

# THE PATHWAY

to accessible  
surgery-free  
sterilization



2021-22 Biennial Report



# Dear fellow advocates, supporters & innovators

As the veterinary field emerges from the shadow of COVID-19, it is clear that veterinary capacity remains impacted by the pandemic and related veterinary labor shortages in the U.S. and many other countries. The reality of sterilization surgery shortfalls during these challenging first years of the decade underscores the urgency to advance non-surgical options to prevent unwanted litters.

We're pleased that Suprelorin has expanded to over 40 countries during this time. While this implant provides temporary suppression of fertility and is licensed in most locations for male dogs only, it is normalizing the concept of choice to many pet owners and is an example of a successful product in this space.

In her free time, Joyce fosters underaged kittens for a local shelter. A recent litter was a reminder of the likely experience for a family faced with an "oops" litter. Without the shelter clinic to perform surgery, sterilizing all four kittens before adoption would have been a logistical and expense challenge, indeed. In fact, despite already being adopted, two kittens stayed with Joyce until 10 weeks old to "make weight" for surgery.

ACC&D is bringing about a day when a brief visit to foster homes

with an injectable sterilant achieves the task in a way that is equitable, accessible, and affordable.

Elly focuses her work on free-roaming dog and cat management internationally, where non-surgical sterilants can truly be a gamechanger. Many countries in the global south have a very limited pool of vets able to safely and affordably surgically sterilize animals, while the demand is extremely high.

One challenge faced by free-roaming dogs is persecution driven by fear of rabies, and culling may be seen as a "quick fix." An injectable sterilant would help humanely prevent unwanted litters, and keep vaccination rates in existing dogs higher, for longer periods, to create "herd immunity." It's a win-win for dogs and humans, and an essential component of the "One Health" paradigm.

We are pleased to share ACC&D's recent work with you in this biennial report. This has been made possible by our committed staff and board members. We are also honored to have the support of many expert volunteers and donors, among them a visionary Council of Stakeholders whose members share our commitment to expanding access to veterinary care.

## For the animals,



**Joyce Briggs**  
**President**



**Elly Hiby**  
**Chair, Board  
of Directors**



*“ACC&D’s work is truly the future of companion animal welfare.”*

— Katherine Polak,  
Vice President,  
Companion Animals and Engagement,  
Humane Society International

## FOCUS ON FEMALES | Promise continues for an injectable sterilant

The past two years have, if anything, deepened our enthusiasm about a technology being researched with funding support from the [Michelson Found Animals Foundation/Michelson Prize and Grants \(MFAF/MPG\) program](#). Teams led by Dr. David Pepin (Assistant Molecular Biologist, Massachusetts General Hospital) and Dr. Lindsey Vansandt (Veterinary Theriogenologist, Cincinnati Zoo Center for Conservation and Research of Endangered Wildlife) conducted a very promising series of studies. These have yielded no pregnancies in treated female adult cats in two years of breeding trials, with continued positive results through year 3 based on hormone levels. Studies in dogs began in 2022.

The work for cats has transitioned from research into a product development plan, working with the U.S. Food & Drug Administration (FDA) on a path toward regulatory approval. ACC&D is helping MPG identify how shelter-adopted cats might get early access to this technology while helping with a field trial.

That is not all. ACC&D keeps in close touch with Epivara, a start-up formed by University of Illinois Professor Chemyong Jay Ko, who has another approach to an injectable sterilant, feasible for young puppies and kittens as early as a few days after birth. Studies conducted in 2021–2022 show promise as we enter 2023 as well!

And funding for new approaches continues. We were pleased that the Morris Animal Foundation offered an RFP for surgery-free sterilization studies to benefit free-roaming cats. In Fall 2022 they funded two projects, starting in 2023. Tufts University researcher Dr. Sandra Ayres' study in female cats will target gonadal cells with a cytotoxin delivered via intramuscular injection. Dr. Kristen Navara's lab at the University of Georgia will test an oral vaccine in male cats to reduce reproductive hormones.

As exciting as research is, though, technologies described above won't be commercially available for some years.



### Project Contributors and Volunteers

- Thomas Conlon, PhD, Michelson Prize & Grants
- Becky Cyr, MA, Michelson Prize & Grants
- Kevin Morris, PhD, Institute for Human–Animal Connection, University of Denver; Michelson Prize & Grants Scientific Advisory Board; ACC&D Board of Directors
- Linda Rhodes, VMD, PhD, Michelson Prize & Grants Scientific Advisory Board; ACC&D Board of Directors
- Richard Surosky, PhD, Sangamo Therapeutics; ACC&D and Michelson Prize & Grants Scientific Advisory Boards

## What can be used now?

### Timely tools in this toolbox

In 2021-22 ACC&D focused on making sure that today's animals have options. Many spay/neuter programs halted surgeries at the start of COVID-19, and [one study](#) estimated that U.S. spay/neuter programs alone may have had a deficit of 2.7M surgeries in 2020 and 2021. As veterinary hospitals have restarted operations, the rising crisis of veterinary labor shortages affect capacity, as well.

### A once a week "treat"

ACC&D developed [resources](#) on the oral contraceptive megestrol acetate (MA) for those seeking alternative ways to temporarily suppress fertility in cats. Over the past two years we've consulted with shelters in the U.S. and Canada on pilot programs offering MA to cats awaiting spay surgery. In that process, we increasingly appreciated that the medication's value is not restricted to the pandemic. Rather, it can be a valuable tool to prevent unwanted pregnancies in many cats awaiting spay surgery for any reason. To reflect this, we updated our informational resources and enhanced our [MA webpage](#).

We also continue to offer support to shelters, veterinarians, and owners considering how MA can be used in their particular situations.



Cat Adoption Team veterinarian Dr. Victoria Brooks examines a patient during a Kitty Birth Control Clinic. This pilot program, supported by ACC&D, explored use of megestrol acetate (MA) to temporarily suppress fertility.

### Project Contributors and Volunteers

- Dianne Brown, DVM, Cat Adoption Team
- Emma Clifford, Animal Balance
- Linda Jacobsen BVSc, MMedVet(Med), PhD, Toronto Humane Society
- Kris Otteman, DVM, ABVP Shelter Medicine, CAWA, Carlson College of Veterinary Medicine, Oregon State University
- Brittany Perkins, Cat Adoption Team

## Advancing tattoo technology to visually mark treated animals

One of ACC&D's key projects is to develop a way to mark animals treated non-surgically. The mark must be permanent, visible, humane, and simple. Achieving this will be essential to using non-surgical sterilization in "real world" scenarios: for pets, in shelters, and for free-roaming animals.

Ear tipping and notching have been a game changer for sterilizing community (free-roaming/outdoor) cats and dogs, yet if an animal need not be anesthetized for sterilization, we want to avoid anesthesia for marking and identification, as well. A mark that can be applied to conscious animals could also add value and efficiency

to dog rabies vaccination programs internationally.

ACC&D launched an [initiative to develop such a mark](#). We've partnered with a team in the laboratory of Mark Prausnitz (Director of the Center for Drug Design, Development and Delivery at the Georgia Institute of Technology) to adapt microneedle patch technology, typically used to deposit medicine or vaccine in the skin, to provide a painless, permanent and visible tattoo.

We've spent the past two years working to refine the design of both the patch and its applicator. In addition to wanting the tattoo to be highly visible and humane to apply, we prioritized making the patch and applicator simple and easy to apply, able to be used on both the abdomen and ear, and able to be used on many sizes of animals: adults and juveniles, cats and kittens, and large and small breeds.

We spent 2022 preparing for a large field study to take place in 2023. We'll apply the tattoo patch to the bellies of owned pets as an alternative to the "score" tattoo that many animals receive when sterilized - perhaps an easier-to-use, more consistent mark can inspire more veterinarians to identify spay/neuter status.

Project partners have also included the University of Georgia, the ASPCA Spay/Neuter Alliance (ASNA), Atlanta Humane Society, and TLC PetSnip, Inc., the latter three of which have been great allies for taking the patch out into the "real world."

### Project Contributors and Volunteers

- Erkan Azizoğlu, PhD, Laboratory for Drug Delivery, Georgia Institute of Technology
- Amy Fischer, PhD, University of Illinois Department of Animal Sciences; ACC&D Scientific Advisory Board
- Mike Greenberg, DVM, The Veterinary Care Accessibility Project
- Elly Hiby, PhD, International Companion Animal Management (ICAM) Coalition; ACC&D Board of Directors
- Stephanie Keating, DVSc, DVM, DACVAA, University of Illinois College of Veterinary Medicine
- Yunki Lee, PhD, Laboratory for Drug Delivery, Georgia Institute of Technology (former)
- Joanne Maki, MS, DVM, PhD, Veterinary Public Health at Boehringer Ingelheim Animal Health - US
- Mark Prausnitz, PhD, School of Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering and Center for Drug Design, Development and Delivery, Georgia Institute of Technology
- G. Robert Weedon, DVM, MPH, University of Illinois College of Veterinary Medicine Shelter Medicine (retired); ACC&D Board of Directors



atlanta hu♥ane society



A small number of pet guardians (Dr. Bob Weedon, Dr. Amy Fisher, and Clay Foley) also volunteered their beloved pets to receive patches.

Be sure to view our periodic e-newsletters for the latest news on the study and this project.

*This project was made possible by the John T. and Jane A. Wiederhold Foundation, a supporting organization of the Northwest Connecticut Community Foundation.*

## John T. and Jane A. Wiederhold Foundation

a supporting organization of



Dr. Kristina Smith of the Atlanta Humane Society applies a microneedle patch to the belly of an anesthetized dog. The new technology provides a painless, permanent and visible tattoo.



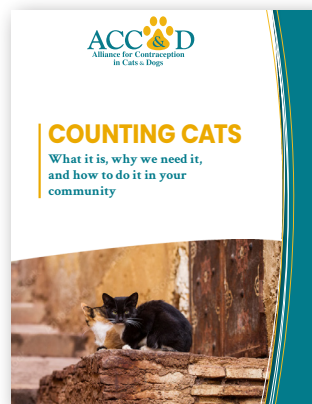
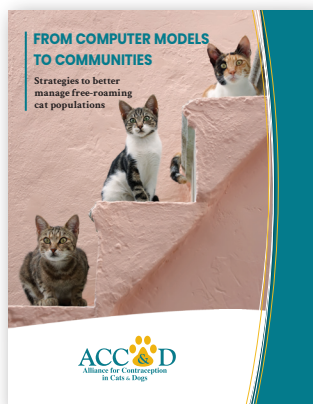
## SMART TNR | Data to guide programs today & non-surgical options ahead

Free-roaming cat (FRC) bioeconomic modeling is a longstanding ACC&D [project](#), strengthened by collaboration among diverse experts in feline health and behavior, wildlife biology, conservation, veterinary medicine, economics, and modeling. The team modeled the population and economic impacts of different approaches to FRCs. Our inspiration: a lot remains unknown about how to most effectively manage FRCs and particularly doing so in a humane and life-saving manner. In addition, much of the data is anecdotal.

Computer modeling technology that reflects the “real world” can fill knowledge gaps. We started out focusing on biological and population outcomes, which generated two journal publications, and then incorporated economics. This involved calculating the many costs that go into the different cat management approaches, and folding them into the biological simulation.

The result is “[Guidance for management of free-roaming community cats: a bioeconomic analysis](#),” published in the *Journal of Feline Medicine and Surgery* in 2022, which provides a comprehensive framework for better-informed FRC policy and management outcomes. We share the practical take-aways in “[From computer models to communities: Strategies to better manage free-roaming cat populations](#),” a must-read for anyone advocating for TNR.

We also provide guidance on counting cats and measuring progress in “[Counting cats: What it is, why we need it, and how](#)



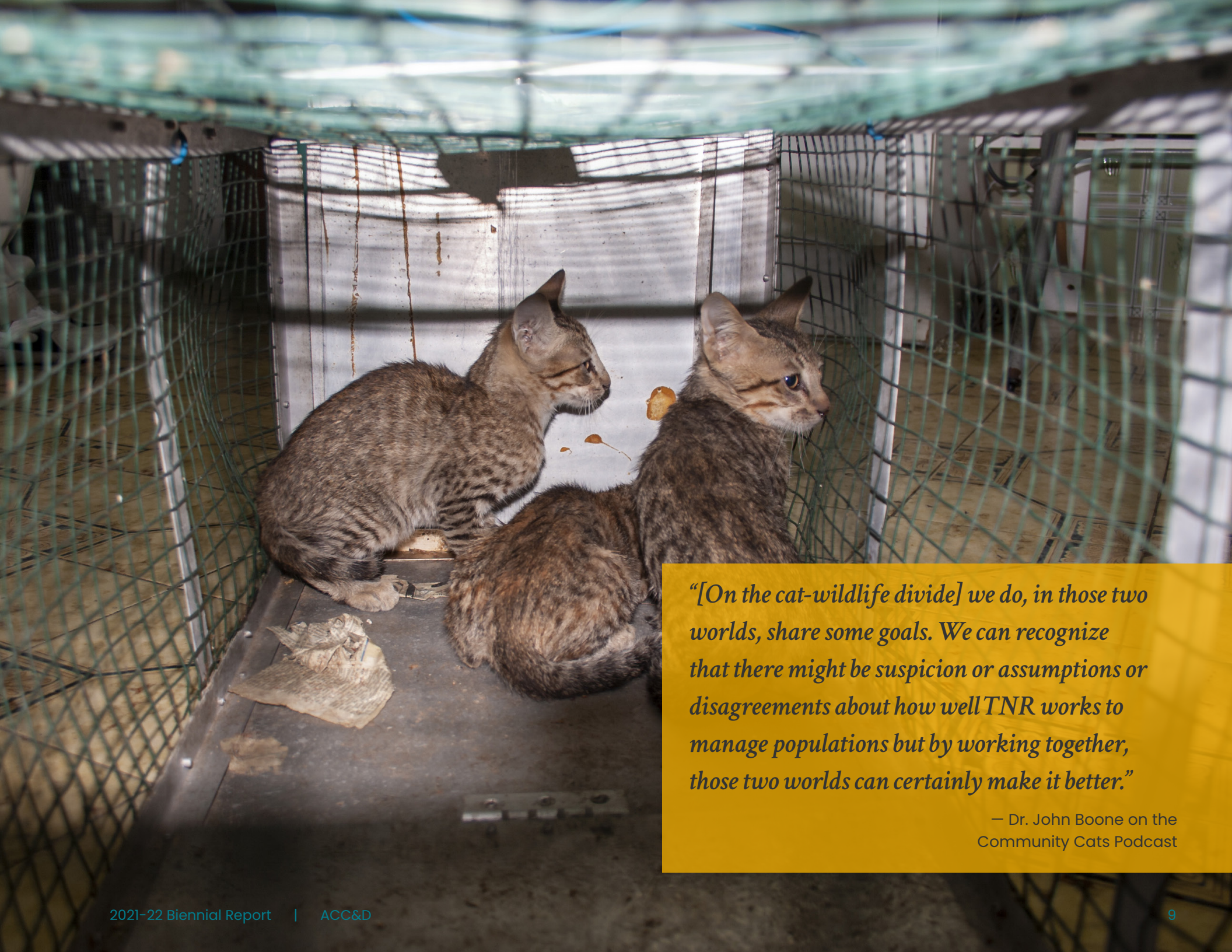
[to do it in your community](#)” and the companion [TNR calculator](#) to help advocates set cat trapping and sterilization targets. ACC&D’s Valerie Benka and Dr. John Boone joined the [Community Cats Podcast](#) to talk about this initiative to make humane management of outdoor cats more efficient and effective; it’s available here.

We encourage you to read, share, and use these research findings and related tools to generate greater impact with limited resources!

### Project Contributors and Volunteers

- Aaron Anderson, PhD, USDA National Wildlife Research Center
- John Boone, PhD, Great Basin Bird Observatory; HSI/HSUS; ACC&D Board of Directors
- Julie Levy, PhD, DACVIM, DABVP, Maddie’s Shelter Medicine Program, College of Veterinary Medicine, University of Florida; ACC&D Scientific Advisory Board
- Philip Miller, PhD, Conservation Planning Specialist Group, Species Survival Commission, IUCN; ACC&D Scientific Advisory Board
- Felicia Nutter, DVM, PhD, Cummings School of Veterinary Medicine, Tufts University
- Margaret Slater, DVM, PhD, Strategy & Research Department, ASPCA®; ACC&D Scientific Advisory Board
- Christopher Sloatmaker, PhD, USDA National Wildlife Research Center; Mountain Data Group
- Steve Zawistowski, PhD, ASPCA® (Emeritus); Animal Behavior and Conservation Program, Hunter College; ACC&D Scientific Advisory Board





*“[On the cat-wildlife divide] we do, in those two worlds, share some goals. We can recognize that there might be suspicion or assumptions or disagreements about how well TNR works to manage populations but by working together, those two worlds can certainly make it better.”*

— Dr. John Boone on the  
Community Cats Podcast

# Understanding the benchmark of surgery to prevent litters

A collaboration with Banfield Pet Hospital is increasing knowledge of the benefits and risks of spay/neuter surgery in dogs. To be sure, sterilization is a widely accepted practice in certain countries that can contribute to managing dog population numbers. At the individual-dog level, the benefits and risks of surgery become more complicated, particularly regarding the best age to sterilize different “types” of dogs (e.g., different breeds, sizes, risk factors). Several studies have explored this topic, but there remain unresolved questions about the relationship between sterilization and risk of later health and behavior challenges.

ACC&D’s team of experts, in partnership with Banfield Pet Hospital, is working to tackle these questions. Not only do the findings have relevance now, as veterinarians and pet guardians make decisions about timing of surgical spay/neuter, but they will also provide a valuable “baseline” against which future non-surgical sterilants can be evaluated.

## Project Contributors and Volunteers

- Jo Ann Morrison, MS, DVM, DACVIM, Banfield Pet Hospital Veterinary Science
- Kate Rieke, PhD, Epidemiologist
- Audrey Ruple, DVM, MS, PhD, DipACVPM, MRCVS, Virginia-Maryland College of Veterinary Medicine
- John Sahrman, MS, Division of Infectious Diseases, Department of Medicine, Washington University School of Medicine
- Jan Scarlett, DVM, MPH, PhD, Cornell University College of Veterinary Medicine (Emirata)
- Nate Spofford, MPH, Banfield Pet Hospital Data Analytics
- Mike Yang, BVM, MS, Banfield Pet Hospital Data Analytics
- Steve Zawistowski, PhD, CAAB, ASPCA® (Emeritus); Animal Behavior and Conservation Program, Hunter College; ACC&D Scientific Advisory Board

For example, if a non-surgical technology prevents a dog from getting pregnant and has a different level of effect on sex hormones than surgery, could that be better for her health? Does it depend on the age at which she is treated? Once we know more about the health outcomes of surgically spayed/neutered dogs, it will be easier to answer questions like these.



Banfield is the leading provider of preventive veterinary care in the U.S., and all of its clinics use the same record-keeping system. This

yields a large amount of high-quality data from dogs across the country, which can then be used (following anonymizing of data, plus ethical reviews and approvals) to help improve medical care for current and future animals.

We started this project by analyzing the relationship between spay/neuter and overweight and obese (O/O) body condition score (BCS). With a sample of over 155,000 dogs tracked for up to seven years, we compared outcomes for sterilized versus intact dogs, and then also looked at whether the age at which dogs were sterilized affected their risk of O/O BCS. We analyzed dogs by their breed size category rather than limiting the study to only purebred dogs, or putting all mixed breeds into a single category regardless of their size. This is but one way that our approach differs from much prior literature. We’re proud of the results, which are published in the Journal of the American Veterinary Medical Association, and have plans to continue analysis of other important conditions for the health and well-being of pets.

*Thanks to the Morris Animal Foundation for financially supporting this analysis and publication (Grant ID D22CA-513).*



*“ACC&D is proving a much-needed resource in animal health with a global animal-first perspective... Their thoughtful, innovative and inclusive approach is really making a difference.”*

— Tiffany Grunert, President and CEO, Morris Animal Foundation

# Preparing communities for non-surgical options via public policy

Regulations at local, municipal, and state levels can determine if non-surgical sterilization is a legal alternative to surgical sterilization for cats and dogs. Most commonly, this presents an issue when animals adopted from shelters are required to be spayed or neutered, and the method to be used is specified as surgical.

For non-surgical sterilants to be an option, this specific language must be changed. ACC&D began focusing on this topic in 2013 prior to the U.S. introduction of Zeuterin and achieved several legislative advances, including revised regulation language for the state of Texas.

In 2021, ACC&D convened an advisory committee with experts from The HSUS, ASPCA, and Best Friends Animal

Society, with Mars Petcare joining in 2022. The committee has comprehensively reviewed all 50 state policies related to sterilization, and has identified where state-wide policies create barriers or have the potential to interfere with implementing non-surgical options.

The committee works strategically to ensure non-surgical sterilization is considered when sterilization or related animal welfare or veterinary legislation is proposed.

Over the past two years ACC&D has provided support on legislation in Kansas, New Jersey, Hawaii, and California, as well as successfully assisted Illinois to update their Animal Control Act to guarantee that non-surgical options are available under state programs.



## Advisory Committee Members

- Richard Angelo, JD, Best Friends Animal Society
- Danielle Bays, MS, The Humane Society of the United States
- Meredith Beach, JD, ASPCA®
- Barbara Hodges, DVM, MBA, The Humane Society Veterinary Medical Association
- Ali McIntyre, Mars Veterinary Health
- Kevin O'Neill, ASPCA®
- Kellye Pinkleton, MA, The Humane Society of the United States
- Pam Runquist, MS, The Humane Society Veterinary Medical Association; ACC&D Board of Directors
- Jessica Simpson, The Humane Society of the United States
- Ledy Vankavage, JD, Best Friends Animal Society

# NEWS & NOTES

## 2021-2022 ACC&D-authored publications

- Alliance for Contraception in Cats & Dogs. Short-term use of megestrol acetate for estrus prevention in cats when surgery is delayed [ACC&D Position Statement]. <https://www.acc-d.org/resources/position-statement-ma>
- Alliance for Contraception in Cats & Dogs. From computer models to communities: Strategies to better manage free-roaming cat populations. January 2022. <https://www.acc-d.org/resources/frc-guidance-doc>
- Alliance for Contraception in Cats & Dogs. Counting cats: What it is, why we need it, and how to do it in your community. April 2022. <https://www.acc-d.org/resources/counting-cats>.
- Benka, Valerie. Blog: Making the most of TNR. HumanePro. April 6, 2022. <https://humanepro.org/blog/blog-making-most-tnr>
- Benka, Valerie. Blog: Computers are good for more than cat memes. Community Cats Podcast. June 16, 2022. <https://www.communitycatspodcast.com/computers-are-good-for-more-than-cat-memes/>
- Benka, Valerie. The Ethics of Innovation: Ethical Decision-Making and Review for Field Studies and Projects Targeting Dogs and Cats. *Animals* 2021, 11(12), pp. 3579; <https://doi.org/10.3390/ani11123579> [Peer-reviewed publication]
- Benka, Valerie A., John D. Boone, Philip S. Miller, Joyce R. Briggs, Aaron M. Anderson, Christopher Sloomaker, Margaret Slater, Julie K. Levy, Felicia B. Nutter, and Stephen Zawistowski. Guidance for management of free-roaming community cats: a bioeconomic analysis. *Journal of Feline Medicine and Surgery* 2022, 24(10), pp. 943-e432; <https://doi.org/10.1177/1098612X21105568> [Peer-reviewed publication]

## 2021-2022 Council of Stakeholders Members

ACC&D's [Council of Stakeholders](#) program consists of visionary funders who commit support for a 3-year period, thereby helping to ensure ACC&D's sustainability and enabling us to focus on key strategic and programmatic initiatives.

Anonymous (1)



Animal Welfare. Worldwide.

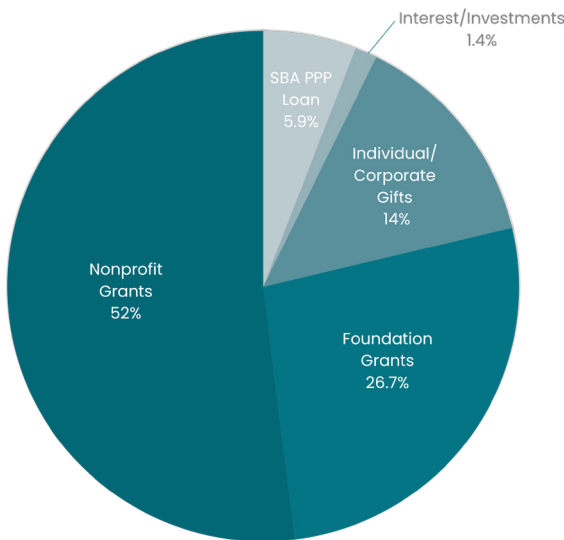


# Financials

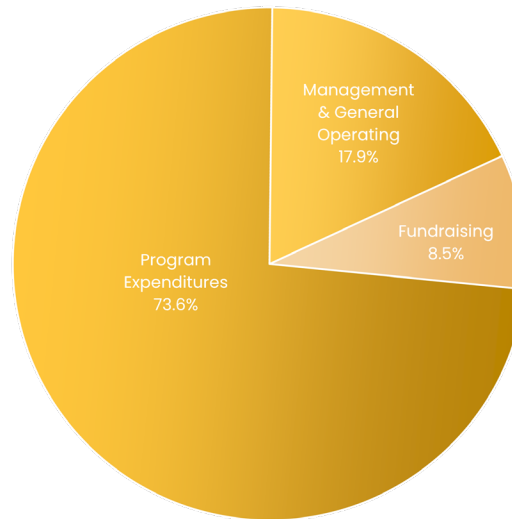
During the two-year period of 2021-2022, ACC&D had total revenue of \$683,208 in contributions, \$9,480 of investment income and a \$40,107 SBA PPP loan in 2021 that was 100% forgiven. Expenditures for 2021-2022 were \$656,271.



Total Revenue in 2021-2022 of \$683,208\*



Total Expenses in 2021-2022 of \$656,271



\*These revenue amounts are non-GAAP as they reflect revenue when collected; Our 990 tax returns reflect GAAP revenue, which is recorded when pledged, even in a multi-year grant.

An independent CPA conducted a Review of the 2021 Financials but not of the 2022 Financials; ACC&D invests in an outside financial Review every other year. Detailed financial information, including our annual 990s and voluntary Review history is available [here](#), or you can contact us at [info@acc-d.org](mailto:info@acc-d.org).

# Thank you, Donors!

ACC&D is fortunate to receive financial support from individuals, organizations, foundations, and companies across the world that work to advance the health and welfare of companion animals and believe in the transformative capacity of non-surgical sterilization to advance this mission.

## Individual Donors:

### \$10,000+

Terry and Marianne Hammerschmidt

### \$1,000-9,999

Stephen Boyle, Joyce Briggs and Ed de la Fuente, Camille DeClementi, Al K. DeRoy, Kevin Morris, Linda Rhodes, Betsy Banks Saul, Margaret Slater, G. Robert Weedon, Laura and Brett Wilson

### \$500-999

Anonymous, John Boone

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Brandon Capitol, The Boeing Company, Nike Inc., T-Mobile US, Inc.

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- Valerie Benka, MS, MPP, Director of Programs
- Adelia Hwang, JD, Operations and Program Manager

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- Joanne Maki, MS, DVM, PhD, Technical Director, Veterinary Public Health, Global Commercial Development, Boehringer Ingelheim Animal Health
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- Richard Surosky, PhD, Sangamo Therapeutics (retired)
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*“What an exciting time to be a part of ACC&D!”*

— Lauren Overman,  
Senior Director,  
Shelter Medicine,  
ASPCA®

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- Emma Clifford, Founder and Executive Director, Animal Balance
- Elly Hiby, PhD, ICAM Coalition Director; Independent Animal Welfare Consultant
- Darryn Knobel, BVSc, MSc, PhD, MRCVS, Dipl. ACVPM (Epi), Director, Research Center for Conservation Medicine & Ecosystem Health & Professor of Epidemiology & Population Health, Ross University School of Veterinary Medicine
- Natasha Lee, DVM, MSc, Independent Animal Welfare Consultant (Malaysia)
- Rey del Napoles, DVM, Head, Disaster Response and Veterinary Services, Animal Kingdom Foundation (Philippines) Member, Council on Technical Standards for Companion Animal Practice, Philippine Veterinary Medical Association
- Katherine Polak, DVM, MPH, MS, DACVPM, DABVP (Shelter Medicine Practice), Vice President, Companion Animals & Engagement, Humane Society International



**ACC&D**

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*ACC&D is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit*

*“I suspect that 10 years from now we’ll be looking back on surgical sterilization thinking how barbaric it was that we used to perform intra-abdominal surgery to sterilize animals! Thank you ACC&D for pioneering this critically important work.”*

— Katherine Polak, Vice President,  
Companion Animals and Engagement,  
Humane Society International