



St. Mary's Spay Neuter Your Pet (SNYP) Program

Project #

22-7079

County: St. Mary's County

Number of Cats Spayed: 151

Number of Dogs Spayed: 44

Number of Cats Neutered: 77

Number of Dogs Neutered: 44

Amount Received: \$30,045.00

Amount Remaining (to be returned to MDA): \$0.00

Project Synopsis:

This program targeted low-income families in specific zip codes in St. Mary's County. The goal was to reduce the number of unwanted or abandoned animals and as a side benefit, assist in correcting behavioral issues related to remaining intact. These behavioral issues (wandering, spraying, aggression) put animals at increased risk of abandonment or euthanization. We actually completed the project in early February but were able to continue to fund additional surgeries in support of Animal Control with SMAWL funds.



Maryland Department of Agriculture
Spay and Neuter Grants Program



Project Description:

SMAWL performed this project beginning in the second quarter of 2022 and ended the project in the first quarter of 2023. We actually completed the project in early February - ahead of schedule. We are a volunteer-staffed, non-profit operating in Southern Maryland and this project focused on five zip codes in St. Mary's County with the most population density. Outreach efforts focused on social media and attendance of public events in addition to marketing information being provided at our vaccination clinics, adoption events, and local veterinary clinics and the municipal shelter. St. Mary's Animal Control officers and local food pantries are also very important to spreading information about this project. In 2022 St. Mary's County was served by Tri County Animal Shelter until September, 2022 when the new St. Mary's municipal shelter opened.

Summary of Approach:

Outreach included providing flyers at our vaccination clinics, local veterinary hospitals and clinics, information tables at community programs, various social media posts, and working closely with Animal Control officers. Local food pantries also provided the opportunity to reach out to community members who struggled with costs associated with their pets. In addition to making vouchers available to community members who qualified for vouchers, we were able to assist with negotiations for reduced fee procedures or payment over time arrangements for those who did not qualify. As the impacts of COVID concerns have reduced and public gatherings are back to normal frequency we saw a significant increase in our outreach this year. With the opening of the new municipal shelter as well as the re-opening of our adoption center, we were able to be face to face with so many more people than in the recent years. Our trained volunteers helped many applicants with vouchers and other assistance.

Accomplishments:

We facilitated 316 spay/neuter surgeries to community members who might otherwise have let their pets remain intact. We strengthened many community relationships to improve our outreach and increase support of community members in need. We have assisted with the placement of unwanted or improperly cared for animals through this outreach as well, working closely with Animal Control officers and other rescues in the area. This program achieves so much - reducing the increase of abandoned or euthanized animals but also strengthening the community as they come together to help each other. We are very proud to be a part of this.



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Lessons Learned:

We remain the only source of spay/neuter assistance for pets in St. Mary's County. The need for this assistance remains high. We continue to source additional programs to support the community with needs beyond these surgeries. We have implemented additional training for our volunteers after a local rescue attempted to apply for vouchers for animals they had available for adoption. We also spent some time with that rescue discussing fundraising options as well as sponsorships to help to right their ship. There continues to be a problem with community cats in the county and we have been able to provide some assistance to colonies with caretakers using other resources and the assistance of Animal Control. Our team is stronger than ever and looking forward to continued participation in this program.

For More Information Contact:

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