



12/12/25 Media Release:

## **Over 200 Animals Rescued Following Animal Welfare Check**

GRASS VALLEY, CA – Joshua Evan Grayson, 39, of Grass Valley, was arrested on Dec. 11 for eight felony counts of animal cruelty, following an animal cruelty investigation that launched Nov. 30. Over 200 animals were seized over a period of two days, Nov. 30 - Dec. 1, after a concerned citizen called the Nevada County Regional Dispatch Center on Nov. 30 to report suspected animal neglect on a private property on Meyer Ravine Rd. in Grass Valley.

A sergeant of the Nevada County Sheriff's Office (NCSO) conducted a welfare check of the property that same day, Nov. 30, and observed numerous deceased animals, along with sickly and emaciated animals. NCSO's Animal Control Division responded to the scene with a veterinary specialist, along with the Sheriff's Humane Emergency Animal Rescue Team, better known as the Sheriff's HEART, for emergency animal rescue support. Grayson arrived during the welfare check. He was cooperative with the investigation and shared he was in the process of opening an animal rescue.

Under Penal Code 597.1, animal control officers can seize neglected and mistreated animals with or without a warrant and opted to seize several animals that day. On the following morning, NCSO deputies and animal control officers returned to the property with a search warrant to thoroughly search the property and inside the home for additional neglected animals. Support was also provided by Sheriff's HEART volunteers and the veterinary specialist.

In total, it was determined the property housed 229 animals. Over the course of the two days, 215 living animals were rescued, the bulk of which were sheep, but included goats, dogs, horses, pigs, calves, chickens, and one donkey, cat, pony and rabbit. A total of 14 animals were found dead on the property. Three additional animals could not be saved and were humanely euthanized by the veterinary specialist. Four more animals could not be saved from their original ailments and died in the days ahead, bringing the death toll to 20. Six of the deceased animals underwent necropsy at UC Davis Veterinary with results still pending.

Many of the animals appeared to be infected with severe Orf, also known as Sore Mouth Disease, which is a highly contagious zoonotic disease, meaning it can easily be transferred to both animals and humans. In response, HEART volunteers worked to set up an emergency pop-up rescue center on County-owned land with logistics support provided by the Nevada County Fairgrounds, and lighting, water and related supplies provided by Robinson's Enterprises. The Nevada County Animal Shelter was also instrumental in arranging quarantine and care for 47 animals at various locations.

"With cases like this, it's imperative that we take our time and conduct a thorough and complete investigation," said Animal Control Supervisor Stefanie Geckler and Sheriff's HEART cofounder. "Every animal must be individually assessed and provided medical care and treatment, specific to their health needs."

Over the course of the investigation, the Sheriff's HEART volunteers, the Nevada County Animal Shelter, and animal partners have provided ongoing care to the animals. HEART volunteers alone have provided over 700 hours of volunteer care and support to date and will continue to help for as long as needed.

Grayson has relinquished ownership of 81 of the animals, which will be available for adoption through Sammie's Friends at the Nevada County Animal Shelter when they are medically cleared for release. Once the remaining animals are medically cleared, foster homes will be needed.

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