



# Maryland Spay and Neuter Grants Program Annual Report August 2014

Covering July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2013 to June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2014

## Final Report

8/1/2014

Maryland Department of Agriculture

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Maryland Department of Agriculture

Spay and Neuter Grants Program

Annual Report

(July 1, 2013-June 30, 2014)

August 2014

This report details the activities and accomplishments of each element pertaining to the Maryland Spay and Neuter Grants Program (the Program) for Fiscal Year 2014 (FY14) covering July 1, 2013 to June 30, 2014.

***GRANT PROPOSALS SELECTED AND NUMBER OF SPAY AND NEUTER  
PROCEDURES PERFORMED UNDER EACH GRANT***

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None to date. The submittal deadline for the first cycle of funding was August 6, 2014 and fell out of the reporting period for this report. This time period was devoted to the development of the Program elements (such as regulations, advisory board, guidelines, application process and form, web page, outreach, and other Program essentials) and all required steps leading to the first funding cycle.

**Goals for FY15:**

- Fund as many high quality proposals as possible during the first funding cycle.

***PUBLIC EDUCATION AND OUTREACH***

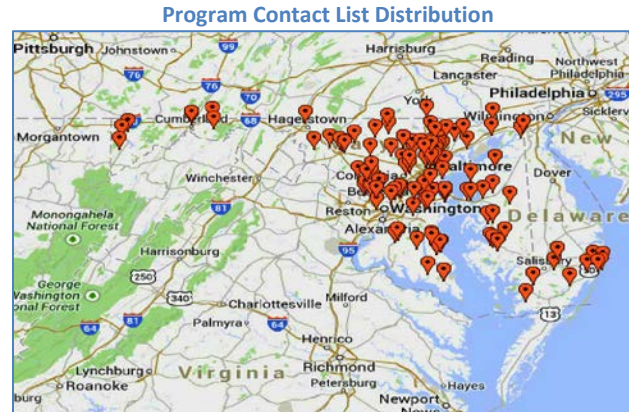
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The following summarize the outreach efforts put forth with regards to the Program during the specified time period:

- The Advisory Board held five public meetings during the reporting period. All meetings were advertised on the MDA web site two weeks prior to the meeting dates and

distributed to media by the Agency's Public Information Office. Attendees from the general public were given the opportunity to comment on the issues discussed, ask questions, or bring up new issues. Dates and meeting topics are detailed in the ADVISORY BOARD section to follow;

- The public comment period for the Program regulations was announced on the MDA website on March 21, 2014 and the public was invited to comment up to April 21, 2014;
- The Program Coordinator developed a comprehensive contact list, consisting of 167 qualifying facilities and animal welfare organizations with 501(c)(3) status. This list was used to send Program information via email and direct mail for those organizations without adequate email information;
- The Program Coordinator sent emails to all people and organizations on the Program contact list on June 3, 2014, announcing the launch of the program, the posting of the Request for Proposals, and the opening of the application for the first cycle of funding;
- A 10-minute radio interview by WNAV 1430 Radio (Annapolis, MD) and the Program Coordinator was conducted and aired June 3, 2014 to summarize and promote the Program;
- Program announcements were made on MDA website on 7 dates and on MDA social media accounts: MDA Twitter on 18 dates, MDA Facebook on 3 dates, and Rural Maryland Council Facebook on one date;
- The Program Coordinator attended the Carroll County Pet Expo at the Shipley Arena on June 14, 2014 to speak about the Program with various animal welfare organizations exhibiting at the event; and
- The Program web page is located on the MDA website and is the main repository for all documents, materials, and information relating to the Spay and Neuter Grants Program. The Program Coordinator expanded the program webpage to include sections with information:
  - **Program Background:** Provides information on program genesis, Task Force and their report of findings, the Advisory Board, Senate Bill 820, Program Regulations, and Program funding, with links to all pertinent documents and legislation.



- **Spay and Neuter Advisory Board:** Provides information about the board members and the description of their duties.
- **Benefits of Spay and Neuter:** Provides information for the public on the health, behavior, financial (including comprehensive list of pet licensing per county and the savings available to those with altered pets), and community benefits of having pets spayed or neutered.
- **Useful Web Information:** Hosts links to databases that locate Low Cost Spay Neuter Providers, and link to contact information for Maryland County Attorneys.
- **Information for Applicants:** Posts of the Program *RFP, Application Form, Program Guidelines, Q&A and Examples* document, and *Training Opportunities* information sheet.
- **Information for Project Managers:** Posts of the *Quarterly Progress Report Form, Information for Approved Grant Recipients* guide and *Final Project Fact Sheet* template.
- **Reports:** Hosts links to reports of interest including the *Task Force Final Report, 2012* and *Analysis of Quarterly Survey Data for Initial (1<sup>st</sup> Qtr) Quarter (October-December) 2013, Final Report June 2014.*

#### **Accomplishments for FY14:**

- The Program and its regulations were successfully advertised to the general public and to target groups that met the qualifications for applying for funds, through the use of mail, regular mail, various Department media, and radio;
- The Program Coordinator developed a Program web page that serves as a one-stop location for all the information needed by applicants, grant recipients, and the general public; and
- Through public Advisory Board meetings, full transparency regarding the development of all the Program elements resulted and public involvement was encouraged.

#### **Goals for FY15:**

- Continue to post reports and information about the Program and about spay and neuter in general to the Program webpage;
- Post information about projects funded under the first funding cycle;
- Develop marketing strategy for the Program;
- Develop outreach and promotional materials; and
- Continue to add to contact list.

## **ADVISORY BOARD**

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The Maryland Secretary of Agriculture appointed the 7 member board on November 7, 2013. The Advisory Board was tasked to make recommendations on the Program guidelines and regulations needed to implement the state's Spay and Neuter Fund.

- During FY14, the Advisory Board held five public meetings at the MDA offices to identify, develop, clarify Program specific goals and make recommendations to MDA regarding critical Program elements. The Advisory Board met on the following days:
  - December 6, 2013: Discussed organizational issues, and clarified the board's duties and tasks,
  - January 31, 2014: Hosted a presentation by Michael Barrett (ASPA Vice President, Grants Management at ASPCA) on ASPCA's funding program, discussed Program's regulations, draft guidelines, and application process,
  - March 7, 2014: Met newly-hired Program Coordinator, discussed regulations and draft guidelines,
  - April 25, 2014: Discussed draft guidelines, the application form, and other program elements, and
  - May 22, 2014: Reviewed the status of the regulations and issues expressed by public comments, the Request for Proposals (RFP), final guidelines, Program deadlines and review schedule, and other Program elements.

### **Accomplishments for FY14:**

- Made recommendations to the drafting in the drafting of the Program regulations;
- Helped research of other similar state programs for best practices, program structure ideas, and what pitfalls to avoid (including coordinating with managers of similar programs for advise and recommendations);
- Helped interview and select the Program Coordinator;
- Developed a rough draft of the Program guidelines;
- Gave input to the development of the Request for Proposals (RFP), application form, Q&A and examples document, Information for Grant Recipient document, Grant Agreement template, and various information sheets; and
- Provided review of all documents and program materials developed by the Program Coordinator and offered recommendations.

**Goals for FY15:**

- Review all proposals for funding during the first funding cycle and make funding recommendations to the Department;
- Review and make recommendations on program materials including the Quarterly Progress Report Form, the Final Project Fact Sheet template, and any other Program material developed during the year; and
- Review Program and its elements to identify any areas requiring revision, or improvement.

***PROGRAM REGULATIONS***

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As per SB 820 *“The Department shall adopt regulations requiring a grant recipient to report relevant information on how the grant was used, including data on the number and type of spay or neuter surgeries performed and a description of any public education and outreach implemented.* During the reporting period:

- Program regulations were developed by the Advisory Board, the Department, and drafted in 2013 by the Department’s Assistant Attorney General;
- The regulations were posted for public review on March 21, 2014 and open for public comments until April 21, 2014. The public comment period was announced on the MDA website and on the MDA social media accounts. During that period, the Program Coordinator received 461 comment letters (460 emails and 1 print letter) and sent confirmation emails or letters to all comment submitters. One comment letter was received after the deadline and a response was drafted by Department Assistant Attorney General and sent by the Program Coordinator; and
- The Department Assistant Attorney General drafted a minor revision to the regulations to address the concern that made up the majority of the comments. The final regulations were published in the Maryland Register on June 13, 2014.

**Accomplishments during FY14:**

- The Program regulations were completed in less than a year, adopted by the Maryland Secretary of Agriculture on March 28, 2014 and made effective on June 23 2014; and
- Links to the final regulations were added to the Guidelines document and to the Program Background section of the Program webpage.

## ***DEVELOPMENT OF PROGRAM ELEMENTS AND MATERIALS***

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Fiscal Year 2014 was devoted to developing all the materials and methods required to launch the Program and the funding cycle steps. During the reporting period the following were developed for the Program:

- MDA started recruiting candidates for Program Coordinator position on Dec. 17, 2013 and accepted applications through Jan. 2, 2014. Department staff and an Advisory Board member conducted interviews and a Program Coordinator was hired on Feb. 19, 2014;
- The Program Coordinator set up a dedicated email box for the Program to serve as a location for receiving application forms, survey responses and quarterly progress reports and final project fact sheets for funded projects;
- The Advisory Board researched similar spay neuter programs, reviewed their program guidelines, and drafted a rough guidelines document. The Program Coordinator made additions, edits and all revisions. The Program Coordinator also developed a fillable WORD application form, supplemental guidance including *Q&A and Examples* document, *Training Opportunities* information sheet, and *Information for Grant Recipients* document. All documents were reviewed and approved by the Advisory Board and after Program regulations were finalized, all documents were posted to the Program webpage on June 3, 2014;
- The Program Coordinator drafted the Program's first Request for Proposals (RFP) which incorporated a Program-specific sample Grant Agreement drafted by Department Assistant Attorney General. This document was reviewed and approved by the Advisory Board and posted on the Program webpage on June 3, 2014; and
- The Department Assistant Attorney General generated a list of County Attorneys and contact information for each. The Program Coordinator sent inquiries to each for information about the county laws (if any) specific to feral cats. The responses received were then put in the form of an information sheet that will be used by the Program Coordinator and the Advisory Board to check the legality of any feral cat projects proposed and as an information source for applicants that contact the Program for this information.

### **Accomplishments for FY14:**

- Developed all materials (application, RFP, Guidelines and additional instructions and information sheets) needed to launch the Program and procedures needed to begin the first funding cycle.

### Goals for FY15:

- Develop materials and methods to review all applications, including tools such as application review checklist, Due Diligence Checklist, and review instructions for Advisory Board members;
- Develop metrics by which the Program success may be measured and presented;
- Develop project database in which all individual project due dates and pertinent information will be stored;
- Develop and finalize the Quarterly Progress Report form and the Final Project Fact Sheet template both of which will be used by the project managers; and
- Continue to explore and develop new tools for applicants and project managers, such as a series of narrated PowerPoint presentations that will be posted on the webpage, demonstrating the application process, the tools available and other topics as they are needed.

### ***FEE COLLECTION***

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The program is funded from annual fees levied on manufacturers of all dog and cat feed and treats registered with the Maryland State Chemist Office. During this reporting period:

- Department staff (Marketing Division) generated and sent invoices for Spay/Neuter Program fees on Nov. 1, 2013 to 325 pet feed/treat manufacturers, based on product information from the State Chemist products registration database. Each invoice was sent via first class US mail and included an explanatory letter, a list of products on which the invoice total was based and instructions as to where to send payment;
- Department staff maintained a Program Fee Excel Spreadsheet that served as the main repository of fee remittance information. The Program Coordinator maintained all paperwork pertaining to each paid invoice;
- On March 24, 2014 the Program Coordinator sent 2nd notices for fee payment to 78 companies that had not paid their fees by that date. From April through June 2014 the Program Coordinator called the remaining delinquent companies to follow up on unpaid invoices;
- On June 30, 2014 the Program Coordinator drafted and sent 3<sup>rd</sup> notice letters to 23 companies still in delinquency, advising each to remit payment by July 31, 2014. Nineteen (19) letters were sent US certified with return receipt requests. Four (4) letters were sent to foreign companies (3 to Canada and 1 to New Zealand) by international registered mail with return receipt requested.



### **Accomplishments during FY14:**

- A total of \$388,036.00 in fees was collected as of June 30, 2014 and \$1,994.15 in interest was deposited into the Program's account for program administration costs and for project funding. Of the 325 invoices sent, collection success was 92% of invoices sent. The total amount still outstanding from 23 delinquent companies as of June 30, 2014 was \$14,014.

### **Goals for FY2015:**

- Send remaining 2013 delinquent accounts to state collections.
- Update fee database as remaining 2013 invoices are paid;
- Send out 2014 invoices by Oct. 1, 2014; and
- Continue to process fee payments as they come in.

## ***SURVEY***

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As stipulated in SB 820, *“beginning January 1, 2014, each county and municipal animal control shelter and each organization that contracts with a county or municipality for animal control shall report quarterly to the department on a form prescribed by the Department describing for the previous 3 months: (1) the number of cats and dogs taken in; (2) the number of cats and dogs disposed of, broken down by method of disposal, including euthanasia; and department describing for the previous 3 months”*. The following details what the department did during this reporting period to meet this requirement.

- Department staff used information provided by the Professional Animal Workers Association (PAWS), the Maryland State Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners, and individual referrals to compile a list of potential respondents made up of 56 government and non-profit animal control and welfare facilities throughout the state of Maryland.
- Department staff mailed to 56 organizations each a survey form, letter of explanation and a return envelope;
- The Program Coordinator input all results into a spreadsheet database by organization.
- The Program Coordinator determined 27 of the 56 organizations on the original list were required by law to respond;
- The Program Coordinator made contact with any missing respondents and collected data from all facilities required by law to respond;

- All information was checked for calculation accuracy and then consolidated into a report detailing intake, disposition and euthanasia at a statewide level. The Program Coordinator drafted the Final Report this report on the Program website in June 2014; and
- The Program Coordinator sent via email, survey forms to cover the 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter of 2014 (January-March, 2014) to 27 facilities identified as required to respond and compiled data as it was submitted.

**Accomplishments during FY14:**

- Obtained survey participation from 100 percent of the facilities required by law to provide survey data and an additional 4 non-government facilities volunteered to submit data;
- Developed list and email contact information for all facilities required by law to participate in the survey; and
- Produced and published on the Program webpage *The Analyses of the Survey Data for the Initial Quarter (October-December 2013) Final Report* in June 2014. The following is a breakdown of the data compiled from the responses from the survey received back to MDA as of March 30, 2014.
  - Number of facilities contacted: 56;
  - Number of facilities responding: 31 (55 percent of the 56 organizations contacted);
  - Number of facilities not responding: 25 (45 percent of the 56 organizations contacted);
  - Number of facilities responding that are required to respond: 27 (represents 100 percent participation of facilities required to respond);
  - Total animals under the care of facilities statewide in beginning of quarter: 5,243;
  - Total intake of animals during quarter: 18,793;
  - Total disposition of animals during quarter: 20,230;
  - Total of animals remaining in facilities at the end of the quarter: 3,806;
  - Percent of cats euthanized under the care of shelters (number of cats at the beginning of the quarter plus the intake during quarter): 39 percent; and
  - Percent of dogs euthanized under the care of shelters (number of dogs at the beginning of the quarter plus the intake during quarter): 24 percent.

**Goals for FY15:**

- Obtain all data sheets for all four quarters in 2014, data for first two quarter for 2015, analyze each quarter's data, and produce quarterly reports for each; and

- To request voluntary data from facilities with regards to intake and disposition of feral cats to aid in analyzing the impact of feral cat projects funded.