



Spay It Forward TNR Initiative

Project #
19-422

County: Montgomery

Number of Cats Spayed: 112
Number of Cats Neutered: 96

Number of Dogs Spayed:
Number of Dogs Neutered:

Amount Received: \$12,860

Amount Remaining (to be returned to MDA): 2306

Project Synopsis:

For the past several years, Montgomery County Partners for Animal Well-Being (MCPAW) has worked with area volunteers, colony caretakers, and veterinary clinics to trap, spay/neuter, vaccinate, ear tip, and microchip as many feral cats as possible. The goal of MCPAW's Spay It Forward program is to decrease the number of cats and kittens entering the sheltering system and to reduce the euthanasia rate. The newly formed Montgomery County Community Cat Coalition (MC C3) partnered with MCPAW again this year to apply for this grant. MC C3 is an independent, nonprofit animal welfare organization dedicated to bettering the lives of community cats. MCPAW had full responsibility for administering the grant and purchasing/registering/recording the microchips. We TNR'd 208 cats in about 70 locations between October 1, 2018 and December 31, 2019.



Project Description:

MCPAW is the 5013c nonprofit partner of Montgomery County Animal Services and Adoption Center (MCASAC). The Spay It Forward program is intended to reduce the number of homeless cats coming into the shelter by preventing births of more cats and reducing the euthanasia rate. This year, the project targeted just three zip codes within the Silver Spring/Wheaton area (20902, 20904, and 20906) due to the large identified number of colonies in these locations.

By being a part of the Montgomery County Community Cat Coalition (MC C3), MCPAW has been able to offer free spay/neuter and return (TNR) services to the community. Free rabies vaccines, ear tipping, and MPCAW-funded microchips have also been made available to the members of the coalition and other community caretakers. Excluded from the project are additional surgeries or treatments.



MCPAW has partnered with several clinics to provide negotiated prices for spay/neuter, vaccines, and microchipping. Spay Now Animal Surgery Clinic in Laurel, Maryland, Metro Ferals Clinic in Eldersburg, Maryland, and Humane Rescue Alliance in DC are the primary facilities we use.

Summary of Approach:

MCPAW selected projects based on need, size, and scope, and our ability to bring the appropriate resources to the project. Before committing to a project, we had a discussion with the property owner or authorized representative to be sure the requisite permission to TNR was granted. We also ensured that a dedicated and competent colony manager was secured. With the assistance of volunteer trappers and transporters, we scheduled and completed the TNR. We committed to trapping 100% of the cats in each colony to manage growth and ensure a “no kitten zone.” We also developed relationships with partners who will help deliver quality of life to the cats in the colonies. We used social media, our website, and our extensive email list to share our successes while maintaining the confidentiality of the colony locations and caretakers.

Accomplishments:

The Spay It Forward program in 2019 was scaled back from 2018 due to the need to focus on just three targeted zip codes - 20902, 20904, and 20906. We TNR'd 208 cats in about 70 locations between October 1, 2018 and December 31, 2019. The colonies were located in Wheaton and Silver Spring, per the terms of the grant. At each location, we obtained the required signed property permission forms, with each colony assured to have a reliable caretaker. All cats were ear tipped, vaccinated against rabies, and microchipped. MCPAW self-funds the microchips. Because of these efforts, we estimate to have prevented over 1,000 kittens from being born, thus reducing the intake to MCASAC and euthanasia rates of cats at MCASAC. This is a highly respected program among the community cat caretakers, trappers, and others who care about the cats. The community depends on us. MCPAW is very pleased and proud of our accomplishments.

Lessons Learned:

Just as in previous years, MCPAW is grateful for the hardworking volunteers who work with us and care so much about the cats. We could not do this without them. We continue to work with MC C3 to recruit and train new trappers and to spread the word about TNR. It is a challenging to retain dedicated volunteers.

Because we were restricted in this grant to just three zip codes instead of the entire county, we have concerns that many cats who had been identified as needing TNR did not get addressed. While we understand the need to be able to prove that our efforts have effectively reduced the intake into MCASAC, we hold firm in our beliefs that doing any TNR is beneficial.

Attachments:

Spreadsheet of TNR'd Cats
Permission Forms

For More Information Contact:

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MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
SPAY AND NEUTER GRANTS PROGRAM

