



# WASHOE COUNTY

"Dedicated To Excellence in Public Service"

www.washoecounty.us

CM/ACM \_\_\_  
Finance \_\_\_  
DA JG  
Risk Mgt. \_\_\_  
HR NA \_\_\_  
Grant NA \_\_\_

## STAFF REPORT

BOARD MEETING DATE: April 14, 2015

**DATE:** March 18, 2015  
**TO:** Board of County Commissioners  
**FROM:** Robert Smith, Animal Services Supervisor  
(775) 353-8945 [rasmith@washoecounty.us](mailto:rasmith@washoecounty.us)  
**THROUGH:** Shyanne Schull, Director of Animal Services  
**SUBJECT:** Introduction and first reading of an ordinance amending Washoe County Code Chapter 55 by adding provisions related to the managed care of feral cats and related definitions; and making changes to the definitions of "nuisance" and "owner". (All Commission Districts)

### SUMMARY

A presentation on Feral Cat Management was given by Washoe County Regional Animal Services (WCRAS), the Nevada Humane Society (NHS) and the State of Nevada, Department of Wildlife regarding Trap, Neuter, and Release Initiatives in the October 14, 2014 BCC meeting. Direction was given to staff to monitor the 2015 Legislative session and move forward with the Nevada Humane Society and other non-profit rescue groups to become the caretakers of managed feral cat colonies.

**Washoe County Strategic Objective:** Safe, secure and healthy communities.

### PREVIOUS ACTION

On October 14, 2014, presentations were given on Feral Cat Management, by WCRAS, the NHS and the State of Nevada, Department of Wildlife to include Trap, Neuter, and Release Initiatives. Direction was given to staff to monitor the 2015 Legislative session and move forward with the NHS and other rescues to become the caretakers of managed feral cat colonies.

### BACKGROUND

Management of the feral cat population has been present within Washoe County over the past 15 years. The following is a brief chronology and history specific to feral cat management within Washoe County to the present.

In 1999, the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA) of Northern Nevada started the first Trap-Neuter-Return-Monitor program in Washoe County in response to more than 1,800 feral cats euthanized every year at the Reno city shelter. In

AGENDA ITEM # 15

recognition of this programming, the City of Reno and Washoe County issued Proclamations to the SPCA of Northern Nevada recognizing the value of Trap, Neuter, and Release as a humane method of population control.

In 2002, voters approved a property tax increase to fund a regional animal facility and consolidated animal services. Washoe County consolidated with City of Sparks effective July 1, 2003, and with City of Reno on July 1, 2005. In late 2005, a service agreement with NHS was approved. On March 1, 2006 adoptions were transferred to NHS.

In 2003, Community Cats, an organization created for the spay/neuter of feral cats was founded and received non-profit status, leading to the organization utilizing the spay/neuter vehicle owned by WCRAS and the NHS to spay/neuter feral cats in 2006. In addition, the Board approved an agreement for Community Cats to utilize the surgical suite at WCRAS to provide free spay/neuter services to feral cats in Washoe County. This provided a resource for citizens to bring feral cats to WCRAS for sterilization and vaccination.

In 2008, Community Cats discontinued the use of the spay/neuter vehicle. On November 21, 2008 the Board approved and executed a First Amendment to Agreement between Washoe County and Community Cats, to extend the terms of the feral cat program at WCRAS for an additional two years. In 2009, Community Cats moved to the NHS who privately funded the Trap, Neuter and Release Program, with the program continuing as a resource recommended by WCRAS for the spay/neuter outlet of feral cats.

In 2013, complaints were received by WCRAS specific to feral cats, captured by citizens and delivered to WCRAS, being returned to properties they were trapped from and property owners being contacted by NHS staff regarding capture location information. As a result of these complaints, in May 2013, a review of animal services procedures was done and it was determined that NHS was able to view records in WCRAS's database to facilitate the return of trapped feral cats to their original location. These records included personal information, notes on cruelty cases, and customer billings which lead to a request by WCRAS for a legal opinion from the District Attorney's Office regarding sharing of information with NHS; and a review of the legality of the Spay/Neuter Return program operated by NHS, in conjunction with Community Cats, as it pertains to the "return" aspect of the program.

The legal opinion dated December 3, 2013, (attached) concluded the "return" part of the Spay/Neuter Return program, releasing the animals back into the community at the location they were found, is illegal because it constitutes an act of animal abandonment under NRS 574.100 and/or 574.110. This legal opinion resulted in the removal of access by NHS and any other entity to the WCRAS database. Even though the information is normally a "public record" and it would be released to a requester, if the information is to be used to aid or abet an illegal act, such information may be withheld. The Spay/Neuter Return program was determined abandonment in violation of statute, with WCRAS taking custody and then releasing based on location by NHS. This resulted in WCRAS discontinuing the program pursuant to the legal opinion.



Based on the December 2013 legal opinion, a legislative change to the current statutory definition of abandonment would be required for a Spay/Neuter Return program to be implemented.

On October 1, 2014 a scheduled and advertised public forum was held to obtain input on feral cats. At this same time questions were posted on "Open Washoe" to solicit public input regarding feral cats in Washoe County.

On October 14, 2014, presentations were given on Feral Cat Management, by WCRAS, the NHS and the State of Nevada, Department of Wildlife to include Trap, Neuter, and Release Initiatives.

On March 11, 2015, AB261 was introduced to modify the definition of abandonment, allowing for the spay/neuter and vaccination of feral cats, as part of a managed cat colony program. In a review of options and the proposed legislative amendment, a legal solution would be the designation of a sponsor (non-profit rescue group) and caretakers for the managed care of feral cat colonies.

#### **FISCAL IMPACT**

No fiscal impact is identified at this time.

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that the Board of County Commissioners introduce and conduct a first reading of an ordinance amending Washoe County Code Chapter 55 by adding provisions related to the managed care of feral cats and related definitions; and making changes to the definitions of "nuisance" and "owner".

#### **POSSIBLE MOTION**

Should the Board approve the Staff's recommendation, a possible motion would be:

Move to hold an introduction and first reading of an ordinance amending Washoe County Code Chapter 55 by adding provisions related to the managed care of feral cats and related definitions; and making changes to the definitions of "nuisance" and "owner"; and, if supported, set the public hearing for second reading and possible adoption of the ordinance.

SUMMARY: An ordinance amending the Washoe County Code by creating provisions related to the managed care of feral cats and revising definitions.

BILL NO. \_\_\_\_\_

ORDINANCE NO. \_\_\_\_\_

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE WASHOE COUNTY CODE BY ADDING PROVISIONS RELATED TO THE MANAGED CARE OF FERAL CATS AND RELATED DEFINITIONS; AND MAKING CHANGES TO THE DEFINITIONS OF "NUISANCE" AND "OWNER".

THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF THE COUNTY OF WASHOE DO ORDAIN:

SECTION 1. Washoe County Code is hereby amended by adding thereto the following new section which shall read as follows:

**55.475 Managed care of feral cats.**

**1. Feral Cat Colonies.**

(a) Feral cat colonies are allowed in Washoe County. Feral cat colony caretakers shall be entitled to maintain and care for feral cats.

(b) *TNRM Programs: Sponsorship.* Any animal humane organization that agrees to comply with the requirements of this section shall contact regional animal services to obtain designation as a sponsor. The humane organization shall advise regional animal services in writing and provide its address, telephone number and electronic mail address, if applicable.

(c) *Sponsor Requirements.* It shall be the duty of the sponsor to:

- (1) Approve feral cat colony caretakers;
- (2) Work actively to resolve any complaints over the conduct of a feral cat colony caretaker or of cats within a colony;
- (3) Maintain records provided by feral cat colony caretakers on the size and location of the colonies and the vaccination, micro-chipping, and spay and neuter records of cats in the sponsor's colonies. Titer tests are acceptable to determine a particular colony's resistance to rabies by random examination;
- (4) Provide educational training and written materials for all feral cat colony caretakers covering uniform standards and procedures for colony maintenance. An approved online training program may be accepted upon approval by regional animal services;

(5) Report annually to regional animal services on the following:

(i) number and location of colonies by address and zip code that the sponsor maintains through the TNRM program;

(ii) estimated total number of cats in each of the colonies;

(6) Prevent sponsored feral cat colonies from being maintained on lands managed for wildlife or other natural resources, such as, but not limited to, nature preserves, in order to avoid the taking of rare, listed, threatened or endangered species as determined by Nevada Department of Wildlife;

(7) Provide forms and other documentation necessary to allow feral cat colony caretakers to receive public or private subsidies, medical care or other assistance which may be available for their feral cat colonies.

(d) *Feral Cat Colony Caretaker Responsibilities.* It shall be the duty of each feral cat colony caretaker to:

(1) Register each colony with the sponsor;

(2) Take all appropriate and available steps to vaccinate the colony population for rabies, preferably with a three-year vaccine, and to update rabies vaccinations as mandated by law;

(3) Take all appropriate and available steps to have the colony population spayed or neutered by a licensed veterinarian;

(4) Ear tip the left ear of each colony cat that has been vaccinated, spayed or neutered so that each colony cat can be readily identified;

(5) Microchip each colony cat in accordance with professional medical standards. The sponsor and the feral cat colony caretaker shall be the named contacts for purposes of the microchip animal identification;

(6) Provide the sponsor with descriptions of each cat in the colony and copies of documents demonstrating that the cats have been vaccinated, micro-chipped and spayed or neutered;

(7) Provide the necessary sustenance for colony cats;

(8) Obtain written approval from all property owners or their authorized representatives to enter land upon which the feral cat colony caretaker requires access to establish and provide colony care;

(9) Abide by the sponsor's policies and procedures.

(e) *Withdrawal of feral cat colony caretaker or sponsor.* In the event a feral cat colony caretaker is unable or unwilling to continue in that role, he or she shall notify his or her sponsor. In the event a sponsor is unable or unwilling to continue to perform its role, it shall advise regional animal services. The sponsor shall work with regional animal services to obtain a replacement sponsor. If no new sponsor is found

within 30 days, the sponsor shall notify regional animal services.

(f) *Disposition of feral cat colony cats.*

(1) An animal control officer or authorized representative who has impounded or received a cat from a member of the public, where the cat has been ear tipped or microchipped indicating that it belongs to a feral cat colony, shall attempt to contact the sponsor or feral cat colony caretaker. If a microchip is not found, the animal control officer or authorized representative shall impound the cat and notify the approved sponsors of the description and zip code where the cat was found. The sponsor shall then take all available steps to identify the cat's feral cat colony caretaker or a feral cat colony caretaker who will take responsibility for managing this cat.

(2) If an identified feral cat colony caretaker is not able to immediately take custody of the cat, the sponsor shall immediately pick up the cat.

2. Enforcement.

(a) In order to encourage the stabilization of the feral cat population in Washoe County, regional animal services shall have the following rights:

(1) To trap in a humane manner and remove any cats:

(i) which demonstrate signs of disease; or

(ii) which must be removed for public health or safety concerns.

(2) To euthanize in a humane manner any feral cat which demonstrates signs of rabies, or which has an illness or injury that presents an imminent danger to public health or safety.

(3) To request that a sponsor remove a feral cat that is creating a nuisance if the sponsor has failed to adequately resolve the nuisance within 30 days of written notice thereof. In the event regional animal services directs the sponsor to remove the cat, the sponsor shall have 30 days to do so.

(b) Animal control officers may investigate any nuisance complaint allegedly caused by a feral cat. In the event an animal control officer finds that a feral cat or feral cat colony has created a nuisance, the animal control officer shall advise the sponsor in writing.

(c) If a sponsor fails to perform its responsibilities, regional animal services may notify the sponsor that it must comply with the requirements of this section within 30 days. If the sponsor fails to do so, regional animal services may remove the sponsor from the list of approved sponsors, and may reassign the feral cat colonies to another sponsor.

(d) A feral cat who is not microchipped, but who was spayed or neutered, vaccinated for rabies, ear tipped, and released

prior to the effective date of this section shall be deemed to be in compliance with this section.

SECTION 2. Section 55.010 of the Washoe County Code is hereby amended by adding thereto the following new definitions:

"Abandoned Cat" means a domesticated cat that an owner has forsaken entirely or refused to provide care and support.

"Domesticated cat" means a cat that is socialized to humans and is appropriate as a companion.

"Eartipping" means straight-line cutting of the tip of the left ear of a cat while the cat is anesthetized.

"Feral Cat" means a cat:

1. That is born in the wild; or
2. That is a formerly owned cat that has been abandoned and is no longer socialized.

"Feral Cat Colony" means a group of cats that congregates, more or less, together as a unit. Although not every cat in a feral cat colony may be feral, any non-feral cats that congregate with a colony shall be deemed to be a part of it.

"Feral Cat Colony Caretaker" means a person other than an owner who provides food, water and shelter to, or otherwise cares for, a feral cat colony, and who is approved by a sponsor.

"Sponsor" is any animal humane organization that agrees to comply with the requirements of this section and provides written notice to regional animal services that it will serve as a sponsor for feral cat management.

"TNRM" means trap, neuter, return and monitor.

"TNRM Program" means a program in which feral and stray cats are trapped, neutered or spayed, micro-chipped, vaccinated against rabies, and returned to the colony location in which they were found, and which are then monitored by the feral cat colony caretaker.

Section 3. Washoe County Code 55.010 is hereby amended by changing the definitions of "Nuisance" and "Owner" as follows:

~~"Nuisance" means any act, conduct or circumstance, which is injurious to health, or indecent and offensive to the senses, or~~

~~an obstruction to the free use of property, so as to interfere with the comfortable enjoyment of life or property of others. As used in this ordinance, nuisance shall also have the meaning described in and as limited by, NRS 40.140.~~ **has the meaning described in Washoe County Code 50.308 (18) and (19).**

"Owner" means any person keeping, harboring or having charge of or having the care, custody or control of an animal, or permitting any animal to be or remain on, or be lodged or fed within, such person's house, yard or premises. "Owner" does not apply to ~~veterinarians or boarding kennel operators temporarily maintaining on their premises animals owned by others for a period of less than 30 days.~~ **animals owned by others that are temporarily maintained on the premises of a veterinarian.** Owner does not include a feral cat colony caretaker.

[Business Impact Note: The Board of County Commissioners hereby finds that this ordinance does not impose a direct and significant economic burden upon a business, nor does it directly restrict the formation, operation or expansion of a business.]

Proposed on the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2015.

Proposed by Commissioner \_\_\_\_\_.

Passed on the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2015.

Vote:

Ayes:

Nays:

Absent:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chairman  
Washoe County Commission

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_

County Clerk

This ordinance shall be in force and effect from and after  
\_\_\_\_\_, 2015.

SUMMARY: An ordinance amending the Washoe County Code by creating provisions related to the managed care of feral cats and revising definitions.

BILL NO. \_\_\_\_\_

ORDINANCE NO. \_\_\_\_\_

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE WASHOE COUNTY CODE BY ADDING PROVISIONS RELATED TO THE MANAGED CARE OF FERAL CATS AND RELATED DEFINITIONS; AND MAKING CHANGES TO THE DEFINITIONS OF "NUISANCE" AND "OWNER".

THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF THE COUNTY OF WASHOE DO ORDAIN:

SECTION 1. Washoe County Code is hereby amended by adding thereto the following new section which shall read as follows:

55.475 Managed care of feral cats.

1. Feral Cat Colonies.

(a) Feral cat colonies are allowed in Washoe County. Feral cat colony caretakers shall be entitled to maintain and care for feral cats.

(b) *TNRM Programs: Sponsorship.* Any animal humane organization that agrees to comply with the requirements of this section shall contact regional animal services to obtain designation as a sponsor. The humane organization shall advise regional animal services in writing and provide its address, telephone number and electronic mail address, if applicable.

(c) *Sponsor Requirements.* It shall be the duty of the sponsor to:

- (1) Approve feral cat colony caretakers;
- (2) Work actively to resolve any complaints over the conduct of a feral cat colony caretaker or of cats within a colony;
- (3) Maintain records provided by feral cat colony caretakers on the size and location of the colonies and the vaccination, micro-chipping, and spay and neuter records of cats in the sponsor's colonies. Titer tests are acceptable to determine a particular colony's resistance to rabies by random examination;
- (4) Provide educational training and written materials for all feral cat colony caretakers covering uniform standards and procedures for colony maintenance. An approved online training program may be accepted upon approval by regional animal services;



(5) Report annually to regional animal services on the following:

(i) number and location of colonies by address and zip code that the sponsor maintains through the TNRM program;

(ii) estimated total number of cats in each of the colonies;

(6) Prevent sponsored feral cat colonies from being maintained on lands managed for wildlife or other natural resources, such as, but not limited to, nature preserves, in order to avoid the taking of rare, listed, threatened or endangered species as determined by Nevada Department of Wildlife;

(7) Provide forms and other documentation necessary to allow feral cat colony caretakers to receive public or private subsidies, medical care or other assistance which may be available for their feral cat colonies.

(d) *Feral Cat Colony Caretaker Responsibilities.* It shall be the duty of each feral cat colony caretaker to:

(1) Register each colony with the sponsor;

(2) Take all appropriate and available steps to vaccinate the colony population for rabies, preferably with a three-year vaccine, and to update rabies vaccinations as mandated by law;

(3) Take all appropriate and available steps to have the colony population spayed or neutered by a licensed veterinarian;

(4) Ear tip the left ear of each colony cat that has been vaccinated, spayed or neutered so that each colony cat can be readily identified;

(5) Microchip each colony cat in accordance with professional medical standards. The sponsor and the feral cat colony caretaker shall be the named contacts for purposes of the microchip animal identification;

(6) Provide the sponsor with descriptions of each cat in the colony and copies of documents demonstrating that the cats have been vaccinated, micro-chipped and spayed or neutered;

(7) Provide the necessary sustenance for colony cats;

(8) Obtain written approval from all property owners or their authorized representatives to enter land upon which the feral cat colony caretaker requires access to establish and provide colony care;

(9) Abide by the sponsor's policies and procedures.

(e) *Withdrawal of feral cat colony caretaker or sponsor.* In the event a feral cat colony caretaker is unable or unwilling to continue in that role, he or she shall notify his or her sponsor. In the event a sponsor is unable or unwilling to continue to perform its role, it shall advise regional animal services. The sponsor shall work with regional animal services to obtain a replacement sponsor. If no new sponsor is found

within 30 days, the sponsor shall notify regional animal services.

(f) *Disposition of feral cat colony cats.*

(1) An animal control officer or authorized representative who has impounded or received a cat from a member of the public, where the cat has been ear tipped or microchipped indicating that it belongs to a feral cat colony, shall attempt to contact the sponsor or feral cat colony caretaker. If a microchip is not found, the animal control officer or authorized representative shall impound the cat and notify the approved sponsors of the description and zip code where the cat was found. The sponsor shall then take all available steps to identify the cat's feral cat colony caretaker or a feral cat colony caretaker who will take responsibility for managing this cat.

(2) If an identified feral cat colony caretaker is not able to immediately take custody of the cat, the sponsor shall immediately pick up the cat.

2. Enforcement.

(a) In order to encourage the stabilization of the feral cat population in Washoe County, regional animal services shall have the following rights:

(1) To trap in a humane manner and remove any cats:

(i) which demonstrate signs of disease; or

(ii) which must be removed for public health or safety concerns.

(2) To euthanize in a humane manner any feral cat which demonstrates signs of rabies, or which has an illness or injury that presents an imminent danger to public health or safety.

(3) To request that a sponsor remove a feral cat that is creating a nuisance if the sponsor has failed to adequately resolve the nuisance within 30 days of written notice thereof. In the event regional animal services directs the sponsor to remove the cat, the sponsor shall have 30 days to do so.

(b) Animal control officers may investigate any nuisance complaint allegedly caused by a feral cat. In the event an animal control officer finds that a feral cat or feral cat colony has created a nuisance, the animal control officer shall advise the sponsor in writing.

(c) If a sponsor fails to perform its responsibilities, regional animal services may notify the sponsor that it must comply with the requirements of this section within 30 days. If the sponsor fails to do so, regional animal services may remove the sponsor from the list of approved sponsors, and may reassign the feral cat colonies to another sponsor.

(d) A feral cat who is not microchipped, but who was spayed or neutered, vaccinated for rabies, ear tipped, and released

prior to the effective date of this section shall be deemed to be in compliance with this section.

SECTION 2. Section 55.010 of the Washoe County Code is hereby amended by adding thereto the following new definitions:

"Abandoned Cat" means a domesticated cat that an owner has forsaken entirely or refused to provide care and support.

"Domesticated cat" means a cat that is socialized to humans and is appropriate as a companion.

"Eartipping" means straight-line cutting of the tip of the left ear of a cat while the cat is anesthetized.

"Feral Cat" means a cat:

1. That is born in the wild; or
2. That is a formerly owned cat that has been abandoned and is no longer socialized.

"Feral Cat Colony" means a group of cats that congregates, more or less, together as a unit. Although not every cat in a feral cat colony may be feral, any non-feral cats that congregate with a colony shall be deemed to be a part of it.

"Feral Cat Colony Caretaker" means a person other than an owner who provides food, water and shelter to, or otherwise cares for, a feral cat colony, and who is approved by a sponsor.

"Sponsor" is any animal humane organization that agrees to comply with the requirements of this section and provides written notice to regional animal services that it will serve as a sponsor for feral cat management.

"TNRM" means trap, neuter, return and monitor.

"TNRM Program" means a program in which feral and stray cats are trapped, neutered or spayed, micro-chipped, vaccinated against rabies, and returned to the colony location in which they were found, and which are then monitored by the feral cat colony caretaker.

Section 3. Washoe County Code 55.010 is hereby amended by changing the definitions of "Nuisance" and "Owner" as follows:

"Nuisance" has the meaning described in Washoe County Code 50.308 (18) and (19).

"Owner" means any person keeping, harboring or having charge of or having the care, custody or control of an animal, or permitting any animal to be or remain on, or be lodged or fed within, such person's house, yard or premises. "Owner" does not apply to animals owned by others that are temporarily maintained on the premises of a veterinarian. Owner does not include a feral cat colony caretaker.

[Business Impact Note: The Board of County Commissioners hereby finds that this ordinance does not impose a direct and significant economic burden upon a business, nor does it directly restrict the formation, operation or expansion of a business.]

Proposed on the \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2015.

Proposed by Commissioner \_\_\_\_\_.

Passed on the \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2015.

Vote:

Ayes:

Nays:

Absent:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chairman  
Washoe County Commission

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
County Clerk

This ordinance shall be in force and effect from and after \_\_\_\_\_, 2015.



# WASHOE COUNTY

"Dedicated To Excellence in Public Service"

www.washoecounty.us

CM/ACM \_\_\_\_\_

Finance\_NA \_\_\_\_\_

DA\_NA \_\_\_\_\_

Risk Mgt.\_NA \_\_\_\_\_

HR\_NA \_\_\_\_\_

Grant\_NA \_\_\_\_\_

## STAFF REPORT

BOARD MEETING DATE: October 14, 2014

DATE: October 1, 2014

WASHOE COUNTY CLERK

784-7279

TO: Kevin Schiller

FROM: NANCY PARENT, COUNTY CLERK

DATE OF BCC MEETING: 10/14/14

### BOARD ACTION TAKEN

- BCC Approved
- Not Approved by BCC

*Listen to motion for direction  
hnp*

Conditions of approval/denial: \_\_\_\_\_

### CLERK ACTION TAKEN

- Original Agreement/Resolution kept by Clerk.
- Original Agreement/Resolution kept by Clerk and other(s) attached.
- Original(s) attached. Copy(s) kept by Clerk.
- Copies given to: \_\_\_\_\_

### DEPARTMENT ACTION

- Once you have a fully executed Agreement, send original to Clerk.
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Nevada Humane Society  
e and possible direction to  
n Districts)

ne Society and the State of  
Release Initiatives with

y communities.

gional animal services  
solidated, countywide field  
he General Services

vices Agreement between  
vada Humane Society (NHS)  
s provided at the WCRAS

oted to transfer management  
s to the Sheriff's Office,  
y Services Department.

cknowledged completion of  
imal Services by the



# WASHOE COUNTY

"Dedicated To Excellence in Public Service"  
www.washoecounty.us

CM/ACM\_\_\_\_  
Finance\_NA\_\_\_\_  
DA\_NA\_\_\_\_  
Risk Mgt.\_NA\_\_\_\_  
HR\_NA\_\_\_\_  
Grant\_NA\_\_\_\_

## STAFF REPORT

BOARD MEETING DATE: October 14, 2014

**DATE:** October 1, 2014  
**TO:** Board of County Commissioners  
**FROM:** Kevin Schiller, Assistant County Manager  
(775) 328-2008 [kschiller@washoecounty.us](mailto:kschiller@washoecounty.us)  
**THROUGH:** John Slaughter, County Manager  
(775) 328-3607 [jslaughter@washoecounty.us](mailto:jslaughter@washoecounty.us)  
**SUBJECT:** Presentations on Feral Cat Management by the Nevada Humane Society and the State of Nevada, Department of Wildlife and possible direction to staff on related policy matters. (All Commission Districts)

---

### SUMMARY

Presentations on Feral Cat Management, by the Nevada Humane Society and the State of Nevada, Department of Wildlife to include Trap, Neuter, and Release Initiatives with possible direction to staff on related policy matters.

**Washoe County Strategic Objective:** Safe, secure and healthy communities.

### PREVIOUS ACTION

On July 1, 2005 Washoe County assumed responsibility for regional animal services including operation of the Animal Services Center and for consolidated, countywide field operations. Regional Animal Services was a program within the General Services Division of the Public Works Department.

On December 13, 2005 the Board approved a Professional Services Agreement between Washoe County Regional Animal Services(WCRAS) and Nevada Humane Society (NHS) defining operational responsibilities for each including services provided at the WCRAS Center, animal handling, standards of care, and other matters.

On December 13, 2011 the Board of County Commissioners voted to transfer management of the operations of Washoe County Regional Animal Services to the Sheriff's Office, coupled with the merger of Public Works under the Community Services Department.

On December 17, 2013 the Board of County Commissioners acknowledged completion of temporary management services and oversight of Regional Animal Services by the

Washoe County Sheriff's Office and directed staff to initiate a process to determine its future status and place in Washoe County.

On February 25, 2014 the Board accepted the update on the status of Washoe Regional Animal Services Future Operator Technical Advisory Team (WCRAS TAC) and gave direction to staff to continue analysis of three potential models: a Public/Non-Profit Division within the County (managed by a department other than WCSO), a Public/Non-Profit Department within the County (New Department), and a new stand-alone entity/Joint Powers Authority (JPA).

On April 22, 2014 the Board was provided three Operating Models to choose from for future governance of the Washoe County Regional Animal Services. The Board selected Model 2 which recommended creation of a new department with a Director of Regional Animal Services.

On June 24, 2014 the Board appointed Kevin Schiller as Interim Director of the Washoe County Regional Animal Services Department effective July 1, 2014.

On July 22, 2014, the Board acknowledged the update on Washoe County Regional Animal Services Department.

## **BACKGROUND**

Management of the feral cat population has been present within Washoe County over the past 15 years. The following is a brief chronology and history specific to feral cat management within Washoe County to the present. In 1999, the SPCA of Northern Nevada started the first Trap-Neuter-Return-Monitor program in Washoe County in response to more than 1,800 feral cats euthanized every year at the Reno city shelter. In recognition of this programming the City of Reno and Washoe County issued Proclamations to the SPCA of Northern Nevada recognizing the value of Trap, Neuter, and Release as a humane method of population control.

In 2002 voters approved a property tax increase to fund a regional animal facility and consolidated animal services. Washoe County consolidated with City of Sparks effective July 1, 2003, with City of Reno on July 1, 2005. In late 2005 a service agreement with Nevada Humane Society (NHS) was approved. On March 1, 2006 adoptions were transferred to NHS.

In 2003, Community Cats was founded and received non-profit status, leading to the organization utilizing the Spay/Neuter vehicle owned by Washoe County Animal Services and the Nevada Humane Society to spay/neuter feral cats in 2006. In addition, the Board approved an agreement for Community Cats to utilize the surgical suite at WCRAS to provide free spay/neuter services to feral cats in Washoe County. This provided a resource for citizens to bring feral cats to Washoe County Regional Animal Services for sterilization and vaccination.

In 2008, Community Cats discontinued use of the vehicle; however on November 21, 2008 the Board approved and executed a First Amendment to Agreement between Washoe County and Community Cats, to extend the terms of the feral cat program at Washoe County Regional Animal Services for an additional two years. In 2009 Community Cats moved to the Nevada

Humane Society who privately funded the Trap, Neuter, and Release Program, with the program continuing as a resource recommended by WCRAS for spay, neuter outlet of feral cats.

In 2013, complaints were received by WCRAS specific to feral cats, captured by citizens and delivered to WCRAS, being returned to properties they were trapped from and property owners being contacted by NHS staff regarding capture location information. As a result of these complaints, in May 2013, a review of the procedures was done and it was determined that NHS was able to view records in WCRAS data base to facilitate the return of trapped feral cats to their original location. These records included personal information, notes on cruelty cases, and customer billings which lead to a request by WCRAS for a legal opinion from the District Attorney's Office regarding sharing of information with NHS; and a review of the legality of the Spay/Neuter Return program operated by NHS, in conjunction with Community Cats, as it pertains to the "return" aspect of the program.

The legal opinion dated December 3, 2013, (attached) concluded the "return" part of the Spay/Neuter Return Program, releasing the animals back into the community at the location they were found, is illegal because it constitutes an act of animal abandonment under NRS 574.100 and/or 574.110. This legal opinion resulted in the removal of access by NHS and any other entity to the WCRAS database. Even though the information is normally a "public record" and it would be released to a requester, if the information is to be used to aid or abet an illegal act, such information may be withheld. The Spay/Neuter Return program was determined abandonment in violation of statute, with WCRAS taking custody and then releasing based on location by NHS. This resulted in WCRAS discontinuing the program pursuant to the legal opinion.

Based on the December 2013 legal opinion, a legislative change to the current statutory definition of abandonment would be required for a Spay/Neuter Return program to be implemented. In speaking with advocates who support this program a Bill Draft Request (BDR) is being submitted to change this definition.

At the present time, both NHS and WCRAS provide the service of traps to the public resulting in the acceptance of feral cats at the shelter. A feral cat brought to WCRAS cannot be released based on the abandonment of the animal as the caretaker pursuant to the current legal opinion of the District Attorney. In a review of options a potential legal solution would be designation of a caretaker for the cat colonies. This is currently in practice in Clark County. They have designated management of the colony by a caretaker agency removing any issue of abandonment.

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

No fiscal impact is identified at this time.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that the Board of County Commissioners acknowledge the presentations on Feral Cat Management by the Nevada Humane Society and the State of Nevada, Department of Wildlife and possible direction to staff on related policy matters.



**POSSIBLE MOTION**

Should the Board approve the Staff's recommendation, a possible motion would be:  
Move to "Acknowledge presentations on Feral Cat Management by the Nevada Humane Society and the State of Nevada, Department of Wildlife and possible direction to staff on related policy matters."



# Washoe County District Attorney

RICHARD A. GAMMICK  
DISTRICT ATTORNEY

December 3, 2013

Lt. Robert Smith  
Animal Control Supervisor  
2825 Longley Lane, Suite A  
Reno, Nevada 89502

Re: Public Records Request

Dear Lt. Robert Smith:

You have asked this office for an opinion on two subjects:

First, you have requested an opinion relating to a public records request received by Washoe County Animal Control from the Nevada Humane Society (NHS) requesting the identity of each person that surrendered certain feral cats together with the exact address location where the feral cats were caught.

Second, you have requested an opinion as to the legality of the Spay/Neuter Return program operated by the NHS, in conjunction with Community Cats, as it pertains to the "return" aspect of the program, in light of state statutes and county ordinances.

The factual scenario as it is understood for purposes of this opinion is as follows:

1. Regional Animal Services (AC), from time to time, receives from residents certain feral cats which they have captured; in the past year this number has been well in excess of 1000 cats.
2. AC is required by statute to take up and to keep these animals safe for a period of impoundment. After the impoundment time period has run, these animals are subject to several legal dispositions in accordance with Washoe County Code. One such disposition is that the cats may be adopted by members of the public. To this end, Washoe County has contracted with NHS for animal adoption services by way of a Professional Services Agreement (PSA). In accordance with the terms of this agreement, once the impoundments time period has elapsed, NHS has first choice of these animals, and in response to such a request, these animals, including the feral cats, are transferred by Washoe County to the care and custody of NHS.

3. NHS, according to the PSA, is to provide for the adoption of the animals which AC transfers to them. However, if a cat is determined by NHS to be a "feral" cat, NHS transfers that animal to "Community Cats" (CC), a 501(c) (3), non-profit organization.

4. In this way, CC assists NHS to operate its "Spay/Neuter Return" program through which it seeks to return the feral cats, after being spayed/neutered, to the exact location it was caught.

5. In support of this program, NHS has in the past and continues to request specific address and resident identity, by way of a public records request, for each cat, so CC or NHS may return them to that location and to discuss the return of the cat with the person that initially surrendered it.

6. You have informed this office that NHS returns and releases these animals the day after they are spayed or neutered and the tip of the ear cut off for identification. You have further informed this office that the above stated facts have been verified by NHS staff.

#### **BACKGROUND**

At the present time, Washoe County operates the Washoe County Regional Animal Shelter. Washoe County through its Animal Services Division operates the shelter. The County also leases space at the shelter to the NHS. Washoe County has contracted with NHS to perform animal adoption services in accordance with the PSA.

NHS also, according to the facts supplied by you, operates a Spay/Neuter Return program, in conjunction with a non-profit organization called "Community Cats", which seeks to spay or neuter feral cats, including the animals it receives from Washoe County, and to return them back to the exact location at which they were captured. It is the stated purpose of this program to control the population of feral cat colonies in the Washoe County area. NHS receives the feral cats primarily from AC which are eventually spayed, neutered and returned.

Recently, NHS has been requesting from AC exact capture location information (i.e. exact street address and the name of the resident) for each feral cat so the animals can be turned loose at that same exact location. It is this information which is the subject of your opinion request.

#### **RESPONSE SUMMARY**

As will be explained below, it is the opinion of this office that the "return" part of the spay/neuter return program is illegal because it constitutes an act of animal abandonment under NRS 574.100 and/or 574.110. Accordingly, even though the information requested is normally a "public record" and it would be released to a requester, it is the opinion of this office that, if the information is to be used to aid or abet an illegal act, such information may be withheld, because the governmental interest outweighs the public's interest in access to records.

## PUBLIC RECORDS REQUEST

Addressing the public records issue first, the law in Nevada is clear that "...unless otherwise declared by law to be confidential, all public books and public records of a governmental entity must be open at all times during office hours to inspection by any person, and may be fully copied or an abstract or memorandum may be prepared from those public books and public records. NRS 239.010(1).

This statement of the public records law is to be liberally construed so as "to foster democratic principles by providing members of the public with access to inspect and copy public books and records to the extent permitted by law." NRS 239.001. And, "[a]ny exemption, exception or balancing of interests which limits or restricts access to public books and records by members of the public must be construed narrowly" so as to foster the same public purpose.

To the extent there is an exception, exemption or a balancing of interests which allow a government to deny a public records request, the parameters of that exception are spelled out in Reno Newspapers, Inc. v. Gibbons, 126 Nev. \_\_\_\_\_, 266 P.3d 623 as follows:

"Next, in the absence of a statutory provision that explicitly declares a record to be confidential, any limitations on disclosure must be based upon a broad balancing of the interests involved, DR Partners, 116 Nev. at 622, 6 P.3d at 468; Bradshaw, 106 Nev. at 635, 798 P.2d at 147, and the state entity bears the burden to prove that its interest in nondisclosure clearly outweighs the public's interest in access. Reno Newspapers v. Sheriff, 126 Nev. at \_\_\_\_\_, 234 P.3d at 927. Finally, our case law stresses that the state entity cannot meet this burden with a non-particularized showing, DR Partners, 116 Nev. at 627-28, 6 P.3d at 472-73, or by expressing hypothetical concerns. Reno Newspapers v. Sheriff, 126 Nev. at \_\_\_\_\_, 234 P.3d at 927.

Therefore, unless you can point to a statute that specifically makes the requested information confidential or you can demonstrate a governmental interest which outweighs the presumption that a record should be disclosed, then the requested information must be disclosed.<sup>1</sup>

It is, however, the opinion of this office that the purpose for which this information is sought by NHS does provide the governmental interest that clearly outweighs disclosure and therefore justifies denying NHS's records request. It is readily foreseeable that providing the requested information to be used for this intended purpose would "chill" a resident/taxpayer's willingness to call animal control and utilize the services which that facility provides. The

---

<sup>1</sup> Please note that NRS 574.053(2) specifically makes disclosure of the identity of a person making a report of an act of animal cruelty a misdemeanor. However, this does not apply to the facts as you have supplied them since the action of the resident is simply surrendering a cat rather than making a report of cruelty.



improper use of this information may lead to residents being targeted because they did in fact utilize animal services for impoundment services. In addition, and as stated in more detail herein, the use of this information is for improper disposition of feral cats, and taken in whole; improper use of this information could frustrate the entire purpose of animal impoundments and having a designated impoundment facility.

### ABANDONMENT

The Nevada law in this area is very straightforward. The release of the feral cats after being captured is an abandonment of that animal and that act violates NRS 574.100 and/or 574.110.<sup>2</sup> NRS 574.100 (in pertinent part) states:

1. A person shall not:

(a) through (e)

(f) Abandon an animal in circumstances other than those prohibited in NRS 574.110.

Nevada statutes do not define the term "animal abandonment" nor is it defined in the Washoe County Code. However, the State of Oregon has defined animal abandonment at ORS sec. 167.340 as follows:

"...a person commits the crime of animal abandonment if the person intentionally, knowingly, recklessly or with criminal negligence leaves a domestic animal or an equine at a location without providing minimum care."

It is the opinion of this office that this definition comports with the intent of the plain language of NRS 547.100.

Usually, feral cats are brought to AC by residents that have trapped or caught them on or near their private property. The AC is designated under WCC 55.480 as the facility in the County responsible for the care, custody and disposition of impounded animals. AC is authorized by WCC 55.460(4) to take up and impound such animals brought to it by residents. Once such an animal is brought to AC, the Nevada statutes and the Washoe County Code spell out how Washoe County may legally dispose of those animals.

Once impounded, WCC 55.490 sets forth that the animal is to be held for a period of impoundment for at least 5 days. WCC 55.490(1). If the owner is known, the owner may redeem the animal after paying the costs of impoundment; otherwise, if the owner is not known or if the owner is known and chooses not to redeem the animal, WCC 55.490 authorizes the

---

<sup>2</sup> This opinion letter does not address the Spay/Neuter aspects of the Spay/Neuter Return practice as you have not requested an opinion on those issues.

animal to be humanely euthanized. However, this is not the only legally authorized disposition of feral cats by AC.<sup>3</sup>

WCC 55.510 also allows unredeemed animals, such as feral cats, to be adopted by new owners. WCC 55.510 authorizes the Washoe County Board of Commissioners to enter into a contract for adoption services as a way to dispose of unredeemed animals at AC.<sup>4</sup> Washoe County has entered into a contract for adoption services with NHS on December 13, 2005.

### CONCLUSION

As to the "return" aspect of the "Spay/Neuter Return" program operated by NHS and/or CC, it is the opinion of this office that releasing the animals back into the community at the location they were found is illegal under NRS 574.100 and/or 574.110 because it is an act of abandonment. Accordingly, it is further the opinion of this office that the information being requested by the NHS (location and identity) may be refused because it is being used to aid in the abandonment of the feral cats which AC transferred to NHS.

The opinion of this office, thus stated, is not intended to express any opinion as to the desirability of the "Spay/Neuter Return" program. It may or may not be an effective means to control feral cats. And it may or may not be a program that the BCC would wish to adopt as a matter of public policy. However, at the present time, considering the exact wording of the statutes, ordinances and contracts related to this issue, the return aspect of the "Spay/Neuter Return" program is an illegal abandonment of the cats and should not be sanctioned by Washoe County.

However, these items are capable of change. The PSA can be amended to include a program that allows for the non-adoption disposition of feral cats. However, this is certainly a topic that requires the consideration and action of the BCC and should not be allowed without public debate since it impacts the County as a whole. Also, before the PSA can be amended to allow this, NRS 574.100/110 should be amended so this practice is removed from the reach of the definition of animal abandonment.

---

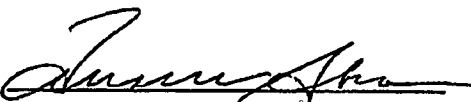
<sup>3</sup> It should be noted at this point that there is no state statute or county code section that authorizes AC to take unredeemed animals and return them to the location where they were caught as a form of legal disposition.

<sup>4</sup> WCC 55.510(4) "Pursuant to section 55.020, the Board of County Commissioners may contract for adoption services. In such event, the entity providing the adoption services may establish such procedures for the adoption of animals that are consistent with state law and the terms of any agreement entered into between the county and such entity."

The County Code allows the BCC to contract for adoption services; the Professional Services Agreement is the vehicle chosen by the County to contract with NHS for those services. County Code does not authorize the County to return animals in its custody to the location where they are found nor does the PSA or state statute allow NHS to release animals in such a manner.

Sincerely,

RICHARD A. GAMMICK  
District Attorney

By   
TERRANCE SHEA  
Deputy District Attorney

TS:lm

cc: Barry Brode



Brian Sandoval  
Governor

STATE OF NEVADA  
**DEPARTMENT OF WILDLIFE**

1100 Valley Road  
Reno, Nevada 89512  
(775) 688-1500 • Fax (775) 688-1595

TONY WASLEY  
Director

RICHARD L. HASKINS, II  
Deputy Director

PATRICK O. CATES  
Deputy Director

September 10, 2014

Mr. Robert Smith, Animal Services Supervisor  
Mr. Kevin Schiller, Assistant County Manager/Interim Animal Services Director  
Washoe County  
1001 E. 9<sup>th</sup> Street  
Reno, NV 89512

Re: Trap, Neuter, and Release (TNR) of Feral Cats Concept

Dear Mr. Smith and Mr. Schiller:

The Nevada Department of Wildlife (NDOW) appreciates the opportunity to submit information for the record relative to the conceptual discussion you are having with the Board of County Commissioners on the Trap, Neuter, and Release of Feral Cats Concept. NDOW comments will provide insights into the impacts from feral and free-roaming cats, express our concerns with the concept, and provide some information relative to the complex issues of management of feral and free-roaming cats.

NDOW is concerned about the effects of establishing trap/neuter/release (TNR) as the accepted method of feral cat control in Washoe County because of the serious harm it poses to native wildlife and potential negative effects on human health.

You can find more information about issues regarding feral and free-ranging domestic cats in an attached position statement issued by The Wildlife Society, a non-profit scientific and educational association of nearly 11,000 professional biologists and managers dedicated to excellence in wildlife stewardship through science and education.

Feral and free-ranging domestic cats are exotic species to North America. Exotic species are recognized as one of the most widespread and serious threats to the integrity of native wildlife populations and natural ecosystems. The impact of domestic cats on wildlife is difficult to quantify. However, a growing body of literature strongly suggests that domestic cats are a significant factor in the mortality of small mammals, birds, reptiles, and amphibians. Because free-ranging cats often receive food from humans, they can reach population levels that may create areas of abnormally high predation rates on wildlife. Even conservative estimates suggest that the number of prey animals killed is immense. Feeding cats does not deter them from killing wildlife for they do not always eat what they kill. Humans introduced cats to North America, and humans must be responsible for their control and removal from the wild.



Life outdoors is also dangerous for individual cats. Free-ranging and feral cats are at risk for early death or serious injury due to diseases, cars, poisons, and predators such as dogs and coyotes. Outdoor cats typically live less than five years, whereas cats kept exclusively indoors can live to be 17 years or older. TNR programs that return cats to the streets subject them to these many hazards, failing to safeguard the animals' welfare after release.

A recent study in *Conservation Biology* (see attached) looked at common claims regarding TNR, such as the idea that feral cats do not contribute to the decline of native species and are not significant vectors or reservoirs of disease. A review of relevant literature revealed that these claims are untrue. The authors also noted that these programs usually do not receive the level of environmental analysis normally due to projects with potentially adverse environmental impacts.

Feral cats also present a human and wildlife health risk, as feral cat colonies can be a source for the spread of diseases and parasites. Diseases such as rabies and Toxoplasmosis may be transmitted to humans and wildlife, and feral cats have been identified as vectors for avian flu. Feral cats may be reservoirs for parasites such as roundworms and fleas. Additionally, a study (see attached) in Florida found that 75 percent of cats within a colony were infected with hookworms, a parasite known to affect humans and other wildlife. For your information, we have attached two policies from the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) on abandoned owned and Feral Cats.

Feral cats can be damaging to ecosystems, especially in unnaturally high numbers created by human-managed colonies. TNR fails to adequately control feral cat populations and compromises their welfare by subjecting them to potentially hazardous conditions outdoors. Finally, the Department has attached a resolution adopted by the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners discouraging the support of feral and free roaming cats.

We strongly encourage you to oppose TNR program in Washoe County.

Thank you for considering the views of NDOW. If you require additional information, please contact Wildlife Diversity Administrator Laura Richards at (775) 688-1996, or NDOW Veterinarian Dr. Peregrine Wolff at (775) 353-3753.

Sincerely,

  
Tony Wasley  
Director

Attachments (5)  
KJ/TW

# Critical Assessment of Claims Regarding Management of Feral Cats by Trap–Neuter–Return

TRAVIS LONGCORE,\*‡§ CATHERINE RICH,\* AND LAUREN M. SULLIVAN†

\*The Urban Wildlands Group, P.O. Box 24020, Los Angeles, CA 90024-0020, U.S.A.

‡Department of Geography, University of Southern California, Los Angeles, CA 90089-0255, U.S.A.

†Department of Geography, University of California, Los Angeles, CA 90095-1524, U.S.A.

**Abstract:** *Many jurisdictions have adopted programs to manage feral cats by trap–neuter–return (TNR), in which cats are trapped and sterilized, then returned to the environment to be fed and cared for by volunteer caretakers. Most conservation biologists probably do not realize the extent and growth of this practice and that the goal of some leading TNR advocates is that cats ultimately be recognized and treated as “protected wildlife.” We compared the arguments put forth in support of TNR by many feral cat advocates with the scientific literature. Advocates promoting TNR often claim that feral cats harm wildlife only on islands and not on continents; fill a natural or realized niche; do not contribute to the decline of native species; and are insignificant vectors or reservoirs of disease. Advocates also frequently make claims about the effectiveness of TNR, including claims that colonies of feral cats are eventually eliminated by TNR and that managed colonies resist invasion by other cats. The scientific literature contradicts each of these claims. TNR of feral cats is primarily viewed and regulated as an animal welfare issue, but it should be seen as an environmental issue, and decisions to implement it should receive formal environmental assessment. Conservation scientists have a role to play by conducting additional research on the effects of feral cats on wildlife and by communicating sound scientific information about this problem to policy makers.*

**Keywords:** exotic species, *Felis catus*, no kill, predation, TNR, trap–neuter–release, urban ecology

Evaluación Crítica de las Demandas Relacionadas con el Manejo de Gatos Ferales en Programas de Captura–Esterilización–Liberación

**Resumen:** *Muchas jurisdicciones han adoptado programas para el manejo de gatos ferales mediante la captura–esterilización–liberación (CEL), en los que los gatos son atrapados y esterilizados y devueltos al ambiente para ser alimentados y cuidados por voluntarios. La mayoría de los biólogos de la conservación probablemente no comprenden la extensión y crecimiento de esta práctica y que la meta de los defensores de CEL es que los gatos sean reconocidos y tratados como “vida silvestre protegida.” Comparamos los argumentos en apoyo a CEL por muchos defensores de gatos ferales con la literatura científica. Los defensores que promueven el CEL sostienen que los gatos ferales solo dañan a la vida silvestre en islas y no en los continentes; ocupan un nicho natural o realizado; no contribuyen a la declinación de especies nativas y son vectores o reservorios de enfermedad insignificantes. Los defensores frecuentemente también sostienen que la efectividad de CEL, incluyendo argumentos que las colonias de gatos ferales eventualmente son eliminadas por CEL y que las colonias manejadas resisten la invasión de otros gatos. La literatura científica contradice cada uno de esos argumentos. CEL de gatos ferales es vista y regulada principalmente como un asunto de bienestar animal, pero debería verse como un tema ambiental, y las decisiones para su implementación deberían recibir una evaluación ambiental formal. Los científicos de la conservación tienen un papel importante al realizar investigaciones adicionales sobre los efectos de los gatos ferales sobre la vida silvestre y en la comunicación de información científica sólida a los tomadores de decisiones.*

§Address correspondence to Travis Longcore, email [longcore@urbanwildlands.org](mailto:longcore@urbanwildlands.org)

Paper submitted April 22, 2008; revised manuscript accepted November 12, 2008.

[Correction added after publication 24 February 2009: A capitalization error in the keywords was amended.]



**Palabras Clave:** captura-esterilización-liberación, CEL, depredación, ecología urbana, especies exóticas, no muerte

## Introduction

Exotic and subsidized predators pose a grave threat to native species (Wilcove et al. 1998; Crooks & Soulé 1999), and feral domestic cats (*Felis catus*) are particularly harmful (Nogales et al. 2004). Domestic cats are on the list of the 100 worst invasive species globally (Lowe et al. 2000). In North America, however, advocates for feral cats have gained political strength and have influenced legislation, the funding agendas of foundations, and the policies of major animal-oriented nonprofit organizations. For example, in 2008 a coalition of organizations successfully blocked federal legislation that would have funded removal of exotic species from national wildlife refuges because feral cats might be targeted. Feral cat advocates usually promote trap-neuter-return (TNR) as a management approach (Berkeley 2004). Almost universally these advocates claim that TNR is the only proven, humane method to manage feral cats (Berkeley 2004; No Kill Advocacy Center 2006a,b; Winograd 2007).

Trap-neuter-return (or any number of similarly named variants) is an approach to feral cat management in which cats are surgically sterilized and returned to the environment, usually where they were captured (Barrows 2004; Berkeley 2004; Levy & Crawford 2004). The course of action after neutering varies, although advocates promote ongoing care of the cats in managed colonies (Slater 2002; Levy & Crawford 2004). Cats may be tested and vaccinated for some diseases and an ear tip may be removed before release to identify treated cats. Managers generally feed cats daily and seek to capture and sterilize any new cats (Slater 2004).

Animal advocates have increasingly called for shelters to avoid euthanasia of any healthy animals, an approach described as "no kill" (Levy & Crawford 2004; Winograd 2007). Although the effort to reduce euthanasia is long established and has widespread appeal, the generic no kill approach has been formalized by the No Kill Advocacy Center, a leading proponent of TNR, as the so-called no kill equation, the first element of which is a TNR program for feral cats (No Kill Advocacy Center 2006b; Winograd 2007). The stated goal of this program is for feral cats to be recognized as "protected healthy wildlife [that] should not enter shelters in the first place." This group believes "it is inevitable that the No Kill paradigm will eventually lead to laws that make it illegal for people to trap and kill healthy feral cats" (No Kill Advocacy Center 2006a). TNR approaches have been adopted in at least 10 large metropolitan areas in the United States (Berkeley 2004; The Humane Society of the United States 2008).

Unfortunately, TNR does not eliminate feral cat colonies under prevailing conditions (Jessup 2004; Winter 2004, 2006) and many false claims used to support the approach go unchallenged. Published research has been distorted by TNR proponents with little response from the scientific community, perhaps in part because TNR has been approached largely as an animal welfare issue instead of being recognized as a broad environmental issue with a range of impacts on species conservation, the physical environment, and human health. Conservation scientists and advocates must properly identify the environmental implications of feral cat management and actively engage this issue to bring scientific information to the attention of policy makers.

## Environmental Effects of Feral and Free-Roaming Cats

Trap-neuter-return advocates use a series of arguments to justify the return of cats to places where they have adverse environmental consequences. Conservation scientists should be aware of these arguments because they are often presented to jurisdictions considering actions pertaining to feral cats.

### Claim: Feral Cats Harm Wildlife Only on Islands and Not on Continents

Trap-neuter-return advocates argue that studies showing adverse effects of feral cats on islands do not apply to continents (Gorman & Levy 2004; Alley Cat Allies 2005). Cats are implicated in species declines and extinctions on islands (Nogales et al. 2004). The Stephens Island Wren (*Traversia lyalli*) was famously driven to extinction by predation from feral cats, although not by a single cat as often reported (Galbreath & Brown 2004). Feral and free-roaming cats also affect wildlife on continents (Soulé et al. 1988; Hawkins 1998; Crooks & Soulé 1999; Jessup 2004). In urban and suburban areas, natural habitats resemble islands, where fragments are surrounded by an inhospitable matrix, but unlike on islands, the inhospitable areas serve as an ongoing source of subsidized predators (Walter 2004). In California, for example, increased predation is likely to occur in fragments <1.4 km<sup>2</sup>, where probability of cat presence is higher. Larger areas are likely to have fewer cats because of the presence of larger predators (Soulé et al. 1988; Crooks 2002). Urban and suburban habitats, including yards, serve as valuable habitat for migratory and resident birds

(Pennington et al. 2008; Seewagen & Slayton 2008) and support local and regional biodiversity (Angold et al. 2006; Tratalos et al. 2007), so concerns about predation by feral cats should extend to these environments.

#### **Claim: Feral Cats Fill a Natural or Realized Niche**

Feral cats are exotic and do not fill an existing niche, but TNR advocates often argue that their long presence in ecosystems diminishes their impact (Gorman & Levy 2004). The sheer abundance of feral cats subsidized by humans, however, makes them an unnatural element of any ecosystem. Feral cats are generally found at densities 10–100 times higher than similarly sized native predators (Nowell & Jackson 1996; Liberg et al. 2000).

Cats managed in TNR colonies can continue to prey on species whose populations have declined to such levels that they would not support native predators (Soulé et al. 1988). This is a form of hyperpredation, similar to what occurs on oceanic islands where an exotic prey species (e.g., rats) supports an exotic predator (e.g., cats) that then devastates native prey (Courchamp et al. 2000; Woods et al. 2003). Owned cats also threaten native prey populations when they are allowed to roam outdoors, although this effect decreases (as it does for feral cats) with the presence of larger predators and harsh weather (Crooks & Soulé 1999; Kays & DeWan 2004). Feeding by humans reduces the average range size of free-roaming cats, but increases densities, concentrating predation on wildlife where feeding occurs (Schmidt et al. 2007).

Contrary to claims that well-fed cats pose little threat to wildlife, hunting and hunger are not linked in domestic cats (Adamec 1976). Even well-fed cats hunt and kill lizards, small mammals, birds, and insects (Liberg 1984; Castillo & Clarke 2003; Hutchings 2003). A classic study documented continuous kills by the same 3 well-fed house cats over 4 years (George 1974).

#### **Claim: Feral Cats Do Not Contribute to the Declines of Native Species**

Trap–neuter–return advocates frequently imply that because cats are not singled out in reviews of the causes of bird declines, cats must have no influence on bird populations (Alley Cat Allies 2005). Habitat loss and resulting fragmentation are indeed leading causes of species decline, but this does not mean that sources of direct mortality are not important to species dynamics. Furthermore, one of the adverse effects of fragmentation is increased predation by cats supported by humans (Wilcove 1985; Askins 1995) and evidence indicates that cats can play an important role in fluctuations of bird populations (Lepczyk et al. 2003; Woods et al. 2003).

Trap–neuter–return advocates cite the work of John Terborgh as vindicating cats as a cause of decline of North American birds because he did not specifically mention them in his paper on the decline of American songbirds

(Terborgh 1992; Alley Cat Allies 2005). When informed of this by telephone, Terborgh said that this argument is “a preposterous extrapolation and grotesque distortion of something I didn’t say” (personal communication). Nevertheless, variations on the claim that the decline of bird species is due to other factors and, by implication, not by cats, has been proffered by cat advocacy groups and has appeared in peer-reviewed veterinary journals (Slater 2004).

Comparative field studies and population measurements illustrate the adverse effects of feral and free-roaming cats on birds and other wildlife. In canyons in San Diego native bird diversity declined significantly with density of domestic cats (Crooks & Soulé 1999). In a comparative study in Alameda County, California, a site with a colony of feral cats had significantly fewer resident birds, fewer migrant birds, and fewer breeding birds than a control site without cats (Hawkins 1998). Ground-foraging species, notably California Quail (*Callipepla californica*) and California Thrashers (*Toxostoma redivivum*), were present at the control site but never observed at the site with cats. Native rodent density was drastically reduced at the site with cats, whereas exotic house mice (*Mus musculus*) were more common (Hawkins 1998). In Bristol, United Kingdom Baker et al. (2005) calculated that the predation rates by cats on 3 bird species in an urban area is high relative to annual productivity, which led the authors to suggest that the area under study may be a habitat sink. The fear of cats exhibited by birds can result in population declines even if predation is low or absent (Beckerman et al. 2007).

Most discussion of the effects of feral cats on wildlife concentrates on birds. Cat advocates correctly argue that birds are secondary prey items for cats under most (but not all) circumstances (Gillies & Clout 2003; Hutchings 2003). But even as a secondary prey item, the number of birds killed is vast, and evaluation of the importance of such mortality requires species-by-species consideration (Baker et al. 2005). Cat predation on mammals (Hawkins 1998; Baker et al. 2003; Meckstroth et al. 2007), reptiles (Iverson 1978), and even invertebrates (Gillies & Clout 2003) is also cause for concern because of direct impacts to native species and competition with native predators (George 1974). Rare and endangered species of birds, mammals, and reptiles are documented victims of feral cats (Winter 2004, 2006).

Feral and free-roaming cats are efficient predators, and their abundance results in substantial annual mortality of wildlife. Churcher and Lawton (1987) concluded that cats were responsible for 30% of the mortality of House Sparrows (*Passer domesticus*) in an English village. May (1988) extrapolated their results to an estimated 100 million birds and small mammals killed per year in England. Although this extrapolation is often criticized for the limited geographic scope and number of cats studied, Woods et al. (2003) confirmed and refined this result with a

larger sample size and geographic area that included England, Scotland, and Wales. From a survey of cat owners that documented prey returned by 696 cats, Woods et al. (2003) estimated that the 9 million cats in Britain kill at least 52–63 million mammals, 25–29 million birds, and 4–6 million reptiles each summer. In North America Coleman and Temple (1996) developed estimates of cat densities in Wisconsin and associated mortality of 8–217 million birds per year.

The focus in discussions of predation by feral cats on birds is usually whether the predation is significant at the population level (Lepczyk et al. 2003; Woods et al. 2003; Baker et al. 2005). We argue that it is philosophically inappropriate for population-level impacts to be the only criteria by which the effects of cats are judged. People who notice and care about birds are just as attuned to the loss of an individual bird in a backyard, or the decline of local populations of birds, as are feral cat advocates to the loss of individual feral cats. We see no justification for valuing birds and other wildlife only as populations while valuing cats as individuals.

#### Claim: Feral Cats Are Not Vectors or Reservoirs of Disease

Cats in TNR programs have infection rates of 5–12% for either feline leukemia virus (FeLV) or feline immunodeficiency virus (FIV) or both (Gibson et al. 2002; Lee et al. 2002; Wallace & Levy 2006). Only 2 of 7 TNR programs surveyed in the United States test for FeLV or FIV before releasing cats, and these tests are optional (Wallace & Levy 2006). Some programs vaccinate for these diseases without testing (Wallace & Levy 2006), but the vaccine is ineffective on infected animals. These diseases can be transmitted to owned domestic cats and to wildlife (Jesup et al. 1993; Roelke et al. 1993).

High densities of feral cats increase the prevalence of ectoparasites in the environment. For example, at a site in Florida, 93% of feral cats had fleas and 37% had ear mites (Akucewich et al. 2002). Fleas transmit disease-causing bacteria such as *Bartonella*, *Rickettsia*, and *Coxiella* between animals and humans (Chomel et al. 1996; Shaw et al. 2001), and arthropod vectors cause a high rate of disease transfer between feral cats (Chomel et al. 1996). A study of feral cats in Florida shows that 75% were infected with hookworms (Anderson et al. 2003). Cats infected with hookworms or roundworms shed the eggs of the parasite, which then accumulate in the soil where they can be transmitted to humans and wildlife (Uga et al. 1996). In backyards with feral cats in Prague, prevalence of roundworm eggs in soil reached 45% of all samples (Dubná et al. 2007). Anderson et al. (2003) conclude that feral cats may be reservoirs of hookworm infection for wild canids and felids in Florida.

Felids, including free-roaming and feral cats, are vectors of the protozoan *Toxoplasma gondii* (Dubey 1973), which can infect other wildlife and humans through con-

tact with oocysts in soil, vegetation, or water (Afonso et al. 2006). Feral cats are vectors for transmission of rabies to humans (Patronek 1998). Over 80% of the prophylactic treatments administered to humans in the United States for possible exposure to rabies resulted from contact with stray or feral cats (Moore et al. 2000). Laboratory studies show that cats exposed to avian flu (H5N1) contract the disease and shed the virus extensively, raising concerns about cats as vectors for a pandemic (Rimmelzwaan et al. 2006).

Some TNR advocates argue that feral cats are infected with a variety of pathogens at the same rate as free-roaming owned cats (Levy & Crawford 2004; Luria et al. 2004). The correct comparison should be with indoor-only cats, which are healthier and live longer (Barrows 2004). Even so, other studies show elevated infection rates of disease-causing pathogens in stray and feral cats compared with owned cats as a whole, including those that roam (Dubey 1973; Nutter et al. 2004; Norris et al. 2007).

Fecal matter from feral and free-roaming cats degrades water quality (Dabritz et al. 2006). In an urban watershed in Michigan, Ram et al. (2007) showed that cats and dogs contribute more to fecal coliform bacteria contamination than other sources and that cats are 2 times more likely than dogs to be the source of bacteria. Runoff contaminated by cat feces also threatens sea mammals. Felids, including feral and free-roaming cats, shed *Toxoplasma* oocysts that infect southern sea otters (*Enhydra lutris nereis*) (Miller et al. 2002; Conrad et al. 2005), Pacific harbor seals (*Phoca vitulina richardsi*), and California sea lions (*Zalophus californianus*) (Conrad et al. 2005). The large quantity of waste from feral and free-roaming cats containing *Toxoplasma* oocysts (Dabritz et al. 2006, 2007) and the correlation between freshwater runoff and toxoplasmosis in marine mammals (Miller et al. 2002) has led researchers to suspect domestic cats as the source of the infections, although further research is needed to determine the relative importance of native versus exotic felids as sources of this parasite (Miller et al. 2008).

In terrestrial ecosystems *Toxoplasma* oocysts accumulate in the soil (Dabritz et al. 2007), where they can infect other species. For example, feral cats are implicated in *T. gondii* infection in the endangered island fox (*Urocyon littoralis*) on the California Channel Islands (Clifford et al. 2006).

#### Efficacy of TNR

Feral cat advocates regularly assert that TNR “works” and is proven effective. They support this claim with anecdotes of success and reference to selected peer-reviewed studies (Zaubrecher & Smith 1993; Centonze & Levy 2002; Hughes & Slater 2002; Levy et al. 2003).

Nevertheless, the definition of a successful TNR program for feral cat advocates is almost always different from what a conservation biologist or policy maker might view as a successful feral cat management program. Reduced adverse effects on wildlife and rapid colony elimination are almost never included in the definition of success used by advocates (e.g., No Kill Advocacy Center 2006a). For many TNR advocates, success is not defined by elimination of feral cats in an area, but rather by the welfare of the cats. For example, one study concluded, "The effectiveness of the program was demonstrated by the low turnover and improved health of the colony over the 3-year period," but the colony size only decreased from 40 to 36 (Zaubrecher & Smith 1993). Another seminal study used to support the notion that TNR works was based on the assumption that feral cats were desired at a location, in which case TNR would produce a "stable, healthy, and manageable colony" (Neville 1983). Similarly, a Florida county implemented TNR "to decrease the number of healthy cats euthanized, decrease the costs to the county, and decrease complaints" (Hughes et al. 2002). In contrast, conservation scientists and wildlife veterinarians measure success of a feral cat management program by the decline and elimination of free-roaming cats (e.g., Jessup 2004; Nogales et al. 2004).

#### **Claim: Trap-Neuter-Return Eliminates Colonies under Prevailing Conditions**

Supporters of TNR assert that managed colonies slowly shrink through attrition. Mathematical models of feral cat populations indicate that 71–94% of a population must be neutered for the population to decline, assuming there is no immigration (Andersen et al. 2004; Foley et al. 2005). This level of neutering and exclusion of additional cats has not been consistently documented in practice. A study of TNR implemented countywide in San Diego showed that feral cat populations had not decreased after 10 years, and a similar result was found after 7 years in Alachua County, Florida, where feral cat populations increased (Foley et al. 2005). Four years of TNR at a colony in London saw the population fluctuate between 19 and 17 with no indication of further decline (Neville 1989). Ten years of TNR in Rome showed a 16–32% decrease in population size across 103 colonies but concluded that TNR was "a waste of time, energy, and money" if abandonment of owned cats could not be stopped (Natoli et al. 2006). Two colonies subject to TNR in Florida were tracked for over a year and population size of both colonies increased owing to the influx of new cats dumped at the highly visible sites (Castillo & Clarke 2003).

Peer-reviewed reports of TNR decreasing the size of feral colonies (e.g., Levy et al. 2003) derive in part from intensive efforts to remove cats for adoption as part of the TNR program. In a TNR program on a Florida uni-

versity campus, 73 of 155 cats (47%) were removed for adoption during the study period (Levy et al. 2003). In another program, during 2–3 years of TNR, 270 of 814 cats (33%) were captured and adopted, without which the number of cats at the 64 sites would have increased as a result of 87 cats joining the colonies while 50 died (Stull 2007). If adoption is sufficiently high, it may offset immigration to colonies and even reach the 50% removal threshold necessary for population decline (Andersen et al. 2004). Documented examples of dramatic population declines at TNR sites are from programs in limited geographic areas that were implemented with participation of the researchers themselves (e.g., Hughes & Slater 2002; Levy et al. 2003). Programs implemented by researchers are likely to be much more thorough than programs implemented exclusively by volunteers (see also examples in Jessup 2004).

Assertions of colony declines often are supported only by reference to Web sites, even in peer-reviewed articles (Gibson et al. 2002). Few published scientific studies document the actual disappearance of a colony through TNR and then only after many years of constant effort (e.g., Levy et al. 2003; Stoskopf & Nutter 2004).

#### **Claim: Trap-Neuter-Return Colonies Resist Invasion**

Feral cat advocates usually argue that managed colonies are stable and resist invasion by cats from surrounding areas (Berkeley 2004), but this assertion is not consistent with scientific literature or reports from TNR colonies (Stull 2007). For example, Levy et al. (2003) documented cats moving between identified colonies and to and from the surrounding woods. Cats do not defend territories when a constant food source is available (Levy & Crawford 2004) and can therefore reach high densities (Liberg et al. 2000; Schmidt et al. 2007). Populations can be limited by lack of shelter from the environment (Calhoun & Haspel 1989). Advocates also refer to a so-called vacuum effect in which new cats are said to immigrate to a location after removal programs (Patronek 1998; Gibson et al. 2002), but fail to provide evidence that such a phenomenon does not also occur when TNR colonies decrease in size.

## **Conclusions**

Management of feral cats is usually governed by laws about pets and domestic animals, which vary by the patchwork of jurisdictions that control land uses. Although some entities in the U.S. federal government have banned TNR, most notably the U.S. Navy (Jessup 2004), it is largely local jurisdictions that are adopting TNR policies (The Humane Society of the United States 2008). These local policies typically do not receive the formal environmental review that projects with potential adverse

environmental effects normally require (Glasson et al. 1999). This probably results from the perception of TNR as an animal welfare, rather than environmental, measure.

The lack of formal environmental review of TNR makes it difficult for scientists, trustee agencies, and conservationists to give input. We urge greater engagement from conservation scientists at local to national levels to communicate that management of feral cats is not just an animal welfare issue. Scientists and conservationists have an important role to play by conducting research on feral cats and providing credible scientific information to resource managers, funding agencies, foundations, and policy makers about the adverse ecological consequences of condoning the indefinite maintenance of feral cat colonies through adoption of TNR as a preferred management scheme.

## Acknowledgments

We thank D. A. Jessup, H. S. Walter, and four anonymous reviewers for constructive critiques of this manuscript.

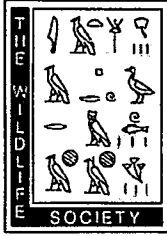
## Literature Cited

- Adamec, R. E. 1976. The interaction of hunger and preying in the domestic cat (*Felis catus*): an adaptive hierarchy? *Behavioral Biology* 18:263-272.
- Afonso, E., P. Thulliez, and E. Gilot-Fromont. 2006. Transmission of *Toxoplasma gondii* in an urban population of domestic cats (*Felis catus*). *International Journal for Parasitology* 36:1373-1382.
- Akuczewich, L. H., K. Philman, A. Clark, J. Gillespie, G. Kunkle, C. F. Nicklin, and E. C. Greiner. 2002. Prevalence of ectoparasites in a population of feral cats from north central Florida during the summer. *Veterinary Parasitology* 109:129-139.
- Alley Cat Allies. 2005. Understanding cats and predation. Alley Cat Allies, Bethesda, Maryland.
- Andersen, M. C., B. J. Martin, and G. W. Roemer. 2004. Use of matrix population models to estimate the efficacy of euthanasia versus trap-neuter-return for management of free-roaming cats. *Journal of the American Veterinary Medical Association* 225:1871-1876.
- Anderson, T. C., G. W. Foster, and D. J. Forrester. 2003. Hookworms of feral cats in Florida. *Veterinary Parasitology* 115:19-24.
- Angold, P. G., et al. 2006. Biodiversity in urban habitat patches. *Science of the Total Environment* 360:196-204.
- Askins, R. A. 1995. Hostile landscapes and the decline of migratory songbirds. *Science* 267:1956-1957.
- Baker, P. J., R. J. Ansell, P. A. A. Dodds, C. E. Webber, and S. Harris. 2003. Factors affecting the distribution of small mammals in an urban area. *Mammal Review* 33:95-100.
- Baker, P. J., A. J. Bentley, R. J. Ansell, and S. Harris. 2005. Impact of predation by domestic cats *Felis catus* in an urban area. *Mammal Review* 35:302-312.
- Barrows, P. L. 2004. Professional, ethical, and legal dilemmas of trap-neuter-release. *Journal of the American Veterinary Medical Association* 225:1365-1369.
- Beckerman, A. P., M. Boots, and K. J. Gaston. 2007. Urban bird declines and the fear of cats. *Animal Conservation* 10:320-325.
- Berkeley, E. P. 2004. TNR past present and future: a history of the trap-neuter-return movement. Alley Cat Allies, Washington, D.C.
- Calhoun, R. E., and C. Haspel. 1989. Urban cat populations compared by season, subhabitat and supplemental feeding. *Journal of Animal Ecology* 58:321-328.
- Castillo, D., and A. L. Clarke. 2003. Trap/neuter/release methods ineffective in controlling domestic cat "colonies" on public lands. *Natural Areas Journal* 23:247-253.
- Centonze, L. A., and J. K. Levy. 2002. Characteristics of free-roaming cats and their caretakers. *Journal of the American Veterinary Medical Association* 220:1627-1633.
- Chomel, B. B., R. W. Kasten, K. Floyd-Hawkins, B. Chi, K. Yamamoto, J. Roberts-Wilson, A. N. Gurfield, R. C. Abbott, N. C. Pedersen, and J. E. Koehler. 1996. Experimental transmission of *Bartonella henselae* by the cat flea. *Journal of Clinical Microbiology* 34:1952-1956.
- Churcher, P. B., and J. H. Lawton. 1987. Predation by domestic cats in an English village. *Journal of Zoology*, London 212:439-455.
- Clifford, D. L., J. A. K. Mazet, E. J. Dubovi, D. K. Garcelon, T. J. Coonan, P. A. Conrad, and L. Munson. 2006. Pathogen exposure in endangered island fox (*Urocyon littoralis*) populations: implications for conservation management. *Biological Conservation* 131:230-243.
- Coleman, J. S., and S. A. Temple. 1996. On the prowl. *Wisconsin Natural Resources* 20:4-8.
- Conrad, P. A., M. A. Miller, C. Kreuder, E. R. James, J. Mazet, H. Dabritz, D. A. Jessup, F. Gulland, and M. E. Grigg. 2005. Transmission of *Toxoplasma*: clues from the study of sea otters as sentinels of *Toxoplasma gondii* flow into the marine environment. *International Journal for Parasitology* 35:1155-1168.
- Courchamp, F., M. Langlais, and G. Sugihara. 2000. Rabbits killing birds: modelling the hyperpredation process. *Journal of Animal Ecology* 69:154-164.
- Crooks, K. R. 2002. Relative sensitivities of mammalian carnivores to habitat fragmentation. *Conservation Biology* 16:488-502.
- Crooks, K. R., and M. E. Soulé. 1999. Mesopredator release and avifaunal extinctions in a fragmented system. *Nature* 400:563-566.
- Dabritz, H. A., E. R. Atwill, I. A. Gardner, M. A. Miller, and P. A. Conrad. 2006. Outdoor fecal deposition by free-roaming cats and attitudes of cat owners and nonowners toward stray pets, wildlife, and water pollution. *Journal of the American Veterinary Medical Association* 229:74-81.
- Dabritz, H. A., M. A. Miller, E. R. Atwill, I. A. Gardner, C. M. Leutenegger, A. C. Mell, and P. A. Conrad. 2007. Detection of *Toxoplasma gondii*-like oocysts in cat feces and estimates of the environmental oocyst burden. *Journal of the American Veterinary Medical Association* 231:1676-1684.
- Dubey, J. P. 1973. Feline toxoplasmosis and coccidiosis: a survey of domiciled and stray cats. *Journal of the American Veterinary Medical Association* 162:873-877.
- Dubná, S., I. Langrová, I. Jankovská, J. Vadlejch, S. Pekár, J. Nápravník, and J. Fechtner. 2007. Contamination of soil with *Toxocara* eggs in urban (Prague) and rural areas in the Czech Republic. *Veterinary Parasitology* 144:81-86.
- Foley, P., J. E. Foley, J. K. Levy, and T. Paik. 2005. Analysis of the impact of trap-neuter-return programs on populations of feral cats. *Journal of the American Veterinary Medical Association* 227:1775-1781.
- Galbreath, R., and D. Brown. 2004. The tale of the lighthouse-keeper's cat: discovery and extinction of the Stephens Island wren (*Traversia bryalli*). *Notornis* 51:193-200.
- George, W. G. 1974. Domestic cats as predators and factors in winter shortages of raptor prey. *Wilson Bulletin* 86:384-396.
- Gibson, K. L., K. Keizer, and C. Golding. 2002. A trap, neuter, and release program for feral cats on Prince Edward Island. *Canadian Veterinary Journal* 43:695-698.
- Gillies, C., and M. Clout. 2003. The prey of domestic cats (*Felis catus*) in two suburbs of Auckland City, New Zealand. *Journal of Zoology*, London 259:309-315.
- Glasson, J., R. Therivel, and A. Chadwick. 1999. Introduction to environmental impact assessment: principles and procedures, process, practice and prospects. UCL Press, London.

- Gorman, S., and J. Levy. 2004. A public policy toward the management of feral cats. *Pierce Law Review* 2:157-181.
- Hawkins, C. C. 1998. Impact of a subsidized exotic predator on native biota: effect of house cats (*Felis catus*) on California birds and rodents. Ph.D. dissertation. Wildlife and Fisheries Sciences, Texas A&M University, College Station, Texas.
- Hughes, K. L., and M. R. Slater. 2002. Implementation of a feral cat management program on a university campus. *Journal of Applied Animal Welfare Science* 5:15-28.
- Hughes, K. L., M. R. Slater, and L. Haller. 2002. The effects of implementing a feral cat spay/neuter program in a Florida county animal control service. *Journal of Applied Animal Welfare Science* 5:285-298.
- Hutchings, S. 2003. The diet of feral house cats (*Felis catus*) at a regional rubbish tip, Victoria. *Wildlife Research* 30:103-110.
- Iverson, J. B. 1978. The impact of feral cats and dogs on populations of the West Indian rock iguana, *Cyclura carinata*. *Biological Conservation* 14:63-73.
- Jessup, D. A. 2004. The welfare of feral cats and wildlife. *Journal of the American Veterinary Medical Association* 225:1377-1383.
- Jessup, D. A., K. C. Pettan, L. J. Lowenstine, and N. C. Pedersen. 1993. Feline leukemia virus infection and renal spirochetosis in free-ranging cougar (*Felis concolor*). *Journal of Zoo and Wildlife Medicine* 24:73-79.
- Kays, R. W., and A. A. DeWan. 2004. Ecological impact of inside/outside house cats around a suburban nature preserve. *Animal Conservation* 7:273-283.
- Lee, I. T., J. K. Levy, S. P. Gorman, P. C. Crawford, and M. R. Slater. 2002. Prevalence of feline leukemia virus infection and serum antibodies against feline immunodeficiency virus in unowned free-roaming cats. *Journal of the American Veterinary Medical Association* 220:620-622.
- Lepczyk, C. A., A. G. Mertig, and J. Liu. 2003. Landowners and cat predation across rural-to-urban landscapes. *Biological Conservation* 115:191-201.
- Levy, J. K., and P. C. Crawford. 2004. Humane strategies for controlling feral cat populations. *Journal of the American Veterinary Medical Association* 225:1354-1360.
- Levy, J. K., D. W. Gale, and L. A. Gale. 2003. Evaluation of the effect of a long-term trap-neuter-return and adoption program on a free-roaming cat population. *Journal of the American Veterinary Medical Association* 222:42-46.
- Liberg, O. 1984. Food habits and prey impact by feral and house-based domestic cats in a rural area in southern Sweden. *Journal of Mammalogy* 65:424-432.
- Liberg, O., M. Sandell, D. Pontier, and E. Natoli. 2000. Density, spatial organisation and reproductive tactics in the domestic cat and other felids. Pages 119-147 in D. C. Turner and P. Bateson, editors. *The domestic cat: the biology of its behaviour*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, United Kingdom.
- Lowe, S., M. Browne, and S. Boudjelas. 2000. 100 of the world's worst invasive alien species: a selection from the global invasive species database. Invasive Species Specialist Group, International Union for Conservation of Nature, Auckland, New Zealand.
- Luria, B. J., J. K. Levy, M. R. Lappin, E. B. Breitschwerdt, A. M. Legendre, J. A. Hernandez, S. P. Gorman, and I. T. Lee. 2004. Prevalence of infectious diseases in feral cats in Northern Florida. *Journal of Feline Medicine and Surgery* 6:287-296.
- May, R. M. 1988. Control of feline delinquency. *Nature* 332:392-393.
- Meckstroth, A. M., A. K. Miles, and S. Chandra. 2007. Diets of introduced predators using stable isotopes and stomach contents. *Journal of Wildlife Management* 71:2387-2392.
- Miller, M. A., et al. 2002. Coastal freshwater runoff is a risk factor for *Toxoplasma gondii* infection of southern sea otters (*Enhydra lutris nereis*). *International Journal for Parasitology* 32:997-1006.
- Miller, M. A., et al. 2008. Type X *Toxoplasma gondii* in a wild mussel and terrestrial carnivores from coastal California: new linkages between terrestrial mammals, runoff and toxoplasmosis of sea otters. *International Journal for Parasitology* 38:1319-1328.
- Moore, D. A., W. M. Sischo, A. Hunter, and T. Miles. 2000. Animal bite epidemiology and surveillance for rabies postexposure prophylaxis. *Journal of the American Veterinary Medical Association* 217:190-194.
- Natoli, E., L. Maragliano, G. Cariola, A. Faini, R. Bonanni, S. Cafazzo, and C. Fantini. 2006. Management of feral domestic cats in the urban environment of Rome (Italy). *Preventive Veterinary Medicine* 77:180-185.
- Neville, P. 1983. Humane control of an urban cat colony. *International Pest Control* 25:144-145, 152.
- Neville, P. N. 1989. Feral cats: management of urban populations and pest problems by neutering. Pages 261-268 in R. J. Putman, editor. *Mammals as pests*. Kluwer, London.
- No Kill Advocacy Center. 2006a. A model feral cat policy. No Kill Sheltering November/December: 10-12.
- No Kill Advocacy Center. 2006b. The no kill equation. No Kill Sheltering July/August:7-11.
- Nogales, M., A. Martín, B. R. Tershy, C. J. Donlan, D. Veitch, N. Puerta, B. Wood, and J. Alonso. 2004. A review of feral cat eradication on islands. *Conservation Biology* 18:310-319.
- Norris, J. M., E. T. Bell, L. Hales, J. A. Toribio, J. D. White, D. I. Wigney, R. M. Baral, and R. Malik. 2007. Prevalence of feline immunodeficiency virus infection in domesticated and feral cats in eastern Australia. *Journal of Feline Medicine and Surgery* 9:300-308.
- Nowell, K., and P. Jackson, editors. 1996. Status survey and conservation action plan: wild cats. IUCN, Gland, Switzerland, and Cambridge, United Kingdom.
- Nutter, F. B., J. P. Dubey, J. F. Levine, E. B. Breitschwerdt, R. B. Ford, and M. K. Stoskopf. 2004. Seroprevalences of antibodies against *Bartonella henselae* and *Toxoplasma gondii* and fecal shedding of *Cryptosporidium* spp, *Giardia* spp, and *Toxocara cati* in feral and pet domestic cats. *Journal of the American Veterinary Medical Association* 225:1394-1398.
- Patronek, G. J. 1998. Free-roaming and feral cats—their impact on wildlife and human beings. *Journal of the American Veterinary Medical Association* 212:218-226.
- Pennington, D. N., J. Hansel, and R. B. Blair. 2008. The conservation value of urban riparian areas for landbirds during spring migration: land cover, scale, and vegetation effects. *Biological Conservation* 141:1235-1248.
- Ram, J. L., B. Thompson, C. Turner, J. M. Nechvatal, H. Sheehan, and J. Bobrin. 2007. Identification of pets and raccoons as sources of bacterial contamination of urban storm sewers using a sequence-based bacterial source tracking method. *Water Research* 41:3605-3614.
- Rimmelzwaan, G. F., D. van Riel, M. Baars, T. M. Bestebroer, G. van Amerongen, R. A. M. Fouchier, A. D. M. E. Osterhaus, and T. Kuiken. 2006. Influenza A virus (H5N1) infection in cats causes systemic disease with potential novel routes of virus spread within and between hosts. *American Journal of Pathology* 168:176-183.
- Roelke, M. E., D. J. Forrester, E. R. Jacobson, G. V. Kollias, F. W. Scott, M. C. Barr, J. F. Evermann, and E. C. Pirtle. 1993. Seroprevalence of infectious disease agents in free-ranging Florida panthers (*Felis concolor coryi*). *Journal of Wildlife Diseases* 29:36-49.
- Schmidt, P. M., R. R. Lopez, and B. A. Collier. 2007. Survival, fecundity, and movements of free-roaming cats. *Journal of Wildlife Management* 71:915-919.
- Seewagen, C. L., and E. J. Slayton. 2008. Mass changes of migratory landbirds during stopovers in a New York City park. *Wilson Journal of Ornithology* 120:296-303.
- Shaw, S. E., R. J. Birtles, and M. J. Day. 2001. Arthropod-transmitted infectious diseases of cats. *Journal of Feline Medicine and Surgery* 3:193-209.



- Slater, M. R. 2002. Community approaches to feral cats: problems, alternatives, and recommendations. Humane Society Press, Washington, D.C.
- Slater, M. R. 2004. Understanding issues and solutions for unowned, free-roaming cat populations. *Journal of the American Veterinary Medical Association* 225:1350-1354.
- Soulé, M. E., D. T. Bolger, A. C. Alberts, J. Wright, M. Sorice, and S. Hill. 1988. Reconstructed dynamics of rapid extinctions of chaparral-requiring birds in urban habitat islands. *Conservation Biology* 2:75-92.
- Stoskopf, M. K., and F. B. Nutter. 2004. Analyzing approaches to feral cat management—one size does not fit all. *Journal of the American Veterinary Medical Association* 225:1361-1364.
- Stull, G. B. 2007. Burlington County Feral Cat Initiative census/progress report 2007. Burlington County Feral Cat Initiative, Vincentown, New Jersey.
- Terborgh, J. 1992. Why American songbirds are vanishing. *Scientific American* 266:98-104.
- The Humane Society of the United States. 2008. Resources for helping feral cats. Washington, D.C. Available from [http://www.hsus.org/pets/issues\\_affecting\\_our\\_pets/feral\\_cats/feral\\_cat\\_resources.html](http://www.hsus.org/pets/issues_affecting_our_pets/feral_cats/feral_cat_resources.html) (accessed October 2008).
- Tratalos, J., R. A. Fuller, P. H. Warren, R. G. Davies, and K. J. Gaston. 2007. Urban form, biodiversity potential and ecosystem services. *Landscape and Urban Planning* 83:308-317.
- Uga, S., T. Minami, and K. Nagata. 1996. Defecation habits of cats and dogs and contamination by *Toxocara* eggs in public park sand pits. *American Journal of Tropical Medicine* 54:122-126.
- Wallace, J. L., and J. K. Levy. 2006. Population characteristics of feral cats admitted to seven trap-neuter-return programs in the United States. *Journal of Feline Medicine and Surgery* 8:279-284.
- Walter, H. S. 2004. The mismeasure of islands: implications for biogeographical theory and the conservation of nature. *Journal of Biogeography* 31:177-197.
- Wilcove, D. S. 1985. Nest predation in forest tracts and the decline of migratory songbirds. *Ecology* 66:1211-1214.
- Wilcove, D. S., D. Rothstein, J. Dubow, A. Phillips, and E. Losos. 1998. Quantifying threats to imperiled species in the United States. *BioScience* 48:607-615.
- Winograd, N. J. 2007. Redemption: the myth of pet overpopulation and the no kill revolution in America. Almaden Books, Los Angeles.
- Winter, L. 2004. Trap-neuter-release programs: the reality and the impacts. *Journal of the American Veterinary Medical Association* 225:1369-1376.
- Winter, L. 2006. Impacts of feral and free-ranging cats on bird species of conservation concern: a five-state review of New York, New Jersey, Florida, California, and Hawaii. American Bird Conservancy, The Plains, Virginia.
- Woods, M., R. A. McDonald, and S. Harris. 2003. Predation of wildlife by domestic cats *Felis catus* in Great Britain. *Mammal Review* 33:174-188.
- Zaunbrecher, K. I., and R. E. Smith. 1993. Neutering of feral cats as an alternative to eradication programs. *Journal of the American Veterinary Medical Association* 203:449-452.



## **THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY**

5410 Grosvenor Lane • Bethesda, MD 20814-2197  
Tel: (301) 897-9770 • Fax: (301) 530-2471  
E-mail: [tws@wildlife.org](mailto:tws@wildlife.org)

### **Final Position Statement**

#### **Feral and Free-Ranging Domestic Cats**

Feral and free-ranging domestic cats are exotic species to North America. Exotic species are recognized as one of the most widespread and serious threats to the integrity of native wildlife populations and natural ecosystems. Exotic species present special challenges for wildlife managers because their negative impacts on native species are poorly understood by the public to the point that many exotic species are perceived as a natural component of the environment. Some exotic species have advocacy groups that promote their continued presence, and few policies and laws deal directly with their control. Perhaps no issue has captured more of the challenges for contemporary wildlife management than the impacts of feral or free-ranging domestic cats and their impacts on native wildlife.

Domestic cats originated from an ancestral wild species, the European and African wild cat (*Felis silvestris*). The domestic cat (*Felis catus*) is now considered a separate species, and is found on all 7 continents, with 600 million cats worldwide and 148-188 million within the U.S.. Domestic cats have great reproductive potential. Individuals become sexually mature as early as 6 months of age, and reproduction can occur throughout the year. A single female may produce as many as 3 litters each year with 2 to 4 kittens per litter, with the capacity to successfully raise as many as 12 offspring in any given year.

A growing body of literature strongly suggests that domestic cats are significant predators on small mammals, birds, reptiles, and amphibians. Feral and free-ranging cats also serve as reservoirs for several diseases, including rabies, toxoplasmosis, bartonellosis, typhus, and feline immunodeficiency virus, that can have significant effects on the health of humans, wildlife, and other domestic animals. Because humans often feed free-ranging cats, they can reach population levels that may result in abnormally high predation rates on wildlife and increase the spread of diseases. Domestic cats have tremendous impacts on wildlife and are responsible for the extinction of numerous mammals, reptiles, and at least 33 bird species globally. Effects of cat predation and disease spread are most pronounced in island settings (both actual islands and islands of habitat), where populations of wildlife are already low or stressed by other factors. Effects are also significant in natural areas where cat colonies become established. Competition with native predators, disease implications for native wildlife populations, and pet owners' attitudes toward wildlife and wildlife management also are important issues.

Extensive popular debate over absolute numbers or types of prey taken by feral and free-ranging cats is not productive. The number of cats is undeniably large. Even if conservative estimates of prey taken are considered, the number of prey animals killed is immense. The supplemental feeding of cats does not deter them from killing wildlife; often they do not eat what they kill. Likewise, population-level impacts of diseases associated with cats have only been established in a few wildlife species, such as southern sea otters (*Enhydra lutris nereis*), but negative individual

impacts clearly occur in an extremely wide range of species. Humans introduced cats to North America, and humans are ultimately responsible for the effects these animals have on native wildlife species.

The policy of The Wildlife Society regarding feral and free-ranging domestic cats is to:

1. Support and encourage the humane elimination of feral cat populations, including feral cat colonies, through adoption into indoor-only homes of eligible cats and humane euthanasia of unadoptable cats.
2. Support the passage and enforcement of local and state ordinances prohibiting the feeding of feral cats, especially on public lands, and the release of unwanted pet or feral cats into the wild.
3. Oppose the passage of any local or state ordinances that legalize the maintenance of "managed" (trap/neuter/release) free-ranging cat colonies.
4. Support educational programs and materials that provide scientific information on feral cats and the negative effects on cats from living outdoors, and call on pet owners to keep cats indoors, in outdoor enclosures, or on a leash.
5. Support programs to educate and encourage pet owners to neuter or spay their cats, and encourage all pet adoption programs to require potential owners to spay or neuter their pet.
6. Support the development and dissemination of information on what individual cat owners can do to minimize predation by free-ranging cats, and to minimize potential disease transmission to humans, wildlife, cats, and other domestic animals.
7. Pledge to work with the conservation and animal welfare communities to educate the public about the effects of free-ranging and feral cats on native wildlife, including birds, small mammals, reptiles, amphibians, and endangered species.
8. Support educational efforts to encourage the agricultural community to keep farm-cat numbers at low, manageable levels and use alternative, environmentally safe rodent control methods.
9. Support efforts to reduce risks to the health of humans and other animals posed by diseases and parasites of feral cats, including but not limited to removal of free-ranging cats and elimination of feral cat colonies. Encourage researchers to develop, obtain, and disseminate information on the impacts of feral and free-ranging cats on native wildlife populations, relative to predation, competition, and diseases.
10. Recognize that cats as pets have a long association with humans, and that responsible cat owners are to be encouraged to continue caring for the animals under their control.

Approved by Council August 2011. Expires August 2016.



## Free-roaming Abandoned and Feral Cats

The AVMA encourages and supports actions to eliminate the problem of free-roaming abandoned and feral cats. As a result of irresponsible societal attitudes, millions of these cats exist in the United States. Unfortunately, most of these cats will suffer premature mortality from disease, starvation, or trauma. Their suffering is of sufficient magnitude that it constitutes a national tragedy of epidemic proportions. These free-roaming abandoned and feral cats also represent a significant factor in the mortality of hundreds of millions of birds, small mammals, reptiles, amphibians, and fish. This population of cats also poses a zoonotic disease risk for the public.

### *Encouragement of State and Local Ordinances*

The AVMA strongly supports reducing the number of unowned free-roaming abandoned and feral cats through humane capture (with placement in homes where appropriate) by local health departments, humane societies, and animal control agencies. All free-roaming abandoned and feral cats that are not in managed colonies should be removed from their environment and treated in the same manner as other abandoned and stray animals in accord with local and state ordinances. State and local agencies should adopt and enforce ordinances that:

- Prohibit the sale or adoption of intact cats by humane organizations and animal control agencies.
- Require licensing, rabies vaccination, and permanent animal identification through microchipping of all cats.
- Encourage that owned cats be kept indoors, in an outdoor enclosure, or on a leash. Cats in rural areas must be confined to the property.
- Prohibit public feeding of intact free-roaming abandoned and feral cats.
- Prevent establishment of managed cat colonies in wildlife-sensitive ecosystems.

### *Managed Cat Colonies*

The AVMA neither endorses nor opposes appropriately managed cat colony programs.

- An insignificant percentage of the total number of unowned free-roaming and feral cats are being managed by humane organizations. Consequently, the reduction in the total number of free-roaming cats these programs will effect is insignificant.
- Managed colonies should be considered an interim solution to the problem of feral, free-roaming cats—the first step toward reducing the size of the colony through attrition.
- The AVMA opposes placement of managed cat colonies on public lands or in any area that could threaten at-risk wildlife or in areas that may pose a zoonotic risk to the public.
- Should managed cat colonies be established, natural or artificial restrictive barriers should be employed to protect both cats and native wildlife.
- If sanctuaries for feral cats exist or are to be built, the AVMA encourages properly designed and maintained facilities. High quality care is imperative and overcrowding must be avoided.

### *Research*

- The AVMA encourages research into the production of an environmentally safe and effective oral or parental contraceptive vaccine.
- The AVMA encourages research that better defines the impact of free-roaming cats on native wildlife populations.
- The AVMA encourages research into the causes of animal abandonment by the public.

### *Education*

The AVMA encourages public education that reduces abandonment of domestic cats and eliminates public feeding of unowned and free-roaming feral cats.

STATE OF NEVADA BOARD OF WILDLIFE COMMISSIONERS

RESOLUTION TO CONTROL AND MANAGE FERAL  
AND FREE-RANGING DOMESTIC CATS

WHEREAS, feral and free-ranging domestic cats (*Felis catus*) are non-native predators;  
and

WHEREAS, feral and free-ranging domestic cats exist in substantial numbers throughout  
or adjacent to most areas populated by humans, with reliable estimates in the millions for the  
United States; and

WHEREAS, feral and free-ranging domestic cats are exceptional, skillful, and prolific  
predators of small mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians and other wildlife; and

WHEREAS, feral and free-ranging domestic cats are estimated to kill several million  
native birds and other small animals annually in the United States; and

WHEREAS, birds represent 20-30% of the prey of feral and free-ranging domestic cats,  
and many of these birds, in particular migratory songbirds, are in decline; and

WHEREAS, the Nevada Department of Wildlife and federal natural resource management  
agencies are making efforts to reverse these declines in songbird populations.

WHEREAS, feral cat colony programs, wherein feral cats are captured, trapped,  
vaccinated, neutered, released and fed, do not eliminate but may increase predation on native  
wildlife; and

WHEREAS, wildlife in the State of Nevada not domesticated and in its natural habitat is  
part of the natural resources belonging to the people of the State of Nevada, and feral cats are  
unowned, and therefore have no legal status.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the State of Nevada Board of Wildlife  
Commissioners recognizes cat predation as an important adverse factor affecting wildlife that the  
Nevada Department of Wildlife is charged to manage; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the State of Nevada Board of Wildlife  
Commissioners supports Department of Wildlife efforts to increase awareness of problems  
associated with unregulated feral cat colony programs and urges the Department of Wildlife to  
work with local governments to encourage the proper management of feral and free-ranging  
domestic cats necessary to minimize take of wildlife.

May 8, 1998



# **Trap-Neuter-Return Ordinances and Policies in the United States: The Future of Animal Control**

Elizabeth Holtz, JD





Copyright © 2013 by Alley Cat Allies, Inc. All Rights Reserved.  
7920 Norfolk Avenue, Suite 600  
Bethesda, MD 20814-2525  
[www.alleycat.org](http://www.alleycat.org)

For information on permission to reprint any portion of this work, please contact us at: [info@alleycat.org](mailto:info@alleycat.org)

The correct citation to this document is as follows:

Elizabeth Holtz, JD "Trap-Neuter-Return Ordinances and Policies in the United States: The Future of Animal Control," *Law & Policy Brief*  
(Bethesda, MD: Alley Cat Allies, January 2013).

Cover photo: Jason Putsché

# Trap-Neuter-Return Ordinances and Policies in the United States: The Future of Animal Control

Elizabeth Holtz, JD

A substantial number of cities and counties across the United States practice or promote Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) as a method of animal control for feral cats. Alley Cat Allies' survey of city and county ordinances and animal control practices revealed that at least 331 local governments incorporate TNR into their animal control policies and practices. This number does not include the thousands of feral cat groups and countless individual caregivers conducting TNR privately. Many cities, counties, police departments, and animal control agencies recognize that TNR is the most humane and effective approach for stray and feral cats. Trap-Neuter-Return is poised to become the predominant method of feral cat management in the United States.

## ABOUT THE RESEARCH

Alley Cat Allies staff attorney Elizabeth Holtz, JD reviewed hundreds of municipal and county codes and animal control policy statements. This research was then reviewed by other staff attorneys. A local government was deemed to participate in TNR if it: (1) has a TNR ordinance; (2) has an animal control department that supports TNR; or (3) has an animal control department that condones TNR. Animal control was considered supportive of TNR if its website or other informational materials explicitly endorsed it. Animal control was considered to condone TNR if the municipal website acknowledged TNR as a valid method of animal control but also offered "catch and kill" services.

Local governments were assessed only on the basis of their ordinances and animal control websites and materials. This analysis does not include local governments that support TNR but do not have an ordinance or materials documenting that fact. This methodology excludes some jurisdictions we know support TNR. For instance, the county animal control in Arlington and Albemarle counties in Virginia have active TNR programs. But because they are not listed on the county website—as opposed to the shelter website—they, and other jurisdictions like them, are not included in this analysis.





Alley Cat Allies President Becky Robinson with Ron Cash, celebrating 10 years of success of the Boardwalk Cats Project in Atlantic City.

## The Public Health Perspective

Ron Cash is the Business Administrator of Atlantic City, which oversees the Department of Health and Human Services. Beginning in 1991 as a Licensed Health Officer, Cash has worked on many issues affecting public health from HIV to environmental health.<sup>4</sup> Cash has collaborated with Alley Cat Allies for over a decade to manage the feral cat colonies living under the Atlantic City Boardwalk. He says, “TNR is good public health policy.” Before the boardwalk colonies were managed, he received many calls from the public about the cats. But today he says, “The [cat] population that’s here is much healthier. They’re coexisting with people very well now. Most people don’t even know the cats are there.”<sup>5</sup> Trap-Neuter-Return is not only the humane solution but it also makes for good public policy.

## HISTORY OF TRAP-NEUTER-RETURN

Trap-Neuter-Return is successfully practiced in thousands of communities and in every landscape and setting. With Trap-Neuter-Return, cats are humanely trapped and taken to a veterinarian to be neutered, vaccinated, and eartipped. After recovery, the cats are returned to their home—their colony—outdoors. Kittens and cats who are friendly and socialized to people may be adopted into homes.

Trap-Neuter-Return can trace its beginnings to England during the 1950s.<sup>1</sup> It then migrated to the United States and took hold in the 1990s. As awareness of feral cats grew, animal protection organizations began holding workshops and conferences to address the feral cat population’s special needs.

Grounded in science, TNR stops the breeding cycle of feral cats and therefore improves their lives. Feral cats, just like pet cats, are members of the domestic cat species, but they are not adoptable. The term “feral” means that the cats are not socialized to people and generally avoid contact with humans. Feral cats have been living in close proximity to people for over 10,000 years, and have lived outside in the United States for centuries.<sup>2</sup> Feral cat caregivers care for outdoor cats but are not owners of these cats. Caregivers neither create nor maintain the stray and feral cat population. Rather, they are Good Samaritans stepping forward to help the community.

Historically, the ineffective and costly “catch and kill” approach was used to control the feral cat population.<sup>3</sup> But attempts to permanently clear an area of cats are futile because of the scientifically documented phenomenon known as the “vacuum effect”: in basic terms, whenever cats are removed, new cats move in to take advantage of the now-available resources (like food and shelter), or the surviving cats left behind breed to capacity. Today, there is robust support for TNR both at the grassroots level and within traditional political structures.

## THERE IS BROAD SUPPORT FOR TNR

At least 240 local governments have enacted ordinances (policies) supporting TNR. Ninety-one cities and counties support or condone TNR as a valid method of animal control. Out of these, 63 endorse TNR as the *only* effective way to address feral cat populations. The three states with the highest number of TNR ordinances are New Jersey (58), California (33), and Texas (29). Major municipalities and counties that support TNR include: San Francisco, the District of Columbia, New York City, Sacramento County (California), San Jose, Palm Beach County (Florida), Clark County (Nevada), Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Las Vegas, Broward County (Florida), Cook County (Illinois), Oklahoma City, Dallas, Omaha, St. Paul, Milwaukee, Salt Lake City, Fairfax County (Virginia), Maricopa County (Arizona), and Suffolk County (New York).



## TRAP-NEUTER-RETURN COMMUNITIES ARE DIVERSE

Trap-Neuter-Return is endorsed by local governments ranging from conservative **Colorado Springs, Colorado** to the liberal bastion of **Berkeley, California**. Because TNR decreases the size of colonies, decreases animal control calls from citizens, improves public health, and is humane and economical, it is an appealing method of care for feral cats to many different interest groups and organizations, not all of them related to animal protection. This has resulted in an extraordinary diversity of communities with TNR that vary in population, region of the country, and political orientation.

For example, **Cook County, Illinois**—a major metropolitan area that includes the 2.7 million residents of Chicago—has a TNR ordinance. At the other end of the spectrum, **Elko New Market, Minnesota**—home to less than 1,500 residents—does, also. Other small, rural towns like **Espanola, New Mexico** and **Hermann, Missouri** employ TNR alongside urban landscapes like **New York City**.

Support for TNR runs the gamut from a simple animal control department declaration to a complex ordinance enacted by a local government. For example, **Oakland, California** Animal Services states:

“Oakland Animal Services supports trap, neuter, return as a means of controlling the feral cat population... Trap-and-Remove doesn't work. 'Trap-and-Remove' is a euphemism for trapping and euthanizing cats. It may seem like a logical solution, but the fact is that it is not effective... Catch and euthanize is an endless, costly cycle.”<sup>6</sup>

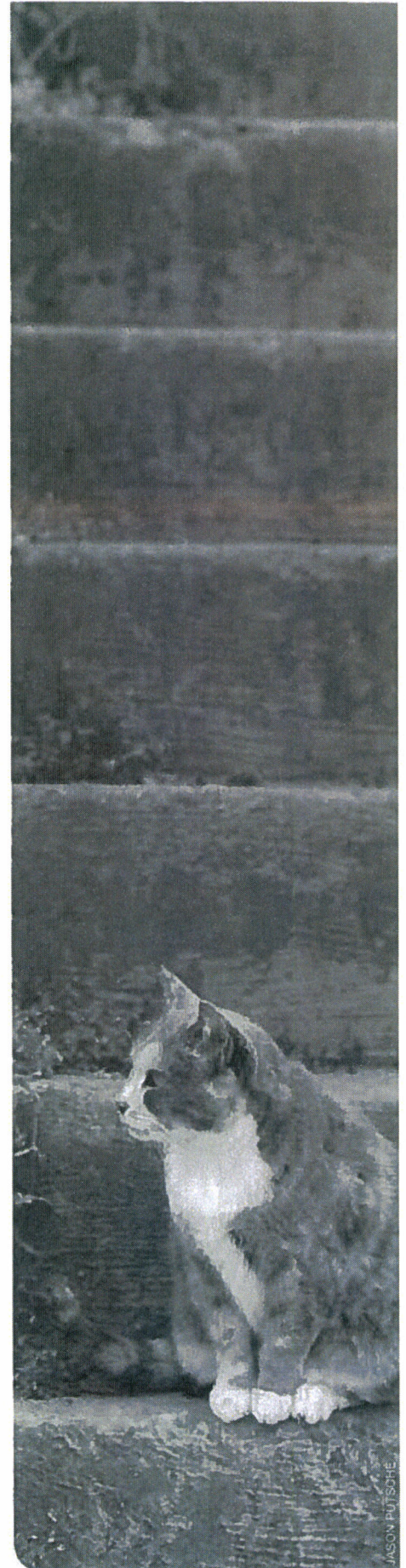
The **Rancho Cucamonga, California** Animal Care & Services echoes this sentiment, stating on the city's website:

“Sadly, many communities still opt to control populations using outdated methods, including lethal elimination or relocation. Not only are some of these methods horribly cruel, they are ineffective.”<sup>7</sup>

The **Brunswick, Georgia** police department notes in a brochure, “The best way to handle a feral cat problem is with a Trap, Spay/Neuter, Release and Manage Program.”<sup>8</sup>

Some animal control departments work closely with local feral cat organizations to provide TNR services to the community. For example, in **Somerville, Massachusetts** the animal control agency urges residents concerned about feral cat colonies in their neighborhoods to call animal control and either an officer or a volunteer with Charles River AlleyCats will respond to the call and trap, sterilize, and return the cats.<sup>9</sup>

Other animal control departments merely opt not to impound cats that are at-large, and instead refer concerned citizens to private organizations. **Carbondale, Colorado** uses this approach. Carbondale does not impound cats, but instead has a feral cat program managed by a resident.<sup>10</sup> The government's website states, “This has been a very successful program. We have seen a significant drop in feral cats in Carbondale.”





The primary goal is for TNR to be a regular and accepted practice in communities. An ordinance is one tool among many to achieve this objective.

## TRAP-NEUTER-RETURN ORDINANCES: LESS CAN SOMETIMES BE MORE

While this paper focuses on broad support for TNR at the municipal level, this isn't the only—or best—way to implement a Trap-Neuter-Return program. It is not always necessary or even advantageous to pursue an ordinance if the local codes present no obstacle for the neutering and returning of unowned feral cats.

This approach may seem counterintuitive because animal advocates usually regard laws that protect animals as positive. However, even well-intentioned laws can end up causing more harm than good if they create regulations and restrictions—and subsequently, penalties and liabilities—where there were none. For example, detailed and unnecessary regulations regarding the care of feral cats could result in caregivers being fined if they fail to follow them exactly. Another example: feral cats could be impounded and killed—even if they already have been neutered and vaccinated—if they are not part of what could be deemed “sanctioned” or “registered” colonies.

Often, brief ordinances that simply communicate the city's support are best. For example, the Washington, D.C. ordinance underscores the city's commitment to TNR instead of regulating the practice of TNR. It states that the animal control agency “shall promote: (1) the reduction of euthanasia of animals for which medical treatment or adoption is possible; and (2) the utilization of trap, spay or neuter, and return practices as a means of controlling the feral cat population.”<sup>11</sup>

Finally, it is important to note that an ordinance, or the lack thereof, may not provide a clear picture of actual TNR practices in a community. A municipality may have an admirable TNR ordinance, but without education and support from animal control services and community members, the cats are unlikely to benefit. Conversely, there may be a thriving TNR program but no TNR ordinance.

The primary goal is for TNR to be a regular and accepted practice in communities. An ordinance is one tool among many to achieve this objective. There are guidelines to follow to ensure any ordinance passed best protects cats and caregivers.

## SAMPLE ORDINANCE PROVISIONS

Ordinances should not be vague or use words inappropriately. Clarifying the meaning of local ordinances and writing them for a lay audience ensures there is no room for misinterpretation.

Below are key components that should be included to best support feral cats in a TNR ordinance. Note that these components include important protections for impounded feral cats, such as mandating the return of cats to their colony, as well as protections for caregivers of the cats.

### Definitions:

- A. **“Eartip”** A mark identifying a feral cat as being in a TNR program, specifically, the removal of approximately  $\frac{3}{8}$  of an inch off the tip of the cat's left ear in a straight line, while the cat is anesthetized.
- B. **“Feral cat”** A cat that is unsocialized to people and typically avoids contact with humans.
- C. **“Feral cat caregiver”** Any person, who in accordance with a good faith effort to trap, neuter, vaccinate and return the feral cat, provides volunteer care to a feral cat.
- D. **“Feral cat colony”** means a group of feral cats that congregate, more or less, together as a unit and share a common food source.
- E. **“Owner”** Does not include a person caring for a feral cat as a feral cat caregiver.
- F. **“Trap-Neuter-Return/TNR”** A nonlethal approach to feral cat population control where feral cats are humanely trapped, sterilized and vaccinated, eartipped, and then returned to the location where they were originally trapped.

### Additional Provisions:

1. Trap-Neuter-Return shall be permitted, and feral cat caregivers, organizations and animal control, are allowed to carry out TNR.
2. An eartipped feral cat received by animal services or local shelters will be returned to the location where trapped unless veterinary care is required. An eartipped cat trapped by animal services will be released on site unless veterinary care is required.
3. Feral cat caregivers are empowered to reclaim impounded feral cats without proof of ownership.
4. A feral cat caregiver who returns a feral cat in conjunction with TNR is not deemed to have abandoned the feral cat.





## REMOVING EXISTING LEGAL BARRIERS TO TNR

Another powerful way to promote and support TNR in some communities is to remove the parts of an existing animal control ordinance that interfere with it or make it unlawful to carry out. For example, if there is an ordinance banning at-large cats, consider working to strike that provision or add an exemption for cats who are eartipped.

Additionally, protect feral cat caregivers by exempting caregivers from the definition of “owner.” In some locales, ownership of an animal brings with it a host of requirements like licensing and registration that are inappropriate for caregivers of feral cats. Accordingly, the **Kern County, California** code defines “owner” as “any person who owns, possesses, controls, keeps, cares for, harbors, or has custody of the animal for fifteen (15) or more consecutive days, except feral cat caretakers...”<sup>12</sup> This exemption for caretakers in Kern clarifies that caregiving is not the same as owning the cats.

Trap-Neuter-Return is the most effective and humane approach to feral cats (for a more thorough explanation please refer to “Why Trap-Neuter-Return Feral Cats?: The Case for TNR” available at [www.alleycat.org/CaseforTNR](http://www.alleycat.org/CaseforTNR)) but there is no one-size-fits-all recommendation for **how** cities and counties in the U.S. implement it. Prior to opening a dialogue about a TNR or feral cat ordinance with your city or county council, Alley Cat Allies strongly recommends contacting us first at [info@alleycat.org](mailto:info@alleycat.org).

## The Animal Control Perspective

**Jon Cicirelli** has worked in animal control for nearly two decades and is presently the Director of San Jose Animal Care and Services in California. Cicirelli explains why San Jose uses TNR: “We use TNR as a humane alternative to the more traditional approach of trap and euthanize. Our focus is on reducing the number of cats being born in the community, which will reduce the number of cats in the shelter and the number of cat nuisances we must respond to.” As a result of San Jose’s program, **Cicirelli and his team have reduced cat and kitten shelter intake by 25% over the last three years.**<sup>13</sup>

**Norman Brice** is the animal control supervisor for the Peoria Police Department in Arizona. Like many other cities, the Peoria Police Department’s previous trap and kill policy resulted in large numbers of cats being killed with no reduction in the feral cat population. The city of Peoria implemented a TNR policy because, as Brice says, TNR is “**the best and most cost efficient way to control feral/free roaming cat populations.**” Brice explains, “TNR, when properly combined with vaccinations, stabilizes feral/free roaming cat populations while reducing the spread of feline disease. When combined with public education, feral/free roaming cat populations can be reduced over time.”<sup>14</sup>



## Spotlight on Communities with Successful TNR Programs

From local government officials to animal control officers to your neighbors, TNR works best when all stakeholders are educated about feral cats. Successful implementation of TNR requires community support. Affordable, accessible spay/neuter services and community outreach are also important components of any feral cat program. Below are highlights of just a few of the communities with successful TNR programs.

### COMMUNITIES WITH NON-ORDINANCE TNR PROGRAMS

**Fairfax County, Virginia** endorsed a TNR program in the fall of 2008. Four years later, the county shelter had experienced a 58% drop in the number of feral kittens in its foster care program.<sup>15</sup> Former Shelter Director Dr. Karen Diviney, noted, “Trap, neuter, and return works. It is a humane solution and we are thrilled that in such a short time the TNR program is showing significant results in Fairfax County.” Similarly, **Orange County, Florida** implemented a TNR program in conjunction with the nonprofit CARE Feline TNR, Inc.<sup>16</sup> After six years, the county euthanasia rate for cats dropped by 18%.<sup>17</sup>

**Santa Clara County, California** launched a TNR program in 2011 with the help of county residents.<sup>18</sup> A year into the program, there has been a 65% reduction in cat euthanasia and a 15% reduction in cat intake.<sup>19</sup>



### COMMUNITIES WITH ORDINANCES

In 2011, **Sea Bright, New Jersey** passed a pilot TNR ordinance, and within a year the number of kittens born to feral cats was reduced to virtually zero.<sup>20</sup> The **Clark County, Nevada** ordinance has also proved successful. One year after implementing the ordinance, the local animal shelter impounded 1,600 fewer stray cats.<sup>21</sup> The **Washington, D.C.** ordinance is implemented through a program called the Cat Neighborhood Partnership Program (“CatNiPP”).<sup>22</sup> The CatNiPP program not only assists with the trapping and sterilizing of feral cats, but also runs community meetings to educate citizens about feral cats and works with specific neighborhoods to create a TNR program appropriate for them.





JASON PUTSCHE



JASON PUTSCHE

## Fairfax County: A Model Community

In 2007, tired of the endless influx of cats and kittens into its shelter, the Fairfax County Animal Shelter in Virginia decided to make a change. Karen Diviney, former director of the shelter, chose TNR because "it works and...is the humane solution to a problem that we human beings created in the first place."<sup>23</sup> Since officially launching a TNR program in October 2008, the shelter has achieved a 58% decrease in the number of feral kittens in its foster care program. By January 2012, 1,800 feral cats had been through the program with the assistance of more than 330 Fairfax citizens.<sup>24</sup> The shelter has received numerous accolades, including the Community Impact Award from the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments for its good work in the area of feral cats.<sup>25</sup> Michelle Hankins, former Community Outreach Program Manager for the shelter, explains that the shelter is "working toward a day when no healthy, treatable, or rehabilitatable animal is euthanized for lack of space or resource. TNR has been an important part of that initiative."<sup>26</sup> Diviney adds, "Someday we will look back on the days before TNR and wonder how we did anything else!"<sup>27</sup>

Fairfax County Animal Shelter's Karen Diviney and Michelle Hankins



## CONCLUDING REMARKS

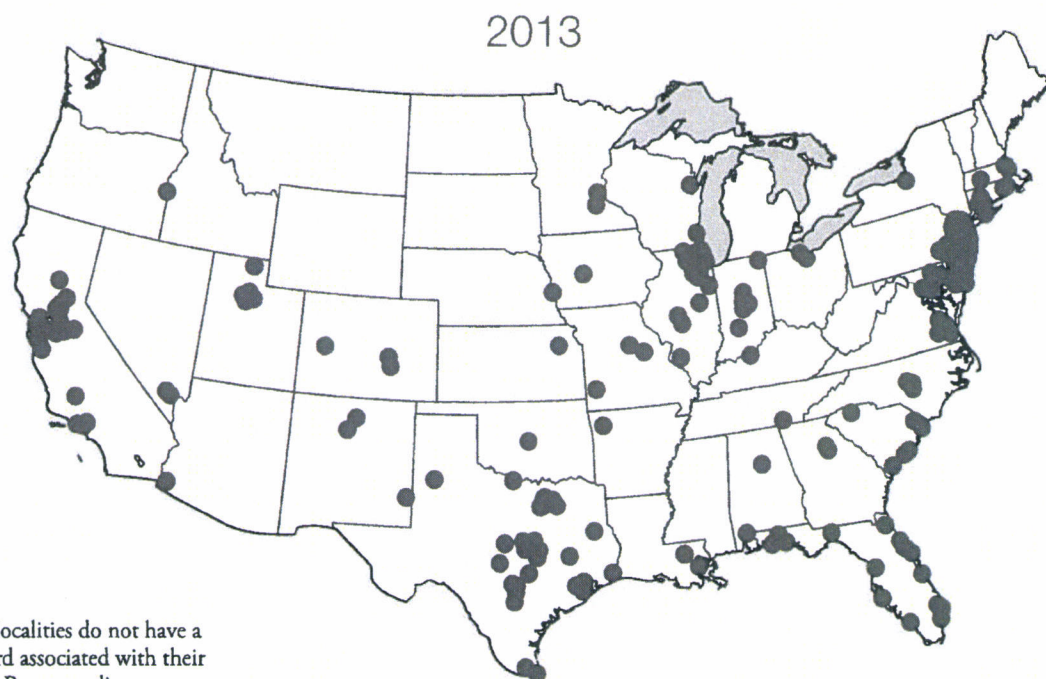
The research is clear—Trap-Neuter-Return is the future of animal control and sheltering. Trap-Neuter-Return is embraced by hundreds of local governments in the United States and is becoming the primary method of feral cat management.

## TNR ORDINANCES AND POLICIES ACROSS THE UNITED STATES



# TRAP-NEUTER-RETURN ORDINANCES ACROSS THE UNITED STATES: 2003 TO 2013

In 2003, 23 municipalities had ordinances supporting Trap-Neuter-Return.\* Just ten years later, in 2013, support has increased ten-fold: 245 communities now have TNR ordinances, and that number increases monthly. Hundreds of communities support TNR because it works: it's the effective and humane approach for cats.



\*Note: Some localities do not have a date on record associated with their Trap-Neuter-Return ordinance.

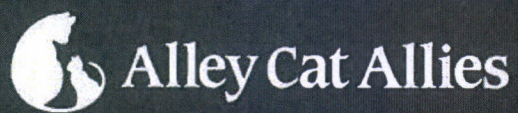




## ENDNOTES

1. Berkeley, Ellen Perry, *TNR: Past, Present, and Future* (Washington, DC: Alley Cat Allies, 2004), 1.
2. Alley Cat Allies. "The Natural History of the Cat." <http://www.alleycat.org/page.aspx?pid=1010> (accessed March 22, 2103)
3. Karyen Chu and Wendy M. Anderson, "U.S. Public Opinion on Humane Treatment of Stray Cats," *Law & Policy Brief* (Bethesda, MD: Alley Cat Allies, September 2007).
4. Alley Cat Allies. "Feral Cats and the Public—A Healthy Relationship." <http://www.alleycat.org/page.aspx?pid=937> (accessed March 8, 2013).
5. City of Atlantic City. "Business Administrator Ron Cash." <http://www.cityofatlanticcity.org/directordetail.aspx?did=3> (accessed March 8, 2013)
6. Oakland Animal Services, "Feral Cats." <http://oaklandanimalservices.org/educate/feral-cats/> (accessed March 7, 2013).
7. City of Rancho Cucamonga California. "TNR Program." Community Programs, <http://www.cityofrc.us/cityhall/animalcare/programs/tnt/default.asp> (accessed March 7, 2013).
8. Brunswick Police Department. "Animal Control Unit." [http://brunswickpolice.org/AssociatedDocuments/animal\\_control\\_brochure.pdf](http://brunswickpolice.org/AssociatedDocuments/animal_control_brochure.pdf) (accessed March 7, 2013).
9. Somerville, MA. "Animal Control-Cats." City of Somerville's Information Center, <http://faqs.somervillema.intelligovsoftware.com/feral.aspx> (accessed March 7, 2013).
10. Town of Carbondale, CO. "Frequently Asked Questions-Police." [http://www.carbondalegov.org/index.asp?Type=B\\_LIST&SEC={2AB43FFB-6EB7-4CFB-9CF5-9408AA63B088}](http://www.carbondalegov.org/index.asp?Type=B_LIST&SEC={2AB43FFB-6EB7-4CFB-9CF5-9408AA63B088}) (accessed March 7, 2013).
11. "Animal Care and Control Agency." D.C. Official Code, sec. 8-1802.
12. *Kern County Code*. <http://library.municode.com/index.aspx?clientId=16251> (accessed March 8, 2013).
13. Ciciirelli, Jon. e-mail message to Elizabeth Holtz, July 5, 2012.
14. Brice, Norman. e-mail message to Elizabeth Holtz, July 9, 2012.
15. Fairfax County, VA. "Trap, Neuter, Return Program Decreases Homeless Feral Cat Population." Fairfax County Police Department, January 19, 2012. <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/police/news-releases/2012/011912trapneuterreturn.htm> (accessed March 7, 2013).
16. Orange County Government, Florida. "Feral Cats: Living with community cats." <http://www.ocfl.net/AnimalsPets/FeralCats.aspx> (accessed March 7, 2013).
17. Hughes, Kathy L., Margaret R. Slater, and Linda Haller. "The Effects of Implementing a Feral Cat Spay/Neuter Program in a Florida County Animal Control Service." *Journal of Applied Animal Welfare Science* 5, no. 4 (2002): 292.
18. County of Santa Clara. "County of Santa Clara Animal Care & Control Places 100% of Healthy Dogs and Cats in 2011." January 25, 2012. <http://www.sccgov.org/sites/acc/inthenews/Documents/SCC%20Animal%20Care%20Places%201-24-12.pdf> (accessed March 7, 2013).
19. Ibid.
20. Ward, John T. "Sea Bright Strays Yield No Kittens." [redbankgreen.com](http://www.redbankgreen.com/2012/02/sea-bright-strays-yield-no-kittens.html), February 3, 2012. <http://www.redbankgreen.com/2012/02/sea-bright-strays-yield-no-kittens.html> (accessed March 7, 2013).
21. Clark County, Nevada. "Trap, Neuter, and Return (TNR) Program for Feral and Free-Roaming Cats Working." District A Newsletters, April 2012. <http://www.clarkcountynv.gov/Depts/newsletters/districta/Pages/SisolakApril2012.aspx#TNR9> (accessed March 7, 2013).
22. Washington Humane Society. "CatNiPP" Programs and Services. [http://support.washumane.org/site/PageServer?pagename=programs\\_communitycatresources\\_catnipp](http://support.washumane.org/site/PageServer?pagename=programs_communitycatresources_catnipp) (accessed March 7, 2013).
23. Diviney, Karen. e-mail message to Elizabeth Holtz, July 13, 2012.
24. Fairfax County, VA. "Trap, Neuter, Return Program Decreases Homeless Feral Cat Population."
25. Larson, Susan. "Fairfax County Recognized for Animal Programs and Rescue." Lorton Patch, April 24, 2010. <http://lorton.patch.com/articles/fairfax-county-recognized-for-animal-programs-and-rescue> (accessed March 8, 2013).
26. Hankins, Michelle. e-mail message to Elizabeth Holtz, July 13, 2012.
27. Diviney, Karen. e-mail message to Elizabeth Holtz, July 13, 2012.





**Alley Cat Allies**

7920 Norfolk Avenue, Suite 600

Bethesda, MD 20814

[www.alleycat.org](http://www.alleycat.org)

© 2013



## Proposed Community Cat Ordinance – Final Draft

These pages are excerpted from the Wake County Animal Control Ordinance to show the proposed wording. The text under discussion is italicized and shown in blue.

### *Community Cat Initiative*

*The County of Wake recognizes the need for innovation in addressing the issues presented by feral and free roaming cats. To that end, it recognizes that there are community cat caregivers and acknowledges that properly managed community cats may be part of the solution to the continuing euthanasia of cats. TNR is an effective and humane method to manage, and over time, reduce the population of free roaming cats.*

### **§91.01 DEFINITIONS**

For the purpose of this chapter, the following definitions shall apply unless the context clearly indicates or requires a different meaning.

***ABANDON.*** To forsake, desert or give up an animal previously under the custody or possession of a person without having secured another owner or custodian or by failing to make reasonable arrangements for adequate care for 24 or more consecutive hours. *A community cat caregiver who provides care to or has temporary custody of a community cat in accordance with a Trap-Neuter-Return Program as defined in this ordinance is not deemed to have abandoned the cat.*

### ***ABUSE.***

(1) Failing to provide an animal with adequate food and potable water for more than 24 hours without written instructions from a veterinarian who has recommended withholding food and water for medical reasons, or failing to consistently provide food at intervals sufficient to maintain the animal's health and well-being;

(2) Overworking or overdriving any animal causing physical pain, suffering or death to the animal;

(3) Beating, torturing, molesting, harassing, injuring, tormenting, poisoning or mutilating any animal causing physical pain, suffering or death to the animal;

(4) Failing to provide adequate medical attention for any sick, diseased or injured animal in order to prevent physical pain, suffering or death to the animal;

(5) Keeping any animal under conditions which cause physical pain, suffering, disability or death to the animal or which increase the probability of the transmission of disease;

(6) Failing to provide an adequate shelter for an animal wherein the animal can be protected from extremes of weather (heat, cold, rain, sun and the like) and which is large enough to allow the animal to make normal body movements;

(7) Failing to provide for animals, which are kept outside, a shelter, which is surrounded on three sides, covered by a roof and has a floor (excluding barns), and which is structurally sound, maintained in good repair and constructed in the manner that it is water and wind resistant;

(8) Conveying any type of animal in a motor vehicle or in a wagon or trailer pulled by a motor vehicle or in a truck or the back of a truck in the way as to cause physical pain, suffering, disability or death to the animal; or

(9) Placing or confining an animal or allowing an animal to be placed or confined in a motor vehicle under the conditions or for the period of time as to cause physical pain, suffering or death to the animal due to temperature, lack of food or drink or other conditions.

**ANIMAL.** Excluding fish, any non-human vertebrate species, domestic or non-domestic.

**ANIMAL BITE.** An animal bite occurs when the teeth of the animal scratch or break the skin of a human being or animal, regardless of the location of the scratch or bite on the body.

**ANIMAL SHELTER.** Any premises designated by the county for the purpose of impounding and caring for all animals found running at large or otherwise subject to impounding in accordance with the provisions of this chapter.

**AT LARGE.** Any animal shall be deemed to be **AT LARGE** when it is off the real property or premises of its owner and not under the restraint of a competent person. "Real property", in this context, means curtilage and does not include public rights-of-way or easements.

**ATTACK.** An approach to a person by an unrestrained animal in a vicious, terrorizing or threatening manner or apparent attitude of attack, without the animal having been teased, molested, provoked, beaten, tortured or otherwise harmed.

**ATTACK TRAINING FACILITY.** Any person, group of persons, partnership or corporation engaged in boarding, breeding, selling or training dogs or other animals in mode of attack.

**COMMUNITY CAT.** A cat that is abandoned, stray, lost, or feral and cared for by a community cat caregiver pursuant to this ordinance.

**COMMUNITY CAT CAREGIVER.** A person who, in accordance with the Trap-Neuter-Return Program defined in this ordinance:

- 1) Provides care, including food, shelter, or medical care to a community cat; or
- 2) Has temporary custody over a community cat.

A community cat caregiver shall not be considered the owner or keeper of a community cat.

**DANGEROUS DOG.** Any dog that has demonstrated a fierce or dangerous propensity or tendency to do any act, which may endanger persons or property and/or any non-domesticated animal indigenous to the state including hybrid animals that are part wild. This would include, but not be limited to, any dog which assaults, bites, attacks or inflicts serious injury on a human

being without provocation on public or private property and/or which has killed or injured a pet or domestic animal. Exceptions: No dog is **DANGEROUS**, pursuant to this definition, if, at the time, the threat, injury or damage was sustained, the person attacked was teasing, tormenting, abusing or assaulting the dog or has in the past teased, tormented, abused or assaulted the dog or was committing or attempting to commit a crime. Nor shall a dog be considered **DANGEROUS**, pursuant to this definition, if it has attacked or injured a pet or domesticated animal in defense of an attack by another animal or if it is protecting or defending its young.

**DEALER.** Any person who is licensed by the U.S. Department of Agriculture as a dealer.

**DOMESTIC ANIMAL.** Any of various animals such as horses, sheep, cattle, goats, hogs, poultry and the like, domesticated by humans so as to live and breed in a tame condition.

**EARTIPPING.** *The removal of the 1/4 inch tip of a community cat's left ear, performed while the cat is under anesthesia, to identify the community cat as being sterilized and lawfully vaccinated for rabies.*

**EXHIBITOR.** Any person who is licensed by the U.S. Department of Agriculture as an exhibitor.

**EXPOSED TO RABIES.** An animal has been **EXPOSED TO RABIES** within the meaning of this chapter, if it has been bitten by, or been exposed to, any animal known or suspected to have been infected with rabies.

**FERAL CAT.** *A cat that is not socialized.*

**IMPOUNDMENT.** The placement of an animal in the custody of the County Animal Control Section or person or entity duly authorized by this chapter or the Board of County Commissioners or by state law for the purpose.

**INHERENTLY DANGEROUS MAMMAL.** Inherently dangerous mammal is any live member of the canidae, felidae, or ursidae families, including hybrids thereof, which, due to their inherent nature, may be considered dangerous to humans and which include:

(1) **CANIDAE.** Any member of the dog (canid) family not customarily domesticated by humans, or any hybrids thereof, including wolf hybrids which are a cross between a wolf and a domestic dog, but not including, domestic dogs (*Canis familiaris*);

(2) **FELIDAE.** Any member of the cat family weighing over 15 pounds not customarily domesticated by humans, or any hybrids thereof, but not including, domestic cats (*Felis catus*); and

(3) **URSIDAE.** Any member of the bear family or any hybrids thereof.

**KENNEL, DEALER or BREEDER.** Any person, group of persons, partnership or corporation engaged in buying, selling, breeding or boarding animals.

**NEUTERED.** Any male animal, which has been operated upon to prevent reproduction.

**OWNER.** Any person, group of persons, firm, partnership or corporation owning, keeping, having charge of, sheltering, feeding, harboring or taking care of any animal for more than five days. The owner is responsible for the care, actions and behavior of his or her animals. In the event that the owner of an animal is a minor, the parent or guardian of the minor shall be held liable for noncompliance with the provisions of this chapter. *A person, group of persons, firm, partnership or corporation caring for or having temporary custody of a community cat as a community cat caregiver shall not be considered the owner or keeper of the cat.*

**OWNER'S REAL PROPERTY.** Any real property owned or leased by the owner of the animal, but does not include any public right-of-way or a common area of a condominium, apartment complex or townhouse development.

**PET.** A domesticated animal kept for pleasure rather than utility.

**PREMISES.** A definite portion of real estate, including land with its appurtenances, a building or part of a building curtilage.

**RESTRAINT.** An animal is under **RESTRAINT** within the meaning of this chapter if it is controlled by means of a chain, leash or other like device; on or within a vehicle being driven or parked; within a secure enclosure; or within the dwelling house of the owner.

**SECURE ENCLOSURE.** A fence or structure of adequate height, forming or causing a humane enclosure suitable to prevent the animal from escaping and to prevent the entry of children. A home, mobile home, underground fence or separate garage is not secure housing. **SECURE ENCLOSURE** is for dangerous dog-housing only, not to be confused with animal quarantine.

**SPAYED.** Any female animal, which has been operated upon to prevent conception.

**STERILIZATION.** Any surgical or chemical procedure performed by a licensed veterinarian that renders any male or female animal permanently incapable of reproducing.

**STRAY.** Any animal, which is running at large or appears to be lost, unwanted or abandoned,

**TRAP-NEUTER-RETURN.** *The process of humanely trapping, sterilizing, vaccinating for rabies, ear-tipping, and returning community cats to their original location.*

## **§91.07 ANIMALS AT LARGE**

(A)

(1) It shall be unlawful for any owner to permit an animal to be at large. *This section shall not apply to a Community Cat Caregiver.*

(2) The Animal Control Section *may* confiscate any animal found to be at large and impound it at the county animal shelter in accordance with §§ 91.50 through 91.58.

(B)

(1) An owner may lawfully permit an animal which is not dangerous to be at large in the course of a show, obedience school, tracking tests, field training or other events sanctioned or supervised by a recognized organization. Hunting dogs may be at large in the course of hunting if under the control of the owner.

(2) However, this provision does not exempt an owner from otherwise complying with § 91.08 or any other provision of this chapter.

(C) It shall be unlawful for any person owning or having possession, charge, custody or control of any dog to take the dog into or allow the dog to enter any public park without being at all times under the restraint of a leash unless the park is designated as a dog park.

(D) It shall be unlawful for any person owning or having possession, charge, custody or control of a female dog or female cat to allow that animal to be at large during its estrus period. During this period, the owner or person having possession of the animal must restrain the animal in an enclosure in the manner that will prevent the animal from coming in contact with a male of its species. This section shall not be construed to prohibit the intentional breeding of animals on the premises of the owners or keepers of the animals involved.

(E) Any owner reclaiming an animal that has been running at large shall be required to have his or her animal microchipped by a licensed veterinarian within 72 hours of reclaim.

#### **§ 91.10 SETTING HUMANE ANIMAL TRAPS AND AUTHORITY TO RECEIVE TRAPPED ANIMALS.**

The Animal Control Section is authorized to place, upon request of the property owner or lessee, live-capture animal traps on private or public property to trap and remove stray, at large, abandoned or nuisance animals. It is unlawful for any person other than an animal control officer or the officer's designee to remove any animal from the trap or to damage, destroy, move or tamper with the trap. The Animal Control Section is authorized to receive and impound animals that are trapped by other agencies or persons. *The Animal Control Section shall offer to a property owner, lessee, or other resident who calls about stray or community cats information about Trap-Neuter-Return, and shall offer to refer the individual to a Trap-Neuter-Return Program.*

#### **§ 91.33 EVIDENCE OF INOCULATION OF CATS.**

Cats shall not be required to wear the metallic tag referred to in § 91.32 of this chapter, but the owner of a cat shall maintain the rabies vaccination certificates as written evidence to prove that

the cat has a current rabies inoculation. A cat that has been eartipped is presumed to have been vaccinated at least once.

#### *Community Cat Initiative*

#### *§ 91.40 Community Cats.*

*The County of Wake adopts this Community Cat Initiative.*

#### *§ 91.41 Trap-Neuter-Return Programs*

- (A) *Organizations or individuals that engage in Trap-Neuter-Return are encouraged to register through a sponsoring organization. Organizations performing or supporting Trap-Neuter-Return in Wake County shall identify and nominate a community cat sponsoring organization, which shall be recognized by the Wake County Environmental Services Director or his designee.*
- (B) *The community cat sponsoring organization shall make available to the public information about Trap-Neuter-Return and feral cats; shall attempt to notify the appropriate community cat caregiver when notified by the Animal Services Division about an impounded eartipped cat, and shall provide a single point of contact to the Animal Services Division for the coordination of Trap-Neuter-Return, calls about at large cats, and calls about complaints related to community cats.*
- (C) *Responsibilities of the Community Cat Caregiver:*
- 1) Cats must be trapped using humane trapping techniques.*
  - 2) Cats must be assessed by a veterinarian and deemed healthy at the time of spay/neuter surgery.*
  - 3) Cats must be spayed or neutered,*
  - 4) Cats must be vaccinated for rabies and FVRCP (Feline Viral Rhinotracheitis, Calicivirus, and Panleukopenia),*
  - 5) Cats must be eartipped.*
  - 6) Cat bites must be reported to Wake County Animal Control.*
- (D) *Responsibilities of Wake County Animal Services Division*
- 1) Persons that contact Wake County Animal Services about stray or community cats shall be provided information about Trap-Neuter-Return and referred to the community cat sponsoring organization.*
  - 2) When a person contacts Wake County Animal Services with a complaint about an eartipped community cat, County staff will contact the community cat sponsoring organization for assistance in resolving the complaint.*

#### **§ 91.50 GENERALLY.**

Any animal which appears to be lost, stray or unwanted, or which is not wearing a valid rabies vaccination tag, as required by state law or this chapter, and found at large, may be impounded by the Animal Control Section and confined in an animal shelter. Impoundment of the animal shall not relieve the owner thereof from any penalty, which may be imposed for



violation of this chapter. *An eartipped cat shall not be impounded under this section unless a complaint has been lodged against the cat pursuant to other applicable sections of this ordinance.*

**§ 91.51 NOTICE TO OWNER OR COMMUNITY CAT SPONSORING ORGANIZATION.**

Immediately upon impounding an animal, the Animal Control Section shall make reasonable effort to notify the owner *or community cat sponsoring organization* and inform the owner *or community cat sponsoring organization* of the conditions whereby the animal may be redeemed. If the owner *or community cat sponsoring organization* is unknown or cannot be located, the animal shall be assigned an impoundment identification number and release date. The impoundment identification number and release date shall be posted on the animal's cage or kennel at the animal control shelter for a minimum of three business days and any information about the animal, including the time and place of the taking of the animal and the time and date of posting the notice of impoundment, shall be available at the animal control shelter by reference to the impoundment identification number.

**§ 91.52 REDEMPTION BY OWNER OR COMMUNITY CAT CAREGIVER GENERALLY.**

(A) The owner *or community cat caregiver* of an animal impounded under this chapter may redeem the animal and regain possession thereof within 72 hours or three business days after notice of impoundment is given or posted, as required by § 91.51 by complying with all applicable provisions of this chapter and paying any necessary veterinarian's fee, boarding fee and cost incurred in capture approved by the Board of County Commissioners.

(B) No animal owner *or community cat caregiver* may be permitted to adopt his or her own animal under the provisions of § 91.53 in order to reclaim an animal that has been impounded pursuant to state law or this chapter.

**§ 91.53 DESTRUCTION OR ADOPTION OF UNREDEEMED ANIMALS GENERALLY.**

(A) If an impounded animal is not redeemed by the owner within the period prescribed in § 91.52, it may be destroyed in a humane manner or shall become the property of the animal shelter and offered for adoption. A new adult owner *or community cat caregiver* who agrees to comply with this chapter may acquire an impounded animal; however, any prospective new owner *or community cat caregiver* shall not be an animal dealer who acquires animals for resale. The prospective new owner *or community cat caregiver* must pay any required fees. The county will not purposefully release for adoption any animal that has previously bitten a person, is aggressive or is potentially dangerous. Fees may be waived at the discretion of the Environmental Services Director or designee for rescue groups and other animal welfare groups that apply in writing to the Section. The placement of animals with these organizations will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

(B) All unsterilized dogs and cats five months of age or older adopted from the county animal shelter shall be either spayed or neutered within 30 days of their adoption. All animals adopted under five months of age shall be spayed or neutered at six months of age. The adopter shall promptly provide written proof of the sterilization to the Animal Control Section. The adoption of any animal not sterilized pursuant to this section shall be deemed to violate the provision of this section and must be returned by the applicant for re-adoption to the county animal shelter. The Animal Control Section is authorized to obtain an adoption agreement from an applicant to implement the provisions of this section.

(C) (1) The animal shelter shall require from the adopter a sterilization deposit fee established by the Board of Commissioners to ensure that sterilization is obtained in addition to the established adoption fee if the animal has not been sterilized prior to its being adopted.

(2) When written proof that a licensed veterinarian has performed the required sterilization is returned to the Animal Control Section, a fee equal to the sterilization portion of the deposit will be reimbursed to the adopter. A person who fails within the specified time to arrange for the sterilization of an unsterilized cat or dog adopted from the animal shelter forfeits the sterilization deposit fee and shall surrender the cat or dog to the animal shelter.

(D) No animal which has been impounded by reason of its being a stray and unclaimed shall be allowed to be adopted from the animal shelter during a period of emergency rabies quarantine invoked pursuant to § 91.36 except by special authorization of the Director of Environmental Services.

(E) Any animal that exhibits fierce, dangerous or aggressive behavior will not be offered for adoption.

#### **§ 91.54 PROCEDURE WITH RESPECT TO REDEMPTION OR ADOPTION OF UNVACCINATED DOG OR CAT.**

(A) Unless proof of a current rabies vaccination can be furnished, every person who either adopts or redeems a dog or cat at the animal shelter shall have his or her animal vaccinated for rabies. A one-year vaccination may be obtained at the time of reclaim or adoption at the county animal shelter. *Each redeemed community cat shall be vaccinated at the animal shelter.* If an owner or adopter wishes to receive the vaccine for his or her animal at a veterinary practice of their choice, they will be given a "proof of rabies vaccination card" at the time of the redemption or adoption. This card will be stamped with a date stating the maximum time limit allowed to take the dog or cat to the veterinarian of the person's choice for rabies vaccination. The time limit for dogs and cats four months and older will be 72 hours, with Sundays and holidays excluded. For puppies and kittens under four months, the Environmental Services Director or his or her designee will determine the time limit according to their age within 72 hours of the designated date.

(B) The “proof of rabies vaccination card” will be completed and returned to the animal shelter by the veterinarian. If this card is not returned to the animal shelter within the time limit specified on the card, an animal control officer will be dispatched to retrieve the dog or cat.

(C) Payment for the rabies vaccination provided for in this section will be the responsibility of the person redeeming or adopting the animal.

(D) The adoption agreement will be completed at the time of adoption. If the adopter fails to comply with the agreement, an animal control officer may be dispatched to retrieve the dog or cat if corrective action has not been taken by the animal’s owner.

DRAFT

# Staff Report



## Trap Neuter and Release Program Resolution

City Council Meeting Date: 08-20-13 | Document Being Considered: Resolution

### **RECOMMENDATION**

Approve a resolution authorizing and approving the Trap-Neuter-Return Program whereby nonprofit organizations partner with the City in the management of feral cats.

### **PRIOR BOARD OR COUNCIL ACTION**

None

### **ANALYSIS**

Feral cats currently exist in large numbers and roam free throughout the City of Arlington with no effective means of controlling their population. The City currently addresses nuisances caused by feral cats through trapping and humane euthanasia. Approximately 2,000 feral cats are humanely euthanized annually at the Arlington Animal Services Center.

Current animal industry best practices recognizes the potential advantages for a well managed trap-neuter-return (TNR) program as a mechanism to manage and reduce the existing feral cat populations. The City proposes to enter into partnership with the Arlington Feral Cat Coalition and Friends of Arlington Animal Services. In order to implement a successful TNR program, that is designed to reduce the number of feral cats euthanized, standards and protocols will be adopted for the management of feral cats and provide for the minimization and abatement of nuisances caused by feral cats.

The implementation of a TNR program requires the adoption of a resolution in order to avoid conflicts, by providing that a feral cat is not subject to capture and impoundment by the City for merely being at-large, and by enacting affirmative defenses to what would otherwise constitute violations for allowing feral cats to roam beyond an owner's property, failing to obtain and display a City license, or for failing to provide for the rabies vaccination of a feral cat.

### **FINANCIAL IMPACT**

Cost of reduced staff animal care processing time and euthanasia will result in an unknown amount of savings.

### **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

Attached:	Resolution
Under separate cover:	N/A
Available in the City Secretary's Office:	N/A

### **STAFF CONTACT(S)**

Mike Bass  
Asst. Director of Code Compliance Services  
817-459-5341  
[Mike.Bass@arlingtontx.gov](mailto:Mike.Bass@arlingtontx.gov)

Resolution No. \_\_\_\_\_

**A resolution authorizing and approving the community cat initiative Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) program whereby nonprofit organizations help manage feral cats**

- WHEREAS, feral cats currently exist in large numbers and roam free throughout the City of Arlington with no comprehensive effective means of controlling their population; and
- WHEREAS, the City currently addresses nuisances caused by feral cats through trapping and humane euthanasia; and
- WHEREAS, the City recognizes the potential for a Trap-Neuter-Return ("TNR") program as a mechanism to reduce existing feral cat populations; and
- WHEREAS, in the interest of instituting a successful TNR program to control feral cat population control, sponsoring organizations and individuals approved as caretakers with the sponsoring organizations have agreed to act to minimize feral cat nuisances; and
- WHEREAS, sponsor organizations including the Arlington Feral Cat Coalition, Friends of Arlington Animal Services, the Texas Coalition for Animal Protection, and Alley Cat Allies, Inc. have volunteered to provide the TNR program and coordinate with Arlington Animal Services; NOW THEREFORE

**BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ARLINGTON, TEXAS:**

I.

That all of the recitals contained in the preamble of this resolution are found to be true and are adopted as findings of fact by this governing body and as part of its official record.

II.

That the City of Arlington adopts the community cat initiative Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) program whereby organizations or individuals sponsored by certain organizations take actions to control the City of Arlington feral cat population.

III.

That the organizations designated by the Arlington City Council as community cat sponsoring organizations to work with Arlington Animal Services are the Arlington

Feral Cat Coalition, Friends of Arlington Animal Services, the Texas Coalition for Animal Protection, and Alley Cat Allies, Inc.

IV.

That the community cat sponsoring organizations have agreed to publicize information about the Trap-Neuter-Return program, provide a single point of contact for Arlington Animal Services and will attempt to notify the appropriate sponsoring organization when notified by Animal Services about an impounded TNR designated cat. Animal Services will notify the single point of contact about any apparent feral cat colonies in order that the sponsoring organization can take action to limit any nuisances caused by feral cats.

V.

That the sponsoring community cat caregivers have agreed to obtain cats in public areas only or with property owner permission using humane measures, ensure veterinarian care including vaccinations, and coordinate with the City Animal Services. Sponsoring organizations and their caregivers have affirmed that all cats that are part of Trap-Neuter-Return program will be sterilized, vaccinated against the threat of rabies, and ear-tipped for easy identification. If these requirements are met, properly identified TNR cats have an affirmative defense to the requirements of licensing, stray, at-large and other city ordinance provisions if there is no nuisance created by the TNR cats.

VI

That the City Council authorizes and approves the Community Cat Caretaking Sponsor organizations relative to control of feral cat populations.

PRESENTED AND PASSED on this the \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2013, by a vote of \_\_\_\_ ayes and \_\_\_\_ nays at a regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Arlington, Texas.

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
ROBERT N. CLUCK, Mayor

\_\_\_\_\_  
MARY W. SUPINO, City Secretary

APPROVED AS TO FORM:  
JAY DOEGEY, City Attorney





## Shelter Practices

### Toolkit

# Transforming Shelters to Save More Cats: Frequently Asked Questions

The best change shelters can make right now to save more cats is to adopt a Feral Cat Protection Policy and stop accepting feral, or community, cats.

*You may be wondering...*

### But what will happen to community cats?

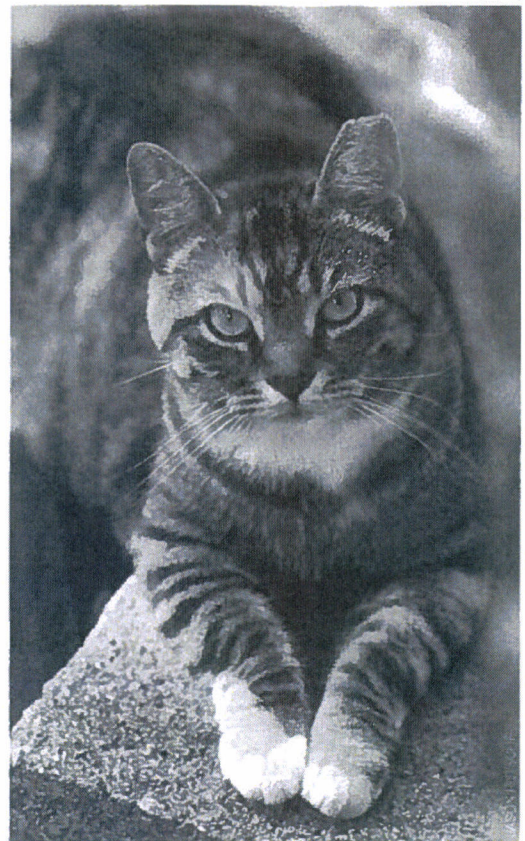
Instead of being impounded, community cats can be spayed/neutered, vaccinated, eartipped, and returned to their outdoor home and their family colony. The population stabilizes—no more kittens! Volunteer caregivers provide food and water for colonies and help ensure that the cats coexist peacefully with their community. TNR is a humane method of care—and the best approach—for outdoor cats. If your facility cannot start its own program right away, consider working with local community cat groups that you can refer people to in the interim. Learn how to implement an organizational TNR program at [www.alleycat.org/OrganizationalTNR](http://www.alleycat.org/OrganizationalTNR).

If you decide to take the next step and only accept the number of healthy socialized cats that you can adopt out, there are other alternatives to shelters for those cats who you can't accept. Cats are actually much more likely to find their way home or be adopted if they stay where they are instead of coming to a shelter. According to Barbara Carr, Director of Erie SPCA in Pennsylvania, cats who were waitlisted when the shelter was full had far more live outcomes than cats admitted to the shelter. Of those not taken in, 45% were rehomed 14% were kept by their caregivers, and about 6% were taken to a rescue group.<sup>1</sup>

For detailed veterinary protocol for community cats, go to [www.alleycat.org/Veterinarian](http://www.alleycat.org/Veterinarian).

### Don't we have to accept community cats?

Many public shelters operate under the assumption that they are legally required to impound community, or feral, cats when residents bring them in. But it is actually rare that local or state laws require municipal shelters to impound



Eartipped cat.



## Fact Sheet:

TRANSFORMING SHELTERS TO SAVE MORE CATS: FAQ, page 2 of 3

healthy community cats. Check your local laws to determine whether your city or state requires that municipal shelters accept community cats. If your municipal shelter is required to accept community cats, work with local officials to propose reversing this policy.

### Who will pay for their care?

While costs differ from area to area, implementing a shelter-sponsored TNR program—or even just underwriting the spay/neuter for community cats—will almost always cost less than catching, receiving, housing, feeding, and then killing the cats. And it's a real investment in the future—leading to healthier cats and happier community members, and humanely stabilizing outdoor cat populations. If your shelter can't afford to sponsor its own TNR program right now, you can consider partnering with private community cat protection groups that can cover some or all of the cost of TNR and use volunteers to trap and transport cats. For example, commissioners in Hillsborough County in Florida have approved a two-year TNR pilot program that will save the tax-funded shelter at least \$160,000 a year through a partnership with private organizations.

Jacksonville Animal Control and Protective Services estimates that the city's TNR program, Feral Freedom, has saved the city more than one million dollars in just over four years.

According to Donna Alexander, DVM, director of Cook County Animal and Rabies Control, the average cost of trapping, transporting, holding, killing, and disposing of a feral cat is \$185. The cost of TNR is much lower. If caregivers trap and transport the cat, the organization providing TNR services only covers the surgery or a portion of it. Even if the shelter is covering all costs associated with TNR, the total cost will still be lower than that of the trap and remove method.

Many public shelters cover the cost of TNR themselves because it is an investment in cats' lives and health, and it demonstrates a commitment to using socially responsible, compassionate, and efficient approaches to serving the animals and the public. And because it quickly pays for itself with reduced intake rates and increased save rates.

Also, it is free to educate people about TNR—you are welcome to use any of our free resources on TNR available at [www.alleycat.org/TNR](http://www.alleycat.org/TNR).



### Can cats be left outdoors?

Yes—and for community cats, this is the only humane option. Cats have lived outdoors for thousands of years and can live—and thrive—in every habitat and climate, from farms to cities, and north to south. Outdoor cats can have the same lifespans as pet cats. A long-term study published in the *Journal of the American Veterinary Medical Association* of a TNR program noted that 83% of the cats present at the end of the observation period had been there for more than six years—showing that the cats were living about the same amount of time as pet cats, who have an average lifespan of 7.1 years.<sup>2</sup>

Outdoor cats are also healthy. A 2006 study published in the *Journal of Feline Medicine and Surgery* found that of 103,643 community cats examined in spay/neuter clinics in six states from 1993 to 2004, less than 1% of those cats needed to be euthanized because of debilitating conditions, trauma, or infectious diseases.<sup>3</sup> In other words, most outdoor cats live full, healthy lives outdoors.

Research shows that feral cats are not a health threat to communities in which they live. After testing feral cats in Northern Florida for FIV, FeLV, and nine other infectious organisms, a 2004 study published in the *Journal of Feline Medicine and Surgery* concluded that “feral cats assessed in this study posed no greater risk to human beings or other cats than pet cats.”

Learn more about feral cats living healthy lives outdoors at [www.alleycat.org/HealthyOutdoors](http://www.alleycat.org/HealthyOutdoors).



## Fact Sheet:

TRANSFORMING SHELTERS TO SAVE MORE CATS: FAQ, page 3 of 3



### How will we respond to calls from the public about community cats?

The majority of people calling animal control about community cats are looking for help—they do not want community cats to be taken away and killed. Even though communities sometimes have one opponent who is very vocal and makes it seem like people want the cats gone, that idea is held by a small minority. The truth is that killing healthy cats does not align with what the overwhelming majority of Americans want. More than 80% of Americans believe that leaving a stray cat outside to live out his life is more humane than having the cat killed, according to a national survey conducted for Alley Cat Allies by Harris Interactive.

When people call, educate them about community cats, TNR, and local resources like low-cost spay/neuter clinics. If you have partnerships with local groups providing these services, give referrals when appropriate. If needed, provide information on humane deterrents to keep cats away from places they are not welcomed, and step in to mediate disputes. Find information on deterrents at [www.alleycat.org/Deterrents](http://www.alleycat.org/Deterrents).

Share educational materials and information in your shelter and online about community cats and why TNR is the best option for the cats, the shelter, and the community.

Always be sure to tell people the truth about what will happen to community cats who are brought to shelters—that they almost always have negative outcomes. Learning about what happens to community cats in shelters motivates people to participate in the only humane approach to community cats, TNR.

Sue Cosby, CEO of the Pennsylvania SPCA, says that when her shelter receives calls from people who see cats outside, they start by educating the callers about why these cats are outside and let them know that TNR is the best approach for outdoor cats.

“Animal control in Philadelphia has actively supported TNR for nearly a decade,” says Cosby. “Over the years we have come to recognize that there are a wide range of cats living comfortably in our community from the truly feral to the socialized, yet un-owned neighborhood cat. If they’re healthy, happy or feral, we explain that the cats living outside are already in their home—they live outdoors much like the squirrels and other animals seen outside. We explain how humanely trapping, vaccinating and sterilizing the cats, then returning them right back to where they live outdoors, is the best option for the cats and for people. We have continued to evolve over time on how we can best help cats and the community, at first just assisting just the truly feral and now being more flexible to serve a wider range of cats in a similar fashion. Our philosophy is to educate people and help them understand that scooping cats up and bringing them to the shelter is neither the best, nor the only, option.”

### How will not accepting community cats improve our shelter?

Shelters that stop accepting community cats, and support TNR programs, generally see both their intake numbers decrease and their number of live releases increase. Shelters can also save money by not taking in community cats. Holding cats for a waiting period and then killing them is costly. It is obviously extremely stressful for the cats, as well as for the shelter staff. Shelters are often able to invest more resources into adoption services and programs that empower community members to help protect animals. Shelters that have stopped accepting community cats and increased their save rates often report that this shift drastically improves shelter staff morale and community relations as people feel better about a shelter that is actively working to increase live outcomes.

### References

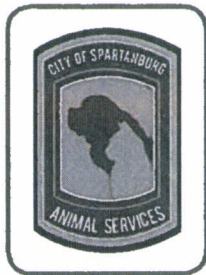
1. Hurley, K. Sheltering as a response to outdoor cats [PowerPoint slides]. Center for Companion Animal Health. University of California, Davis. 2012.
2. Levy JK, et al. “Evaluation of the Effect of a Long-Term Trap-Neuter-Return and Adoption Program on a Free-Roaming Cat Population.” *Journal of the American Veterinary Medical Association*. 2002. 222(1): 42-46.
3. Wallace JL and Levy JK. “Population Characteristics of Feral Cats Admitted to Seven Trap-Neuter-Return Programs in the United States.” *Journal of Feline Medicine and Surgery*. 2006. 8: 279-284.





## Spartanburg Animal Services

Spartanburg, South Carolina



### ORGANIZATION PROFILE

Spartanburg, S.C., is a small city in the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains. The city has a high unemployment rate, in part because of the collapse of the textile industry upon which the city was built. Spartanburg Animal Services is an agency that enforces the city's animal control ordinances. Several years ago, the agency decided to overhaul its policing policies and emphasize education over enforcement. Spartanburg Animal Services launched a number of innovative programs including "A Free Ride Home" for first-time stray dogs. One of the most successful new ventures is a city-run Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) program for community cats.



Spartanburg Animal Services officer returning a feral cat to her outdoor home.

### DISTINGUISHING PROGRAM

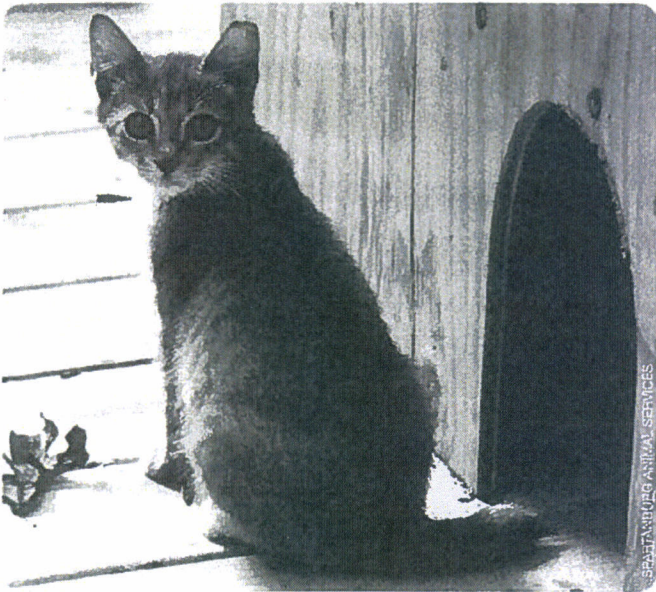
After conducting extensive research, Spartanburg Animal Services formally launched Trap-Neuter-Return in January 2013. Unlike some other TNR efforts that are spearheaded by volunteers or nonprofit shelters, Spartanburg's program is organized and run by the city's animal control officers. It is funded by a grant with the goal of spaying/neutering and vaccinating 750 free-roaming cats in the community by the end of 2013, and they are on track to meet this goal.

Spartanburg's TNR program is still relatively new. But it has already resulted in significant positive changes for the community. The program has brought the community together to support community cats and the work of Spartanburg Animal Services. As of October 2013, more than 600 cats have been sterilized and returned. Meanwhile, the kill rate of cats picked up by animal control has dropped to essentially zero.





Spartanburg Animal Services officers providing feral cats with a winter shelter.



Since Spartanburg started TNR the kill rate of cats picked up by animal control has dropped to essentially zero.

## Highlights

- **Zero kill rate.** Since launching TNR, Spartanburg Animal Services has stopped trapping healthy, free-roaming cats and turning them over to the local shelter to be killed. The head of Spartanburg Animal Services, Major Steve Lamb, says that except for five very sick kittens who had to be euthanized, all community cats the animal control officers have picked up since January 2013 have been neutered, vaccinated, and returned back to their colony locations.

- **Relationship building.** Prior to the inception of its TNR program, Spartanburg Animal Services had “a very hostile relationship” with the community—and with feral cat colony caregivers in particular—according to Major Lamb. This was due in part to the agency’s long history of killing feral cats. Now, Spartanburg Animal Services works closely with citizens and has established a community advisory team. The result is a supportive environment that helps make the TNR program a success.

- **Education through social media.** When Spartanburg Animal Services launched its TNR program, it also launched a Facebook page to interact with citizens and educate them about TNR and other humane programs. “We just wanted to put the truth out there. People needed to understand what we were doing,” says Major Lamb. They’ve been amazed by the overwhelmingly positive response—not just locally, but worldwide. Major Lamb says it’s hard to keep up with all the calls and emails, some from groups as far away as the Netherlands and Australia, applauding their work and seeking more information about setting up similar TNR programs. Spartanburg Animal Services’ Facebook page has more than 10,000 likes.

## Background

When Major Lamb took over Spartanburg Animal Services in 2009, the division’s primary focus was enforcement. Animal control officers spent most of their time issuing citations to pet owners and catching stray dogs and cats. Most of the cats were taken to a local shelter and killed. In 2012, for instance, 78% of the 624 cats and kittens brought to the shelter by Spartanburg Animal Services were killed.

Major Lamb, a veteran police officer with a background in investigations, wanted to overhaul the agency and make it more of a community partner. So when a retired school teacher suggested he consider a citywide TNR program, Major Lamb decided to look into it. In addition to online research, he worked with local caregivers to



determine locations and population sizes for feral cat colonies. Spartanburg Animal Services crafted a proposal to cover the costs of a pilot TNR program, and received a grant to fund the effort, allowing the program to launch at the beginning of 2013.

## How the TNR Program Works

- **Collaboration.** The city's TNR program is a joint effort between Spartanburg Animal Services and a group of community volunteers. Two full-time animal control officers do the bulk of the trapping, but volunteers also assist when needed. The city loans traps to volunteers.
- **Clinic care.** Once trapped, cats are transported to a low-cost spay/neuter clinic for treatment. The animals receive an initial health assessment and are then neutered, vaccinated, and eartipped. The cats receive additional medical care if necessary. The cost is about \$45 per cat. After an overnight recovery period, animal control officers return the cats back to their original colony.
- **Outreach.** Spartanburg Animal Services works hard to promote TNR efforts through its Facebook page. It also organizes community classes on how to manage cat colonies and build winter shelters for cats. The efforts have paid off—the agency now has an active and dedicated volunteer corps that assists them in the TNR program.

## The Takeaway

Major Lamb says his vision of the agency as a community partner is becoming a reality in large part because of TNR. Spartanburg Animal Services hopes to extend its TNR grant through 2014. It's also compiling data on the cost savings of TNR. Major Lamb says he's optimistic that the ongoing success of TNR will convince city leaders to pass an ordinance supporting the effort. "It's our view that feral cats are not homeless," he says. "They already have a home, it's in our community."



"It's our view that feral cats are not homeless.  
They already have a home, it's in our community."

Major Steve Lamb, Major with the Spartanburg Public Safety Department

City of Spartanburg Animal Services' website:

[www.cityofspartanburg.org/public-safety/animal-services](http://www.cityofspartanburg.org/public-safety/animal-services)





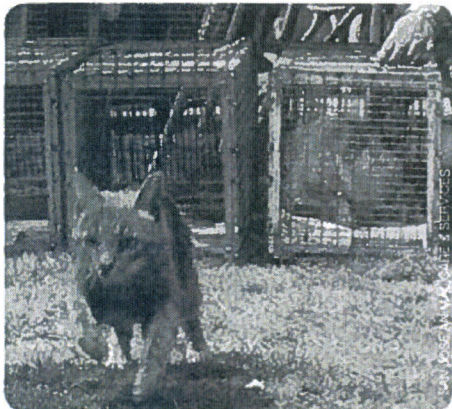
## San Jose Animal Care & Services

San Jose, California



### ORGANIZATION PROFILE

San Jose Animal Care & Services is a government animal control agency that serves the city of San Jose and surrounding communities. San Jose is a large, diverse city of more than a million residents located about an hour drive south of San Francisco. San Jose Animal Care & Services runs the city's animal control division, which enforces laws, and operates a shelter and two veterinary clinics. The agency, with the support of city leaders, has long embraced a number of lifesaving programs to humanely and effectively curb the growth of animal populations, including low-cost spay/neuter and community Trap-Neuter-Return. In 2010, the agency expanded its work with feral cats, also known as community cats, by launching an innovative program to target cats entering its own shelter, San Jose Animal Care Center.



### DISTINGUISHING PROGRAM

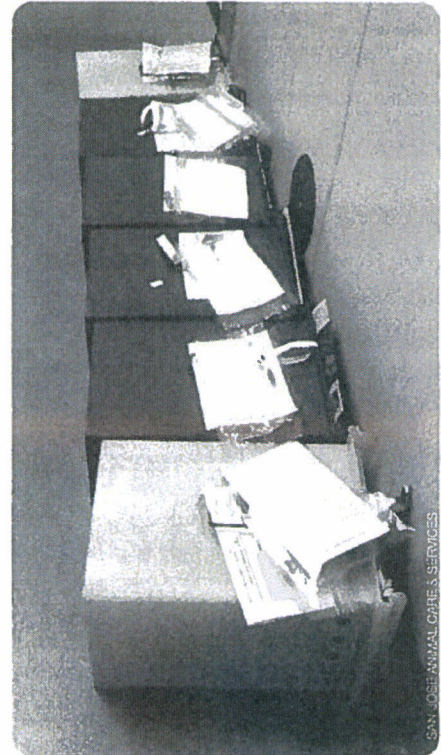
A growing number of U.S. municipalities now support the concept of TNR within their communities, but few use it within their own shelters. San Jose Animal Care & Services is an exception. In March 2010, the agency began identifying cats at the point of intake for Shelter-Neuter-Return (SNR), a shelter-run neuter and return program. Cats who qualify are spayed/neutered, vaccinated, microchipped, and eartipped for identification. After they recover from surgery, they are transferred to a community nonprofit that returns them to their colony location. As of October 2013, more than 8,000 cats have gone through San Jose's SNR program, and kill rates at the city shelter have plummeted as a result.

Cats are returned to their colonies after being spayed/neutered, vaccinated, and eartipped.



## Highlights

- **Lives saved.** San Jose Animal Care & Services reports that in 2013, the shelter's save rate for adult cats is about 85%. That's a huge improvement over 2007, when the save rate for impounded cats was only about 30%. Between 2010 and 2013, the shelter's intake rates for cats and kittens fell by 25% as a result of SNR. This decline is especially notable because San Jose Animal Care & Services operates an open-access facility, meaning it does not limit the number of animals who can be brought in or the age, health, or disposition of animals brought in.
- **Money saved.** It costs San Jose Animal Care & Services about \$50 per cat for SNR, about a quarter of what it costs the shelter to hold, care for, and kill a cat. Other savings are realized from a recent steep drop in shelter intakes because of the SNR program.
- **Partnerships.** San Jose Animal Care & Services pays to spay/neuter, vaccinate, and microchip cats in the SNR program. A local nonprofit steps up for the last leg of the effort. Each night, volunteers with the animal rescue group Town Cats pick up shelter cats who have recovered from surgery and are ready to be returned to their original colony. Volunteers also place doorhangers on nearby homes with basic information about the program. The collaboration between San Jose Animal Care & Services and Town Cats' volunteers is a huge part of SNR's ongoing success.



Community cats awaiting spay/neuter surgery at San Jose Animal Care Center.

## Background

A few years ago, San Jose Animal Care & Services staff thought they were doing everything they could to stabilize animal populations. The agency operated low-cost spay/neuter clinics and supported local TNR efforts. It even offered spay/neuter services for feral cats on a walk-in basis. The efforts seemed to be paying off. Then, in 2007, the global economic crisis started to take a toll. Instead of declining numbers, cat intakes at the San Jose Animal Care Center spiked to levels not seen in years. From 2008 to 2009, the shelter took in 11,428 cats and kittens. Most were killed. The agency needed a new solution to address the community's needs.

After much research, San Jose Animal Care & Services started a pilot project based on a successful program in Jacksonville, Fla. In Jacksonville, community cats brought to the city shelter are transferred to a nonprofit group that sterilizes them at its own clinic. The cats are then returned to their outdoor homes. San Jose added an extra innovation: since the city didn't have a nonprofit in a position to run a program, the city shelter started a TNR program itself. The shelter would not just evaluate cats for participation in the program, it would neuter them as well. Three years later, the city shelter boasts a save rate for adult cats of about 85%.

## How the SNR Program Works

- **Evaluation.** In San Jose, animal control doesn't actively trap feral cats or participate in colony management. Shelter-Neuter-Return is a shelter-based program that kicks in at the point of intake. Most cats are brought to the shelter by residents. People dropping off cats are required to sign an acknowledgement that one potential outcome is the cat will be returned to the neighborhood after sterilization. Animals are evaluated within the first 24 hours. Healthy cats are placed in the SNR program if they are not socialized and thus do not qualify for adoption.



- **Spay/neuter.** Shelter-Neuter-Return cats are community cats who live and thrive in their own neighborhoods. The agency's goal is to "prevent them from breeding, not prevent them from living." After being placed in the SNR program, the cats are spayed/neutered, vaccinated, microchipped, and eartipped for identification.
- **Return.** To limit their stress, the cats are returned to their colony within three days of intake. When the cats have recovered from surgery, they are transferred to volunteers with Town Cats, who return them to where they were first picked up. Town Cats also maintains a website ([www.catcenter.org](http://www.catcenter.org)) that offers additional information on SNR.

## The Takeaway

San Jose Animal Care & Services has saved the lives of thousands of cats and has saved money for the people of San Jose by taking bold and innovative steps including:

- **Seeking the cutting edge.** Before starting a program of its own, San Jose Animal Care & Services looked for groundbreaking models elsewhere, particularly within the nonprofit sector. Once the agency found an innovative TNR program in Jacksonville, Fla., it set out to fashion its own program, which is tailored to the city of San Jose.
- **Limiting the focus.** San Jose Animal Care & Services supports community-wide TNR, but it made the decision to focus its efforts on neutering and returning cats brought by others to the city shelter, rather than spending the shelter's limited time and resources trapping free-roaming cats. With a clear mission and a targeted population, the agency has been able to spay/neuter cats at high volume. The shelter clinic currently serves about 2,500 cats a year in the SNR program alone.
- **Offering help.** The agency feels strongly that education is part of its role. "We have to help people understand what we are doing," says Jon Cicirelli, Director of San Jose Animal Care & Services. In addition to maintaining its own website and Facebook page, the agency promotes the efforts of its nonprofit partner, Town Cats. The San Jose Animal Care Center also runs a program to supply traps and deterrents and repellants, including Cat Stop devices, to the community. Cat Stop is a motion-activated ultrasonic device to deter cats from areas where they are not welcome. "We are emphasizing non-lethal solutions," Cicirelli says.
- **Moving forward.** As a result of Shelter-Neuter-Return, the San Jose Animal Care Center has the benefit of additional space and time. With feline intake down by a quarter, staff are now able to focus on the cats awaiting adoption.

Jon Cicirelli, Director of San Jose Animal Care & Services, says that as a result of the new TNR program in San Jose, the shelter has "the bandwidth now to help cats in new ways."

[San Jose Animal Care & Services' website:](http://www.sanjoseca.gov)

[www.sanjoseca.gov](http://www.sanjoseca.gov)







## Fairfax County Animal Shelter

Fairfax, Virginia



### ORGANIZATION PROFILE

The Fairfax County Animal Shelter is a municipal shelter serving Fairfax County, Va., the most populous jurisdiction in the Washington, D.C., metropolitan area. Fairfax County has one of the highest median incomes in the nation but also includes some low-income areas where poverty is on the rise.

### DISTINGUISHING PROGRAM

In 2008, the shelter started one of the first Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) programs in the region. Since then, it has become a powerful advocate for expansion of TNR throughout the greater Washington, D.C., area. As of October 2013, more than 3,500 feral cats had gone through the shelter's TNR program. The shelter relies heavily on volunteers and credits them for helping make TNR an enormous success.

### Highlights

- **Lives saved.** Since the Fairfax County Animal Shelter adopted its TNR program in 2008, its save rate for cats has nearly doubled to 71%. The intake of cats into the shelter dropped by 16% from 2008 to 2012. The shelter reports a 22% reduction in kitten intake from 2011 to 2013. In the spring of 2013, during the height of kitten season, Fairfax County Animal Shelter had fewer kittens than it had ever had before.
- **Community partnerships.** More than 350 residents have joined forces with the shelter, volunteering with the TNR program and helping manage feral cat colonies in Fairfax County. The shelter also supports a robust foster program that includes people trained in the care of neonatal kittens and animals requiring socialization or specialized medical treatment.
- **Creative solutions.** In Fairfax County, there are no laws or policies prohibiting free-roaming cats. The shelter's policies reflect this, and staff members work hard to ensure that any eartipped cats brought to the shelter are returned to their home colonies. Some cats are spayed/neutered and transferred into the shelter's barn cat adoption program, another innovative and lifesaving program for cats.



More than 3,500 feral cats have gone through the shelter's TNR program.





Fairfax County Animal Shelter's former Director Karen Diviney started the TNR program, and current Director Tawny Hammond keeps it going strong.



Since the shelter started TNR in 2008, its save rate for cats has nearly doubled to 71%.

## Background

In 2007, responding to the endless influx of cats and kittens into the shelter, the Fairfax County Animal Shelter decided to make a change. Shelter Director at the time, Karen Diviney, chose TNR because “it works and... is the humane solution.” She says that after “dipping [their] toes in the water” with a small, successful pilot program, she sought government approval for a countywide TNR program. It was launched in October 2008. Since then, the shelter has vaccinated and returned more than 3,500 feral cats in Fairfax County.

## How the TNR Program Works

Since the TNR program started in 2008, the Fairfax County Animal Shelter has made enormous strides in the humane stabilization and reduction of feral cat populations. TNR, which current Director Tawny Hammond calls “the compassionate solution,” is at the heart of its work. The shelter covers all the costs of TNR and at times goes beyond basic care—cats in need of medical care or treatment for parasites are also covered under the program. Because the shelter doesn’t have its own spay/neuter clinic, it contracts with the Potomac Spay Neuter Clinic, a low-cost, nonprofit facility committed to ending the killing of healthy and treatable cats and dogs.

- **Beyond clinics.** Up until late 2012, the Fairfax County Animal Shelter provided funds for two feral cat spay/neuter clinics a month, with a limit of 60 cats per clinic. But shelter staff felt the limits were slowing down the pace of TNR. Now the shelter’s volunteer trappers work directly with the spay/neuter clinic to schedule surgeries at their convenience. The new system makes it easier and faster for trappers to get their cats treated and returned, reducing stress for both the cats and their caregivers.
- **An educated approach.** The shelter requires all potential volunteers to take a training course on Trap-Neuter-Return and sign “Caregiver Agreements,” promising to fulfill the terms of TNR. The shelter provides loaner traps for TNR. While a core group does most of the trapping, the shelter credits the large base of well-trained volunteers for much of its success.
- **Sustainable funding.** The Fairfax shelter estimates it costs between \$65 and \$85 to put a cat through the TNR program, depending on whether the cat needs extra services like ear cleaning, grooming, or flea treatment. The shelter covers all the costs of TNR without using tax dollars, relying on revenue from Virginia’s spay/neuter license plate, a private trust fund that accepts citizen donations, and fundraisers hosted by a well-organized group of shelter supporters.



## The Takeaway

Fairfax County Animal Shelter staff members report a growing list of positive changes since the shelter began its TNR program in 2008. One of the most significant is that the shelter currently does not kill animals assessed as healthy, adoptable, treatable, or able to be rehabilitated. The shelter has succeeded in part because it is no longer strained by a constant influx of cats and kittens.

Establishing a TNR program takes work and planning. Diviney says it's crucial to "do it right and beyond reproach."

Her suggested guidelines include:

- **Develop a strategic plan.**
- **Have funds to get the job done.**
- **Secure a provider of low-cost spay/neuter services.**
- **Select a point person committed to doing the groundwork/setup.**
- **Start small and document all successes.**
- **Keep detailed records.**
- **Know the political environment and let the powers that be know what you are doing.**
- **Cultivate and train volunteers.**
- **Educate your staff. Sometimes the biggest obstacles can be internal.**

Fairfax County Animal Shelter Director of Communications and Outreach Kristen Auerbach says TNR has made a "huge and positive difference" for both animals and staff. The shelter continues to move forward and hopes to soon include not only feral cats but also stray community cats in the growing TNR program.

Diviney says one of the biggest accomplishments of TNR has been simply helping people "see" a little differently and understand that returning feral cats to their original colonies is not abandonment.



"We help them understand that these cats have a life, that it needs to be respected."

Karen Diviney, Former Fairfax County Animal Shelter Director

Fairfax County Animal Shelter's website:

[www.fairfaxcounty.gov/police/animal](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/police/animal)



# Targeted feral cat sterilization yields lower euthanasia rates

## TNR program effectively managed feral cat population in Florida area

Posted Oct. 1, 2014

A University of Florida study of a feline trap-neuter-return program found that a targeted approach helped effectively manage the feral cat population and reduce shelter euthanasia rates in the area.

Results of the two-year study showed that sterilizing feral cats in a region of historically high animal-control impoundments led to a steep decline in the number of cats that were admitted to and euthanized at the local shelter.

"We investigated whether we ever could neuter enough cats to slow their intake into animal control," explained Dr. Julie Levy, professor of shelter medicine at the UF College of Veterinary Medicine and principal investigator on the study, "[Effect of high-impact targeted trap-neuter-return and adoption of community cats on cat intake to a shelter](#)," published online this September in the open-access *The Veterinary Journal*.

"Neutering a few cats here and there wasn't making a big impact, so we wanted to pick a focused area and throw all our resources into it," she said.

The region researchers selected for the study is in Alachua County adjacent to the UF campus and includes the downtown Gainesville business district, several residential neighborhoods, a mobile home park, two homeless shelters, industrial parks, and a veterinary clinic. The zone has higher unemployment and poverty rates as well as lower household income and rates of home ownership than the county as a whole.

During the study, 2,366 stray and feral community cats—approximately 54 percent of the estimated feral cat population in the targeted area—were trapped and neutered. Afterward, they were returned to their environment or adopted.



A study out of the University of Florida College of Veterinary Medicine showed marked decreases in shelter intake and euthanasia of feral cats in an area of intensive cat neutering and adoption, compared with figures for the rest of the Florida county. (Courtesy of the UF College of Veterinary Medicine)

Dr. Levy and her team found that in the target area, animal control cat intake declined 70 percent from a baseline of 13 cats per 1,000 residents to four cats per 1,000 residents at the end of the study. In the rest of the county, cat intake declined only 13 percent from a baseline of 16 cats per 1,000 residents to 14 cats per 1,000 residents.

In the target area, euthanasia declined 95 percent from a baseline of eight cats per 1,000 residents to less than one per 1,000 residents at the end of the study. In the nontarget area, cat euthanasia declined 30 percent from a baseline of 10 cats per 1,000 residents to seven cats per 1,000 residents.

"The figures were incredible, as were the adoptions," Dr. Levy said. "Adoption wasn't part of the original plan, but it happened organically as residents offered to take in kittens and the friendlier adults."

Cats weren't the only ones to find new homes. While unclaimed cats were the focus of the study, the shelter intake rates of dogs also declined in the targeted area. "That was just an extra win," she said. "As we went door to door, we talked to people about how to care for all their animals, including other resources available for their pets."

Funded through a \$250,000 grant from Maddie's Fund, the study initially used direct advertising to promote the free spay-neuter surgery available through Operation Catnip, the trap-neuter-return program based at UF.

"But the cats didn't arrive in large numbers like we'd expected," Dr. Levy said. "They were out there, but this is a community that doesn't just take stray cats to a spay-neuter clinic." So Dr. Levy hired a neighborhood resident to knock on doors.

"It's not enough for an agency like ours to just make services available. You must get into a community and talk to people to find out what they need," she said. "If we go in with the right resources and attitudes, we can save animals from animal control and from being euthanized."

"The animal welfare community as a whole has realized that we can't be solely shelter-centric," Dr. Levy said. "The next step in our work is to connect with communities, find out their needs, and how we can help."

The resources needed to complete the project were intensive. "It's not realistic to provide this level of coverage throughout the community in an untargeted way. To expand what we did in the target area to the entire county would cost millions of dollars," Dr. Levy said. "But like all daunting problems, you bite off the greatest need and start there."

## Wade, Valerie

---

**From:** Michael T. Greenlee <michael.greenlee@agri.nv.gov>  
**Sent:** Thursday, October 09, 2014 8:42 AM  
**To:** Smith, Robert A.; Schiller, Kevin; Wade, Valerie  
**Subject:** Comments on TNR  
**Attachments:** TNR Response.doc

Those of us in the Animal Industries Division of NDA are unanimously against any change in regulations allowing TNR in the county. See our attached response.

**Michael T. Greenlee, DVM, DACVPM**  
State Veterinarian  
Nevada Department of Agriculture  
Division of Animal Industries  
405 S. 21<sup>st</sup> Street  
Sparks, NV 89431-5557  
[michael.greenlee@agri.nv.gov](mailto:michael.greenlee@agri.nv.gov)  
(775) 353-3755



**CONFIDENTIALITY** - This message and accompanying documents are covered by the electronic Communications Privacy Act, 18 U.S.C. §§ 2510-2521, may be covered by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) 20 U.S.C. § 122g; 34 CFR Part 99 and may contain confidential information or Protected Information intended for the specified individual(s) only. If you are not the intended recipient or an agent responsible for delivering it to the intended recipient, you are hereby notified that you have received this document in error and that any review, dissemination, copying, or the taking of any action based on the contents of this information is strictly prohibited. Violations may result in administrative, civil, or criminal penalties. If you have received this communication in error, please notify sender immediately by e-mail, and delete the message. The Nevada Department of Agriculture will not accept any liability in respect of such communication that violates our e-mail policy.

BRIAN SANDOVAL  
Governor

STATE OF NEVADA

JAMES R. BARBEE  
Director

Las Vegas Office:  
2300 McLeod Street  
Las Vegas NV 89104-4314  
(702) 688-4590  
Fax (702) 668-4567



Elko Office:  
4780 E. Idaho Street  
Elko NV 89801-4672  
(775) 738-8076  
Fax (775) 738-2639

**DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**

405 South 21<sup>st</sup> Street  
Sparks, Nevada 89431-5557  
Telephone (775) 353-3601 Fax (775) 353-3661  
Website: <http://www.agri.nv.gov>

October 9, 2014

Mr. Robert Smith, Director  
Mr. Kevin Schiller, Asst. County Manager  
Washoe County  
1001 E. 9<sup>th</sup> St.  
Reno, NV 89512

Re: Trap-Neuter-Release (TNR) of Feral Cats

Dear Mr. Smith and Mr. Schiller:

The decision on whether or not to allow private citizens to participate in the practice of TNR is certainly a complex one. Numerous groups advocate this practice as a solution to the problem of overpopulation by feral cats. Those of us here in the Animal Industry Division are concerned with the potential impact on wildlife and human health that legitimizing this practice would cause.

TNR is advocated as a way to humanely control feral cat populations. Numerous studies have found that TNR as a management tool fails to accomplish this goal. Additional cats are often found to join or at least feed with the colony and more than compensate for losses due to death or adoption. Legalizing this practice might actually result in the opposite by increasing the food supply at existing colonies and/or the establishment of new colonies.

While it is difficult to quantify the effect on wildlife from feral cat colonies, there is no doubt among wildlife managers that the impact on song bird populations from predation is significant. These same colonies can be a source of disease spread. Rabies is of major concern in Nevada and feral cats may transmit the virus to both humans and wildlife. Toxoplasmosis, which is common in cats, can be a serious disease in susceptible humans, as well. External and internal parasites of cats, which are usually controlled in feline pets, will likely have a high prevalence in feral cat colonies and can affect both humans and wildlife.

For these reasons we encourage you to oppose legalizing TNR in Washoe County.

Dr. Michael Greenlee, DVM  
State Veterinarian

NDA Rev. 07-13 gb



October 10, 2014

The Honorable David Humke, Chair  
Members of the Washoe County Commission

**Via e-mail: [dhumke@washoecounty.us](mailto:dhumke@washoecounty.us); [mberkbigler@washoecounty.us](mailto:mberkbigler@washoecounty.us); [kjung@washoecounty.us](mailto:kjung@washoecounty.us); [vhartung@washoecounty.us](mailto:vhartung@washoecounty.us); [bweber@washoecounty.us](mailto:bweber@washoecounty.us)**

Dear Mr. Chair and Members of the Commission:

I hope you are well. Our office is hearing from Washoe County–area citizens who are deeply worried about the push to legally condone the trapping, sterilization, and re-abandonment of homeless cats, both friendly and frightened. **This dangerous policy would cause animal suffering and ultimately increase animal control–related taxpayer costs, and we respectfully urge you to oppose it.**

PETA is an animal-protection organization, so the proposed policy deeply concerns us because it would leave many, if not most, cats to multiply on the streets and put them and other animals in harm's way. Public officials should be concerned about such policies for additional reasons, such as potential liabilities resulting from the denial of effective assistance to taxpayers who want homeless cats removed from their properties, rabies and other zoonotic diseases, and more.

Leaving cats to reproduce and struggle for survival outdoors is in direct conflict with the mission of animal care and control authorities and public health agencies. According to the National Association of State Public Health Veterinarians, "[N]o evidence exists that maintained cat colonies adequately reduce human public health risks or appropriately address their impact on pets or native wildlife. Several reports suggest that support of 'managed cat colonies' may increase the public's likelihood of abandoning unwanted pets in lieu of more responsible options." A case in point was recently described at TurlockJournal.com in a story about a cat-colony caretaker who reports that it is impossible to keep up with the number of animals who have been dumped and are dying at the site: "For the past 10 years Walker has tended to the cats at the river location but is troubled that the problem is worsening. Many of the cats are dying from distemper or neglect. . . . 'It's happening daily,' said Walker. 'Last year not a day went by that I didn't have at least one, possibly two or three cats abandoned.'"<sup>1</sup>

In another example, Phoenix College in Arizona recently decided to end its cat trap-and-return program after approximately eight years because "[i]nstead of

PEOPLE FOR  
THE ETHICAL  
TREATMENT  
OF ANIMALS

Washington, D.C.  
1536 16th St. N.W.  
Washington, DC 20036  
202-483-PETA

Los Angeles  
2154 W. Sunset Blvd.  
Los Angeles, CA 90026  
323-644-PETA

Norfolk  
501 Front St.  
Norfolk, VA 23510  
757-622-PETA

Oakland  
554 Grand Ave.  
Oakland, CA 94610  
510-763-PETA

Info@peta.org  
PETA.org

Affiliates:  
• PETA Asia  
• PETA India  
• PETA France  
• PETA Australia  
• PETA Germany  
• PETA Netherlands  
• PETA Foundation (U.K.)

<sup>1</sup>Jeff Benziger, "Abandoned Cat Problem Growing for Caretaker," TurlockJournal.com, 11 Mar. 2014  
<<http://www.turlockjournal.com/archives/24670/>>.

stabilizing the population, it has doubled, creating an unhealthy situation for the cats and the community."<sup>2</sup>

A study published in the peer-reviewed public health journal *Zoonoses and Public Health* found that "[f]ree-roaming cat populations have been identified as a significant public health threat and are a source for several zoonotic diseases including rabies, toxoplasmosis, cutaneous larval migrans because of various nematode parasites, plague, tularemia and murine typhus" and that "free-roaming cats account for the most cases of human rabies exposure among domestic animals and account for approximately 1/3 of rabies postexposure prophylaxis treatments in humans in the United States."<sup>3</sup>

The proposed program to trap, sterilize, and re-abandon cats in Washoe County is also in direct conflict with Nevada Criminal Law, Chapter 574, Cruelty to Animals, which forbids animal abandonment and requires the owners of cats and other animals to provide their animal companions with humane and adequate care. In a December 3, 2013, opinion, the Washoe County District Attorney's Office stated: "The Nevada law in this area is very straightforward. The release of the feral cats after being captured is an abandonment of that animal and that act violates NRS 574.100 and/or 574.110. NRS 574.100."<sup>4</sup>

Individuals and groups that promote leaving and re-abandoning homeless cats to fend for themselves outdoors refuse, as a matter of course, to accept the responsibilities of animal ownership, including providing routine and necessary vaccinations and other medical care for even life-threatening illnesses and injuries, providing adequate protection and shelter from the elements, and abiding by state and local animal-control and public-safety laws.

It's also of serious consequence that roaming cats terrorize and kill countless birds and other wildlife who are not equipped to deal with such predators. A 2013 *New York Times* article reports that feral cats account for the majority of cat-caused wildlife deaths in the U.S., an astounding "2.4 billion birds and 12.3 billion mammals a year, most of them native mammals like shrews, chipmunks and voles rather than introduced pests like the Norway rat."<sup>5</sup> The American Bird Conservancy reports that "[c]at predation is one of the reasons why one in three American bird species are in decline."<sup>6</sup>

Allowing the presence and growth of colonies of homeless cats doesn't just endanger wildlife and public health. It also sends a dangerous—and wrong—

---

<sup>2</sup>Eugene Scott, "Phoenix College Ending Feral-Cat Program, to Remove Animals," AZCentral.com, 7 Feb. 2014 <[http://www.azcentral.com/community/phoenix/articles/20140129phoenix-college-ending-feral-cat-program.html?click\\_check=1](http://www.azcentral.com/community/phoenix/articles/20140129phoenix-college-ending-feral-cat-program.html?click_check=1)>.

<sup>3</sup>R. W. Gerhold and D.A. Jessup, "Zoonotic Diseases Associated With Free-Roaming Cats," 16 Mar., 2012 <<https://www.documentcloud.org/documents/681002-zoonotic-diseases-associated-with-free-roaming.html>>.

<sup>4</sup>Richard Gammick, Washoe County District Attorney to Lieutenant Robert Smith, Animal Control Supervisor, December 3, 2013, Re: Public Records Request.

<sup>5</sup>Natalie Angier, "That Cuddly Kitty Is Deadlier Than You Think," *The New York Times*, 29 Jan. 2013 <[http://www.nytimes.com/2013/01/30/science/that-cuddly-kitty-of-yours-is-a-killer.html?\\_r=4&](http://www.nytimes.com/2013/01/30/science/that-cuddly-kitty-of-yours-is-a-killer.html?_r=4&)>.

<sup>6</sup>Elizabeth Weise, "House Cats Kill More Critters Than Thought," *USA Today*, 7 Aug. 2012 <<http://usatoday30.usatoday.com/news/nation/story/2012-08-06/house-cats-kill/56831262/1>>.

message to the public, because it implies that cats can and do thrive outdoors without daily attention, parasite prevention, regular veterinary medical care, adequate and safe shelter, and more. **Nothing could be more untrue.**

We receive countless reports of incidents in which cats—"managed" or not—suffer and die horribly because they must fend for themselves outdoors. PETA's caseworkers routinely handle cruelty cases involving "outdoor cats" who have been poisoned, shot, mutilated, tortured, set afire, skinned alive, or killed in other cruel ways, often by property owners or neighbors who just didn't want the cats there, regardless of the cats' reproductive and/or vaccination status. A gruesome case in point involves a cat who was allowed to roam untended outdoors in Elko, Nev., and was taken by a man to a deserted location. The man stomped on the animal's tail and then decapitated the cat with a sword. The accused reportedly told police that he had abused and killed the animal "out of boredom."<sup>7</sup> In December 2013, two cats outdoors in Las Vegas were reportedly shot,<sup>8</sup> and in 2012, a man in Indian Hills, Nev., was arrested after shooting and beheading a feral cat who had taken refuge under his house.<sup>9</sup> That same year, two Las Vegas teens were arrested after drowning a homeless cat's kittens<sup>10</sup> and two 11-year-olds were arrested after stoning a stray cat who was giving birth. Her six kittens died.<sup>11</sup>

**Cats are not safe outdoors.**

PETA stands ready to help in any way needed to aid the county in passing proven, effective ordinances and programs to address the overpopulation crisis in your community. I can be reached at 443-320-1277 or [TeresaC@peta.org](mailto:TeresaC@peta.org).

Thank you for all your hard work for the citizens of Washoe County.

Yours truly,



Teresa Chagrin  
Animal Care and Control Specialist  
Cruelty Investigations Department  
443-320-1277  
[TeresaC@peta.org](mailto:TeresaC@peta.org)

cc: Robert Smith, Director of Animal Services ([rasmith@washoecounty.us](mailto:rasmith@washoecounty.us))

<sup>7</sup>Dylan Woolf Harris, "Man Accused of Torturing, Killing Cat Arrested," 21 March 2014  
<[http://elkodaily.com/news/man-accused-of-torturing-killing-cat-arrested/article\\_443af47e-b15e-11e3-a435-001a4bcf887a.html](http://elkodaily.com/news/man-accused-of-torturing-killing-cat-arrested/article_443af47e-b15e-11e3-a435-001a4bcf887a.html)>.

<sup>8</sup>Joe Bartels and David Peterlinz, "Residents United Against Cats Being Shot," 24 Dec. 2013  
<<http://www.8newsnow.com/story/24300049/residents-unite-against-cats-being-shot>>.

<sup>9</sup>Eric Ortiz, "Nevada Man Guilty of Beheading Cat Gets Jail Time and Must Volunteer at Animal Shelter," 26 Sept. 2012, NYDailyNews.com  
<<http://www.nydailynews.com/news/national/nevada-man-guilty-beheading-cat-jail-time-volunteer-animal-shelter-article-1.1168508>>.

<sup>10</sup>"Teens in Custody After Kittens Drowned," 27 Jun. 2012, 8NewsNow.com  
<<http://www.8newsnow.com/story/18828605/teens-in-custody-after-kittens-drownings>>.

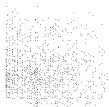
<sup>11</sup>Brian Nordll, "Two 11-Year-Olds Arrested in Deaths of Six Kittens," 19 Oct. 2012, LasVegasSun.com  
<<http://www.lasvegassun.com/news/2012/oct/19/11-year-olds-arrested-deaths-six-kittens/>>.





# **Washoe County Animal Code Public Input Report**

Topic: Trap, Neuter and Release of Feral Cats





# PUBLIC INPUT REPORT

## Trap, Neuter and Release of Feral Cats



### Topic: Trap, Neuter and Release of Feral Cats

The Public Input Report for the topic “Trap, Neuter and Release of Feral Cats” lists constituent feedback received from Open Washoe comments, public workshops, comments cards and emails. The public feedback is sorted by “Pros” and “Cons” for this topic.

- Number of Citizens at Public Workshop: 30
- Number of Responses from Open Washoe (as of 9/25/14): 11
  - 11 voted “TNR” as #1 priority
- Number of comment cards: 1

### Pros:

- Education in causation of cat issue.
- Proven effective solutions.
- High cost of trap and kill—economical.
  - “Vacuum effect”—site attraction.
- Privately funded.
- TNR allows for cat owners to collect misidentified domestic cats.
- TNR is done by volunteers—economical.
- Cat intake is decreasing in Washoe County.
- Encourage enforcement of those who have feral cat communities to use TNR.
  - Proposed solution: Can we make this a law?
- Hard to register caretakers of feral cat colonies.
- Cited studies on bird control are inaccurate.
- Once a cat is fixed it no longer roams the area.
- Vaccinated cats are a buffer between feral cats and wildlife.
- Attrition: Our solution (TNR) reduced feral cat population.
- TNR is the most actionable solution to feral cat issue.
- Pest invasion: Feral cats keep raccoons away from homes.
- Education of public on TNR, spay/neuter and nuisance prevention.
- Spay/neuter reduces nuisance behavior.
- Clarifying difference in feral, domestic and abandoned cats.
- Effective attrition: Trap and kill does not work.
- Education, causation and clarification: TNR is the only approach that works to control feral cat population.
- Most economical.
- Most humane.
- Vaccination of feral cats help the public health safety.



# PUBLIC INPUT REPORT

## Trap, Neuter and Release of Feral Cats



- We have a no-kill shelter—keeping with that philosophy.
- Feral cats control rodent population.
- Allow in urban area to keep rodent population down.
- Kill birds is a false theory.
- Smithsonian and Audobon—false studies.
- Need to put animals back where they came from.
- If not wanted in original location, relocate.
- Need to educate public about programs regarding traps that are available.
- TNR—word choice—should change to “return” to demonstrate that it is humane to return cats where they came from

### Cons:

- The law should be equal for all animal species.
- Feral cats have an effect on birds and native species.
- How can you tell the difference between a domestic and feral cat?
  - Should there be a difference? Both wandering animals are destructive.
  - There needs to be a way to differentiate the two.
- Destructive to personal property.
- Feral cats are a nuisance and cause harm to private property.
- Feral cats can carry rabies and can be disease vectors—threat to human health
- Washoe County—DA issue
- What is the process questions for male versus female?
- Feral cats are a nuisance and increase dogs barking.
- Funding
  - How is this program paid for?
  - Why do people with dogs have to support the program?
  - Is this program self-sustaining?
- Feral cats have an effect on neighboring property because they are not contained.
- Level of cruelty—address ecological and environmental unknowns.
- Are these animals being vaccinated?
- Should cats be licensed and micro-chipped?
- As a community we have a responsibility and liability for human health.
- What is the difference between ownership versus guardians?
- Minimal to no regulation.
- Let private sector deal with feral cats.
- Issue is with those that feed the feral cats.



# New regulations for feral cats

*What are your thoughts on Washoe County creating a regulation for the trap, neuter and release of feral cats?*

All Statements sorted chronologically

As of October 6, 2014, 12:13 PM

Failed to fetch image from [https://pd-oth.s3.amazonaws.com/production/uploads/portals/88/welcome\\_item/image/27/county\\_seal\\_1861\\_150px.gif](https://pd-oth.s3.amazonaws.com/production/uploads/portals/88/welcome_item/image/27/county_seal_1861_150px.gif)

*As with any public comment process, participation in Open Washoe County is voluntary. The statements in this record are not necessarily representative of the whole population, nor do they reflect the opinions of any government agency or elected officials.*

# New regulations for feral cats

*What are your thoughts on Washoe County creating a regulation for the trap, neuter and release of feral cats?*

## Introduction

### Introduction

Washoe County Regional Animal Services is encouraging community input and participation on proposed changes to the animal control ordinance, Washoe County Code (WCC) Chapter 55. This input will be used to help update the ordinances, which are expected to be presented to the Board of County Commissioners in October. The existing ordinances were last updated in 2005. Changes to animal laws within the state have been made during the past two legislative sessions and the County is required to amend WCC Chapter 55 with those changes. The draft is available online at [www.washoecounty.us/repository/files/44/Chapter55\\_AnimalCode\\_initial\\_draft.pdf](http://www.washoecounty.us/repository/files/44/Chapter55_AnimalCode_initial_draft.pdf) and includes some initial public input.

However, in an effort to continue to be open and transparent, we encourage you to review the draft and provide us with your suggestions as we update Washoe County animal laws. To make it easier to understand and allow you to respond to the topic most important to you, we have separated the animal control ordinance draft into five major topics. You can submit comments on each topic and/or provide specific written language you would like to see included in the animal code laws. The major topics areas include:

- Dangerous dogs
- Retail sales and breeding of animals
- Nuisance issues (ex. barking dogs)
- Exotic animals
- Trap, neuter and release of feral cats

---

### NEW REGULATIONS ON FERAL CATS

This topic area is not addressed in current code. However, we encourage and welcome your feedback on this issue and would like to hear any concerns or suggestions you have regarding potential code governing this topic.

**\*\*\* What are your thoughts and suggestions on Washoe County creating a regulation for the trap, neuter and release of feral cats? \*\*\***

---

### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

To learn more about the process for updating the animal control ordinances, including opportunities for public input, please visit [www.washoecounty.us/animal/2014code.html](http://www.washoecounty.us/animal/2014code.html).

### UPCOMING WORKSHOPS

Washoe County Regional Animal Services will be hosting workshops on specific topics in August and

# New regulations for feral cats

*What are your thoughts on Washoe County creating a regulation for the trap, neuter and release of feral cats?*

September to gather additional public input. Currently, the workshop schedule is as follows:

- Monday, Aug. 25, 5:30 p.m. - Topics: Dangerous Dogs; Exotic Animals
- Wednesday, Aug. 27, 5:30 p.m. - Topic: Retail Sales and Breeding of Animals
- Two additional workshops will be held in September. Dates and topics to be determined.

The workshops will be held at Wilbur D. May Center, Rancho San Rafael Regional Park (1595 N. Sierra Street, Reno).



## New regulations for feral cats

What are your thoughts on Washoe County creating a regulation for the trap, neuter and release of feral cats?

As of October 6, 2014, 12:13 PM, this forum had:

Attendees:	146
All Statements:	37
Hours of Public Comment:	1.9

## New regulations for feral cats

What are your thoughts on Washoe County creating a regulation for the trap, neuter and release of feral cats?

Name not shown in District 5 (on forum)

October 3, 2014, 6:09 PM

I thought we had a tnr program. It is a great way to keep population down without destroying beautiful lifes.

---

Name not shown in District 3 (on forum)

October 3, 2014, 5:20 PM

I support TNR (Trap, Neuter and Return). It is the only way to control feral and stray cats. It is humane, it doesn't cost the taxpayers in the county whereas Trap and Kill would cost the taxpayers an enormous amount of money. The Smithsonian study that says cats are responsible for the loss of song birds has been debunked many time over. See Alley Cat Allies ([www.alleycat.org](http://www.alleycat.org)) for more information. Cats are not any more responsible for the decline of song birds than are raptors, such as hawks, owls and eagles as well as other predatory birds. The only animal responsible is humans. TNR has been working in our community for 15 years and has resulted in the decline by 33% of the number of kittens turned into the Humane Society. The attorney who said that TNR was abandonment is absolutely wrong. I don't know where he did his research, but it obviously was at some cat-hating site. TNR is the way to go. It has been proven effective here and other places. Let's stop killing anything that might inconvenience ourselves.

---

Marcy Lienau in District 2 (on forum)

October 3, 2014, 9:45 AM

I am in favor of the TNR program. The NV Humane Society has a wonderful program that really does help the problem and make a difference. This is not an expense to the city, because they cover all costs with volunteers and donations. I believe this is a win/win situation for all involved, especially the cats.

1 Supporter

---

Name not available (unclaimed)

October 2, 2014, 11:10 PM

Trap, neuter, and release is the most effective and humane way to control the homeless and feral cat population. It's working in my neighborhood, located in zip code 89502.

---

Maryan Grilli in District 4 (on forum)

October 2, 2014, 9:22 PM

TNR helps save lives. It is better for cats and humans alike. I am in favor if TNR.

2 Supporters

---

Anne Lundgren in District 4 (on forum)

October 2, 2014, 1:49 PM

The TNR program allows residents to make a difference and donate their time and money, reducing the financial burden of stray animals on Washoe County. Should the TNR program be abandoned, animal control

## New regulations for feral cats

What are your thoughts on Washoe County creating a regulation for the trap, neuter and release of feral cats?

officers and employees will be even more inundated with cats than they already are. And these cats are wild animals so they are extremely challenging to domesticate, meaning they would most likely face death sentences, also leading to more depletion of already limited government funds.

The TNR program also benefits our community because it helps keep the cat population under control, while still allowing cats to minimize rodent infestation. I saw this firsthand when working at a blueprinting company in Reno. The store had a huge paper inventory, as well as a neighboring cat colony. All of the cats were trapped, altered and returned. Never did we have any issues with mice or rats.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to voice my opinion. Please make the Trap Neuter Release program legal.

2 Supporters

---

Name not shown in District 5 (on forum)

October 2, 2014, 9:14 AM

I would just like to say that TNR is the proven method for controlling feral cat populations. It has been shown in numerous communities that rounding up the cats and killing them does nothing to control the population, nor obviously does ignoring the problem and allowing them to reproduce out of control. TNR is humane and effective, allowing feral colonies to stabilize and continue to help control vermin populations. TNR is the compassionate and educated choice for Washoe County, one of the safest places in the country for homeless animals. I think we are all proud of that and there is no reason to exclude feral animals by placing limitations on TNR.

3 Supporters

---

Marseana Davies in District 3 (on forum)

October 1, 2014, 4:53 PM

I have lived in other areas that have had this program. I was very pleased with how well it worked and how healthy the cats were. The rv park management changed and demanded that the cats be removed from the area. In a short period of time the amount of vermin increased in and around the park. A good feral cat program benefits the community in a lot of ways.

Mrs. Marseana Davies

1 Supporter

---

Kimberly Wade in District 2 (on forum)

October 1, 2014, 4:41 PM

TNR is a humane, effective approach for feral cats. It allows the colony population to stabilize, improves their lives and their relations with the community: the behaviors and stresses associated with mating stop. Nevada Humane Society successfully utilizes TNR and offers a Barn Car Program for feral cats, but without the changes to the current code they cannot continue these efforts. I support TNR in our community, I support saving lives and making a difference. We are their voice.



## New regulations for feral cats

What are your thoughts on Washoe County creating a regulation for the trap, neuter and release of feral cats?

2 Supporters

---

Name not available (unclaimed)

October 1, 2014, 3:24 PM

TNR is one of the most effective ways to reduce feral cat population, assist in healthy feral colonies and reduce future costs of animal control. I also believe that spay/neuter should be available at very low cost or free to the public which will also reduce the feral colony populations.

---

Alice Hescox in District 5 (on forum)

October 1, 2014, 3:24 PM

TNR is an effective way to reduce the feral cat population, much more so that just euthanize them. Feral's keep the rodent population down and it saves the county and taxpayers money. I've seen the positive effects of TNR and whole heartedly support it.

---

John Ford in District 1 (on forum)

October 1, 2014, 2:17 PM

I support the creation of regulations for the TNR program in Washoe county. I've participated in this program over the last few years and have seen its positive effects on the feral cat colonies.

---

Trisca Arvidson in District 1 (on forum)

October 1, 2014, 1:59 PM

I support the TNR program because it works. TNR is an effective way to reduce the feral cat population, much more so that just euthanize them. I've seen the positive effects of TNR so I believe in it.

---

Name not available (unclaimed)

October 1, 2014, 7:33 AM

I THINK ALL CATS should be kept on a leash or a cage if they are let outside the house. they say CATS ARE A CLEAN ANIMAL. that isn't true. they kill mice and RODANTS. which are filthy. SO if a cat is left outside to ROAM on its own they are FARE GAME TO SHOOT...we have to keep dogs from being able to roam the streets, so it is only fair to keep CATS in a cage... I WILL NEVER OWN ANY CAT OR LET IT NEAR MY YARD. there is an EXTREMELY GOOD CHANCE if I see any CAT in my YARD it MAY not \*\*\*\*\*

---

Name not available (unclaimed)

September 30, 2014, 8:14 PM

I support the TNR effort by the Nevada Humane Society and hope you create regulation for this measure.

---

Name not available (unclaimed)

September 30, 2014, 7:55 PM

## New regulations for feral cats

What are your thoughts on Washoe County creating a regulation for the trap, neuter and release of feral cats?

I am a huge supporter of the TNR approach to feral cat population regulation. It is the only form of regulation the has proven success. Please adopt this approach as a standard and cease trap and kill procedures immediately. Thank you!

---

Julia Ratti in District 4 (on forum)

September 30, 2014, 7:13 PM

I support the trap, neuter and release approach to managing feral populations of cats. We have the benefit of a dedicated community of volunteers who help to humanely manage these populations. It's the right thing to do.  
Julia Ratti

2 Supporters

---

Name not available (unclaimed)

September 30, 2014, 6:57 PM

I am in favor of the TNR program.

---

Sheri Masini in District 4 (on forum)

September 30, 2014, 6:40 PM

I have worked with Community Cats TNR program since 2011. I moved home after retiring from the Air Force and right away I saw that there was a stray/feral cat problem on my block. It had apparently gone unchecked for too long. So, with time and patience I was able to fix every stray/feral on my block and because of that there has not been a litter of kittens born on my block since fall 2010. Over time the number of cats on my block has in fact gone down because I had Community Cats available to me. This program is necessary and needed and without it, the cat population will explode. I find it important to remind you that the feral cat problem was and is caused by man. Too often too many people get pets, don't get them fixed and then abandon them to the streets to mass reproduce. One female can have up to 3 litters in one season. I think you can do the math. Community Cats is an invaluable asset to Washoe County.

After attending the workshop I was extremely frustrated that we who were in favor of TNR did not get equal billing with those on the fence and those against. Their concerns were gone over point for point, ours were not. But, what I did learn is these two other groups just lack education. Case in point, they don't know that Community Cats is a 501c3, a non-profit. They don't know how to identify a TNR cat (left ear tip/a piece is cut off). They don't know that TNR cats ARE vaccinated. That getting cats fixed eliminates fighting, spraying and howling and that through attrition populations actually decrease, which achieves all of our goals humanely. The argument that cats are thinning bird populations is interesting to me. The only birds I have ever seen caught by a cat are sick or injured and there is much research saying it is not founded. I also think it is important to bring up another point voiced by another's concerns posted here that the return process basically makes bait for coyotes and hawks. If I could talk to her, I would tell her that the program is not perfect and that there are areas I would never advise someone to Trap, Neuter and Return because cats are at risk to these things in those areas. Also, the relocation of cats is a slippery slope, too. The reason we return cats to where they came from is it is what they know. Simply taking a cat and moving it does not work. They won't stay and will do everything to try and return to their home. To relocate takes confinement to adjust them and allow them to bond with their new location and humans and it is a long process even with domestic cats depending on their age. So, again

## New regulations for feral cats

What are your thoughts on Washoe County creating a regulation for the trap, neuter and release of feral cats?

the key here for all concerned is education. With education, the on the fencer's get their questions answered and the those against have less of an argument for all and out cruelty by basic execution of cats, which has been proven not to work, and costs more than the TNR program.

---

Name not shown in District 3 (on forum)

September 30, 2014, 6:37 PM

I support the trap/neuter/spay program. No killing of feral cats, they do help keep the rodent populations down.

---

Name not shown in District 4 (on forum)

September 30, 2014, 6:35 PM

TNR is the humane, effective approach for feral cats. Traditionally animal control agencies catch and kill feral cats which is endless and cruel, and it does not keep an area free of cats. As humanity evolves, we must abandon desperate, ineffective indiscriminate killing of animals for more civilized ways to co-exist. Congratulations to Washoe County for endorsing TNR and thank you NHS for being a leader among animal shelters and for the many cats you have saved already.

1 Supporter

---

Jana Garner outside Washoe County (on forum)

September 30, 2014, 6:28 PM

TNR is a great program to keep the feral cat population down. If everyone would take some responsibility and help get the cats fixed, eventually the population would dwindle to a manageable amount. I have brought in over 40 cats to Community cats and the kitten population is way down. Support of TNR is vital to living in harmony with our animals.

---

Mallory Fisher in District 1 (on forum)

September 30, 2014, 5:59 PM

I am a volunteer with the Nevada Humane Society and work weekly with the Trap Neuter Return Program to trap, spay or neuter and return feral cats to their habitats in Reno, Sparks, and the surrounding communities. This program is a wonderful option for citizens who come into contact with feral cats in their backyards or neighborhoods. The program is an incredibly effective tool in feral cat colony population control, and I've seen the positive effects of the program's efforts firsthand. Many of the issues the public has with feral cats are their unwanted mating behaviors, such as fighting, yowling, spraying, and litters of unwanted kittens. These problems cease once the cats are spayed or neutered, and the cats provide pest control and can maintain stable, healthy populations when these birth control measures are taken.

Simply exterminating feral cats is a completely ineffective tool in regulating feral populations due to the vacuum effect of a prime cat habitat becoming vacant when the animals are removed and destroyed, leaving space for new (and many times more) cats to enter. Many commercial areas, such as trucking yards or train stations, notice a marked increase in mice and other disease-spreading pest populations after the feral cats are removed. I am an advocate for the program because I've seen its successes, and the alternative is either no



## New regulations for feral cats

What are your thoughts on Washoe County creating a regulation for the trap, neuter and release of feral cats?

action at all or the unnecessary and inhumane extermination of animals who, once vaccinated and fixed, do not represent a threat or a nuisance to the community.

Please allow the TNR program to continue the great things it does for the community! Any litter of unwanted kittens that is prevented is worthwhile and beneficial to the community. Help the Nevada Humane Society continue its mission for a safe, healthy, and animal-friendly Washoe County.

4 Supporters

---

Name not shown (unverified)

September 30, 2014, 5:06 PM

I support TNR. I have 9 cats at our shop. All are spayed and neutered now that we caught them all. They are happy and healthy, and I feed them, doctor care, shots. Have a babysitter for when I go away. They are too wild to take home - believe me I would if I could. We take care of them in the winter and do our best to protect them. There are so many by the river it is sad.

---

Name not available (unclaimed)

September 30, 2014, 2:57 PM

I think the regulation should be that Community Cats and the community be allowed to participate in TNR. TNR works. The number of kittens entering into the shelters has decreased. Female cats are not condemned to spend their lives having kittens and male cats are less likely to fight. Cats are not the reason for the decline of bird populations, man is the reason. We have cut down their habitats, used poisons to kill bugs that birds would eat and the biggest murderer of birds is the Alberta Tar Sands where they are cutting down the arboreal forest where the song birds go to raise their young. TNR provides a way to spay/neuter and vaccinate feral cats. If you stop the current TNR that is going on now in Washoe County you will have a flood of feral cats that are not spayed/neutered and who have health problems that will spread to other cats. This is the most humane way of handling the situation. In time the colonies die out, but there will always be cruel people who dump their cats without making sure they are spayed and neutered so there is a big need for this program.

---

Name not shown in District 4 (on forum)

September 27, 2014, 8:15 AM

yes to trap, neuter and release of feral cats. poisoning of feral cats should be illegal with fines and jail time.

5 Supporters

---

Christine Page in District 3 (on forum)

September 23, 2014, 9:24 AM

I rescued a mother and her kittens from a storage garage on the property of the home I rent. Two of the kittens were adopted by me; the others were surrendered. All but two were adopted. They fit into the Spay Neuter Release program because they were deemed too feral to be adoptable. After two or three weeks, they made their way back to the garage where they were born. Yes, I fed them, what else was I to do. However, both came to a bad end: feral dogs took one - I heard it during the night; the second went to a Red - Tailed Hawk -

## New regulations for feral cats

What are your thoughts on Washoe County creating a regulation for the trap, neuter and release of feral cats?

heard the scream. So I am of a divided mind to this program. There are so many feral cats in my neighborhood that I have a rescue box so they won't freeze in the winter and yes, I feed them if they are hungry. So arrest me and have me evicted - these rules are ridiculous. Bottom line is that had I known of the Cat Rescue place near Verdi, I would NEVER have surrendered these animals to the shelter and the Humane Society (who, by promoting this practice, is promoting horrible death for these animals). There has to be a third solution. How about arresting the people who abandon these cats when they move. That was the scenario here...the neighbor moved with the large male cat, leaving the pregnant one to fend for herself. At least my two adoptees are healthy and loved.

1 Supporter

---

Name not shown in District 2 (on forum)

September 19, 2014, 2:48 PM

Agree with proposed language. Feral cats keep down the rodent population. Trap, neuter and release.

2 Supporters

---

Name not shown in District 1 (on forum)

August 30, 2014, 1:18 PM

Yes, trap, fix, release of cats.

Anyone who poisons feral cats should be convicted of a felony.

2 Supporters

---

Name not shown in District 4 (on forum)

August 30, 2014, 7:36 AM

yes trap neuter and release of cats  
they control vermine

1 Supporter

---

Name not shown in District 5 (on forum)

August 21, 2014, 9:17 PM

You think TNR works? Come to my neighborhood where the feeders are keeping an over-abundance of feral, "neutered" cats alive. They poop in my flower beds, howl and fight all night long, and beat up on my cat. Oh, let's not forget that the neutered males also pee all over my garage when they can get in, and all over my sliding glass doors and patio furniture. Lovely. One cat in my neighborhood had a huge sore on one whole side of his face and neck due to fighting...you call that humane? People, get a grip. Get real. The wild bird populations are down, and there are always cats that won't be trapped and will keep breeding. I say trap and send them off to cat-heaven. It is the humane thing to do. There will still be plenty of feral cats for the feeders to take care of to make themselves feel like they are saving the world.

2 Supporters

---

Name not shown in District 1 (on forum)

August 21, 2014, 6:00 PM

## New regulations for feral cats

What are your thoughts on Washoe County creating a regulation for the trap, neuter and release of feral cats?

Trap fix and release of feral cats.

NO KILL

4 Supporters

---

Name not shown in District 5 (on forum)

August 21, 2014, 9:25 AM

Finding it hard to believe that there isn't any regulation on this. There are far too many domestic and feral cats in the world! Don't get me wrong, I love cats. But I do see the need for some control of the population. Although, when you see ads like this on craigslist

"looking for the lady who wanted a Torrie kitten (Reno nevada)

we're looking for the lady who wanted the tortoise shell kitten last time we do have another letter and one torrtie has been confirmed so give me a call if your still looking and if anyone wants a kitten we are excepting pre orders for when they are ready to leave momma." dated 8/21/14, it should make you shake your head in disgust.

Too many of these kittens and the "free" kittens do not get spayed/neutered and wind up abandoned when he sprays or she gets pregnant. So guess what happens to those kittens . . . they're feral. Through no fault of their own.

Let's put a stop to kitten breeders. Let's get help in getting cats fixed at a reasonable price. I don't believe people realize how expensive it is to get their pets altered. When they get those pets and want to do the right thing, it's like "OH NO!"

Meanwhile, numerous studies show trap and kill does not work. TNR does. There are so many advantages to TNR to list it's ridiculous!

And please, please change the wording. It's not release, it's return. Return to their home.

I can't imagine what the industrial areas, neighborhood parks and some residential communities would be like without rodent control. Even the trucking companies welcome feral cats to help stop mice from eating the wiring in their trucks.

Feral cats are necessary in so many facets in our area. But TNR keeps them disease free and healthy. There are thousands of caretakers in Washoe County that care for these misunderstood victims.

Please help educate and move forward with the world. Of my understanding now, even Carson City is going to implement a TNR program. Why? Because it works!

2 Supporters

---

Name not shown in District 5 (on forum)

August 20, 2014, 7:51 PM

Release of feral cats is an extremely bad idea for wildlife.



## New regulations for feral cats

What are your thoughts on Washoe County creating a regulation for the trap, neuter and release of feral cats?

2 Supporters

---

Name not shown (unverified)

August 20, 2014, 7:42 PM

I believe that trap and neuter is the humane way to control those cats that are just left to run. We should be responsible for them and make sure that they do not add to the over population and let them live where they are comfortable. Trap and neuter should be a part of Washoe Animal Control.

---

Ardena Perry in District 4 (on forum)

August 16, 2014, 8:46 PM

:Suggest Language: "Owner" means any person keeping, harboring or having charge of or having the care, custody or control of an animal, or permitting any animal to be or remain on, or be lodged or fed within, such person's house, yard or premises, or any animal abandoned and cared for by that person on another's parcel. The caregiver/feeder is the owner. "Owner" does not apply to animals owned by others that are temporarily maintained on the premises of a veterinarians

Feral cats are a problem due to feeders, these feeders need to be as responsible for the cats in their care as any other owner, regular vet care/ vax, and pet limits must apply. Keeping of animals on land you do not own or rent is not accepted practice., One lady lost her home for having 44 cats and NHS charged her \$55,000 to store cats and then euthanize them. Had she been feeding the cats down by the river she would have been a TNR Goddess. If they feed these animals anywhere, they "own" them and become subject to vax and licensing.

2 Supporters

---

Name not shown in District 5 (on forum)

August 15, 2014, 1:24 PM

YES, trap, fix and release feral cats.

6 Supporters

---

**Wade, Valerie**

---

**From:** Judi Kleidon <judik19@sbcglobal.net>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 30, 2014 5:10 PM  
**To:** AnimalCode  
**Subject:** TNR

I understand you are reviewing the County Code regarding animals. I would like to encourage you to continue allowing the TNR program that the Nevada Humane Society is currently carrying on. I have seen first class the way cat are treated the the NHS and know that feral cats can be useful in the community in keeping down the rodent population and in helping farmers in that same effort. I have also seen a few feral cats that have been soialized and adopted...a wonderful thing. Thanks for your consideration of my recommendation.

Sincerely,

Judi Kleidon  
4800 S. Saddlehorn Drive  
Reno, NV 89511

**Wade, Valerie**

---

**From:** Gloria McLay <gogimclay@att.net>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 30, 2014 5:11 PM  
**To:** AnimalCode

I have been a feral cat caregiver since 1996. I am enthusiastically behind the TNR program as well as the "No Kill" policy in Washoe County. I am currently a caregiver to approximately 56 (6 colonies totaly). Thank you for understanding that TNR is the only realistic and humane way of caring for the feral cat population.

Gloria McLay  
775-356-6432  
[gogimclay@att.net](mailto:gogimclay@att.net)

## **Wade, Valerie**

---

**From:** marianneryan@att.net  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 30, 2014 5:16 PM  
**To:** AnimalCode  
**Subject:** Proposed change to law regarding feral cats

Good afternoon,

I support the TNR campaign that the Humane Society of Northern Nevada has been successfully operating. We need to care for these feral cats who are out in our community through no fault of their own. The TNR is a humane way to spay and neuter these cats, thus keeping the population contained.

Please do not make any changes to the current law that would jeopardize this wonderful program. The HS of Reno does a wonderful job with all of the animals that they care for. This is just one more example.  
Thank you.

Marianne Ryan  
10768 Grayslake Dr.  
Reno, NV 89521



**Wade, Valerie**

---

**From:** B.J. Perez <bj@monarchnv.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 30, 2014 5:18 PM  
**To:** AnimalCode  
**Cc:** Denise Stevens; Tracy Dean; Bonney Brown  
**Subject:** PLEASE Support TNR for Community Cats - help NHS to care of them!

PLEASE SUPPORT NHS & TNR

I have a TNR cat living at my home.  
"Pumpkin" is a feral who lives outside, she has no contact with us - unless she watches us fill her bowl at night.  
In winter we provide her with a heated house, and see her in it when it gets cold.

She had a litter of kittens in the snow 3 years ago, so I contacted NHS and she was trapped, neutered, and released back at our home.... The kittens would not have been able to survive if it had not been for the NHS.  
Mama "Pumpkin" now has a good life - she is healthy, no longer bothered by males or fighting, and actually has made friends with another neighbors cat... TNR IS A GREAT PROGRAM.

And her 3 kittens are all indoor lap-cats now. (mine)  
They may have been born wild, but you would never know it.

**B.J. Perez**  
Broker/Owner  
**Monarch Mortgage**  
2435 Pyramid Way, Suite A  
Sparks, NV 89431  
**775-331-4400**

----- Forwarded Message -----  
**From:** Nevada Humane Society <kwade@nevadahumanesociety.org>  
**To:** bj@monarchnv.com  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 30, 2014 4:38 PM  
**Subject:** Help Us Support TNR for Community Cats Tomorrow



---

reness for the importance of Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) in Washoe County. Will you stand by our side during tomorrow's  
nd our community cats we will continue to make a difference in saving lives because you are the animal advoca

Changes)

al Park (1595 N. Sierra Street, Reno)

opinion on proposed changes to the animal control ordinance, Washoe County Code (WCC) Chapter 55. NHS stands be  
and make a difference for homeless pets. TNR is vital to our community, our cats, and our shelter.

s. Feral cats are humanely trapped, spayed or neutered, vaccinated, and eartipped (the universal symbol of a neutered a  
cats and kittens are adopted into homes. The colony's population stabilizes. TNR improves their lives and their relations

---

stop. **At NHS we successfully utilize TNR and offer a Barn Car Program for feral cats, but without the changes to** contact with people or her contact with people has diminished over time. She is not socialized to people and survives on her own for 10,000 years. They live and thrive in every landscape, from the inner city to rural farmland. The outdoors is their natural habitat.

In fact, 70% of all cats who enter shelters are killed and that number jumps to close to 100% for feral cats. **At NHS that is the case for feral cats.**

For feral cats which is endless and cruel, and it does not keep an area free of cats. Cats choose to reside in a location for two reasons called the vacuum effect, when cats are removed from a location, survivors of the catch and kill effort and new cats

['LKTyEgldTXvNaEezNrq6xn4uROQ6X3go1cBIKPLespQ4SJE t5coARwU29CSZZVCuryLW0Qo0kZmmpJDR4nUFJnyO V9DVGxSzX7xP7zMrvE0N-fuqbRglJblW 0ONpO-AhIA==&ch=xXpCL6cWUyMJCpdfWuU7vAk7e5ytFwuBhfBa6-mVX2f](#)

provide feedback and offer support for TNR or send an email to [animalcode@washoecounty.us](mailto:animalcode@washoecounty.us) (no need to speak)

community cats!

Nevada Humane Society  
2825 Longley Lane  
Reno, Nevada 89502  
775-856-2000



**Forward this email**



This email was sent to [bj@monarchnv.com](mailto:bj@monarchnv.com) by [kwade@nevadahumanesociety.org](mailto:kwade@nevadahumanesociety.org) | [Update Profile/Email Address](#) | Rapid removal with [SafeUnsubscribe™](#) | [Privacy Policy](#).



Nevada Humane Society | 2825 Longley Lane | Reno | NV | 89502

## Wade, Valerie

---

**From:** Mary Holman <maryaholman@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 30, 2014 5:45 PM  
**To:** AnimalCode  
**Cc:** maryaholman@gmail.com  
**Subject:** Feral Cats

I am writing in support of any policy that permits and encourages the program of TNR (Trap, Neuter, Return). As President of the Meadows Homeowners Assoc. at Neil and Peckham Rd. we had a feral cat population around our carport areas. The board voted to enforce that no one in the Assoc. should put out food or water to encourage these cats to remain. One of our Members checked on the TNR program and volunteered to help with the trapping and taking the cats to be neutered rather than cut off their supplies. I was frankly skeptical and against this action but the Lady member prevailed. She was able to trap five feral cats and these cats were returned. It has been about a year and a half and we have no new cats on the premises and some of the regular "feral" cats have disappeared. I am amazed and gratified by this program. By not just removing the cats to the shelter or taking them out to the countryside, we have humanely handled our feral cat population.

*Mary A. Holman, CAM, CPM, CCIM, CRS*  
President/Broker of Holman Investments LLC  
Direct: 775-826-9100  
Cell: 775-771-7971  
Fax: 775-826-9117  
E-Mail: [maryaholman@gmail.com](mailto:maryaholman@gmail.com)

**Wade, Valerie**

---

**From:** Shirley Shoopman <ssbuck88@att.net>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 30, 2014 6:00 PM  
**To:** AnimalCode  
**Subject:** TNR

I support TNR for our community cats.  
Thank you,  
Shirley Shoopman

Sent from my iPhone



**Wade, Valerie**

---

**From:** Robin Chaffey <robinchaffey@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 30, 2014 6:36 PM  
**To:** AnimalCode  
**Subject:** TRAP NEUTER RELEASE of feral cats

I support a change to the animal code to include TRAP / NEUTER / Release of feral cats as an option in Washoe County.

Robin Chaffey  
1223 Tanglewood Drive  
Sparks 89431

## Wade, Valerie

---

**From:** Tina Cook <teenareno@att.net>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 30, 2014 8:05 PM  
**To:** AnimalCode  
**Subject:** TNR

As a feral caretaker for over 12 years I support TNR. There is no reason for any animal to suffer or be euthanized. My colony in Sun Valley has consisted of 200 Ferals. They were out of control when we found them but with TNR we have been successful in spaying and neutering hundreds. TNR has to stay in place for the welfare and safety of feral cats that deserve a life to live in peace. I believe the laws should be stronger and they should be protected under the law. I will always care for my Ferals and do whatever I have to for them to be safe and well taken care of. Thank you.

Sincerely,  
Tina Cook feral caretaker and animal lover!!  
Sent from my iPhone

## **Wade, Valerie**

---

**From:** Karen Outland <svim.karen@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 30, 2014 8:25 PM  
**To:** AnimalCode  
**Cc:** kwade@nevadahumanesociety.org  
**Subject:** October 1 Workshop

Thank you for considering changes to your animal control ordinances. I would like to express my support of the Trap-Neuter-Return program for feral cats. I live in Dallas, Texas and have seen first hand the effectiveness of the program. Not only is TNR the humane approach to feral cat control the program has proved in pure statistics that it is more effective in reducing populations than trapping and euthanizing. I have a great fondness for Reno and therefore Washoe County and want very much to see you all move in the right direction.

This program benefits animals, the general public and your budget to control over population.

Sincerely,

Karen Outland  
4405 Emerson Ave.  
Dallas, Texas  
214-957-8343  
Sent from my iPhone

**Wade, Valerie**

---

**From:** Lisa Braginton <LisaB@moananursery.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 30, 2014 9:23 PM  
**To:** AnimalCode  
**Subject:** TNR program

I strongly support legislation and programs that will allow Trap/Neuter/Return policies to remain in effect in Washoe County.



**Wade, Valerie**

---

**From:** Ashley Smith <littleashleyshortcake@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, October 01, 2014 9:36 AM  
**To:** AnimalCode  
**Subject:** TNR Code Changes

Hi,

I would like to take this opportunity to express my avid support for instituting an ordinance for Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) as part of the animal control ordinance in Washoe County Code (WCC) Chapter 55.

As I'm sure you are aware, TNR is a humane, effective approach for stabilizing, and in some cases reducing feral cat populations. Feral cats are humanely trapped, spayed or neutered, vaccinated, and eartipped (the universal symbol of a neutered and vaccinated cat), and then returned to their outdoor home. Socialized cats and kittens are adopted into homes.

TNR has been successfully utilized abroad for decades, particularly in Italy where it is national law. The Nevada Humane Society has successfully utilized TNR in the past, however in order to continue to humanely and effectively decrease the population of feral cats in our area, changes to the Washoe County Code need to be implemented to include an ordinance for TNR.

Thank you,

Ashley Smith

**Wade, Valerie**

---

**From:** jennifer royle <jaroyle@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, October 01, 2014 11:29 AM  
**To:** AnimalCode  
**Subject:** Feral cat meeting

I support the trap, neuter and release program for feral cats. I have been feeding three cats from this program for several years. I wish we could implement a plan that would require people to keep their cats in doors and to neuter them. Thank you.

Jennifer Royle

Sent from my iPad

## **Wade, Valerie**

---

**From:** Teri L Rodrigues <terir@unr.edu>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, October 01, 2014 1:07 PM  
**To:** AnimalCode  
**Subject:** Feral cat program

Hello,

I wanted to write and show my support for the feral cat trap and release program. When I lived in Highland Ranch I trapped and had 30 cats fixed. I don't think by killing them you solve the program. Domestic cats that are not fixed are increasing the population daily.

I totally support the feral cat trap and release program and will do what I can to help. I have two feral cats who are somewhat domesticated that I feed and sleep in my house at night.

Please let me know if there is something I can do to help.

Thank you,

Teri Jones Rodrigues  
Program Director  
Extended Studies  
University of Nevada  
Reno, Nv 89557  
775-784-6685  
[terir@unr.edu](mailto:terir@unr.edu)

**Wade, Valerie**

---

**From:** Cecelia Lampley <c\_lampley@att.net>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, October 01, 2014 5:17 PM  
**To:** AnimalCode  
**Subject:** TNR

Sorry I can't attend the TNR meeting. I agree that TNR is the best way to control cat populations, particularly feral cats. I support this program. Cecelia Lampley



**Wade, Valerie**

---

**From:** calcat1218 <calcat1218@aol.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, October 02, 2014 3:46 PM  
**To:** AnimalCode  
**Subject:** Ferrel cat program heard on 10/1/14

Hi I am a small business owner here in Washoe County and a die hard cat lover. I have worked with NHS for about a year now as a foster kitten volunteer. Meaning I help care for semi ferrel and non ferrel kittens who are not weaned yet. I know first hand that the kittens once socialized, weaned, and loved can be adoptable. Catching the ferrel cats and fixing them saves lives. They may have to be given back to the wild and prayed for but to just give up on them all together and kill them is wrong. Many species in the feline family mainly the big cats have vanished or on the endangered species list. Please do not list this happen to our house cat. It would be so sad to not give our future generations the opportunity to love and know the common house cat.  
Thank you for your time in this matter.

Sincerely  
Heather Aldrich

Sent on the new Sprint Network from my Samsung Galaxy S@4

**Wade, Valerie**

---

**From:** Pam <pjonidis@me.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, October 03, 2014 2:13 PM  
**To:** AnimalCode  
**Subject:** TNR Feedback

I am a Washoe County resident and I support Trap, Neuter, Release, but wasn't able to attend the workshop last night. This will give us a great way to control the feral and domestic cat populations. Please allow it.

Thank you.

**Wade, Valerie**

---

**From:** Bob Brunner <bobbrunner4@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, October 13, 2014 10:32 AM  
**To:** AnimalCode  
**Subject:** Feral Cats

I am opposed to the releasing of feral cats, by the public or by any agency.

Thank you

Bob Brunner

Washoe

A - 10/14/14  
more # 25

## Wade, Valerie

---

**From:** Miss priss <littlemisspriss@charter.net>  
**Sent:** Saturday, October 11, 2014 7:20 PM  
**To:** Weber, Bonnie; Hartung, Vaughn; Shea, E. Terrance; chet work adams; Schiller, Kevin; Slaughter, John; Jung, Kitty; dave home humke; Lilly tangers  
**Subject:** TNR Thoughts and Truths

TNR is a destructive program. It is NOT a management program. Nothing is managed in TNR. Throwing out food is not management. TNR endangers human health, restricts the rights of property owners, devastates birds and other wildlife, and is cruel to animals. TNR is a maintenance program, not a population control or reduction program. In over 30 years of TNR programs, there are no studies that show TNR programs have had any significant effect on cat populations. As an example, the London colony that has been under TNR since the 70's still exists, and at the same numbers of cats.

TNR advocates state as a rationale for TNR that humans created feral cats and should care for them, but TNR doesn't care for the cats. It repeats the abandonment behavior of humans that put cats out in the first place by dumping them back to the streets to live and die horribly. TNR is unjust, disrespectful, and self serving and hurts the cats themselves. Love of cats means taking care of them, not irresponsibly throwing them away.

There is far more to the care of an animal than food. It is taking responsibility for the health and well being of an animal and for its behavior. Caring for an animal means keeping it from hurting and damaging other lives, health, and property. It is respect for all.

Cats have destructive behaviors. They are natural killers and do it for fun, carry disease parasites in their feces, and their urine is extremely unpleasant, to name a few. problems. Why is it so hard to admit that? It doesn't lessen or take away from the love people have for cats to admit they can be destructive. It doesn't take away from the cats either. They are what they are. They can also be cuddly and warm. TNR programs disregard and ignore the rights and feelings of anyone else or any other animal. With TNR advocates, it is 'my way or the highway.' How just is that? The love someone has for one animal should not supercede the love someone has for another animal. Wildlife are animals. They should not be disregarded, disrespected, dismissed, and slaughtered in preference of another animal.

There is no concern whatever about the killing of wild animals. Wild animals are dispensable, collateral damage they ignore, deny, and try to hide. Animal life is animal life, whether domestic or wild and if someone calls him or herself a no kill animal advocate, he or she should advocate for ALL animals. Cats are domestic animals, bred by humans to be exactly what they are. They should be in the care and control of humans. Most feral cats can be re-socialized and brought back into the human fold because those domestic instincts are genetic. Wildlife is just that, wild. No domestic instincts and cannot be socialized. Wild animals kept in captivity are still wild animals. That is not a description of cats.