

# MANAGING RHINO EMERGENCIES

Veterinarians presented with a recumbent opioid immobilized rhino with traumatic horn removal: supporting and assisting in evaluating a **crime scene** and carrying out a **“forensic” post mortem**

Secure the area

Search the area!

Collect trace evidence:

- i. Photograph all evidence “in situ”
- ii. Trace evidence sealed – “chain of custody” established



1. Determine whether died in tracks or ran a distance,
2. Approx. time of death,
3. Died in its tracks, establish trajectory, locate bullet wounds, presence of a dart

Law enforcement satisfied

Proceed with Post Mortem

Post Mortem

Cause of death unclear –more detailed PM

Gunshot wounds and wound channels

Bullet, entrance and exit wound, locate bullet(s)

“Chain of Custody” continued

Forensic Post Mortem Report

- Describe all external and internal lesions
- Document all items/trace evidence
- Tissues collected for lab analysis
- Significant findings, list in order of importance
- Make a preliminary morphological diagnosis

**The Forensic Process:  
a dead or darted rhino**

Calf present

Dam alive

Released with dam

Sent to Rehabilitation center

or

Post Mortem Kit:

1. Sharp knives
2. Sharpening steel
3. Rope
4. Several plastic or metal probes
5. Scalpel, forceps, scissors, cutting board
6. Metal detector
7. Forensic kit
8. Manpower or winch