The effect of High-Volume Spay/Neuter Clinics on shelter intake and euthanasia in Deschutes County, Oregon

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WAG (2009)


#### Abstract

The Bend SNP Spay/Neuter Clinic in Bend, OR (www.bendsnip.org) in addition to the SNIP House clinic in Prineville (www.sniphouse.org) has been able to provide enough high-volume service to impact cat intake at Deschutes County shelters. For dogs it is less clear if there has been an impact yet.




Deschutes Dog Intake and s/n


## Background

Deschutes County in Central Oregon has a population of about 150,000, most in the city of Bend $(64,000)$ and Redmond $(14,000)$. It has two animal shelters, the Humane Society of Redmond and the Humane Society of Central Oregon in Bend. It abuts Crook County, population 20,000.


In June of 2004, SNIP House Spay/Neuter clinic opened. They operated 2 or 3 days per week, although were closed off and on due to vet unavailability. They acquired a mobile unit and when to Redmond weekly for a brief time, before deciding to concentrate on the fixed clinic. See "The effect of a High-Volume Spay/Neuter Clinic on shelter intake and euthanasia in Crook County, Oregon" for an analysis of SNIP's effect on Crook County. Bend SNP opened in 2005.

## Data

Data from SNIP House comes from a comprehensive database of all surgeries, allowing for breakdowns by species, gender and county. In the charts and tables, only surgeries done for animals from Deschutes County are included here.

[^0]The Bend Spay \& Neuter Project opened its doors on October 3, 2005. Their 990 tax returns include their surgery totals each year and their web page has some information on their numbers. We also have spreadsheets with daily numbers for 2006 and 2007, broken down by gender. We have no breakdowns by species. However, Bend SNP has only 5 cages for dogs. They averaged almost 24 surgeries per day in 2006, so the following data include the assumption that $79 \%$ of their surgeries were cats.

We have data from the Humane Society of Central Oregon from 2000-7, but only from 2000-6 for the Redmond Humane Society. During a visit in the Spring of 2007, they said that they had seen a noticeable delay in Kitten Season that year, so it seems likely they experienced a drop in cat intake similar to HSCO.

| Deschutes | cats in 2000 | $\underline{2001}$ | 2002 | $\underline{2003}$ | $\underline{2004}$ | $\underline{2005}$ | $\underline{2006}$ | $\underline{2007}$ | 2008 | $\underline{2009}$ |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| population | 115,367 | 120,757 | 125,498 | 129,306 | 134,329 | 141,288 | 149,140 | 153,799 | 158,456 |  |
| H. S. of Central OR | 1395 | 1306 | 1603 | 1798 | 1997 | 1811 | 1646 | 1412 |  |  |
| H. S. of Redmond | 401 | 406 | 747 | 747 | 1285 | 1284 | 1198 |  |  |  |
| total cat intake cats euthanized | 1796 | 1712 | 2350 | 2545 | 3282 | 3095 | 2844 |  |  |  |
| H. S. of Central OR | 422 | 137 | 206 | 289 | 233 | 226 | 213 | 141 |  |  |
| H. S. of Redmond | 130 | 150 | 163 | 163 | 607 | 345 | 436 |  |  |  |
| total cat euthanasia | 552 | 287 | 369 | 452 | 840 | 571 | 649 |  |  |  |
| Bend SNP cat $\mathrm{s} / \mathrm{n}$ |  |  |  |  |  | 2167 | 3573 | 2938 | 3335 | 2977 |
| SNIP Deschutes cat $\mathrm{s} / \mathrm{n}$ |  |  |  |  | 379 | 984 | 390 | 538 | 78 | 24 |
| total cat $\mathrm{s} / \mathrm{n}$ |  |  |  |  | 379 | 3151 | 3963 | 3476 | 3413 | 3001 |
| cat s/n / 1000 |  |  |  |  | 2.82 | 22.30 | 26.57 | 22.60 | 21.54 | 18.94 |



## Financial

| Bend SNP |  |  |  |
| :--- | ---: | ---: | ---: |
|  | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 |
| Total Income | $\$ 77,696$ | $\$ 199,653$ | $\$ 220,287$ |
| Program Income | $\$ 40,506$ | $\$ 148,719$ | $\$ 131,466$ |
| Total Expenses | $\$ 38,138$ | $\$ 205,397$ | $\$ 205,121$ |
| Program Expenses | $\$ 36,851$ | $\$ 202,832$ | $\$ 200,027$ |
| s $n$ | 2709 | 4466 | 3672 |
| \$ income/surgery | $\$ 14.95$ | $\$ 33.30$ | $\$ 35.80$ |
| \$ expense/surgery | $\$ 13.60$ | $\$ 45.42$ | $\$ 54.47$ |

## Theoretical Progression

Central Oregon is rapidly growing in population and pet ownership figures are usually based on human population. Taking the estimates in PetSmart's new application, owned cats $=$ pop/3.3, dogs $=$ pop/4, feral cats $=$ pop/6 and the American Pet Products Manufacturers Association (APPMA) 2007-2008 National Pet Owners Survey figures that seventy-five percent of owned dogs are spayed or neutered and eighty-seven percent of owned cats are spayed or neutered. Plus a guess that only $5 \%$ of feral cats are fixed. Assume that the lifespan of owned pets is 10 years, and feral cats 5 and the proportion of those that die that are fixed is the same as those that live. Assume the the replacements of these are unfixed, but of the new pets that come with the increase in population, half are already fixed. Assume $80 \%$ of the cats fixed are owned.

| \# based |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
|  | on |  | \% | \# |  | \#unfixed | \# fixed | \# unfixed | \# fixed |
| $\frac{\text { cats }}{2003}$ | population | $\underline{39184}$ | $\frac{87.0 \%}{}$ | $\frac{\text { unfixed }}{5094}$ | $\frac{\text { fixed }}{0}$ | 509 | $\frac{\text { died }}{3409}$ | $\frac{\mathrm{ced}}{4679}$ | $\frac{\text { moved }}{} 761$ |
| 2004 | 40706 | 40706 | 87.0\% | 5292 | 303 | 529 | 3541 | 5125 | 1054 |
| 2005 | 42815 | 42815 | 77.6\% | 9584 | 2521 | 958 | 3323 | 5471 | 1190 |
| 2006 | 45194 | 45194 | 74.4\% | 11576 | 3170 | 1158 | 3362 | 5225 | 706 |
| 2007 | 46606 | 46606 | 73.2\% | 12474 | 2780 | 1247 | 3413 | 5366 | 706 |
| 2008 | 48017 | 48017 | 71.2\% | 13812 | 2730 | 1381 | 3421 | 5507 | 706 |
| 2009 | 48017 | 49428 | 69.2\% | 15208 | 2401 | 1521 | 3422 | 4943 |  |


| feral |  |  | \% |  |  | \#unfixed | \# fixed | \#unfixed | $\frac{\% \text { of }}{\text { owned+feral }}$ |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| cats |  | start | fixed | unfixed | fixed | died | died | replaced | fixed |
| 2004 | 22388 | 22388 | 5.0\% | 21269 | 76 | 4254 | 224 | 3399 | 57.90\% |
| 2005 | 23548 | 21309 | 4.6\% | 20338 | 630 | 4068 | 194 | 3440 | 53.34\% |
| 2006 | 24857 | 20487 | 6.9\% | 19080 | 793 | 3816 | 281 | 2825 | 53.33\% |
| 2007 | 25633 | 19215 | 10.0\% | 17296 | 695 | 3459 | 384 | 2698 | 54.77\% |
| 2008 | 26409 | 18069 | 12.3\% | 15840 | 683 | 3168 | 446 | 2583 | 55.13\% |
| 2009 | 26409 | 17039 | 14.5\% | 14572 | 600 | 2914 | 493 | 1704 | 55.20\% |


| dogs |  | start | $\frac{\%}{\text { fixed }}$ | \# unfixed | fixed | \#unfixed died | \# fixed died | \# unfixed replaced | \# fixed moved in |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| 2004 | 33582 | 33582 | 75.0\% | 8396 | 211 | 840 | 2519 | 4228 | 870 |
| 2005 | 35322 | 35322 | 67.2\% | 11573 | 805 | 1157 | 2375 | 4514 | 982 |
| 2006 | 37285 | 37285 | 62.1\% | 14125 | 980 | 1412 | 2316 | 4311 | 582 |
| 2007 | 38450 | 38450 | 58.3\% | 16043 | 867 | 1604 | 2241 | 4427 | 582 |
| 2008 | 39614 | 39614 | 54.6\% | 17998 | 855 | 1800 | 2162 | 4544 |  |
| 2009 | 39614 | 40196 | 50.5\% | 19887 | 867 | 1989 | 2031 | 4020 |  |

This also assumes only these two clinics fix Deschutes County pets, obviously not true, but probably private vets are only a small factor for feral cats.

## Conclusion

SNIP House $\mathrm{s} / \mathrm{n}$ clinic produced a remarkable reduction in animal intake in a short period of time. However, this was possible only because the human, and therefore pet also, population is very low compared to most areas with $\mathrm{s} / \mathrm{n}$ clinics, and required considerable financial and convenience incentives to bring in so many animals, which took a great deal of financial investment and volunteer time.

Even with recent $\mathrm{s} / \mathrm{n}$ numbers for cats still above those of the shelter's intake, the cat intake has started increasing again. Considering the progression numbers, it seems that massive $\mathrm{s} / \mathrm{n}$ efforts are not something that can be done for a few years only. Even if $100 \%$ of the animals in an area could be altered, about $10 \%$ would die each year and people would still find unaltered animals to adopt from outside of the area, including people unable or unwilling to afford to spay and neuter.

Since the dog $\mathrm{s} / \mathrm{n}$ numbers are so low, and the effect on shelter intake uncertain, let's speculate only about the cat results. Also, although relatively few dog s/ns were done at SNIP, the initial flat fee of $\$ 30$ each, raised only slightly until recently, means that they required a relatively large cost in subsidy. Therefore, I'm estimating the cats were done with a subsidy of about $\$ 15$ per surgery. For SNIP's it appears to take a s/n rate of more than 40 cats per 1000 population each year to sustain a suppressed shelter intake. At a subsidy of about $\$ 15$ per surgery that's about 60 cents per year per person. Lane County Animal Services currently spends about $\$ 5.74$ per county resident.


[^0]:    ${ }^{1}$ Map generated through http://factfinder.census.gov, shelter locations added

