



## Important Update on Our Horses

Dear Girl Scout Community,

Thank you for your continued support as we navigate the unforeseen and unprecedented challenges over the past year. We truly couldn't do it without you.

As part of our ongoing efforts to come out of this pandemic stronger and with the ability to deliver the best programming for our girls, we've had to reimagine every aspect of our current and future programs. Camp is a bedrock facet of Girl Scouts of Western Washington programming, and our horse program has long been a beloved component of camp. However, due to challenges that have arisen over the last year, we've reached the difficult decision of pausing our horse program at this time. We're beginning the process of selling the herd, with members, donors and the Camp Network given priority access to purchase them. We invite anyone interested in purchasing a horse to complete a [buyer application](#). A list of horses for sale with descriptions, photos, and prices will be linked within the application and available soon. We're committed to resuming a horse program after we've had a chance to engage with our Girl Scout horse program community and donors to develop a path forward that will be both equitable and sustainable.

There are many factors that contributed to this decision, and it's one we did not make hastily. Our duty to care for the horses is our number one priority and the well-being of the animals in our care is a core tenet of operating a horse program. When we decreased our horse herd last summer, our aim was to maintain the herd at a size our camp team could care for and provide a horse program at one camp in the summer with shoulder-season opportunities at a boarding facility in Olympia. Circumstances have changed over the last several months, significantly affecting the exercise needs of the herd as horses require routine exercise for optimum health. With the pandemic continuing to constrain GSWW's ability to provide consistent in-person programs, our horses need to be in loving environments where daily exercise is maintained.

A second factor influencing this decision is that, as a non-profit and with the added impacts of COVID-19, there are limits to our volunteer, staff, and financial capacity to adapt to provide the quality

of care our horses need and deserve. Our horses are deeply loved by many, some have been in our program for years. Our dedicated equine staff—both volunteer and employee—have poured so much of themselves into caring for our herd. This is an incredibly painful decision. We thank you for your understanding of our current realities. While we're saddened about pausing one of our favorite programs, we're thrilled for our horses who can thrive in loving environments while we build our next normal together. In 2022, we're committed to seeking an avenue to provide horse programming that meets what our members want and is sustainable for the council.

With a heavy heart,

Megan Ferland, CEO  
Girl Scouts of Western Washington