



Partners In Prevention

A community-based approach to rabies vaccinations

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Introduction

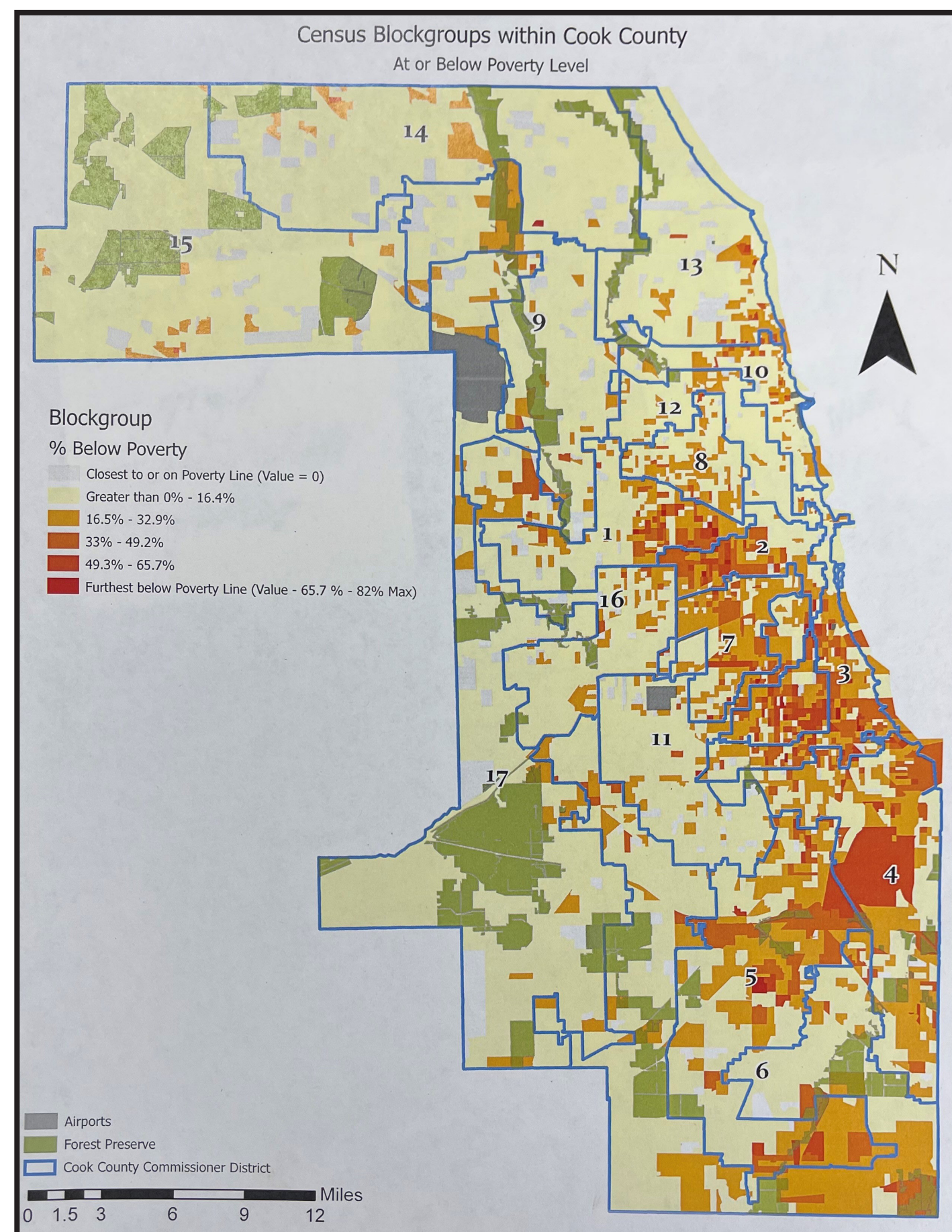
In a large municipality, such as Cook County, Illinois with a population of over 5 million people, the ability of residents in under-resourced areas to have their companion animals vaccinated against rabies is limited. Challenges include a lack of easily accessible veterinary clinics and funding constraints. The mandate for Cook County Animal and Rabies Control (ARC) is protecting the residents of the County from rabies by initiating critical preventive programs any.



Methods

In 2006, ARC developed a program to take rabies vaccinations into under-resourced areas of the County to ensure that access to these services is equitable. ARC worked with the Cook County Geographic Information Systems staff to develop an interactive site that would allow the identification of under-resourced areas throughout the County. Sites within these areas, such as public parks, community centers or parking lots of major food retailers, were identified. Weather was also a factor, so clinics were scheduled from April – October. Clinic information was initially advertised with posters placed in government offices and local retailers. Later the use of websites allowed the clinic dates to be viewed by a larger audience.

Animal shelters and humane societies were solicited because they had access to volunteers and had the ability to provide more services such as pet food, leashes and additional vaccinations. The responsibility to provide veterinarians and veterinary technicians was ARC’s responsibility. This started as a low-cost program but later evolved into a free service. In addition to one-year rabies vaccinations, microchips were also provided as a reliable and long-lasting form of identification.



FREE RABIES VACCINE AND MICROCHIP CLINIC FOR DOGS

Saturday, November 2 from 10 a.m. - 1 p.m.
Berwyn Library
2701 S. Harlem Ave., Berwyn, IL 60402

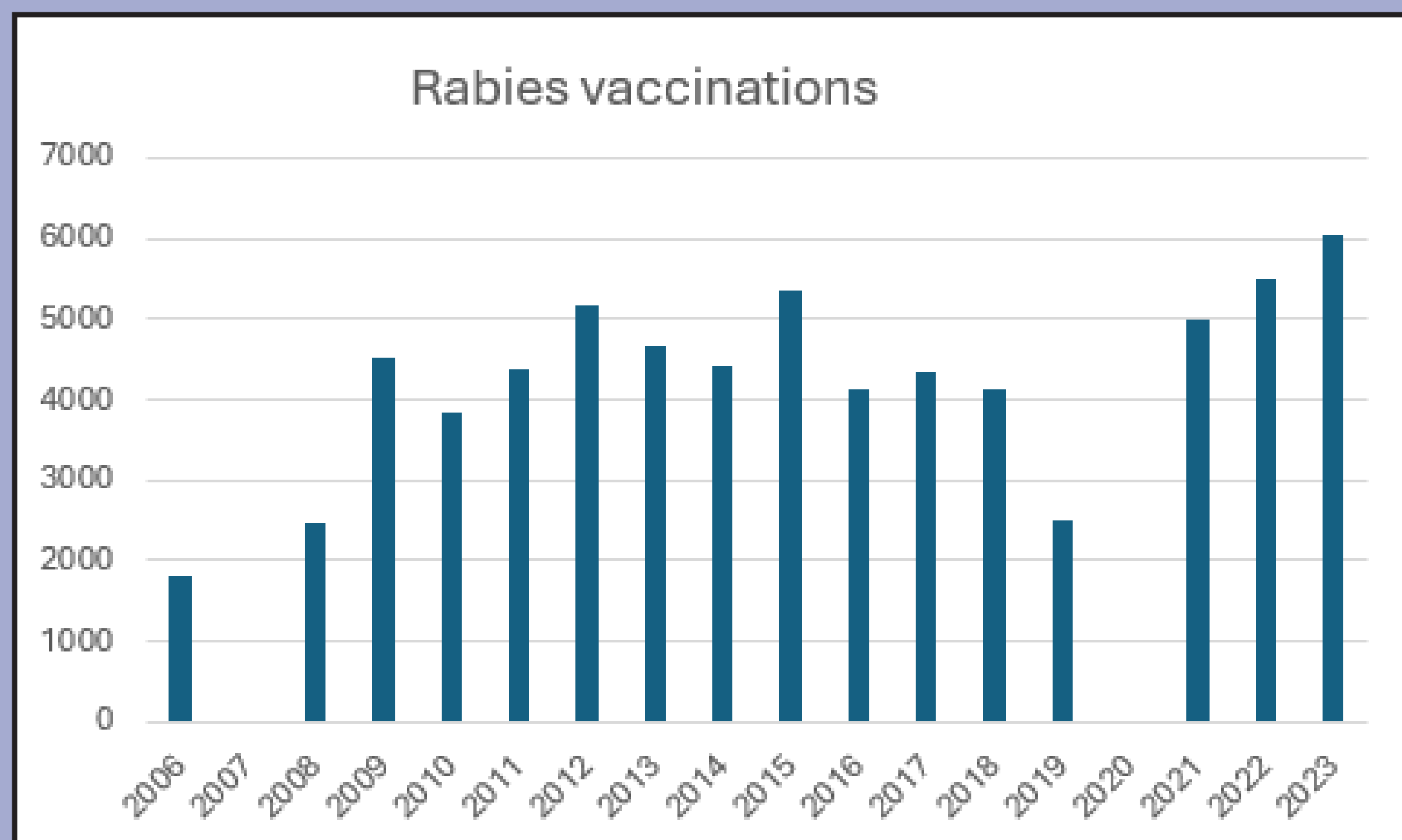
Services offered:
1-year rabies vaccines Microchips.

Free for first 250 dogs. Pet owners must keep dogs leashed.

Co-Hosted by Chicago Wolves
Presented by Cook County Department of Animal and Rabies Control and Cook County Commissioner Frank Aguilar, 15th District

Results

Partners in Prevention is an annual program and has only been postponed twice in its 18-year history. Weather is always a factor in a successful clinic turnout. On average, approximately 100-150 dogs and cats are vaccinated at each clinic. There are 37 clinics annually on average. More than 57,735 rabies vaccinations have been administered to companion animals throughout the program’s history.



Many of these animals would never have received any assistance if not for this program addressing the needs of an under-resourced communities.

Conclusion

The importance of partnerships and collegial relationships to reach residents throughout the County cannot be overstated. In many cases the companion animals vaccinated had no relationship with a veterinarian and would have remained unvaccinated. The ability to have these mobile pop-up clinics throughout the County guaranteed maximum coverage.

