



## Grantee

Project #

## Project Title Final Report

Date of Report: 1/14/26

Project Start Date: 1/7/25

Project End Date: 8/15/25

County(ies) Served: St Mary's County

Project Focus (Owned Pet/Feral Cat): Feral

Number of Cats Spayed Last Quarter: 0

Number of Cats Spayed Total: 161

Number of Cats Neutered Last Quarter: 0

Number of Cats Neutered Total: 138

Number of Dogs Spayed Last Quarter: 0

Number of Dogs Spayed Total: 0

Number of Dogs Neutered Last Quarter: 0

Number of Dogs Neutered Total: 0

Grant Amount Received: \$24,000

Amount Remaining (to be returned to MDA): \$0

### Project Synopsis:

Feral Cat Rescue targeted feral cats in the following zip codes: 20619, 20634, 20659, 20653, 20680, 20622 and 20684. We had said we would vet 300 cats with the \$24,000 grant money.

### Project Description:

Feral Cat Rescue hoped to vet 300 with the money provided based on a guess of vetting half females and half males. We vetted 299. Females are more expensive and we vetted 23 more females than we did males so we didn't reach the goal but more females is fine by me! We took cats to Paw Prints Animal Hospital on Mondays and cats to Calvert Well Pet on Fridays. Animal Control agreed to take cats to Paw Prints on Thursday that caretakers caught if we paid for the surgery. We agreed to do so. That meant that cats were being vetted 3 times a week even though we are a small army of volunteers. In addition, we vetted 635 other ferals and 304 of those cats we took into our foster program. That means we altered 1238 cats this year.

**Summary of Approach:** We asked Animal Control to pass out information about Trap, Neuter, Return and they did so. We are well known since we have been doing this since 2007 and people contact us pretty much every day asking for help. We also talk to people at fund raisers and adoption events to raise awareness. We have a stuffed animal cat in a trap at adoption events so folks can see it is possible to get feral cats they are feeding without trying to tame them for years. Yes that does happen. We enlist the caretakers to trap when they are able and go over in great detail how to trap. We have them put them in a warm place in the winter until they bring to us in the morning for transport or until we can pick the cats up for transport. I personally send out texts to every person trapping and remind them not to feed before trapping. I organize drivers for transport to and from vet offices twice a week. I text the trappers and caretakers to pick up the cats for return and give instructions on after care. When people email us, we send out an email regarding the process. If they don't respond we call them and coax them along or assign someone to do it for them. There is a lot involved in organizing people to trap 1238 cats, transport to and from vet offices, return them to their colonies or find fosters for the babies.

### Accomplishments:

WE VETTED 1238 CATS! We vetted 299 with your money. Of the 1238, Animal Control trapped and took to the vet 367 cats. We finally have Animal Control on board with TNR. That's huge. We are hoping our County Commissioners will see the wisdom in this program and will provide money for the next fiscal year starting July 2026. We plan to still cover the 1<sup>st</sup> six months of 2026. We prevented kitten suffering. We prevented females



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from depleting their bodies with litter after litter. We prevented males from being injured fighting for mating rights and getting hit by cars because they are going to females in heat. It prevents FIV for both sexes. When we started in 2007 Tri County Shelter was euthanizing 550 cats per month. In 2025, our St Mary's Shelter euthanized 13 a month. This is a huge improvement.

#### **Lessons Learned:**

We learned to be persistent and urge people to trap. We learned to ask for help and to recruit more trappers so we could get more cats vetted. We learned it is important to text people a couple days ahead of time to remind them not to feed so the cats would be hungry. Then trappers are successful. We have learned how important it is to remind them to contact us if they see babies or a new cat in there colony. We learned to ask for donations to prepare for when the grant money was spent. We learned last year how important it is to trap in the winter despite the cold and we continued this practice to prevent the Spring babies. It requires more work because you have to check traps so often and haul them up steps and inside instead of just placing cats in a garage. It taught us to work harder. When we only caught 2 or 3 for transport, we would remind ourselves that driving 80 minutes up and back and then picking cats up later was a whole lot less work and time than trying to foster the litter of kittens that would be born and to tame them and clean up after them and take them to adoption events. It has been our best year ever and we are feeling grateful.

**For more information, contact: Diane Harris, *President***

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