

## **CONSIDERATIONS FOR EXOTIC ANIMAL RESCUE**

The Zoo and Aquarium All Hazards Preparedness, Response, and Recovery (ZAHP) Fusion Center, currently in its second year, was created to serve as a conduit between the emergency management sector and the greater managed wildlife community. Funded by USDA and operated by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA), the ZAHP Fusion Center works with key players in emergency management across the country to connect the managed wildlife community with information on the five critical National Preparedness mission areas: Prevention, Protection, Mitigation, Response, and Recovery. The ASAR Heavy Extrication team has been working with zoos all over the country to adapt heavy rescue and technical animal rescue techniques to aid in exotic animal rescue. Applications have been successful in moving both elephants and hippos with new focus on giraffe and rhino. Local FD Heavy Rescue teams are integral for successful planning, application, and safety. In addition, ASAR is working with ZAHP to research creating Exotic Animal Strike Teams to be utilized in SME disaster response. Training based on FEMA ASAR resource typing will be used as a basis as we explore response disasters by zoos all over the country. This presentation will examine the new equipment developed for zoo applications along with roles of first responders and zoo personnel in a rescue or disaster situation.

### **ERIC THOMPSON**



Eric Thompson is a graduate of Kansas University with a B.G.S. in Environmental Science and graduated from the Kansas Law Enforcement Training Center with his Police commission. Currently Eric is working as the Director of Disaster Response for Code 3 Associates and serves as the Past-Chair for the National Animal Rescue and Sheltering Coalition (NARSC). Eric also teaches and provides technical large animal rescue operations for the Emergency Equine Response Unit (EERU) based in Kansas City and is an instructor for the International Technical Rescue Association (ITRA). Eric is certified as a Swiftwater and Technical Rope Rescue Technician and in water, mud, rock, ice, fire and trailer

rescues of animals. Eric has received over 25 certificates of achievement from FEMA regarding disaster response and planning and is working with several states as a disaster planning consultant by incorporating animal-related operations into existing Emergency Support Functions. Eric also instructs technical small Animal Search and Rescue classes (Swiftwater/Flood Ops/Ropes) that meet new NFPA 1670 guidelines for fire departments and first responders. For more information on available training, go to [www.asartraining.org](http://www.asartraining.org).