



TO: Honorable Cochise County Supervisors, Clerk of the Board
FROM: Steve Farley, CEO, The Humane Society of Southern Arizona

DATE: 19 July 2023

Dear Honorable Supervisors,

On behalf of the Humane Society of Southern Arizona, I want to express my full commitment to working with you and the people of Cochise County now and into the foreseeable future to improve the lives of pets throughout the region. Specifically, we look forward to collaborating on an agreement for HSSA to operate the new county shelter and public veterinary clinic in Bisbee once it is built in order to continue to share our expertise and resources with pets and pet owners in Cochise County from a permanent local home.

As you recall, after Supervisor Judd -- along with local activists Mary Moran and Jere Fredenburgh -- first invited me to tour shelters in Cochise County, we worked to develop programs that could help pets immediately while seeking new funding and opportunities to establish a permanent presence in the county.

Subsequently, in FY2022 and 2023, with your support we have taken in 238 pets from various Cochise County shelters and transferred another 36 from Douglas to Benson just this spring to relieve overcrowding and save lives. Were it not for unexpected challenges arising from disease outbreaks, we would have taken many more. We are working in multiple ways to reduce those disease outbreaks into the future.

We are continuing to improve conditions for Cochise County's homeless pets -- and their people -- in many ways. To highlight a few of our current Cochise County programs:

- Last year we hired a Rural Operations Manager and Animal Protection Specialist to work in-person weekly with each of the shelters in Willcox, Douglas, and Benson to help improve operations and increase lifesaving in multiple ways, including:
 - Providing new sheds to free up kennel space and provide a comfortable and less stressful environment for shelter cats;
 - Helping set up new systems and programs to increase adoption, fostering, and volunteering;
 - Providing spays, neuters, and vaccines; and
 - Improving community relations and data collection.

- We are also working on the ground in Douglas to reduce community cat euthanasia and the suffering of kittens born and dying in the heat of the summer. We do this by replacing the ACOs' previous trap-and-kill programs (that led to those high euthanasia rates) with trap-neuter-return (TNR) programs, which can humanely reduce feral cat populations over time by enabling happy, healthy cats that do not reproduce. Our successful pilot program for Douglas was in collaboration with the Douglas State Prison where the warden is extremely pleased with the results, and we are now turning our attention to the City of Douglas proper. Our staff and volunteers transport to Tucson where our veterinarians spay and neuter 20 cats from Douglas each Monday.

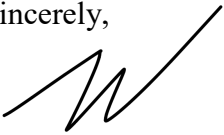
- Also in Douglas we hired a OneHealth Manager who has been leading community conversations and creating business plans to develop an innovative program called OneHealth where low-income pets and people can each receive healthcare at the same time, in collaboration with our human health partners Chiricahua Community Health and HOPE Inc. We will start public services in our OneHealth clinic in Douglas by next February, if not before. If this model is successful, we will explore replicating it in other County locations in the future.
- We are working with Cochise College administration to develop a vet tech program in order to provide more opportunities for well-paid jobs for local residents to help us take care of local pets in the County.

To help us support these programs we have engaged major national funders including Best Friends Animal Society and PetSmart Charities and are always seeking more. We believe that the solutions we implement in Cochise County promise to serve as templates for how private shelters and local officials can collaborate to improve conditions for pets and people in rural areas across the country.

Once we have a permanent home operating the new Bisbee county shelter and public clinic, in addition to traditional sheltering of county and city pets, we plan to offer to the public desperately needed low-cost spay and neuter surgeries, low-cost vaccinations, and other veterinary services, as well as many other animal-related services including training, adoptions, fostering, intake, and more.

We are grateful for your leadership as we proceed along this path toward a bright future for your constituents – both people and pets! Thank you for your hard work in identifying and obtaining the funds for the construction of the Bisbee shelter, and for your faith in our mutual mission. We look forward to a fruitful partnership for many years to come.

Sincerely,



Steve Farley
CEO
The Humane Society of Southern Arizona



Humane Society of Southern Arizona Main Campus and Clinic

635 W Roger Rd Tucson, AZ 85705 Main Campus: (520) 327-6088 or Clinic: (520) 887-0321 | HSSAZ.org

Humane Society of Southern Arizona Thrift Store

1010 S Wilmot Rd Tucson, AZ 85711

(520) 327-0070 | HSSAZ.org/THRIFT

PAWSH Adoption Center at Park Place Mall

5870 E Broadway Blvd Tucson, AZ 85711

(520) 881-7406 | HSSAZ.org/PAWSH