



April 8, 2019

To: Permitted Wildlife Rehabilitation Facilities and Wildlife Rehabilitators within the CDFA-designated Southern California regional quarantine area for virulent Newcastle Disease (vND)

Re: Guidance for the Intake, Rehabilitation and Release of Free-ranging Wild Bird Species

In May 2018, virulent Newcastle Disease (vND) was detected in Southern California. Virulent Newcastle Disease is a highly contagious and nearly always fatal disease among poultry, but all birds may be at risk of infection. Efforts by the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to eradicate the disease have required the euthanasia of more than a million birds (primarily chickens) in Los Angeles, Riverside, San Bernardino, and Ventura counties. Recently, a single chicken was diagnosed with vND in Alameda County. USDA also confirmed detections in chickens in Utah and Arizona.

The majority of vND detections have occurred in backyard and feral chickens; however, detections also have been made in domesticated pigeons, doves, turkeys, peafowl, guineafowl, ducks, geese, and parrots. Due to the heightened risk of transmission among backyard chickens and other birds (e.g. pigeons, turkeys, ducks) in contact¹ with chickens, it is important that wildlife rehabilitation personnel adhere to strict intake and release protocols in order to minimize the likelihood of vND transmission.

On February 27, 2019 CDFA's state veterinarian issued a regional quarantine pursuant to the Food and Agriculture Code, Section 9562 for all of Los Angeles County and large areas of western San Bernardino and Riverside counties. The quarantine prohibits the movement of all birds defined by CDFA as poultry², poultry products, associated poultry materials and equipment, and non-poultry species that have been in contact with poultry.

This letter is offered as guidance for wildlife rehabilitators to allow for the continuation of day-to-day activities while also maintaining adherence to the quarantine in order to minimize the likelihood of vND transmission. Bird species of greatest concern for rehabilitation are non-native, free-ranging birds such as rock pigeons and Eurasian collared doves as well as semi-domestic or hybrid waterfowl because these species are more likely to be in close contact with infected poultry or possibly be released captive birds.

¹ Contact is defined in this document as being currently or previously located on the same property.

² CDFA definition of poultry: chickens, turkeys, turkins, pheasants, peafowl, guinea fowl, quail, ducks, geese, swans, gallinules, doves, pigeons, grouse, partridges, francolin, tinamou, ostriches, and other ratites (including but not limited to the rhea, emu, and cassowary), and hatching or embryonated eggs.

Below are California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) recommendations for the intake and release of wild birds admitted to wildlife rehabilitation centers within the vND quarantine zone (Appendix A). This guidance may be revised at any time if vND is detected in additional species and/or geographic areas.

1. All rehabilitators should follow the guidance and biosecurity measures outlined in the *CDFW VND – Information for Wildlife Rehabilitators* letter, dated March 19, 2019. Additional information can be found on CDFA's and USDA's biosecurity websites.
 - CDFA: https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/AHFSS/Animal_Health/BioSpecies/BioPoultry.html
 - USDA: <https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/ourfocus/animalhealth/animal-disease-information/avian/defend-the-flock-program/df-biosecurity>
2. Any wild bird (with the exception of state or federally threatened and endangered species) that has had known contact with domestic chickens or turkeys or was temporarily held at a facility where domestic chickens or turkeys were present (e.g. animal shelters, veterinary clinics; refer to *CDFA Guidance Document for Animal Control*, dated April 8, 2019³) must be euthanized immediately upon arrival.
 - The remains must be placed in a double plastic bag, the bag tightly closed, and the outside of the bag sprayed with a disinfectant approved for vND⁴. Remains shall be disposed of by cremation, rendering, or burial (landfills are the preferred option).
3. All native wild bird species with no known contact with domestic chickens or turkeys may be rehabilitated and released.
4. All non-native pigeons and doves including Rock Pigeons (*Columba livia*), Eurasian Collared Doves (*Streptopelia decaocto*), Oriental Turtle Doves (*Streptopelia orientalis*), Ring-necked Doves (*Streptopelia capicola*), Ringed Turtle Doves (*Streptopelia risoria*), and Spotted Doves (*Streptopelia chinensis*) should be humanely euthanized and the eggs of these species destroyed immediately upon arrival. Should an organization choose not to humanely euthanize these species, the birds must be held in long-term isolation (potentially 6 months or more) prior to release due to risk of chronic viral shedding.
5. All native wild pigeon and dove species listed in Appendix B with no known contact with domestic poultry may be rehabilitated and released.
6. Do not admit any non-native, domestic, semi-domestic, or feral gallinaceous birds including, but not limited to, Chickens (*Gallus gallus domesticus*), Turkeys

³ CDFA vND Regional Quarantine Guidance Document for Animal Control, Humane Associations, etc. in southern California, dated April 8, 2019.

⁴ USDA Cleaning & Disinfection Basics (Virus Elimination) accessible at: https://www.aphis.usda.gov/animal_health/emergency_management/downloads/vnd/cleaning-disinfection.pdf

(*Meleagris gallopavo f. domestica*), Peafowl (Genera *Pavo*), Guineafowl (Genera *Numida*), Chukar (*Alectoris chukar*), and Ring-necked Pheasants (*Phasianus colchicus*) and the eggs of these species. Refer the public with these birds to CDFA's Sick Bird Hotline (866) 922-2473.

7. All native wild gallinaceous birds listed in Appendix C with no known contact with domestic chickens and turkeys may be rehabilitated and released.
8. The intake and rehabilitation of all apparent domestic, semi-domestic, and hybrid waterfowl including, but not limited to, breeds of Domestic Mallards (*Anas platyrhynchos domestica*), Domestic Muscovy (*Cairina moschata*), Mandarin Ducks (*Aix galericulata*), Graylag Geese (*Anser anser*), Swan or Chinese Geese (*Anser gygnoides*), Egyptian Geese (*Alopochen aegyptiacus*), Mute Swans (*Cygnus olor*), and Black Swans (*Cygnus atratus*) is strongly discouraged due to increased risk of contact with domestic chickens and turkeys. Until the quarantine is lifted euthanasia of ducklings, goslings, and eggs whose species cannot be reliably determined should be considered.
9. All native wild waterfowl species listed in Appendix D with no known contact with domestic chickens and turkeys may be rehabilitated and released.
10. No wild birds are to be rehabilitated by home rehabbers with pet or other domestic birds (e.g. parrots, chickens, turkeys, racing pigeons, ducks, and ratites) at their residence or on other premises with pet or domestic birds.
11. Volunteers or personnel with pet or other domestic birds at home should not have direct contact with wild birds in rehabilitation. If that is not possible due to low staffing, dedicated clothing and footwear should be worn while at the rehabilitation center when in contact with wild birds. This clothing and footwear should remain at the center.
12. Wild birds from inside the quarantine zone should not be transferred to rehabilitation centers outside the quarantine zone. Prior permission from CDFW and CDFA is required if the transfer of birds for the purposes of specialized treatments or placement of a non-releasable, educational animal is necessary.
13. Personnel, equipment, food, containers, cages, or other supplies from inside the quarantine zone should not be transferred outside the quarantine zone.
14. Feeding rehabilitation animals any poultry or poultry products⁵ originating from within the quarantine zone is discouraged until the quarantine is lifted.
15. Rehabilitated, apparently healthy wild birds will be released as close to their location of origin as possible, or within 10 miles as outlined in CDFW's MOU for wildlife

⁵ Poultry and poultry products are defined in the CDFA Regional Quarantine Notice accessible at: https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/ahfss/Animal_Health/pdfs/VND_RegionalQuarantine_1.pdf

rehabilitation. No wild birds from within the quarantine zone will be released outside of the quarantine zone.

Please report any unusual or increased incidence of sick or dead wildlife to the Wildlife Investigations Laboratory by calling us at 916-358-2790 or through our online form:

<https://www.wildlife.ca.gov/conservation/laboratories/wildlife-investigations/monitoring/mortality-report>

To report sick or dead poultry or pet birds, please contact CDFA's hotline at 1-866-922-2473.

Should you have any questions about these guidelines or adhering to the regional quarantine, please contact Krysta Rogers (Krysta.Rogers@wildlife.ca.gov; 916-358-1662), Nicole Carion (Nicole.Carion@wildlife.ca.gov; 916-213-5236), or Dr. Deana Clifford (Deana.Clifford@wildlife.ca.gov; 916-358-2378).

Sincerely,

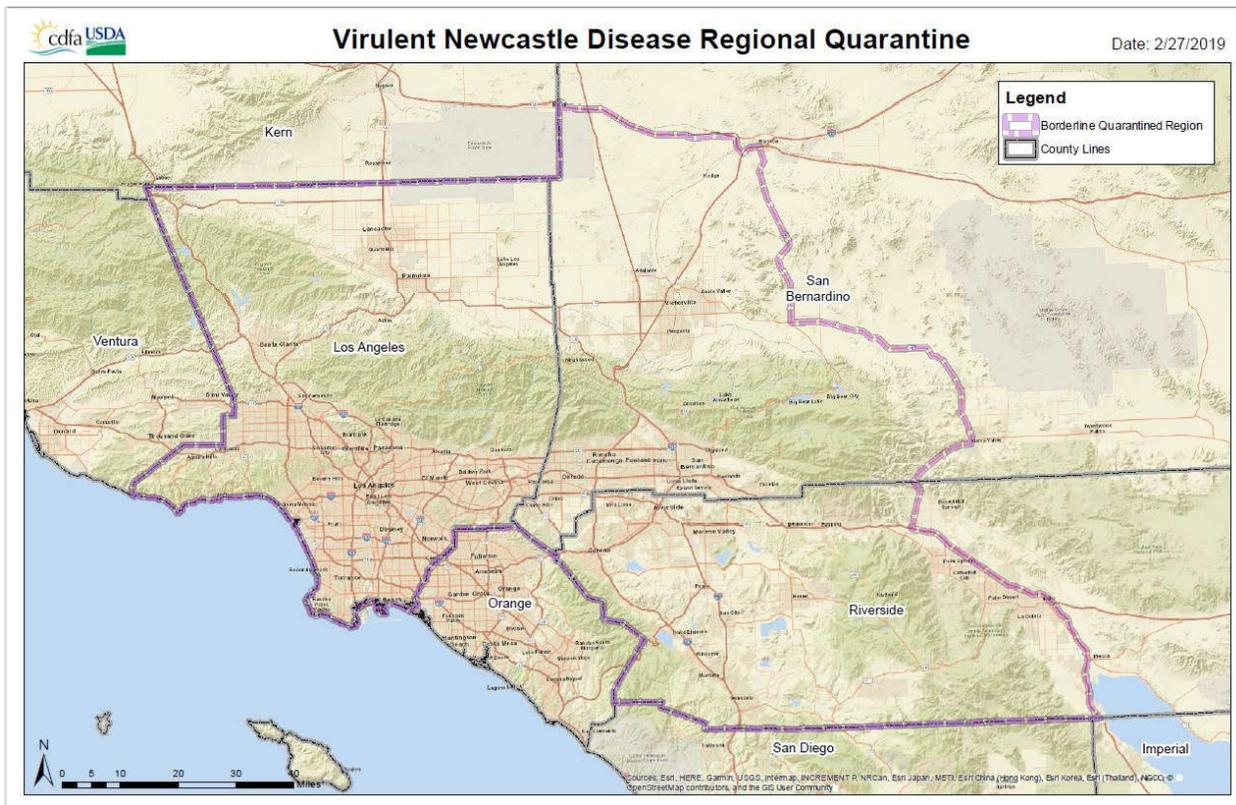
A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dea Clifford". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Deana Clifford, DVM, MPVM, PhD
Senior Wildlife Veterinarian

Appendix A - CDFA Quarantine Boundaries in Southern California

All of Los Angeles County. The modified quarantine extends from the northern and southern borders of western Riverside County to the Salton Sea including the Coachella Valley and as far east as Yucca Valley in San Bernardino County, with a northern boundary of State Route 58 at the Kern County line. Updates available at:

https://www.cdffa.ca.gov/ahfss/Animal_Health/Newcastle_Disease_Info.html



Appendix B - Pigeons & Doves (Columbiformes) native to California

- Band-tailed Pigeon (*Patagioenas fasciata*)
- Inca Dove (*Columbina inca*)
- Common Ground-Dove (*Columbina passerine*)
- White-winged Dove (*Zenaida asiatica*)
- Mourning Dove (*Zenaida macroura*)

Appendix C - Quail, Grouse, & Turkeys (Galliformes) native* to California

- Mountain Quail (*Oreortyx pictus*)
- California Quail (*Callipepla californica*)
- Gambel's Quail (*Callipepla gambelii*)
- Ruffed Grouse (*Bonasa umbellus*)
- Greater Sage-Grouse (*Centrocercus urophasianus*)
- Sooty Grouse (*Dendragapus fuliginosus*)
- Wild Turkey (*Meleagris gallopavo*)* - introduced

Appendix D Waterfowl (Anseriformes) native to California

Snow Goose (*Anser caerulescens*)
Ross's Goose (*Anser rossii*)
Greater White-fronted Goose (*Anser albifrons*)
Brant (*Branta bernicla*)
Cackling Goose (*Branta hutchinsii*)
Canada Goose (*Branta canadensis*)
Tundra Swan (*Cygnus columbianus*)
Wood Duck (*Aix sponsa*)
Blue-winged Teal (*Spatula discors*)
Cinnamon Teal (*Spatula cyanoptera*)
Northern Shoveler (*Spatula clypeata*)
Gadwall (*Mareca strepera*)
Eurasian Wigeon (*Mareca Penelope*)
American Wigeon (*Mareca Americana*)
Mallard (*Anas platyrhynchos*)
Northern Pintail (*Anas acuta*)
Green-winged Teal (*Anas crecca*)
Canvasback (*Aythya valisineria*)
Redhead (*Aythya Americana*)
Ring-necked Duck (*Aythya collaris*)
Tufted Duck (*Aythya fuligula*)
Greater Scaup (*Aythya marila*)
Lesser Scaup (*Aythya affinis*)
Harlequin Duck (*Histrionicus histrionicus*)
Surf Scoter (*Melanitta perspicillata*)
White-winged Scoter (*Melanitta fusca*)
Black Scoter (*Melanitta Americana*)
Long-tailed Duck (*Clangula hyemalis*)
Bufflehead (*Bucephala albeola*)
Common Goldeneye (*Bucephala clangula*)
Barrow's Goldeneye (*Bucephala islandica*)
Hooded Merganser (*Lophodytes cucullatus*)
Common Merganser (*Mergus merganser*)
Red-breasted Merganser (*Mergus serrator*)
Ruddy Duck (*Oxyura jamaicensis*)