities compound that are hazardous and off limits during early spring when the water levels are high and the ground is frozen or soaked.

All visitor vehicle traffic must remain on the main entrance road and designated parking areas. Do not drive nor park on the north side or the back side of the arena. These areas provide safe walkway areas for the horses.

Only specified trained WTRRA personnel are authorized to operate any of the tractors or other equipment.

All fencing is off limits and must not be climbed or played on.

Be aware that snow can slide off the various building roofs without notice. Never stand under the eaves in snow slide areas.

As we continue to upgrade this facility, there will be construction areas that will be off limits. They will be marked with CAUTION tape.

Natural hazards exist on the WTRRA property that can cause direct injury to humans or cause an equine accident. These hazards include bees, snakes, skunks, wild ducks and geese, neighboring animals, and large game animals and vegetation that could spook a horse/harm a horse.

Hazards specific to the Use of Equines

Some of the potential hazards inherent to interacting with horses: biting, kicking, bucking, stepping on person, spooking, etc.

Mounted Activity Emergency Plan:

In the event of an accident in the arena/barn or a sudden, severe weather event during a session:

- Instructor calls for "HALT"
- Wait for instructions from instructor
- All riders stay mounted unless instructed to dismount
- If needed, riders are emergency dismounted and everyone without injury is removed from the arena.
- If needed, instructor takes over in C.P.R. and first aid and designated person assumes leadership over other participants.
- If needed, instructor designates someone to call 911.
- Telephones are located in the helmet/boot room in the arena >>>>>
- At the end of class, the Instructor will file out an Occurrence Report Form if appropriate, which will then be passed on to the Lead Instructor who will follow up on the Occurrence Report.

Emergency Meeting Location

The emergency meeting location for riders is defined as in the bleachers, using the north-west man gate to exit the arena. Horse leaders are to remove the horses from the arena and to the parking lot or the stall barn, as directed by the instructor. A head count will be performed to ascertain if everyone is present. If not safe to meet at this location, WTRRA personnel will define another safe location until evacuation plans from WTRRA property are made in accordance with the Emergency Evacuation Plan.

General Emergency Considerations

- All instructors shall be trained in first aid and C.P.R.
- All facility vehicles licensed for use on public roads shall be kept in good repair and half full of fuel.
- All fire extinguishers shall be checked and maintained annually.
- All signage related to safety and emergency situations shall be checked annually. Building exit signs, fire extinguisher location signs, etc.
- Keep gas and diesel on hand for tractor and generator use.
- Keep functional flashlights in each building.
- Keep hoses at every year round hydrant at every building in case of fire.
- Telephone is located in the helmet/boot room in the arena.

Emergency Plans for Disasters and Hazards

Personnel rehearsals will be conducted annually. Volunteer rehearsals will be conducted at the introductory volunteer trainings.

Thunderstorms and Lightning:

Thunderstorms and lightning are frequent during the summer months. During heavy rains and severe thunderstorms, the horses are to be kept in the stalls or fields. There is access to shelter if they are out during inclement weather and are only to be brought inside the stalls at the discretion of the Equine Manager or Instructor if the Equine Manager is not available.

If a severe storm comes up quickly during a lesson, it can cause the horses to become spooked. If necessary at the instructor's direction, the Mounted Activity Emergency Plan should be followed.

If lightning is seen, then all lessons are to be conducted in the indoor arena. If the instructor feels as if the storm is an imminent safety concern, classes may be postponed or cancelled for the day. If a storm looks imminent, then trail riding is contraindicated.

Building Fire and Wildfire:

- Staff or designated volunteer calls 911.
- Staff designates volunteer at time of fire to meet emergency personnel at the main entrance when they arrive and direct them to the scene of the fire.
- All personnel/guests/participants go to the designated meeting area (bleachers) if safe to do so, otherwise seek safety in an open area distant from the fire.
- Sweep of facility to be performed by staff member.
- If it is safe to do so, trained personnel shuts off power main if applicable.
- Pay particular attention to the above ground fuel tanks (located north of the office trailer)
- Once all riders have been evacuated to a safe area, horse handlers will walk horses to a safe area away from the fire depending on location and nature of the fire.
- Ensure that all participants are safely in designated meeting area. Staff will then evacuate remaining horses from threatened area(s).
- Survey scene to make sure it is safe to enter.
- If fire is in stall area, evacuate horses closest to the fire first.
- If at all possible, horses should be led to a safe area determined by location of fire. In most cases, the large round pen and/or adjacent pastures.
- Leave halters on the horses and lead ropes tied on gates in plain view until ALL threat of danger is eliminated.
- Frightened horses may not want to leave their stalls, talk to them in a reassuring tone of voice. It may be necessary to cover their eyes with a towel or t-shirt.
- If a horse is unmanageable or refuses to leave stall, leave door/gate open and move to the next horse.
- In the case of a fast-moving fire, open all stall doors/gates and evacuate to a safe location.
- Once outside a horse may try to run back into his stall. Be aware of that possibility.
- Evacuate the WTRRA property in accordance with the Emergency Evacuation Plan posted at both ends of the indoor arena.

Earthquake:

- All personnel/guests/participants go the designated meeting area if safe to do so, otherwise seek safety in an open area distant from any buildings.
- Sweep of facilities to be performed by staff member. Interior inspections only if there is no visible damage to the outside of the buildings.
- Pay particular attention to the above ground fuel tanks.
- Once all riders have been evacuated to a safe area, horse handlers will walk horses to a safe area.
- Ensure that all participants have been evacuated. Staff will then evacuate remaining horses from threatened area(s).

Flood:

- All riding or other activities will be cancelled until such time as the threat of flooding has been eliminated.
- All vehicles will be evacuated from the facility and be transported to designated location deemed safe.
- In the case that water tops the pastures and stall barn, the horses will be evacuated off site by the Equine Manager to an appropriate safe location.
- Staff will collect and transport all important documents, equipment and supplies to designated location. These items will be prioritized and defined as necessary by the Equine Manager and Executive Director.

Ice:

During the winter months, repeated melting and refreezing of snow can cause the parking lot and outdoor walking areas to become very slick with ice. During this time, the facility may be closed to public and private activities until the situation can be remedied. Please be aware of this hazard during the winter months.

Loss of Power/Water:

If loss of power occurs, notify the property manager who will ascertain, if possible, the cause. If simple corrective action will solve the problem, such as resetting a thrown breaker, the Property Manager can handle the issue. If it is determined that the cause is off the WTRRA property, the Property Manager will call Idaho Power and seek advice as to how long the power is expected to be out. With this information, the Property Manager will make decisions in consultation with the Executive Director and if required, the Lead Instructor. If appropriate, participants and volunteers will be notified via phone, email on website, or however possible as to the impact on lessons and riding times.

Security:

- The office trailer is locked at night and when not in use.
- The arena is monitored by the Facility Caretaker, and doors are shut when the arena is not in use.
- The Barn is monitored by the Facility Caretaker, and doors are shut when the arena is not in use.

Emergency Evacuation Plan

In the event of an emergency, use the following evacuation plan.

- Building Fire, Earthquake or Flood: Evacuate first to the designated meeting area if safe to do so, otherwise seek safety in an open area distant from any buildings. Then move off the property if necessary via the main road to Cemetery Lane
- Wildfire: Evacuate first to the designated meeting area if safe to do so, otherwise seek safety in an open area. Then move off the property via the main road to Cemetery Lane and to Highway 93S. If the wildfire has obscured the main entrance rendering it unsuitable for evacuation, an evacuation on foot can be achieved in almost any direction.

Whitewater Therapeutic and Recreational Riding Association

PO Box 1443 Salmon, Idaho 83467 - 208-469-0617 – whitewatertherapeutic@gmail.com - Located at 1319 Cemetery Lane

Volunteer Agreement Accepting WTRRA Policies

I/We, the undersigned being of legal age, represent that I/WE have read and do understand the foregoing policies, procedures, and arena rules as presented in the WTRRA Volunteer Handbook. I/WE understand that by signing this document I/WE are to follow all rules, policies and procedures stated within this handbook. I am signing this while of sound mind and not suffering from shock, or under the influence of alcohol, drugs or intoxicants.

Signature of Volunteer: _____

Printed Name: _____

Date: _____

Signature of Parent or Guardian if volunteer is under 18 years of age: _____

Printed Name: _____

Date: _____