

Grant ID: 205

**Title of Proposal:** Trap Neuter Return Program for Lehigh Acres

**Agency Type:** Municipal

**Total Funding Requested:** \$25,000.00

**Check Payable To:** Lee County Domestic Animal Services

Application Information

Demographics

**Name of Applicant Agency:** Lee County Domestic Animal Services

**Website Address:** www.LeeLostPets.com

**Person Submitting Proposal:** Ria Brown

**Position:** Public Information Officer

**Organization Business Address:** 5600 Banner Drive

**City:** Fort Myers

**State:** Florida

**Zip:** 33912

**Phone (xxx-xxx-xxxx):** 239-533-7387

**Fax:** 239-277-7387

**Cell:**

**Email Address:** brownra@leegov.com

Agency Details

**Dates of Last Fiscal Year: Begin:** 10/01/09 **End:** 09/30/10

**Organization Income in Last Fiscal Year:** \$2,370,196.00

**Organization Expenses in Last Fiscal Year:** \$3,786,280.00

**Number of Paid Employees:** Full Time: 46 Part Time: 4

**Number of Active Volunteers:** 60

**Total Volunteer Hours per Week:** 240.00

**How did you learn of the 2009 Florida Animal Friend grant competition?** Previous FAF grant recipient

**Year(s) of previous Florida Animal Friend grants (if applicable):** 2007, 2009

Describe your agency:

Services Provided

- Unlimited Intake Shelter
- Limited Intake Shelter
- Foster Network
- Animal Control

Organization Structure:

- City, county, or tribal agency
- Private nonprofit agency
- Other

- Spay/Neuter Services**
- Other** Adoptions, Pet Pantry, Pe

**List your current board of directors:**

**Applicant Qualifications**

**For your organization, in the last complete fiscal year:**

**4899 cats and 4922 dogs were admitted.**

**1313 cats and 2000 dogs were adopted.**

**2858 cats and 2040 dogs were euthanized.**

**4266 cats and 2615 dogs were sterilized.**

**Briefly describe your animal programs:**

Lee County Domestic Animal Services provides animal control services, including cruelty investigations and pet licensing, for unincorporated Lee County and four of the County's incorporated cities. The agency also operates a shelter for lost and found animals, an adoption program for unclaimed pets, foster program, pet placement partnership/rescue, and community pet pantry for disadvantaged pet owners. Veterinary services are provided for all incoming animals and sterilization for pets adopted from the shelter, TNR cats, and cats and pit bulls of owners receiving public assistance. (Sterilization totals include shelter animals and public animals.) Some limited veterinary and emergency care, funded by donations, is also provided for pets of owners receiving public assistance. Microchip ID clinics are offered once a month for an affordable fee even for pet owners receiving public assistance.

**If your program performs adoptions, are all animals sterilized before adoption?**

No

**If not all, what percentage of animals are not currently sterilized before adoption?**

10

**If not all, how are animals selected for sterilization before adoption?**

Animals are sterilized when adopted but before leaving the shelter if there is an available surgery date within the next couple of days. If there isn't an available surgery date in the next couple of days, the adopter will be given a surgery date within the next 30 days and will bring the pet back to the shelter on that date to be sterilized.

**If not all, describe your sterilization policies and procedures for assuring sterilization after adoption:**

Adopters who are Lee County residents are charged a \$250 spay/neuter deposit and adopters residing outside Lee County are charged a \$500 spay/neuter deposit. The deposit is refundable once the pet has been sterilized.

**Give additional background information on your organization's programs as they relate to this application and the qualifications of the personnel who will be in charge of this program. Show that you have the ability to carry out this program.**

Lee County Domestic Animal Services has operated spay/neuter programs for the public since 2007. The agency has always strived to identify and target the pets most responsible for shelter overcrowding such as pit bulls and feral cats, and those populations and areas most in need of low-cost services. These programs are provided by the shelter's staff veterinarian and veterinary technician and by one contract veterinarian and veterinary technician. A portion of the surgeries will be performed by staff veterinarian, Dr. Suzanne Vazzana. Dr. Vazzana graduated from Cornell University, College of Veterinary Medicine. She has 10 years of experience as a veterinarian including emergency veterinary medicine. Maria Raiche, staff veterinary technician assisting Dr. Vazzana, has 23 years experience in veterinary medicine. Maria's experience and abilities are well recognized by the veterinary community. She has lectured at the Caloosa Veterinary Medical Society Annual Conference, set up an emergency shelter in Mississippi during Hurricane Katrina, was named Care Taker of the Year in 2005 by the Florida Animal Control Association and is a FACA certified instructor. A large number of surgeries will be performed by contract veterinarian, Dr. Thomas Powell. Dr. Powell graduated from Purdue University, School of Veterinary Medicine. He has 47 years of experience as a veterinarian

including 45 years in small animal private practice, two years in veterinary research in the military, and three and one half years as a high-volume spay/neuter veterinarian. He is approaching his 10,000th sterilization for our agency. Contract veterinary technician, Jennifer Fitzell, assisting Dr. Powell, has four and one half years of experience in high-volume spay/neuter clinics.

**If you currently have a program for sterilization of cats and/or dogs, describe your current level of funding and productivity and why additional resources are needed?**

Sterilizations of animals adopted from the shelter are funded by license fee revenue (this revenue is reflected in our Financials under Spay/Neuter Clinic Account). This revenue also subsidizes a portion of the additional sterilizations performed for pets (pit bulls and cats) of economically disadvantaged owners and feral cats for our Trap-Neuter-Return Program. Unfortunately, this revenue does not meet the demand for all of the sterilizations needed to control and reduce the pet overpopulation in Lee County. Spay/neuter services in the Lehigh Acres area consists of full service clinics and one clinic that offers some low-cost services. No veterinary clinics in the county, low-cost or full-service, can perform the volume of TNR surgeries required to control the overpopulation of cats especially feral. Lehigh led the nation in home foreclosures. U.S. Census data reports that 24.5% of Lehigh’s population over the age of 15 years lives below the poverty level. For decades Lehigh has been a “dumping ground” for abandoned pets due to its rural nature. Funds that can be targeted for Lehigh’s booming free-roaming community/feral cat population are critical in reducing the large number of unsterilized cat colonies in this area. Most of these free roaming cats are not owned but many are living in colonies with caretakers who do all they can to feed them but absolutely do not have the funds to pay for sterilizations.

**Target Population**

<b>Geographical target area (name of city, county, etc.):</b>	Lehigh Acres, Lee County, FL
<b>Total human population in target area:</b>	125,214
<b>Percent of residents living below poverty in target area:</b>	24.5
<b>Estimated number of pet cats in target area (human population divided by 3.3):</b>	37944
<b>Estimated number of pet dogs in target area (human population divided by 4.0):</b>	31304
<b>Estimated number of feral cats in target area (human population divided by 6.0):</b>	20869
<b>Number of cats admitted to animal control shelters in the target area last year (if known)</b>	not available
<b>Number of dogs admitted to animal control shelters in the target area last year (if known)</b>	not available
<b>Number of cats euthanized in animal control shelters in the target area last year (if known)</b>	not available
<b>Number of dogs euthanized in animal control shelters in the target area last year (if known)</b>	not available

**Please explain if you believe your target area animal population is significantly different than above.**

We believe the population data is correct as it is from the 2010 census data. The number of feral cats seems to be somewhat high based on tribal knowledge but this should still be a fairly accurate number. We are unable to provide the number of cats and dogs admitted to our shelter and euthanized at our shelter as data for Lehigh Acres is included in the data for all of unincorporated Lee County. However, based on the amount of time our officers spend in each zone, we can confirm that approximately 50% of the calls for animal control services in the unincorporated areas of the county come from Lehigh. Lehigh accounts for approximately 1/3 of our total call volume which includes all of unincorporated Lee County and four incorporated cities. Our specific target area is the NE section of Lehigh where we estimate there to be between 1,500 and 1,700 feral cats. This area has some of the most disadvantaged residents of among all the

residents of Lehigh. It also borders other severely depressed and disfranchised neighborhoods.

**Please explain what you believe are the most substantial sources of dog and cat overpopulation in the target area:**

Residents that allow their unaltered pets to roam; stray or abandoned unaltered pets; feral cats; and resident's inability to afford sterilization from full service veterinary clinics or low-cost clinics.

**What kinds of spay/neuter services are currently available in the target area and in what ways are these resources currently insufficient to meet community needs?**

Lehigh Acres has only full service veterinary clinics and one clinic which offers some low-cost services. Most of the area's economically disadvantaged residents cannot afford even low-cost services. Furthermore, these clinics are not available for high volume spay/neuter of feral cats.

**Florida Animal Friend is highly supportive of proposals that are focused on animal populations that are identified as substantial sources of dog or cat overpopulation rather than being diluted over too broad of a geographic area or diverse animal populations. Describe the specific target animal population of the spay/neuter project proposed for this grant:**

- Pets in low-income families
- Especially difficult or unique animal overpopulation sources
- Pit bull dogs
- Feral cats
- Special spay/neuter event
- Other

**Objectives**

**What do you hope to accomplish with these funds (objectives should be specific and quantifiable)?**

Spay/neuter 1,000 feral/free roaming cats in the NE section of Lehigh Acres, FL. This area has approximately 1,500 to 1,700 feral cats. By targeting this specific area we will be able to sterilize the majority of ferals cats in colonies located here.

**How does this program increase the number of sterilization surgeries above the existing baseline?**

It would provide sterilizations for cats in established colonies whose caretakers cannot afford any fees. It will extend sterilizations in this area beyond what current license fee revenue can cover at this time.

**Methods**

**What criteria will you use to determine eligibility for the program?**

Cats must be feral/free-roaming community cats trapped from colonies in NE Lehigh Acres.

**How will you advertise the program? Explain how the advertising will reach the target audience.**

Program flyers would be distributed to public locations in the target area such as libraries, grocery stores, convenience stores, gas stations, and to neighborhood associations. Print and television media will be contacted via press releases. We will also advertise the program on our shelter website and with flyers posted at the shelter and county buildings. Internet sites frequented by the target population such as Facebook and Craig's List would also be posted with program information. We will try to cover all bases by making the program information available from many sources especially those most likely to be frequented by the target audience.

**How will you address barriers to full use of the program such as transportation, illiteracy, and cultural hurdles?**

Caretakers would be the primary transporters of the cats. TNR Community Coalition Volunteers would only assist with trapping and release for individuals without any access whatsoever to transportation. Our experience has been that most caretakers have a relative, friend, or neighbor that can assist with transportation. Flyers will also be distributed in Spanish and we also have Spanish-speaking staff who can translate when needed. Most non-English speaking clients have children or relatives who can translate for them as well.

**Does this project involve the transportation of animals by someone other than the client? If so, describe the vehicles, methods for confinement, personnel training, liability releases used to assure the safety of the animals and handlers.**

There is a TNR Community Coalition of residents in Lee County who are available to assist with the trapping and release for those caretakers/clients who truly have no access to transportation. TNR Community Coalition Volunteers use their own vehicles. Our agency meets regularly with residents who wish to join the TNR Community Coalition to advise them how they can help and the required method for bringing in trapped cats to be sterilized through our program. The TNR Community Coalition Volunteers are members of a group formed by interested residents in the community. They are not employed by LCDAS, nor are they part of the LCDAS volunteer program and do not use our vehicles.

**Veterinary Services**

**Objectives**

**What arrangements have you made with veterinarians to perform the surgeries?**

The surgeries will be performed in-house by LCDAS Shelter Veterinarian, Suzanne Vazzana, and by LCDAS Contract Veterinarian, Thomas Powell.

**Veterinary Practices**

Practice Name	Address	City	State	Zip	Phone	Lead Practice
Lee County Domestic Animal Services	5600 Banner Drive	Fort Myers	FL	33912	239-533-7387	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

**Fee Range**

**What is the fee range to be paid for spay and neuter and what is the distribution to be paid by the client vs. the grant program? Keep in mind that Florida Animal Friend grant funds may only be used for costs directly associated with sterilization surgery (including anesthesia and pain control) and not for other items such as vaccines, testing, licensing, and capital purchases.**

	Amount Paid by Client	Amount Paid by Project	Total Amount
Range for Male Cats	\$0.00	\$25.00	\$25.00
Range for Female Cats	\$0.00	\$25.00	\$25.00
Range for Male Dogs	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Range for Female Dogs	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00

**Please check each item below to indicate additional services offered at the time of surgery, whether the client is required to pay for them, and if so what the fee is. For example, if an examination is required for surgery but is not charged to the client it would be marked: Required  Yes, Fee to client  No**

	Required, Optional, or Not Offered	Fee to Client?
<b>Examination</b>	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Required <input type="radio"/> Optional <input type="radio"/> Not Available	<input checked="" type="radio"/> No <input type="radio"/> Yes
<b>Rabbies Vaccination if Due</b>	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Required <input type="radio"/> Optional <input type="radio"/> Not Available	<input checked="" type="radio"/> No <input type="radio"/> Yes
<b>Other Vaccination if Due</b>	<input type="radio"/> Required <input type="radio"/> Optional <input checked="" type="radio"/> Not Available	<input checked="" type="radio"/> No <input type="radio"/> Yes
<b>Pain Medication</b>	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Required <input type="radio"/> Optional <input type="radio"/> Not Available	<input checked="" type="radio"/> No <input type="radio"/> Yes
<b>Parasite Medication</b>	<input type="radio"/> Required <input checked="" type="radio"/> Optional <input type="radio"/> Not Available	<input type="radio"/> No <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="text" value="\$10.00"/>
<b>Testing</b>	<input type="radio"/> Required <input checked="" type="radio"/> Optional <input type="radio"/> Not Available	<input type="radio"/> No <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="text" value="\$15.00"/>
<b>Licensing</b>	<input type="radio"/> Required <input type="radio"/> Optional <input checked="" type="radio"/> Not Available	<input checked="" type="radio"/> No <input type="radio"/> Yes
<b>Ear tipping</b>	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Required <input type="radio"/> Optional <input type="radio"/> Not Available	<input checked="" type="radio"/> No <input type="radio"/> Yes
<b>Other</b>	<input type="radio"/> Required <input type="radio"/> Optional <input checked="" type="radio"/> Not Available	<input checked="" type="radio"/> No <input type="radio"/> Yes

**If necessary, please explain the procedures and fees described above:**

The total cost for the sterilization is \$50 for a male cat and \$60 for a female cat. The grant would pay \$25 toward each surgery and the remainder would be funded through current Lee County license revenue. TNR cats are sterilized, receive a rabies vaccination, microchip ID (to identify their colony location), and are ear-tipped. TNR cats are not licensed. Caretakers may request FIV/FELV testing for a \$15.00 fee or parasite medication for a \$10.00 fee.

**Is this a voucher program? If so, how will you assure compliance with the program?**

No.

**Other Information**

**Provide any additional information that will help the grant selection committee understand how the program will operate to achieve its goals.**

The goal of this program is to sterilize 1,000 cats in the most problematic area of Lehigh Acres which is the NE section. Without the grant, we can only allocate enough funds from current license fee revenue to sterilize 29 to 33% of the cats in this area. However, with the grant we can achieve a sterilization rate of up to 70% within these colonies.

**Budget**

**Total number of sterilization surgeries projected:**

Cats: 1000 Dogs: 0

**Total budget requested (Budget should not exceed \$25,000):** \$25,000.00

**Average cost/surgery projected:** \$25.00

**Describe any expenses that are not included in the grant and how they will be paid for:**

The grant would cover the cost of the surgical supplies and medication for surgery and a portion of the labor costs for veterinarians and vet techs. Pet license revenue will cover a portion of the labor costs plus rabies vaccines, microchips, and other administrative costs to administer the program.

**Timeline**

**All projects must be completed within 12 months of receipt of funding. Any unexpended funds must be refunded to Florida Animal Friend within 30 days of the end of the project. Requests for time extensions must be made in writing at least 30 days prior to the end of the project. Funding for accepted projects will be available after August 1, 2009.**

**Projected start date:** 09/01/11/ **Projected end date:** 08/01/12

**Future Funding**

**Explain how the organization plans to fund this program in the future. Having plans beyond "seeking funds from other funders" enhances the chances of receiving this grant.**

A portion of our fundraising for our Animal Care Trust Fund will be used for pet sterilizations. Administrative plans for increasing compliance regarding pet licensing will increase future license fee revenue and allow our spay/neuter programs to continue in the future.

### Promotion of Florida Animal Friend Spay/Neuter License Plate

**Applicants selected for funding are expected to publicize their grant in support of their spay/neuter program via press releases, newsletters, website links, etc. In addition, they are expected to promote the sales of license plates so that additional spay/neuter grants can be funded. Please describe your plan to promote the Florida Animal Friend Spay/Neuter License Plate.**

LCDAS will promote the plate by means of regular press releases reporting the success of the program and the need for continued revenue to keep the program going throughout the State of Florida; emails to our extensive contact list and Facebook fans; link on our website for the Florida Animal Friend Plate; inclusion in our department's main news features on Lee County government's website; posters at the shelter; pitches to the media to cover stories about the plate and the progress of our program through funding from the plate.