



Spay It Forward TNR Initiative

Project #
20-522

County: Montgomery

Number of Cats Spayed: 46
Number of Cats Neutered: 57

Number of Dogs Spayed:
Number of Dogs Neutered:

Amount Received: \$5,200

Amount Remaining (to be returned to MDA): 0

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 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. Our grant application this year was significantly scaled back. In our grant application last year, we proposed targeting six different zip codes within the Silver Spring area. Since then, we have more finely tuned our target area to just three zip codes: 20902, 20904, and 20906. We TNR'd 103 cats between January 1, 2020 and August 31, 2020.



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 MCPAW-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.



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MCPAW/MCC3 have 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/MCC3 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 2020 was scaled back from 2019 due to the need to focus on just three targeted zip codes - 20902, 20904, and 20906. We TNR'd 103 cats between January 1, 2020 and August 31, 2020. The colonies were located mostly in Silver Spring, with one in Wheaton, 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 at least 600 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/MCC3 are very pleased and proud of our accomplishments.

All trapping and surgeries were suspended between March 23 and May 17 due to clinic closings as a result of the pandemic. We were concerned that we could not complete the project because of this disruption. Thanks to dedicated staff and volunteers at Spay Now and Metro Ferals, as well as MCC3 volunteers, we were able to accomplish completion once the clinics reopened.

MCPAW/MCC3 were able to help a woman on Northhampton Drive in Silver Spring with two owned cats. Permission was granted by the Department of Agriculture's Project Coordinator and Grants Specialist to use grant funds to pay for the surgeries.

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:

Name:
Armstrong, Jan



Organization Name and Address:

MCPAW
7315 Muncaster Mill Road
Derwood, MD 20855

Email: jannerl2011@gmail.com



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