



CASE STUDY

Advanced Aquatic Therapy Gets Search & Rescue Dog Back to Work

When Pax, a 7-year-old service dog with Eastern Wyoming Search and Rescue, suffered a career-threatening spinal injury, advanced aquatic therapy proved to be the key to his recovery. As a Human Remains Detection dog helping law enforcement and bringing closure to families, Pax's ability to work depended on making a full recovery from severe disc damage that was causing partial paralysis in his hind legs.

THE CHALLENGE: Damaged Spine

After a routine jump from his handler's truck resulted in three damaged spinal discs, Pax faced a difficult road to recovery. "The initial prognosis wasn't optimistic about him returning to work," recalls Jerry Numon, Pax's handler. Traditional land-based rehabilitation would have put too much stress on Pax's healing spine, potentially compromising his recovery. The team needed a solution that would allow early intervention while protecting the surgical site.

THE SOLUTION:

Surgery and AquaPaws Therapy

VCA Veterinary Specialists of Northern Colorado chose Hudson Aquatic Systems' AquaPaws underwater treadmill, specifically designed for canine rehabilitation. The system features precise speed control from 0.1 to 9 MPH and variable water depth up to 30 inches, allowing therapists to create customized protocols for each phase of recovery. The system's advanced water management maintains optimal temperature and sanitization, while large viewing windows enable close monitoring of gait patterns during therapy.

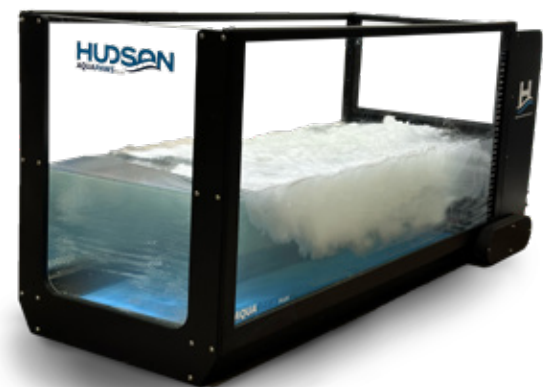
"Water's natural properties make it perfect for post-operative recovery," explains rehabilitation director Carrie Adrian. "The buoyancy reduces

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stress on healing tissues, while water resistance strengthens muscles in a controlled environment.” The AquaPaws’ touchscreen controls allowed therapists to make minute adjustments to speed and water depth during sessions, precisely controlling the amount of weight-bearing as Pax progressed. The system’s resistance jets provided additional therapeutic options, creating currents that challenged Pax’s balance and core strength in a controlled manner.

THE RESULT: Back to Work!

Thanks to the precise control and advanced features of the AquaPaws system, Pax made a remarkable recovery and returned to his vital role in search and rescue. Today, he continues his important work alongside his canine colleague Scout, with regular maintenance sessions in the underwater treadmill helping prevent future injuries. “Without this sophisticated aquatic therapy equipment, years more of happy, healthy, rewarding work wouldn’t have been possible,” says Numon. Pax’s success story demonstrates why leading veterinary rehabilitation facilities choose Hudson Aquatic Systems’ advanced equipment for treating their most challenging cases.



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