



Captain (at left) and Anna have made remarkable progress since arriving at Duchess Sanctuary.

ROAD TO RELEASE

EXCITEMENT WAS BUILDING

at The Fund for Animals Wildlife Center on a clear February morning. After several months rehabilitating an orphaned California black bear, staff were ready to return him to the wild.

He had come a long way from the scrawny 7-month-old cub brought to the center last fall. Weighing only 20 pounds—about half the normal weight for that age—he was found circling the area of his dead mother, who was presumably hit by a car.

The cub was kept in quarantine for a few weeks before being moved to an outdoor enclosure he shared with another rehabilitating bear.



“We try to keep them as wild as possible,” says Ali Crumpacker, center director. There were trees to climb and places for them to dig and make dens. To teach foraging skills, staff hid food in tree branches and in donated Christmas trees.

Thanks to the help of donors who dropped off fruit and vegetables every week, the bear thrived. At his release—armed with survival skills and weighing a robust 147 pounds—he headed for the nearest tree, ready to survey his new home.

FROM TEARS TO TRIUMPH

DUCHESS SANCTUARY STAFF watched in horror as two weak and obviously neglected horses gingerly emerged from the transport trailer. The gelding, called Captain, was so emaciated that most of his skeleton was clearly visible. Anna, the mare, had a fungal skin infection, an unattended knee injury and long, cracked hooves.

Seized by authorities in Nevada after being abandoned and left to starve by their owner, the horses were rescued and given a second chance. With the help of the American Wild Horse Preservation Campaign, Equine Welfare Consulting Services and generous donors and advocates, the pair traveled to Duchess.

“To watch them step off the trailer was very emotional,” says Jennifer Kunz, director of operations at Duchess. “It was obvious that they had been saved from terrible circumstances. With a body condition score of barely two [on a

scale of nine], Captain had us holding back tears.”

Step one for staff members was to place the horses in quarantine, let them settle in and assess their needs. They set up a careful re-feeding program. They bathed and groomed them. They had their feet trimmed and medical issues addressed.

“It took about three months to get Captain healthy enough that we were comfortable with sedating him for the dental work he needed,” Kunz says.

Fast-forward to today: Captain and Anna are healthy and contented horses—as long as they are in sight of each other. The suffering they endured together created a strong bond, and they become very upset if separated.

To reduce stress and prevent illness, the bonded pair has not been introduced to other horses. They spend their days in their own paddock, receiving lots of cookies—and lots of love—from their caretakers.



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*Operated by HSUS affiliate The Fund for Animals

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12526 County Road 3806
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***DUCHESS SANCTUARY**
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Oakland, OR 97462
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***THE FUND FOR ANIMALS WILDLIFE CENTER**
18740 Highland Valley Road
Ramona, CA 92065
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