



# Frederick County Fix for Ferals

Project #  
19-426

County: Frederick

Number of Cats Spayed:	323	Number of Dogs Spayed:	0
Number of Cats Neutered:	243	Number of Dogs Neutered:	0

Amount Received: \$27,959	Amount Remaining (to be returned to MDA): 0
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### Project Synopsis:

This project was a Trap-Neuter-Return-Manage effort to trap, sterilize, and vaccinate 540 community cats in western portion of Frederick, MD.



### Project Description:

Frederick County Fix for Ferals was an 11-month (Nov '18 - Oct '19) Trap-Neuter-Return-Manage project through which Tip Me Frederick (TMF) sterilized and vaccinated 566 community cats whose colony caregivers reside in western portions of the county, primarily Thurmont. The project involved working with colony caregivers to trap unaltered cats; transporting the cats to and from Frederick to Davidsonville to our low-cost veterinary clinic partner, Spay Spa and Neuter Nook (SSNN); sterilization and vaccination for rabies and feline viral rhinotracheitis, calicivirus and panleukopenia (FVRCP); housing cats during recovery; and, returning the cats to their colony caregivers post-recovery. The costs of sterilization and the rabies vaccination were covered 100% by the MDA, while TMF covered the cost of the FVRCP vaccine and other extraordinary medical costs for sick or injured cats. In most cases, colony caregivers were unable to afford sterilization/vaccination services through local veterinarians, making this program the only humane option to manage feline over-population.

### Summary of Approach:

TMF worked with close to 70 colony caregivers located in Thurmont, Sabillasville, and even into Hagerstown to identify and trap unaltered cats. In some cases, when a caregiver was unable to trap, TMF volunteers performed the trapping in the 24 hours prior to a scheduled clinic. On the morning of the clinic, TMF rented a van and transported an average of 38 cats to SSNN for sterilization and vaccination. TMF volunteers then returned cats to their colony caregivers once they were fully recovered.

In the course of trapping, TMF also identified 42 kittens and "friendly" cats who were then fostered and made available for adoption. While we worked closely with local cat rescue groups such as Friends for Life and Animal Welfare League of Frederick County (whose main mission is to foster and adopt cats and kittens), TMF ended up establishing a foster care and adoption program as those groups became full.

### Accomplishments:



MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
SPAY AND NEUTER GRANTS PROGRAM



TMF sterilized and vaccinated 566 cats, 26 more than our target of 540. Of this, 57% were females. We helped 9 large colonies, as well as dozens smaller (3-7 cats) colonies.

As public awareness of TMF's program continues to grow throughout Frederick County, and through referrals from local veterinarians and Frederick County Animal Control (FCAC), TMF no longer has to invest any funds or effort in publicity to ensure clinics are full. This allows us to use funds solely for veterinary care.

Also, we continued to see 26% of the cats coming into clinics with medical issues such as infections that required TMF to cover extra medical expenses such as antibiotics, as well as several enucleations, two umbilical hernias, and one amputation. Social media fund-raising enabled us to cover these expenses, as well as sterilize 26 extra cats.

Although we have anecdotal evidence which points to the positive impact of TNRM in this grant's target zip code, we are continuing to work with FCAC to more accurately assess the impact of TNRM (specifically) on intake and euthanasia by zip code.

**Lessons Learned:**

Since TMF has been using this same approach (described above) for 6 years (trapping, transporting) in partnership with SSNN, our process is well-documented and understood by both the veterinary staff at SSNN and by our volunteers. We've learned to "book" more cats than can actually be accommodated by SSNN, knowing that some colony caregivers will not be able to trap the number of cats they projected. In rare cases, we've trapped the actual number we scheduled and thankfully, SSNN was able to accommodate us. Flexibility is key which is why although the program covered 11 months, TMF ended up holding 15 clinics.

Our greatest challenges continue to be 1) fund-raising to cover (or at least defray) the cost of the FVRCP vaccines and the extra medical expenses for sick or injured cats, and, 2) working with FCAC to more accurately assess the impact of TNRM efforts on intake and euthanasia. Our goal is to be able to track the number of cats who are truly "feral" or "semi-feral" (vs strays with a "bad temperament") by zip code that enter FCAC to determine: 1) if numbers are decreasing and by how much given the existence of TNRM efforts in those zip codes; 2) how many of these same cats are euthanized (we estimate that it's close to 100% currently); and, 3) the percent of ear-tipped cats that are brought into FCAC, returned to their colonies, or euthanized.

**Attachments:**

**For More Information Contact:**

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