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Submitted On  
10/24/2017 11:28:47 AM  
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Fairbanks, Alaska 99701

Please support Proposal #62 to allow for Trap-Neuter-Vaccinate-Return programs and improve the lives of feral cats in Alaska.



Submitted By  
Heather Aronno  
Submitted On  
10/13/2017 10:47:49 AM  
Affiliation

My name is Heather Aronno and I am writing this comment in support of PROPOSAL 62 – 5 AAC 92.029. Permit for possessing live game. This proposal will allow the release of sterilized, feral cats into the wild. Alaska's citizens deserve the opportunity to implement the only humane and effective approach to community cats



Submitted By  
Samantha Blakenship and Marina Lindsey  
Submitted On  
10/23/2017 7:23:21 AM  
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Gastineau Humane Society  
  
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Juneau, Alaska 99801

October 23, 2017

ADF&G Boards Support  
PO Box 115526  
Juneau, AK 99811-5526

Re: Trap, Neuter and Release Proposal

The Gastineau Humane Society (GHS) Board of Directors and Interim Executive Director are writing to express our support for Regulatory Proposal #62, currently before the Board of Game that, if approved, would allow sterilized cats to be released into the wild and, therefore, legalize Trap, Neuter and Release (TNR) programs for feral cats in Alaska.

Alaska, like most places in the world, has a population of feral cats. The primary options for shelters, such as GHS, to manage these animals typically include: 1) do nothing, 2) trap and euthanize, 3) trap and attempt to rehabilitate, or 4) implement a TNR program.

Based on our experience and widely supported research, the first two approaches only perpetuate the problem and burden local animal shelters. In Juneau, our local feral cat populations, which are inbreeding, have resulted in 61 euthanasias in the past 15 months. Increased euthanasia rates due to feral cat populations affect our ability to obtain grants, which adversely affects our ability to care for all the animals in our shelter. Euthanasias also have a negative impact on staff morale and potentially devastating impacts on community support of our shelter.

The third option overburdens shelter staff with animals that are often unsafe to handle and still results in high euthanasia rates, adversely impacting both staff morale and fundraising – people don't want to donate to or work for shelters that catch and kill domestic animals. None of the approaches is guaranteed, and each approach has its supporters and opponents. However, after experiencing the other options, GHS believes that TNR presents a realistic, viable way to help reduce feral cat populations.

TNR programs are not only the most humane method of preventing cats from entering the shelter system, they are the most effective when implemented correctly. (1) TNR is the most widely implemented program to manage cat populations in the U.S. The main goal of the program is to reduce feral cat populations, but it also decreases the spread of cat diseases. (2) TNR goes back to the late 1960's in the U.S. It has been endorsed by the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals as "the most humane, effective and financially sustainable strategy for controlling free-roaming cat populations." The Humane Society of the United States has also endorsed community-based TNR programs as the "most viable, long-term approach available at this time to reduce feral cat populations."

Other entities oppose TNR including the American Bird Conservancy and The Wildlife Society. They dispute its effectiveness at reducing feral cat populations, and comment that free-roaming cats are responsible for much of the decline in bird populations. Rather than TNR, they recommend that free-roaming cats be taken to local animal shelters. The Wildlife Society states that they "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." GHS's experience is that most feral cats are simply too wild to be safely adopted and they must be euthanized. Additionally, trapping and euthanizing cats has been used in many communities, but almost never results in a permanent decrease in the cat population. Until food sources are completely removed, more feral cats will move into the area.

GHS currently spends up to \$1000/month handling, evaluating, and euthanizing feral cats. TNR may initially cost the shelter even more. However, Juneau's feral cat populations are in specific areas and could effectively be trapped, vaccinated, sterilized and released, eventually reducing our costs, the number of feral cats, and the incidence of diseases spread by cats. This, in turn, would allow the shelter to fulfill its mission to promote animal welfare and prevent animal cruelty and suffering.

We acknowledge that the challenge of dealing with feral cats is both an animal welfare and environmental issue. This issue is complicated even further because many feral cats live on private lands where federal and state agencies have limited jurisdiction. As we understand it, the Board of Game does have authority to proactively help balance these complicated animal welfare and environmental issues and could



do so by putting sideboards on TNR programs in Alaska. We suggest that the most important sideboard is to allow TNR programs to be implemented only by official animal shelters, registered Alaska 501(c) 3 animal non-profit organizations, and humane societies. GHS has professionally trained staff and Animal Control Officers who have the skills and knowledge to implement a thorough TNR program in specific circumstances.

If the Board of Game chooses to disapprove this regulatory proposal and disallow any type of TNR in Alaska, we respectfully believe the State then needs to take on the responsibility and cost of trapping and euthanizing feral cat populations. This is the only fair way to reduce the physical and financial burden on local shelters like GHS that were founded to help domestic animals. We are not funded to run euthanasia programs nor do we want this responsibility.

We thank you for your consideration and request that you vote affirmatively to approve this proactive proposal and allow sterilized cats to be released into the wild.

Sincerely,

Samantha Blankenship  
Interim Executive Director

Marina Lindsey  
Board President

1. Levy, J.K., Gale, D.W., et al. Evaluation of the effect of a long-term trap-neuter-return and adoption program on a free-roaming cat population. Journal of American Veterinary Medical Association 2003; 222(1):42-46.
2. Fischer, Sarah M., Quest Cassie M., et al. Response of feral cats to vaccination at time of neutering. Journal of American Veterinary Medical Association 2007; 230(1):52-58.



Submitted By  
Pat Bock  
Submitted On  
10/16/2017 11:53:40 AM  
Affiliation  
1946

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Let's do all we can to help these cats!



Submitted By  
Jill Bohr Jacob  
Submitted On  
10/25/2017 5:55:51 PM  
Affiliation

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Ward Cove, Alaska 99928

I would like to state my support for proposed Rule 62, allowing for trap-neuter-vaccinate-return (TNVR) programs in Alaska.

TNVR programs are animal-friendly, cost-effective, and reduce the burden and bureaucracy placed on the state's animal shelters. Current methods of animal control relative to community cats are expensive, ineffective and oftentimes inhumane. The proposed rule changes would be better for the cats, for public health and for the wildlife we all want to protect.

Thank you,

Jill Bohr Jacob



Submitted By  
Christina Brancaleone  
Submitted On  
10/17/2017 11:38:00 AM  
Affiliation

I am in favor of proposal 62. I feel that this will help battle the overpopulation issue of cats in the state of Alaska. I am an Alaskan resident and would love to see this able to be done with the stray cats in cities around the state.



Submitted By  
Marjorie Carter  
Submitted On  
10/27/2017 8:41:12 PM  
Affiliation

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907-248-4619  
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[pouncam@alaska.net](mailto:pouncam@alaska.net)  
Address  
3005 Carroll Lane  
Anchorage, Alaska 99507

Dear Members,

I am writing to you on behalf of the feral cats of Alaska. I am asking you to approve Proposal 62 that would allow us to implement Trap Neuter Return in the state of Alaska.

I subscribe to many cat and animal publications that strongly support Trap Neuter Return. Some of them are "Animal Sheltering" from The Humane Society of the United States, "Catnip" from Cummings School of Veterinary

Medicine at Tuft's University, "Cat Watch" from Cornell University College of Veterinary Medicine Feline Health Center, "Catster" magazine and Best Friends Animal Society in Kanab Utah.

Best Friends has expanded its highly successful TNR program to Los Angeles as part of their No-Kill campaign and are well on their way. Now they are tackling New York.

There are many organizations that promote Trap Neuter Return such as Tree House in Chicago and many too numerous to mention here.

With Trap Neuter Return, feral populations can be humanely reduced, cat's lives improved, neighborhood concerns addressed and financial resources previously spent taking lives can be re-allocated to lifesaving practices.

Thank you for your time,

Marjorie Carter





Submitted By  
C Cechi  
Submitted On  
10/25/2017 10:09:59 PM  
Affiliation  
Ms.

Herewith I urge you to consider to put in action the proposed "Cat Program" for Trap/Neuter/Release.

Trap/Neuter/Release saves lives and is the **only and humane solution**. (Killing cats or ignoring the problem is not a solution, instead it is just the opposite.)

Many animal rights organizations have researched the issue and have in many communities implemented a TNR program. These programs are very successful.

For more info you may check out this website. It's a resource of information, studies and proven facts:

<https://www.alleycat.org/resources/>

Please take in consideration the following facts.

## **It's time to stop the killing.**

Cities and shelters across America have experienced great success with Trap-Neuter-Return—it is now official policy for feral cats in Washington, DC, Baltimore, and Chicago and other cities across the country. It's time to learn from past mistakes and move forward instead of going around in circles—it's time to stop fighting the endless battle and protect cats' lives.

## **Trap-Neuter-Return is the responsible, humane method of care for feral cats**

Trap-Neuter-Return stabilizes feral cat populations. The cats are humanely trapped, vaccinated, and neutered, so no more kittens will be born. They are then returned to their original location to live out their lives in their outdoor home. Not only is Trap-Neuter-Return the humane option for feral cats, it also improves cats' lives by relieving them of the stresses of mating and pregnancy. In the end, unlike catch and kill, TNR works.

## **The vacuum effect**

Removing cats from an area by killing or relocating them is not only cruel—it's pointless. Animal control agencies and city governments have blindly perpetuated this futile approach for decades. But scientific research, years of failed attempts, and evidence from animal control personnel prove that catch and kill doesn't permanently clear an area of cats.

Scientific evidence indicates that removing feral cat populations only opens up the habitat to an influx of new cats, either from neighboring territories or born from survivors. Each time cats are removed, the population will rebound through a natural phenomenon known as the "vacuum effect," drawing the community into a costly, endless cycle of trapping and killing.

## **The vacuum effect is a phenomenon scientifically recognized worldwide, across all types of animal species**

Well-documented among biologists, the vacuum effect describes what happens when even a portion of an animal population is permanently removed from its home range. Sooner or later, the empty habitat attracts other members of the species from neighboring areas, who move in to take advantage of the same resources that attracted the first group (like shelter and food). Killing or removing the



## Research shows majority of feral cats are healthy.

Feral cats are cats who are not socialized to humans. Instead, they live contented lives with their feline families (often called colonies) outdoors. Cats, like squirrels, chipmunks, and birds, are capable of living healthy, fulfilling lives in the outdoors.

One prominent animal rights organization falsely states that “horrific fates” await feral cats, like diseases, injuries, or human cruelty. But these claims are based on isolated incidents and *not* supported by scientific evidence.

In fact, the research points the other way—a 2006 study found that of 103,643 stray and feral cats examined in spay/neuter clinics in six states from 1993 to 2004, less than 1 percent of those cats needed to be euthanized due to debilitating conditions, trauma, or infectious diseases.

Feral cats *live* full, healthy lives outdoors—there is no reason for them to be *killed* in shelters.

## Feral cats are not a health threat.

Feral cats have equally low rates of disease as the cats who share your home.

In 2008, only 294 cases of rabies were reported in cats, both pet and feral. That’s just 4.3 percent of all the rabies cases reported in animals that year. Feral cats do not pose a rabies risk to humans: there hasn’t been a confirmed cat-to-human rabies transmission in more than 30 years. The number one source of rabies in the United States is wildlife—accounting for more than 90 percent of rabies cases in animals. Since feral cats involved in Trap-Neuter-Return programs are vaccinated and therefore cannot acquire or transmit the virus, they pose no threats to humans or other animals.

Most importantly, research confirms that feral cats are neither breeding grounds for disease nor 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 2002 study concluded that “feral cats assessed in this study posed no greater risk to human beings or other cats than pet cats.”

Feral cats are not a significant health threat to humans or other animals. They deserve to live out their lives just like other outdoor creatures do.

## Feral cats live healthy lives outdoors. Trap-Neuter-Return IS THE SOLUTION !

Thank you so much for your consideration.

The **compassion** and **humanity** of those making the decision is **greatly appreciated**.

Sincerely,

C. Cechi



Submitted By  
Charlotte Ciszek  
Submitted On  
10/24/2017 12:39:17 PM  
Affiliation

Please support Proposal #62 to allow for Trap-Neuter-Vaccinate-Return programs and improve the lives of feral cats in Alaska.



Submitted By  
Della Coburn  
Submitted On  
10/13/2017 11:04:53 AM  
Affiliation  
Kasaan's resident

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[liskidy54@yahoo.com](mailto:liskidy54@yahoo.com)

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Kasaan, Alaska 99950-0340

Feral house cats are the offspring of unaltered pets who either are being dumped off in Kasaan, or who are being abandoned in other towns and villages on Prince of Wales Island! I intend to catch the ones who need to be altered and vaccinated, since we do not want cat viruses to get spread to the house pets. I have been feeding abandoned and feral house cats for a long time, and can't see any good reason to let them be killed! Many can survive on their own, even without being fed by humans!



Submitted By  
Ruth Craine  
Submitted On  
10/24/2017 5:01:39 PM  
Affiliation

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Address  
PO Box 566  
Tenakee Springs, Alaska 99841

Please support Proposal #62 to allow for Trap-Neuter-Vaccinate-Return programs and improve the lives of feral cats in Alaska.

This is not only beneficial for the cats but by controlling the feral population it will benefit and protect the bird population.

Thank you,

Ruth Craiine



Submitted By  
Amber Enns  
Submitted On  
10/12/2017 11:02:54 PM  
Affiliation  
  
Phone  
9073417213  
Email  
[amber.enns@yahoo.com](mailto:amber.enns@yahoo.com)  
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6078 S Hayfield Rd  
Wasilla, Alaska 99623

My name is Amber Enns and I am writing this comment in support of PROPOSAL 62 – 5 AAC 92.029. Permit for possessing live game. This proposal will allow the release of sterilized, feral cats into the wild. Why should Alaska allow TNR? As I am sure you are well aware we have overcrowded and overwhelmed shelters and rescues. Allowing a TNR program will greatly reduce the amount of stray cats that are present. I believe TNR is an Alaskan way to deal with community cats. It allows us as a community to show compassion and humanely address an issue that these animals never asked to be put into. Being able to implement a TNR program will add to the overall public health. When these animals are captured they are vaccinated and sterilized. Reducing the risk of disease among household pets who may come into contact with community cats. Let us stand together and take care of the community cat issue.



Submitted By  
Corinne Estelle Ferre`  
Submitted On  
10/26/2017 10:13:18 AM  
Affiliation  
Kodiak Soil and Water Conservation

Please save feral cats!



Submitted By  
Susan Fisher  
Submitted On  
10/24/2017 2:44:44 PM  
Affiliation  
Ms.

Trap neuter and return is the only reasonable action to take to control animal populations especially domesticated animals as they are ultimately all of our responsibility.





Submitted By  
Mark Francis  
Submitted On  
10/25/2017 10:47:06 PM  
Affiliation  
Ms.

PRO / IN FAVOR of Trap-Neuter-Return program for CATS

Herewith I urge you to consider to put in action the proposed "Cat Program" for Trap/Neuter/Release.

Trap/Neuter/Release saves lives and is the only and humane solution. (Killing cats or ignoring the problem is not a solution, instead it is just the opposite.)

Many animal rights organizations have researched the issue and have in many communities implemented a TNR program. These programs are very successful.

For more info you may check out this website. It's a resource of information, studies and proven facts:  
<https://www.alleycat.org/resources/>

Please take in consideration the following facts.

It's time to stop the killing.

Cities and shelters across America have experienced great success with Trap-Neuter-Return—it is now official policy for feral cats in Washington, DC, Baltimore, and Chicago and other cities across the country. It's time to learn from past mistakes and move forward instead of going around in circles—it's time to stop fighting the endless battle and protect cats' lives.

Trap-Neuter-Return is the responsible, humane method of care for feral cats

Trap-Neuter-Return stabilizes feral cat populations. The cats are humanely trapped, vaccinated, and neutered, so no more kittens will be born. They are then returned to their original location to live out their lives in their outdoor home. Not only is Trap-Neuter-Return the humane option for feral cats, it also improves cats' lives by relieving them of the stresses of mating and pregnancy. In the end, unlike catch and kill, TNR works.

The vacuum effect

Removing cats from an area by killing or relocating them is not only cruel—it's pointless. Animal control agencies and city governments have blindly perpetuated this futile approach for decades. But scientific research, years of failed attempts, and evidence from animal control personnel prove that catch and kill doesn't permanently clear an area of cats.

Scientific evidence indicates that removing feral cat populations only opens up the habitat to an influx of new cats, either from neighboring territories or born from survivors. Each time cats are removed, the population will rebound through a natural phenomenon known as the "vacuum effect," drawing the community into a costly, endless cycle of trapping and killing.

The vacuum effect is a phenomenon scientifically recognized worldwide, across all types of animal species

Well-documented among biologists, the vacuum effect describes what happens when even a portion of an animal population is permanently removed from its home range. Sooner or later, the empty habitat attracts other members of the species from neighboring areas, who move in to take advantage of the same resources that attracted the first group (like shelter and food). Killing or removing the original population does nothing to eliminate these resources; it only creates a "vacuum" that will inevitably draw in other animals living nearby.

Research shows majority of feral cats are healthy.

Feral cats are cats who are not socialized to humans. Instead, they live contented lives with their feline families (often called colonies) outdoors. Cats, like squirrels, chipmunks, and birds, are capable of living healthy, fulfilling lives in the outdoors.

One prominent animal rights organization falsely states that "horrific fates" await feral cats, like diseases, injuries, or human cruelty. But these claims are based on isolated incidents and not supported by scientific evidence.

In fact, the research points the other way—a 2006 study found that of 103,643 stray and feral cats examined in spay/neuter clinics in six states from 1993 to 2004, less than 1 percent of those cats needed to be euthanized due to debilitating conditions, trauma, or infectious diseases.

Feral cats live full, healthy lives outdoors—there is no reason for them to be killed in shelters.

Feral cats are not a health threat.

Feral cats have equally low rates of disease as the cats who share your home.

In 2008, only 294 cases of rabies were reported in cats, both pet and feral. That's just 4.3 percent of all the rabies cases reported in animals that year. Feral cats do not pose a rabies risk to humans: there hasn't been a confirmed cat-to-human rabies transmission in more than 30 years. The number one source of rabies in the United States is wildlife—accounting for more than 90 percent of rabies cases in animals. Since feral cats involved in Trap-Neuter-Return programs are vaccinated and therefore cannot acquire or transmit the virus, they



pose no threats to humans or other animals.

Most importantly, research confirms that feral cats are neither breeding grounds for disease nor 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 2002 study concluded that "feral cats assessed in this study posed no greater risk to human beings or other cats than pet cats."

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Thank you so much for your consideration.

The compassion and humanity of those making the decision is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Mark Francis



Submitted By  
C Francis-C  
Submitted On  
10/25/2017 10:43:26 PM  
Affiliation  
Mrs.

PRO / IN FAVOR of Trap-Neuter-Return program for CATS

Herewith I urge you to consider to put in action the proposed "Cat Program" for Trap/Neuter/Release.

Trap/Neuter/Release saves lives and is the only and humane solution. (Killing cats or ignoring the problem is not a solution, instead it is just the opposite.)

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Thank you so much for your consideration.

The compassion and humanity of those making the decision is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Mrs. C. Francis-C



Submitted By  
Julie Furgason  
Submitted On  
10/26/2017 5:46:11 AM  
Affiliation  
  
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Email  
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Address  
1409 Courtney Dr  
Kenai, Alaska 99611

My name is Julie Furgason and I am writing this comment in support of PROPOSAL 62 – 5 AAC 92.029. Permit for possessing live game. This proposal will allow the release of sterilized, feral cats into the wild. I volunteer with Clear Creek Cat Rescue. TNR benefits public health because community cats get spayed and neutered and get rabies vaccinations they wouldn't have received otherwise. Cat populations will stabilize or reduce in size. Alaska's citizens deserve the opportunity to implement the only humane and effective approach to community cats.



Submitted By  
Paula S Geier  
Submitted On  
10/24/2017 12:17:36 PM  
Affiliation

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1316 Woll Road  
North Pole, Alaska 99705

Please support Trap-Neuter-Vaccinate & Return programs Proposal #62. This would greatly improve the lives of feral cats in Alaska and reduce cats coming into animal shelters and lower rates of euthanasia.

Thank you!



Submitted By  
Jessica Grantier  
Submitted On  
10/25/2017 5:27:37 AM  
Affiliation  
None

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7275 Chugach Meadows Loop  
Anchorage, Alaska 99507

Please support Proposal #62 to allow for Trap-Neuter-Vaccinate-Return programs and improve the lives of feral cats in Alaska. Thank you.



Submitted By  
Meadow Green  
Submitted On  
10/25/2017 10:51:16 PM  
Affiliation

PRO / IN FAVOR of Trap-Neuter-Return program for CATS

Herewith I urge you to consider to put in action the proposed "Cat Program" for Trap/Neuter/Release.

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Well-documented among biologists, the vacuum effect describes what happens when even a portion of an animal population is permanently removed from its home range. Sooner or later, the empty habitat attracts other members of the species from neighboring areas, who move in to take advantage of the same resources that attracted the first group (like shelter and food). Killing or removing the original population does nothing to eliminate these resources; it only creates a "vacuum" that will inevitably draw in other animals living nearby.

Research shows majority of feral cats are healthy.

Feral cats are cats who are not socialized to humans. Instead, they live contented lives with their feline families (often called colonies) outdoors. Cats, like squirrels, chipmunks, and birds, are capable of living healthy, fulfilling lives in the outdoors.

One prominent animal rights organization falsely states that "horrible fates" await feral cats, like diseases, injuries, or human cruelty. But these claims are based on isolated incidents and not supported by scientific evidence.

In fact, the research points the other way—a 2006 study found that of 103,643 stray and feral cats examined in spay/neuter clinics in six states from 1993 to 2004, less than 1 percent of those cats needed to be euthanized due to debilitating conditions, trauma, or infectious diseases.

Feral cats live full, healthy lives outdoors—there is no reason for them to be killed in shelters.

Feral cats are not a health threat.

Feral cats have equally low rates of disease as the cats who share your home.

In 2008, only 294 cases of rabies were reported in cats, both pet and feral. That's just 4.3 percent of all the rabies cases reported in animals that year. Feral cats do not pose a rabies risk to humans: there hasn't been a confirmed cat-to-human rabies transmission in more than 30 years. The number one source of rabies in the United States is wildlife—accounting for more than 90 percent of rabies cases in animals. Since feral cats involved in Trap-Neuter-Return programs are vaccinated and therefore cannot acquire or transmit the virus, they pose no threats to humans or other animals.





Most importantly, research confirms that feral cats are neither breeding grounds for disease nor 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 2002 study concluded that "feral cats assessed in this study posed no greater risk to human beings or other cats than pet cats."

Feral cats are not a significant health threat to humans or other animals. They deserve to live out their lives just like other outdoor creatures do.

Feral cats live healthy lives outdoors. Trap-Neuter-Return IS THE SOLUTION !

Thank you so much for your consideration.

The compassion and humanity of those making the decision is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

M Green



Submitted By  
Karen Hoover  
Submitted On  
10/24/2017 2:16:48 PM  
Affiliation  
  
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9079832648  
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There are so many unwanted creatures in our shelters, let alone left feral to fend for themselves, unloved and unhealthy. This bill would help reduce the expansion of the feral population and the suffering and deaths they endure.

I feel that an attempt to control back yard breeders, who selfishly breed innocent animals for profit, would be a big step forward as well. I totally support and will share with friends and members of our community!!



Submitted By  
Kristine Hutchin  
Submitted On  
10/24/2017 11:28:47 AM  
Affiliation  
Ms.

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9076967250

Email  
[khutchin@mtaonline.net](mailto:khutchin@mtaonline.net)

Address  
10335 Stewart Dr  
Eagle River, Alaska 99577

Please support Proposal #62 to allow for Trap-Neuter-Vaccinate-Return programs and improve the lives of feral cats in Alaska.



Submitted By  
Kora C Isakson  
Submitted On  
10/13/2017 11:13:01 AM  
Affiliation

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9072311776

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[isaksonkora@hotmail.com](mailto:isaksonkora@hotmail.com)

Address  
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Please allow Trap-Neuter-Release for feral cats in Alaska.



Submitted By  
Satonya Jumps  
Submitted On  
10/25/2017 7:53:05 AM  
Affiliation

~~Please support Proposal #62 to allow for Trap-Neuter-Vaccinate-Return programs and improve the lives of feral cats in Alaska.



Submitted By  
Christina Kluever  
Submitted On  
10/25/2017 7:28:50 AM  
Affiliation

As a licensed veterinary technician I believe spay and neuter clinics/release programs can be an effective and positive way to handle a growing cat population. These populations can grow out of control so quickly. Action should and must be taken at some point.



Submitted By  
Marcia Kramer  
Submitted On  
10/26/2017 2:02:07 PM  
Affiliation  
National Anti-Vivisection Society  
  
Phone  
3124276073  
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Address  
53 W. Jackson Blvd.  
Ste. 1552  
Chicago, Illinois 60604

Dear Members of the Alaska Board of Game,

It is with great delight that I have heard that you are considering adoption of Proposal 62 – 5 AAC 92.029, to permit the release of sterilized wild cats back into the wild. Feral cats have become a nuisance problem world wide, and while humans have contributed to the problem by abandoning feline pets, this problem has grown to enormous proportions.

The typical solution, gathering and euthanizing feral cats, seems to be a great idea, it is not the most effective way of dealing with the nuisance issue. Several years ago, Cook County, Illinois, was considering a similar measure. At that time, I knew little about the issue, but I learned. Chicago, which is in Cook County, already had active caretakers for Trap-Neuter-Release (or Return) (TNR) colonies of cats. They were largely operating without legal authorization, but there was a perceived need.

That need is one of the reasons that TNR programs have become so popular around the country. When a location is attractive to wild cats, removing the cats does not make the location any more attractive to other cats. Long-term studies showed that removing nuisance feral cats from a particular location was a very short-term solution, as other cats rapidly took their place.

By capturing, sterilizing, vaccinating and returning those cats to the same location—with their ears tipped for identification—the population will go into a gradual decline, with aging cats staying in the same place and even growing accustomed to the people and hazards nearby. As more cats are captured and sterilized, it is also hoped that the exploding wild population will decline. At least that has been the experience in the Chicago area.

Laws that prohibit the release of wild animals back into the wild can make sense. But in the case of feral cats, everyone is a loser when TNR is not an option.

I hope that you will look at the experiences of many city and county governments that have adopted laws which permit the release of feral cats who have been captured, sterilized (neutered or spayed), vaccinated and returned to their homes. I am convinced that you will give your approval to Proposal 62 as well.

Thank you,

Marcia Kramer  
Director of Legal/Legislative Programs  
The National Anti-Vivisection Society  
Chicago, IL



Submitted By  
Julie Linford  
Submitted On  
10/24/2017 7:56:19 AM  
Affiliation  
Outcast Cat Help

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Martinez, California 94553

Hi,

My name is Julie Linford and I am writing this comment in support of PROPOSAL 62 – 5 AAC 92.029. Permit for possessing live game. This proposal will allow the release of sterilized, feral cats into the wild. I was born and raised in Alaska and have many friends and family in the great state. I've been involved with trap-neuter-return (TNR) in California where I now live for the past 12 years. I founded a 501(c)(3) to use TNR to address outdoor cat overpopulation. It works. It works. It works. Thank you!





Submitted By  
Rena Lopez  
Submitted On  
10/25/2017 10:22:10 PM  
Affiliation  
Ms.

Pro - In favor of Trap Neuter Return program for Cats

Herewith I urge you to consider to put in action the proposed "Cat Program" for Trap/Neuter/Release.

Trap/Neuter/Release saves lives and is the **only and humane solution**. (Killing cats or ignoring the problem is not a solution, instead it is just the opposite.)

Many animal rights organizations have researched the issue and have in many communities implemented a TNR program. These programs are very successful.

For more info you may check out this website. It's a resource of information, studies and proven facts:

<https://www.alleycat.org/resources/>

Please take in consideration the following facts.

## **It's time to stop the killing.**

Cities and shelters across America have experienced great success with Trap-Neuter-Return—it is now official policy for feral cats in Washington, DC, Baltimore, and Chicago and other cities across the country. It's time to learn from past mistakes and move forward instead of going around in circles—it's time to stop fighting the endless battle and protect cats' lives.

## **Trap-Neuter-Return is the responsible, humane method of care for feral cats**

Trap-Neuter-Return stabilizes feral cat populations. The cats are humanely trapped, vaccinated, and neutered, so no more kittens will be born. They are then returned to their original location to live out their lives in their outdoor home. Not only is Trap-Neuter-Return the humane option for feral cats, it also improves cats' lives by relieving them of the stresses of mating and pregnancy. In the end, unlike catch and kill, TNR works.

## **The vacuum effect**

Removing cats from an area by killing or relocating them is not only cruel—it's pointless. Animal control agencies and city governments have blindly perpetuated this futile approach for decades. But scientific research, years of failed attempts, and evidence from animal control personnel prove that catch and kill doesn't permanently clear an area of cats.



Scientific evidence indicates that removing feral cat populations only opens up the habitat to an influx of new cats, either from neighboring territories or born from survivors. Each time cats are removed, the population will rebound through a natural phenomenon known as the “vacuum effect,” drawing the community into a costly, endless cycle of trapping and killing.

## **The vacuum effect is a phenomenon scientifically recognized worldwide, across all types of animal species**

Well-documented among biologists, the vacuum effect describes what happens when even a portion of an animal population is permanently removed from its home range. Sooner or later, the empty habitat attracts other members of the species from neighboring areas, who move in to take advantage of the same resources that attracted the first group (like shelter and food). Killing or removing the original population does nothing to eliminate these resources; it only creates a “vacuum” that will inevitably draw in other animals living nearby.

## **Research shows majority of feral cats are healthy.**

Feral cats are cats who are not socialized to humans. Instead, they live contented lives with their feline families (often called colonies) outdoors. Cats, like squirrels, chipmunks, and birds, are capable of living healthy, fulfilling lives in the outdoors.

One prominent animal rights organization falsely states that “horrific fates” await feral cats, like diseases, injuries, or human cruelty. But these claims are based on isolated incidents and *not* supported by scientific evidence.

In fact, the research points the other way—a 2006 study found that of 103,643 stray and feral cats examined in spay/neuter clinics in six states from 1993 to 2004, less than 1 percent of those cats needed to be euthanized due to debilitating conditions, trauma, or infectious diseases.

Feral cats *live* full, healthy lives outdoors—there is no reason for them to be *killed* in shelters.

## **Feral cats are not a health threat.**

Feral cats have equally low rates of disease as the cats who share your home.

In 2008, only 294 cases of rabies were reported in cats, both pet and feral. That’s just 4.3 percent of all the rabies cases reported in animals that year. Feral cats do not pose a rabies risk to humans: there hasn’t been a confirmed cat-to-human rabies transmission in more than 30 years. The number one source of rabies in the United States is wildlife—accounting for more than 90 percent of rabies cases in animals. Since feral cats involved in Trap-Neuter-Return programs are vaccinated and therefore cannot acquire or transmit the virus, they pose no threats to humans or other animals.

Most importantly, research confirms that feral cats are neither breeding grounds for disease nor 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 2002 study concluded that “feral cats assessed in this study posed no greater risk to human beings or other cats than pet cats.”

Feral cats are not a significant health threat to humans or other animals. They deserve to live out their lives just like other outdoor creatures do.

## **Feral cats live healthy lives outdoors. Trap-Neuter-Return IS THE SOLUTION !**

Thank you so much for your consideration.

The **compassion** and **humanity** of those making the decision is **greatly appreciated**.

Sincerely,

Rena Lopez





Submitted By  
Kari Mason  
Submitted On  
10/12/2017 12:49:19 PM  
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Independent  
  
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3220 Tayshee Circle  
Anchorage, Alaska 99504

My name is Kari Mason and I am writing this in support of proposal 62 - 5 AAC 92 029. Permit for possessing wild game. This will allow the release of sterilized, feral cats into the wild. Alaskan feral cats deserve to live, and this is the only humane and effective way of dealing with feral cat populations. I lost a wonderful cat a few years ago that was both an inside and outside cat, the feral population in the baxter bog area was killed and I believe he was part of the cats that were killed.

thank you.



Submitted By  
katherine mcfarland  
Submitted On  
10/10/2017 11:57:08 AM  
Affiliation

Do the right thing. The rescues work hard to save lives. Don't stand in their way.



Submitted By  
kathleen michael  
Submitted On  
10/10/2017 11:43:27 AM  
Affiliation  
Ms.

We need to do a better job at protecting our communities cats. They need to be treated as any domesticated animal. After all that is what they are. Many of them once belonged to someone and some how got separated from their family's one way or another. Let's do a better job caring for them!



Submitted By  
Pamela Myers-Lewis  
Submitted On  
10/24/2017 12:50:54 PM  
Affiliation

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Please support Proposal #62 to allow for Trap-Neuter-Vaccinate-Return (TNVR) programs and improve the lives of feral cats in Alaska. TNVR has proven very successful where it's been implemented. Feral or "community" cats thrive in their natural environments. TNVR is a humane way to manage community cat populations and is advocated for by animal welfare organizations such as Ally Cat Allies.



Submitted By  
Amanda Nace  
Submitted On  
10/24/2017 5:16:19 PM  
Affiliation

I support Proposal #62 to allow for Trap-Neuter-Vaccinate-Return programs and improve the lives of feral cats in Alaska. We must strive to be humane to all living beings, and if we cannot then we do not deserve it either.





Submitted By  
Ana Maria Navidad  
Submitted On  
10/24/2017 12:27:51 PM  
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Mrs.

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Cats must be protected!!!



Submitted By  
Mary O'Connor  
Submitted On  
10/27/2017 5:46:34 PM  
Affiliation

~My name is Mary O'Connor and I am writing in support of Proposal 62 – 5 AAC 92.029. Permit for possessing live game. This proposal will allow the release of sterilized, feral cats into the wild.

I am a volunteer at Anchorage Animal Care and Control and I also volunteer with two groups that rescue cats and dogs from that facility. I have worked with cats that come to the shelter in traps, many are cats that owners have released outdoors and the owners never claim them after they are picked up and brought to the shelter. Ideally, these cats are evaluated and then adopted into loving homes where they are kept indoors. The rescue groups that I volunteer with also work to that goal. The other cats that come to the shelter in traps are feral, or community cats that are not socialized or comfortable around humans. The municipality currently pays staff from Anchorage Animal Care and Control to pick up cats, house them at the shelter, and then euthanize them.

In order to successfully and more humanely deal with free-living cats in the community, a plan with two main components is needed. The existing community cats need to be fixed so they do not continue to add to the population, and people need to be educated so they do not contribute to the community cat population. Both of these are possible with adoption of Proposal 62. I interact with several rescue organizations, including those that are interested and are capable of trapping, neutering, and returning (TNR) cats to the community where they live. The current system of catch and kill is not working. As nature abhors a vacuum, community cats and other unaltered pet cats that are allowed outdoors reproduce to create more cats that live outdoors. As cats are removed from the environment, they are replaced by more cats, and the cycle repeats itself. TNR and limiting the addition of new cats into the community is the only way to reduce the community cat population in the long term.

Currently TNR is illegal. Changing the Alaska Administrative Code 92.029 will permit communities to allow for TNR to take place. This change must be enacted in coordination with an educational component to teach people to keep their cats indoors. This is the easiest method of compliance with Anchorage Municipal Code Title 17, as most cats are not controlled by restriction to yards, restrained by harness and leash, nor controlled by voice command. This is the second critical piece that is required to successfully manage community cat populations. Neither rescue group that I volunteer with will adopt cats to people that will allow their cats outdoors. In talking to potential adopters, I find that many people living in the municipality of Anchorage have no idea that it is illegal to let their cats roam loose. The myths that cats “need” to be outdoors or that they can “take care of themselves” need to end. Anchorage Animal Care and Control and several of the legitimate rescue organizations are capable of developing and managing an educational campaign to educate the public about responsible cat ownership, the safety benefits, and the regulatory requirements to keep them indoors, or otherwise controlled. Keeping cats indoors will reduce the number of calls to Anchorage Animal Care and Control, limit the number of owned cats that are picked up, and lighten the resulting workload.

Alaskans have been providing food and shelter for community cats and will continue to do so, whether it is legal or not. Proposal 62 will allow them to act in a kind and compassionate manner and get help in properly caring for these animals by altering and vaccinating them. Allowing the trapping of cats for TNR will inevitably result in owned cats being trapped. This will help reduce the numbers of pet cats living outdoors, as they can be brought to Animal Care and Control and claimed by their owners or adopted into homes. Providing this opportunity for our community members is the right thing to do and will enable them to be part of the solution in finding better lives for these cats.

Simply killing the cats is not humane and it does not work. As a community and a society, we are better than that. Killing the cats does not make any of the risks associated with outdoor animals go away, it just makes the catch and kill cycle repeat itself more quickly. Humans have created community cats by not responsibly having their cats altered, and by allowing them to roam freely outdoors. This human-caused problem deserves a humane solution. The cycle needs to be broken and TNR along with education is the best option to treat animals humanely and effectively, and allow their numbers to decrease naturally over time.

Thank you.



Submitted By  
Holly Odd  
Submitted On  
10/26/2017 5:18:42 PM  
Affiliation

I urge the Board of Game to pass proposal #62;

In 98% of the studies done, the TNR ( Trap neuter release) has been successful in controlling feral cat populations. There are many arguments to this issue on both sides. My statement is simple. What would it hurt to release feral neutered cats back into the wild? They were in the wild to begin with, only now they will not reproduce. People will NOT live trap a cat to neuter it if it will be killed.

Thank you for your consideration on this proposal.

Holly Odd



Submitted By  
joann Odd  
Submitted On  
10/24/2017 1:48:44 PM  
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Ms.

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#### COMMENTS ON PROPOSAL 63

Please do not support Proposal 63.

Truth and facts do not support the argument in proposal 63.

Many national and international groups support the TNR program as a humane way to reduce feral cat populations. Currently the only method approved by the Dept. of Fish & Game, is to KILL feral cats.

Supporting Proposal 63 has not and will not end the problem. It also makes **lawbreakers** out of MANY Alaskans who do not agree with the slaughter of feral cats as a way to solve this problem. They will just 'go underground' and relocate cat communities. Does Fish & Game have the resources to try and stop people from TNR programs? Is that a good use of their resources?

The TNR program – AT LEAST – assures that a cat is checked out and vaccinated by a vet, and is neutered, so that they will not ever breed again. Logic should be enough, to see that this program will lessen the numbers of feral cats.

Opponents of proposal 62 cannot show ANY statistics that show it does not help solve the problems. Their only objective is to continue killing feral cats which they call "vermin".

Proposal 63 states that feral cats carry Rabies and Toxoplasmosis, which could spread to native animals and fish. The opposite is closer to the facts. Nearly ALL animal and fish in Alaska ALREADY HAVE TOXOPLASMOSIS, even on remote Arctic areas where there ARE no domestic cats, and cats are not the primary carries of RABIES. Bats, foxes and canines are.

In addition, feral DOGS carry more than 18 diseases that can be spread to native species and humans, but there is no mandated effort to KILL feral dogs. Feral dogs routinely kill more than birds....they can take down baby moose as well as many other native species.... and dogs KILL MORE HUMANS in Alaska, than any other state, the victims are overwhelmingly ... native CHILDREN.

Where is the Proposal to kill feral dogs?

Consider what could happen if TNR cats are killed as the current practice requires..In addition to the extra COSTS, which must be the responsibility of a government agency, requiring a building, staff and all other costs, and when or if someone has a **pet** caught and killed by that agency, a terrible PR issue will be incurred. The firestorm such legal action would cause, would be yet another unneeded expense.

Passing Proposal 62 would eliminate the problems. TNR operates on volunteers, who provide everything. No agency would have to fund



**Allegations that TNR programs do not work, are easily refuted. I cannot include here, all the success stories, but WILL include the most recent one ;**

## **[Baltimore Hearing Affirms Success of City Trap-Neuter-Return Program](#)**

**September 27, 2017**

In an overwhelming show of support for Baltimore's landmark Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) program, city officials, residents, and advocates hailed its success at a hearing on Tuesday and recommended that it continue without changes or modifications. The Judiciary and Legislative Investigations Committee held the hearing to discuss Resolution 17-0042R, which required officials from the Health Department's Office .

"Sharon Miller, director of the city's Office of Animal Control, testified that TNR benefits residents and community cats. She was joined by Jennifer Brause, the executive director of the Baltimore Animal Rescue and Care Shelter (BARCS), which runs the TNR program, and its Community Cat Program Coordinator Grace Fellner.

Brause and Fellner presented statistics showing the positive impact of TNR since the program began a decade ago. "

If this cruel practice of KILLING CATS is allowed to continue, will the same fate next include feral DOGS?

Please avoid all the unnecessary expense and problems, **do not support Proposal 63.**



Submitted By  
joann Odd  
Submitted On  
10/24/2017 2:14:53 PM  
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## COMMENTS ON PROPOSAL #62

I urge the Board of Game to support and pass proposal 62.

Here are FACTS to support Proposal 62:

The TNR (Trap, Neuter and Release) program has been successful INTERNATIONALLY, as the most effective and humane method of reducing feral cat populations. This program stops the problem of 'what to do' about cats at shelters being killed in large numbers, and offers another solution.

Adding Proposal 62 to current game laws, also allows for **different locations in our huge state, to decide what works best, for them.** Conditions in the far north of Alaska differ greatly from Southeast, and the local residents should be allowed to take the actions their area wants and needs.

Realistically, there is really NO WAY to enforce the current regulation. If people do not comply, they simply go 'underground' and continue their project.

Does the State of Alaska and the Dept. of Fish & Game have the **time, money and resources**, to try and stop concerned Alaskans who practice TNR? Since this program has only positive results, why would anyone want it to be stopped? What is the penalty for releasing vaccinated, neutered cats back into their home?

Does the State of Alaska and the Dept. of Fish & Game want to be subjected to lengthy and expensive court cases such as with the ferret case which LOST in the Alaska courts.?

Or the Key Largo, Florida lawsuit which the Fish and Wildlife service LOST a similar case where they wanted to forbid the TNR program.

Opponents of Proposal 62 bring up once again, the **BOOGY-MAN of "RABIES"** when even in the Fish & Game regulations, on rabies, do not even mention CATS.

Bats, foxes and DOGS present the most danger. I have been told by official sources, that there has not been a case of Rabies, IN ANY



The same is true for the issue of Toxoplasmosis. The fact is, Toxoplasmosis is already present in most humans, animals and fish, and is such a non-issue that government records are not even kept regarding it. The PRIMARY way Toxoplasmosis is spread is in undercooked meat, working in the soil, and gardening. The vast majority of people who get it, in Alaska, is from lynx, caribou and wolves. Once you have it in your system, you are immune to it forever.

Official sources conclude that in Alaska, up to 60% of native people already HAVE toxoplasmosis, and domestic feral cats are NOT the carriers.

*JOURNAL OF WILDLIFE DISEASES, VOL. 36, NO. 2,*

*APRIL 2000*

***“Domestic cats are uncommon in rural Alaska villages. In most areas of mainland Alaska, feral domestic cats do not survive outside of established communities. Therefore, domestic cats are not believed to represent a major source of exposure for wildlife.”***

Further research shows that bears, wolves and lynx are primary carriers...and please do NOT conclude that lynx might mate with feral cats. When lynx meets domestic cat the result is NOT reproduction – it's DINNER.

“Hunters and trappers should take special precautions when hunting or trapping lynx, as **lynx serve as the only known Alaska wildlife source of *Toxoplasma oocysts***. There is a need for more public education, particularly among pregnant women in Arctic regions to alert people to the fact that **this is a food-borne disease, and is not always associated with cats.**”

*T. gondii* have been detected in a wide variety of species, including lynx, black bears, grizzly bears, wolves and herbivores (23–25). Among marine mammals, antibodies have been detected in walrus, Steller sea lions, harbor, ringed, spotted and bearded seals (26).

**Opponents of Proposal 62 have not based the Toxoplasmosis argument on facts, studies or truth. People, mammals and marine life ALL show the presence of taxoplasmosis, where there ARE no feral domestic cats.**

**Allegation that TNR programs do not work, are easily refuted. I cannot include here, all the success stories, but WILL include the most recent one ;**

## **[Baltimore Hearing Affirms Success of City Trap-Neuter-Return Program](#)**

**September 27, 2017**

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“Sharon Miller, director of the city’s Office of Animal Control, testified that TNR benefits residents and community cats. She was joined by Jennifer Brause, the executive director of the Baltimore Animal Rescue and Care Shelter (BARCS), which runs the TNR program, and its Community Cat Program Coordinator Grace Fellner.

Brause and Fellner presented statistics showing the positive impact of TNR since the program began a decade ago. Among the data:



The FACT is, "community cat" colonies are maintained ENTIRELY by volunteers, at **NO COST** to any agency. They provide food and spaying fees as well, which results in the need for fewer native food sources.

Arguments have also been made, that cats eat a lot of birds. BIRDS ARE HARD TO CATCH.. So, MICE, RATS, VOLES, SHREWS and other small rodents provide most of their food.. Do we have a shortage of ANY of those?

Please adopt the small change that Proposal 62 has asked for, and let us see how effective this program can be in Alaska.

**Just killing more cats has NOT been the answer.**





Submitted By  
Anne Ogden  
Submitted On  
10/11/2017 5:50:05 AM  
Affiliation  
None

Trap, spay, neuter, release is a humane, low cost solution to an on going problem created by people. Please seriously consider allowing this to become a reality in Alaska.



Submitted By  
Dr Marius & Sylvia Panzarella  
Submitted On  
10/26/2017 2:49:58 PM  
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Anchorage, Alaska 99502

My name is Sylvia Panzarella and I also represent my husband, Marius Panzarella. This comment is being written in SUPPORT of permit for possessing live game. This proposal will allow release of sterilized feral cats into the wild. PROPOSAL 62-5AAC 92.09

I feel that we are all interested in the same outcome, having less feral cats in our community. However, the difference comes in the humanity in achieving this goal. These unfortunate companion animals are in this situation from no fault of their own. There are many trained TNR (trap neuter return) individuals who are waiting and ready to trap these kitties, vaccinate, and return the feral to where they were found, to live out an observed life. Many do not even know they are there and the decimation of wildlife is HIGHLY exaggerated if the truth is examined. Although we have lived in Alaska, Kodiak/Anchorage for over 18 years, I have first hand knowledge that "down South", good Barn Cats are highly prized for their mousing and vermin skills! That is FIRST HAND KNOWLEDGE, not something read out of a hand picked article. They help to prevent diseases from mice, etc. and also prevent mold from grain and foodstuff around horses, chickens and other barn animals. The same would be true for our local gardening community. Unless there is a HIGHLY individualized situation, I am not seeing a lack of songbirds unless there is a raging pack of SUPERCATS equivalent to the Superheroes in action movies rampaging the city! For goodness sake, we are not shooting down all the wild birds in a community when rumors of bird flu appears. We have also seen TNR successfully applied to a feral cat community in Ottawa, Ontario, Canada at their Federal Capitol Bldg. There were many international stories over the years of the large colony that was cared for until the last couple were recently homed. Please look this up online as there is no shortage of stories and videos. There was not a problem with attracting other wildlife with food as there were trained individuals who knew how much, what type, and when to place it. Ottawa is also in a very cold climate and some shelters were put in appropriate spots. TNR CAN WORK if given the chance. I have FAITH that the BOG will take the Humane route of dealing with this situation by supporting TNR. Thank you for your time, Sylvia & Marius Panzarella



Submitted By  
SHERYL  
Submitted On  
10/10/2017 11:51:55 AM  
Affiliation  
NONE

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[sheryl\\_post@yahoo.com](mailto:sheryl_post@yahoo.com)  
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po box 60155  
Fairbanks , Alaska 99706

TNVR IS A GREAT PROGRAM, DON'T PUNISH THE CATS FOR PREVIOUS OWNERS THAT ARE IDIOTS. A LOT OF US CARE FOR STRAY CATS PROVIDING FOOD, WATER AND SHELTER ALL YEAR LONG. LETS DO THIS!!!!!!!!!! TNVR!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Submitted By  
SHERYL  
Submitted On  
10/24/2017 11:24:09 AM  
Affiliation  
NONE

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Fairbanks , Alaska 99706

PLEASE SUPPORT AND IMPLEMENT THE T-N-V-R PROGRAM FOR FERAL CATS. THIS IS A GREAT PROGRAM AND WILL CONTROL THE POPULATIONS AND THEN IMPLEMENT AN EDUCATION PROGRAM FOR PEOPLE WHO ARE NOT TAKING CARE OF THEIR CATS AND LETTING THEM RUN AND BECOME FERAL. PEOPLE ARE THE PROBLEM HERE NOT THE CATS. LET'S DO THE RIGHT THING HERE.

THANK YOU



Submitted By  
Jeanie Preuit  
Submitted On  
10/24/2017 6:53:59 PM  
Affiliation

Phone  
9073490076

Email  
[FlakeInnAK@aol.com](mailto:FlakeInnAK@aol.com)

Address  
8346 Bearberry St  
Anchorage, Alaska 99502

Please support Proposal #62 to allow for Trap-Neuter-Vaccinate-Return programs and improve the lives of feral cats in Alaska.



Submitted By  
Judy Price  
Submitted On  
10/15/2017 5:33:05 AM  
Affiliation  
Clear Creek Cat Rescue

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9079808898  
Email  
[clearcreekkitties@gmail.com](mailto:clearcreekkitties@gmail.com)  
Address  
POBox 15231  
Fritz Creek, Alaska 99603

I am requesting that the Board of Game approve Proposal 62 to allow colony cats to be released back to their homes ('the wild') after spay/neuter. This is the ONLY measure that will curb the burgeoning population of unwanted free-roaming cats. Killing our way out of this problem is not, and has never been, a viable solution and certainly not a humane one. Trap/neuter/return has worked in other parts of the country and has an excellent chance of being successful here.

As founder and Rescue Coordinator of Clear Creek Cat Rescue, I am fully aware of the homeless cat problem. We have been trapping feral cats for many years. They are spayed/neutered, vetted and rehomed to barn situations. This option for the wild cat population is only a half measure. The number of possible barn homes is not great enough to meet the needs of the feral population. And displacing colony cats to a different area without their family group often means that the cats have a tendency to wander off and become part of the homeless population once again.

One of the great advantages of allowing TNR is the attention that cat rescuers, and others, will put on helping ferals. As it is now, most rescue groups refuse to deal with feral colonies because of the limited options of what to do with them after rescue. This means that the cats get no help, but continue to breed, to contract illnesses and to create overpopulation nuisance situations because of their overcrowded destitute situation. What we have found is that the reality of most feral colonies is that a great number of the cats living in that situation are not feral at all. They are family cats that have been abandoned by people who moved away or kicked the cats out of the house or were too irresponsible to feed and care for them. These cats have ended up living in a feral colony for survival support. These dumped cats could be removed entirely from the streets and rehomed as beloved pets of families. Allowing TNR, besides helping these house cats get off the street, would give rescue groups the option of removing the kittens who have a chance of being socialized with people and adopted out to family homes while assuring that the mom cat is spayed. Removing these two groups--abandoned house cats and kittens--from feral colonies could immediately decrease the population by half. With the remaining cats spayed/neutered, that population will decrease over time rather than continuing to grow.

Last year Clear Creek Cat Rescue trapped a colony of 87 cats and kittens. After taking them into foster homes, having them vetted and evaluated by fosters, only about 20 of the cats were determined to be unsuited to living in a family home. Rescue operations like this could make a huge difference to the homeless cat problem. But most rescue groups will not even attempt to deal with such a group of ferals because of the difficulty of what to do with those unsociable cats who cannot be rehomed in the traditional way. If TNR was allowed, the barrier of returning spayed/neutered cats to their homes would be removed and rescue groups given more chance to make this kind of difference.

In attempting to save the wild areas from cats, the state has created a situation of perpetuating and increasing the problem tenfold by making help from those who will help illegal.

And it is clear that the areas where cats are now living and would be returned to are not 'wild' areas at all. Feral colonies are NOT situated in wilderness or lands uninhabited by humans. Feral cats are not hunting endangered species. They are living where their parents or grandparents were dumped by people in the middle of populated areas--rural subdivisions, trailer parks, city streets. Cat colonies are surviving where people have already completely altered the natural habitat and eliminated the ability of most native wild species to survive, particularly those who are so unstable as to be endangered. What these cats are surviving on is the refuse of humans and the non-native species of mice and rats that people have brought in. Blaming cats for ANY reduction in fragile wild species in Alaska is nothing more than a diversion from the true problem. Feral cat colonies follow in the wake of human's destruction of wild creatures' habitat; they do not create it.

I ask that the Board take a rational look at the problem and act accordingly. Allowing people to intervene in cat colonies to reduce the population through humane measures, rather than killing more and more cats without any hope of making a difference in the growing problem, is the ONLY reasonable and humane response.

Please vote to change the wording of Proposal 62 to allow the spaying and neutering of cat colonies.



Submitted By  
R Rauber  
Submitted On  
10/26/2017 11:35:27 PM  
Affiliation  
Ms.

PRO / IN FAVOR of Trap-Neuter-Return program for CATS

Herewith I urge you to consider to put in action the proposed "Cat Program" for Trap/Neuter/Release.

Trap/Neuter/Release saves lives and is the only and humane solution. (Killing cats or ignoring the problem is not a solution, instead it is just the opposite.)

Many animal rights organizations have researched the issue and have in many communities implemented a TNR program. These programs are very successful.

For more info you may check out this website. It's a resource of information, studies and proven facts:  
<https://www.alleycat.org/resources/>

Please take in consideration the following facts.

It's time to stop the killing.

Cities and shelters across America have experienced great success with Trap-Neuter-Return—it is now official policy for feral cats in Washington, DC, Baltimore, and Chicago and other cities across the country. It's time to learn from past mistakes and move forward instead of going around in circles—it's time to stop fighting the endless battle and protect cats' lives.

Trap-Neuter-Return is the responsible, humane method of care for feral cats

Trap-Neuter-Return stabilizes feral cat populations. The cats are humanely trapped, vaccinated, and neutered, so no more kittens will be born. They are then returned to their original location to live out their lives in their outdoor home. Not only is Trap-Neuter-Return the humane option for feral cats, it also improves cats' lives by relieving them of the stresses of mating and pregnancy. In the end, unlike catch and kill, TNR works.

The vacuum effect

Removing cats from an area by killing or relocating them is not only cruel—it's pointless. Animal control agencies and city governments have blindly perpetuated this futile approach for decades. But scientific research, years of failed attempts, and evidence from animal control personnel prove that catch and kill doesn't permanently clear an area of cats.

Scientific evidence indicates that removing feral cat populations only opens up the habitat to an influx of new cats, either from neighboring territories or born from survivors. Each time cats are removed, the population will rebound through a natural phenomenon known as the "vacuum effect," drawing the community into a costly, endless cycle of trapping and killing.

The vacuum effect is a phenomenon scientifically recognized worldwide, across all types of animal species

Well-documented among biologists, the vacuum effect describes what happens when even a portion of an animal population is permanently removed from its home range. Sooner or later, the empty habitat attracts other members of the species from neighboring areas, who move in to take advantage of the same resources that attracted the first group (like shelter and food). Killing or removing the original population does nothing to eliminate these resources; it only creates a "vacuum" that will inevitably draw in other animals living nearby.

Research shows majority of feral cats are healthy.

Feral cats are cats who are not socialized to humans. Instead, they live contented lives with their feline families (often called colonies) outdoors. Cats, like squirrels, chipmunks, and birds, are capable of living healthy, fulfilling lives in the outdoors.

One prominent animal rights organization falsely states that "horrific fates" await feral cats, like diseases, injuries, or human cruelty. But these claims are based on isolated incidents and not supported by scientific evidence.

In fact, the research points the other way—a 2006 study found that of 103,643 stray and feral cats examined in spay/neuter clinics in six states from 1993 to 2004, less than 1 percent of those cats needed to be euthanized due to debilitating conditions, trauma, or infectious diseases.

Feral cats live full, healthy lives outdoors—there is no reason for them to be killed in shelters.

Feral cats are not a health threat.

Feral cats have equally low rates of disease as the cats who share your home.

In 2008, only 294 cases of rabies were reported in cats, both pet and feral. That's just 4.3 percent of all the rabies cases reported in animals that year. Feral cats do not pose a rabies risk to humans: there hasn't been a confirmed cat-to-human rabies transmission in more than 30 years. The number one source of rabies in the United States is wildlife—accounting for more than 90 percent of rabies cases in animals. Since feral cats involved in Trap-Neuter-Return programs are vaccinated and therefore cannot acquire or transmit the virus, they pose no threats to humans or other animals.



Most importantly, research confirms that feral cats are neither breeding grounds for disease nor 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 2002 study concluded that "feral cats assessed in this study posed no greater risk to human beings or other cats than pet cats."

Feral cats are not a significant health threat to humans or other animals. They deserve to live out their lives just like other outdoor creatures do.

Feral cats live healthy lives outdoors. Trap-Neuter-Return IS THE SOLUTION !

Thank you so much for your consideration.

The compassion and humanity of those making the decision is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

R, Rauber



Submitted By  
Rosemarie Ray  
Submitted On  
10/24/2017 2:34:35 PM  
Affiliation

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907690625

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[karmarays3163@gmail.com](mailto:karmarays3163@gmail.com)

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205 W Birch  
#3  
Palmer , Alaska 99645

I support saving cats for all regions!





Submitted By  
Delisa Renideo  
Submitted On  
10/24/2017 1:00:06 PM  
Affiliation  
Yes to Life

Phone  
9073731526

Email  
[delisa@yestolife.info](mailto:delisa@yestolife.info)

Address  
5010 W. Lakeside Dr.  
5010  
Wasilla, Alaska 99623

Please support Proposal #62 to allow for Trap-Neuter-Vaccinate-Return programs and improve the lives of feral cats in Alaska.

This program will allow us to compassionately care for the cats who have no one to care for them, and help stem the tide of unrestricted population growth of these feral cats.

I appreciate your careful consideration and support of Proposal #62.

Thank you,

Delisa Renideo



Submitted By  
Thomas Richards  
Submitted On  
10/27/2017 2:07:48 PM  
Affiliation

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[jssrt@hotmail.com](mailto:jssrt@hotmail.com)

Address  
PO Box 2769  
Palmer, Alaska 99645

Dear Sir or Madam,

I have read on the internet the following: **Thankfully, Proposal 62 will allow communities to implement TNVR programs to humanely and effectively manage feral cat populations in the state. The Alaska Board of Game is considering these rule changes—and you can help show your support.**

Proposal 62 is good if it will advance the cause of trapping, neutering and return outside cats to their home environment and will then stop breeding.

Thank you.

Thomas Richards



Submitted By  
Kelli Riley  
Submitted On  
10/14/2017 2:12:12 PM  
Affiliation

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2096928264

Email  
[rileyfamily85@yahoo.com](mailto:rileyfamily85@yahoo.com)

Address  
Ok box 870829  
Wasilla, Alaska 99687

My name is Kelli Riley and I am writing this comment in support of PROPOSAL 62 – 5 AAC 92.029. Permit for possessing live game. This proposal will allow the release of sterilized, feral cats into the wild.



Submitted By  
M F -Robison  
Submitted On  
10/26/2017 11:47:23 PM  
Affiliation

## PRO / IN FAVOR of Trap-Neuter-Return program for CATS

Herewith I urge you to consider to put in action the proposed "Cat Program" for Trap/Neuter/Release.

Trap/Neuter/Release saves lives and is the only and humane solution. (Killing cats or ignoring the problem is not a solution, instead it is just the opposite.)

Many animal rights organizations have researched the issue and have in many communities implemented a TNR program. These programs are very successful.

For more info you may check out this website. It's a resource of information, studies and proven facts:  
<https://www.alleycat.org/resources/>

Please take in consideration the following facts.

It's time to stop the killing.

Cities and shelters across America have experienced great success with Trap-Neuter-Return—it is now official policy for feral cats in Washington, DC, Baltimore, and Chicago and other cities across the country. It's time to learn from past mistakes and move forward instead of going around in circles—it's time to stop fighting the endless battle and protect cats' lives.

Trap-Neuter-Return is the responsible, humane method of care for feral cats

Trap-Neuter-Return stabilizes feral cat populations. The cats are humanely trapped, vaccinated, and neutered, so no more kittens will be born. They are then returned to their original location to live out their lives in their outdoor home. Not only is Trap-Neuter-Return the humane option for feral cats, it also improves cats' lives by relieving them of the stresses of mating and pregnancy. In the end, unlike catch and kill, TNR works.

### The vacuum effect

Removing cats from an area by killing or relocating them is not only cruel—it's pointless. Animal control agencies and city governments have blindly perpetuated this futile approach for decades. But scientific research, years of failed attempts, and evidence from animal control personnel prove that catch and kill doesn't permanently clear an area of cats.

Scientific evidence indicates that removing feral cat populations only opens up the habitat to an influx of new cats, either from neighboring territories or born from survivors. Each time cats are removed, the population will rebound through a natural phenomenon known as the "vacuum effect," drawing the community into a costly, endless cycle of trapping and killing.

The vacuum effect is a phenomenon scientifically recognized worldwide, across all types of animal species

Well-documented among biologists, the vacuum effect describes what happens when even a portion of an animal population is permanently removed from its home range. Sooner or later, the empty habitat attracts other members of the species from neighboring areas, who move in to take advantage of the same resources that attracted the first group (like shelter and food). Killing or removing the original population does nothing to eliminate these resources; it only creates a "vacuum" that will inevitably draw in other animals living nearby.

Research shows majority of feral cats are healthy.

Feral cats are cats who are not socialized to humans. Instead, they live contented lives with their feline families (often called colonies) outdoors. Cats, like squirrels, chipmunks, and birds, are capable of living healthy, fulfilling lives in the outdoors.

One prominent animal rights organization falsely states that "horrific fates" await feral cats, like diseases, injuries, or human cruelty. But these claims are based on isolated incidents and not supported by scientific evidence.

In fact, the research points the other way—a 2006 study found that of 103,643 stray and feral cats examined in spay/neuter clinics in six states from 1993 to 2004, less than 1 percent of those cats needed to be euthanized due to debilitating conditions, trauma, or infectious diseases.

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Most importantly, research confirms that feral cats are neither breeding grounds for disease nor 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 2002 study concluded that "feral cats assessed in this study posed no greater risk to human beings or other cats than pet cats."

2 of 2

Feral cats are not a significant health threat to humans or other animals. They deserve to live out their lives just like other outdoor creatures do.

Feral cats live healthy lives outdoors. Trap-Neuter-Return IS THE SOLUTION !

Thank you so much for your consideration.

The compassion and humanity of those making the decision is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,  
M F-Robison



Submitted By  
Carita Rosebeary  
Submitted On  
10/10/2017 1:19:47 PM  
Affiliation

Alaska's taxpayers deserve TNVR programs, which are animal-friendly, cost-effective, and reduce the burden and bureaucracy placed on the state's animal shelters. The simple truth is that current methods of animal control relative to community cats are expensive, ineffective and oftentimes inhumane. The proposed rule changes would be better for the cats, for public health and for the wildlife we all want to protect.



ADF&G Boards Support  
Brynn Parr  
PO Box 115526  
Juneau, AK 99811-5526

October 21, 2017

Dear Brynn,

I am writing this letter in support of changing Alaska Administrative Code number 5 AAC 92.029, Permit for Possessing Live Game to remove the regulatory barrier to implement Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) programs to manage community cat populations.

I have been a Licensed Veterinary Technician since September 2000. I have worked in the veterinary field for a total of 23 years. During this time I have become very familiar with feral cat management strategies. While practicing in Washington State (1994-2014) I worked with Feral Cat Coalition of Oregon (FCCO) as a Technician at many of their community outreach clinics. We would routinely sterilize/ear tip/vaccinate 100-140 cats during an 8 hour shift. The feral cat's care takers were responsible for trapping the cats and bringing them to the clinics. They were also responsible for returning them to the same location once they recovered from surgery. In each community there is a dedicated group of individuals who care for these cats and work hard to trap and successfully prevent kittens in their colonies. I remember numerous times when the 3-5 hardest to trap cats, within a colony, were finally brought in and the colony was completely sterilized. It was a proud moment for everyone involved knowing these cats were no longer reproducing and would have a stable group.

Without these programs the cats will reproduce unchecked even with a trap and kill policy. The area in which these cats live is a suitable environment to support a feral cat colony and will continue to support them in spite of the efforts to remove the cats. Within a short time new cats will take their place. The funding used to trap and kill cats is a waste of tax dollars because it is chasing the issue without an end point. A TNR program would allow the sterilized cats to prevent other cats from taking their place and save tax dollars.

I have read multiple articles regarding feral cat's impact on native wildlife. A lot of the information is based on estimations and projections. One point that comes up often is that native species are impacted by human intervention just as much or more so than feral cats. The impact from feral cats will not change with a trap and kill policy because the cats are quickly replaced. However, having a stable group of cats within a given area will likely lessen the impact.

I have been a resident of Juneau, AK since July 2014 and have continued my work as a Veterinary Technician. I am disheartened that current State Code requires feral cats to be trapped and killed as the only form of population control. I have seen many successes when TNR is used to stabilize cat colonies. I fully support changing the current State Code to allow TNR programs in our community and state wide.

Sincerely,

Melissa M. Roulette, LVT



Submitted By  
Isobel Roy  
Submitted On  
10/10/2017 3:10:44 PM  
Affiliation

Please devote resources towards humane strategies as regards to community cat populations. Trapping, neutering and releasing is the correct path. Our ecology has greater threats than any one posed by community cats. Is it the reluctance to address deeper issues the reason for the folly? Let's be better.





Submitted By  
Goldie Russell  
Submitted On  
10/18/2017 7:17:09 AM  
Affiliation

My name is Goldie Russell and I am writing this comment in support of PROPOSAL 62 – 5 AAC 92.029. Permit for possessing live game. This proposal will allow the release of sterilized, feral cats into the wild.

As a supporter of TNR, this will help cat communities in Alaska but ensuring the Cat populations will stabilize or even reduce in size. Public health is supported because the cats will receive rabies vaccinations that they wouldn't otherwise. As recent issues with cat colonies in the MatSu valley have shown the size will rapidly increase and illness is spread through out the colony because of lack of vet care and vaccinations.

Alaska's citizens deserve the opportunity to implement the only humane and effective approach to community cats. I fully support TNR because the cats provide a valuable service to the communities they live in. Please pass this proposal and give Alaskans the chance to help support the health and human control of the feral cat population.

Thank you.



Submitted By  
Lynsey Ryan  
Submitted On  
10/13/2017 2:54:06 PM  
Affiliation  
109

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[pheonix1882@yahoo.com](mailto:pheonix1882@yahoo.com)

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3577 w. Lynn  
Wasilla, Alaska 99654

My name is Lynsey Ryan. I have been a foster/volunteer for Clear Creek Cat Rescue for 7 years. You have no idea how important passing this proposal is to me and many others. Why? Because I have witnessed first hand the devastation these cat colonies are under. I have fought the war with them when a cat colony of 80 I was taking care of until we could get into foster homes was dying of distemper, not to mention their bellies full of worms. I watched kitten after kitten die in my arms, I have seen colonies of well over 70 eating their own dead. I could go on, and wish I could share photos with this comment. Please pass this proposal and let rescue groups like ours that believe all lives matter save them from future death, devastation and more unwanted and abandoned life! Let us do what we do and help our community!!!



Submitted By  
Tarissa Sardari  
Submitted On  
10/26/2017 2:57:36 PM  
Affiliation

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4681 S Runabout Circle  
Wasilla, Alaska 99623

Please support Proposal #62 to allow for Trap-Neuter-Vaccinate-Return programs and improve the lives of feral cats in Alaska. Thank you.



Submitted By  
Katharine Savage  
Submitted On  
10/23/2017 11:25:50 AM  
Affiliation

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907-957-2230  
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[dock\\_savage@msn.com](mailto:dock_savage@msn.com)  
Address  
421 West 10th  
Juneau, Alaska 99801

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing this letter in support of Proposal #62, which allows the re-release of sterile, feral cats into the wild, and against Proposal #63, which prohibits the release of sterile, feral cats into the wild. These Proposals are further described in the Statewide Regulations document the Board of Game will tentatively discuss Nov 10 – 17, 2017 in Anchorage.

I have served rural Alaska for over 20 years as a veterinarian. With respect to feral cats, the following has been my experience:

- Some people release/abandon their unwanted cats with the justification that “they will be fine in the wild”.
- Many of these animals will survive. While generally in suboptimal condition, they are able to forage in the wild. Food supplements are often provided by community “cat people”.
- Over time, the abandoned animals become feral and create problems for the community. They reproduce, significantly impact local bird and small mammal populations, and may transmit disease to domestic cats, other wild animals, or zoonotic diseases to people, including rabies and toxoplasmosis.

How to address the problem? On the most pragmatic level:

1. A community may do nothing.
2. A community may choose to trap and euthanize. A decrease in the population with euthanasia also decreases the competition for food, which would likely increase the fitness of the remaining population. Euthanasia is also often met with public resistance.
3. A community may trap, neuter and release, which maintains the competition for resources, but lowers the reproductive potential of the population. It is important to recognize that a more accurate term for this process would be trap, neuter and “re-release”. The true release of these animals occurs when the original owner abandons it in the wild. The animal is “re-released” following neutering, which does not include an introduction of disease. In actuality, with vaccinations as part of the process, disease transmission may be reduced.

I believe that the first two options either maintain the status quo or exacerbate the problem. It is only through trap, capture and re-release that the feral cat population will start to be addressed, with the understanding that prevention of the initial release and humane care for all animals is the ultimate goal.

Regards,  
Katharine Savage DVM



Submitted By  
Madeline Scholl  
Submitted On  
10/27/2017 12:40:32 PM  
Affiliation

Phone  
907-350-9935  
Email  
[madelineamber3@gmail.com](mailto:madelineamber3@gmail.com)  
Address  
1143 L St  
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Hello, my name is Madeline Scholl and I am writing this comment in support of PROPOSAL 62 - 5 AAC 92.029. Permit for possessing live game. This proposal will allow the release of sterilized, feral cats into the wild. I am a supporter of local organizations who want to implement and manage community cats through a scientifically proven method of Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR). This method benefits public health and safety because community cats receive rabies vaccinations that they otherwise would not receive. TNR is a proven method for stabilizing and reducing the number of feral/community cat colonies. The State of Alaska should allow organizations with the dedicated board members and volunteers to implement the ONLY human and effective approach to managing community cat colonies.

Current municipal and state law prohibits the return of feral cats to their colony if they are captured and brought to an animal control facility. Feral cats have lived their lives outdoors, away from humans, and cannot be placed for adoption. The only option is to destroy the cat, thus creating a vacuum effect in that cat colony - other homeless cats move in, and/or the colony reproduces to replace those taken. This method is an endless cycle and does not address the root-cause of the problem.

By allowing for TNR programs to manage community cat colonies by sterilizing, vaccinating, and returning the cats to their colony, the population is controlled and gradually reduces in size as the cats live out the rest of their lives. Public health is also protected because the cats receive vaccinations and health care when they would otherwise go without. The current laws and regulations do nothing to protect public health with regard to feral cat colonies which, so long as irresponsible pet owners fail to sterilize and care for their cats, will ALWAYS exist - even if an entire colony is destroyed, MORE homeless/abanonded cats will move in. Without TNR, the cycle never ends. TNR is a SMART solution, and is the proven BEST solution for Alaskans.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions. Thank you for considering my comment on this issue.

-Madeline Scholl, Anchorage resident, concerned citizen.



Submitted By  
Rebecca Sentner  
Submitted On  
10/24/2017 4:17:42 PM  
Affiliation

Phone  
4125768115

Email  
[rebsentner@gmail.com](mailto:rebsentner@gmail.com)

Address  
4002 Taft Dr.  
Anchorage, Alaska 99517

Please support Proposal #62 which will allow for Trap-Neuter-Vaccinate-Return (TNVR) programs in Alaska. This will help to control populations and improve the lives of feral cats in our state.

Thank you.



Submitted By  
Zoe Seppi  
Submitted On  
10/13/2017 10:47:49 AM  
Affiliation

Phone  
19074402525

Email  
[Seppi.zoe@gmail.com](mailto:Seppi.zoe@gmail.com)

Address  
12337 Siver Spruce cir anchorage  
Anchorage , Alaska 99516

My name is Zoe and I am writing this comment in support of PROPOSAL 62 – 5 AAC 92.029. Permit for possessing live game. This proposal will allow the release of sterilized, feral cats into the wild/ back into the habitat they were captured from



Submitted By  
Molly Sherman  
Submitted On  
10/11/2017 7:20:07 AM  
Affiliation  
Pet Pride Cat Rescue

Phone  
907-687-8935  
Email  
[molly.sherman1@gmail.com](mailto:molly.sherman1@gmail.com)  
Address  
3467 Shanly  
Fairbanks, Alaska 99709

Good Day Game Board Members,

Please adopt Proposed rule 62 for Alaska's unwanted feline population. **Well managed** trap-neuter-vaccinate-return (TNVR) programs have proven to reduce suffering for feral and unwanted cats. It is not a perfect solution -- as long as companion animals are not required by law to spayed/neuter at a young age, as long as cat hoarders can have 100's of cats on their property without enforcement of animal cruelty regulations and as long as people feed feral cat populations indiscriminately there will always be an excess of unwanted cats who damaged wildlife populations and who suffer greatly. It is important to note that TNVR programs need to be managed by trained people in order to successfully and safely reduce unwanted cat colonies and increase health in wild cat populations.

Community support is essential in places that undertake TNVR programs. One respected, effective program is the Alley Cat Allies organization. They offer guidance and have experience: <https://www.alleycat.org/community-cat-care/ongoing-health-care/>

I am not an expert and have never worked for a TNVR program but with solid, knowledgeable management these programs they have reduced and even eliminated unwanted cats, reducing suffering and improving local wildlife habitat for people and animals. Thanks for listening.

Molly Sherman





Submitted By  
janis skliar  
Submitted On  
10/27/2017 8:27:16 PM  
Affiliation

Phone  
9073606675

Email  
[j.skliar@acsalaska.net](mailto:j.skliar@acsalaska.net)

Address  
2939 captain cook estates circle  
anchorage, Alaska 99517

We need TNR in AK. Neutering feral cats is the only way to control population expansion among these cats. This has been proven in multitudes of communities around the world. Killing feral cats does not solve the cat population problem nor does it help in keeping cats from killing birds. Many people let their domesticated cats outside and those cats kill birds at least as much as feral cats do. I implore our state to adopt this practice.



Submitted By  
Christina Spears  
Submitted On  
10/10/2017 1:03:50 PM  
Affiliation

Phone  
9072747339

Email  
[Petnannies@alaskan.com](mailto:Petnannies@alaskan.com)

Address  
PO Box 244665  
Anchorage, Alaska 99524-4665

I whole-heartedly support Rule 62, TNVR, being put into place. There are do many feral and house cats on the loose in our neighborhoods. So many, even the house cats have not been spayed or neutered, which exacerbates the problem of loose cats. It is also a compassionate way to deal with these strays, as many would be euthanized under the current rule, as they would be unadoptable. Please make Rule 62 part of the solution! Thank you.

Christina Spears



Submitted By  
Chayna Stewart  
Submitted On  
10/13/2017 12:20:59 PM  
Affiliation

Phone  
9076874030

Email  
[Chayna\\_azlin\\_1@yahoo.com](mailto:Chayna_azlin_1@yahoo.com)

Address  
1318 29  
Fairbanks, Alaska 31905

Please support the trap spay and neuter release program



Submitted By  
Joyce Taylor  
Submitted On  
10/24/2017 1:45:39 PM  
Affiliation  
Humane Society

Phone  
9079534311

Email  
[pitatwelve@gmail.com](mailto:pitatwelve@gmail.com)

Address  
P.O. Box 886,  
29425 Fool's Gold  
Soldotna,, Alaska 99669

I believe we should trap, neuter, and release feral cats. This action, done in a humane manner, would benefit cats in Alaska and help insure better lives for them.



# THE HUMANE SOCIETY OF THE UNITED STATES



PC405  
1 of 47

Celebrating Animals | Confronting Cruelty

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October 27, 2017

ADF&G Boards Support Section  
ATTN: Board of Game Comments  
P.O. Box 115526  
Juneau, AK 99811-5526  
dfg.bog.comments@alaska.gov

Dear Board of Game Members:

The Humane Society of the United States (HSUS), the nation's largest animal protection organization, works to protect both wildlife and cats. On behalf of our Alaska members and supporters, please accept these comments in support of Proposal 62 – 5 AAC 92.029. Permit for possessing live game and in opposition to Proposal 63 – 5 AAC 92.029. Permit for possessing live game. Both of these proposals concern the appropriate management of unowned feral and stray cats, commonly referred to as community cats.

We firmly believe that cat management should be designed to protect public safety, protect cats, and protect wildlife. The HSUS supports strategic, non-lethal management of community cats who already exist outdoors through sterilization and vaccination efforts, such as trap-neuter-return (TNR). The goal of TNR is to humanely reduce, and eventually eliminate, the number of community cats, as well as the nuisance behaviors, wildlife predation and public health concerns associated with them.

The effects of free-roaming cats on wildlife are well documented and are a cause of legitimate concern to us, as well as wildlife agencies and organizations. However, it is important to draw a distinction between such concerns and baseline conditions as they currently exist in Alaska. The presence of free-roaming cats, living alone and in aggregations (colonies) throughout the state (including natural habitat areas) and the existing effects of cats on the environment is the pre-existing condition that forms the baseline for this proposed rule-change. The question to consider here is not how Proposal 62 would impact the environment starting from a baseline of no cats on the landscape because that in no way matches the current state of affairs. Rather, starting from the reality of currently unmanaged cats, the decision here is whether to allow for humane and effective management programs or keep the status quo.

The intent of Proposal 62, and any TNR program in any location, is to positively impact the current state of affairs by sterilizing enough unowned cats to reduce the overall population, thereby reducing wildlife predation and public health risks. A 2003 study by Levy, et al., to evaluate the effect of a long-term trap-neuter-return program, with adoption whenever possible, on the dynamics of a free-roaming cat population concluded that, "A comprehensive long-term program of neutering followed by adoption or return to the resident colony can result in reduction of free-roaming cat populations in urban areas." Numerous other studies, as outlined in Proposal 62 and the related Appendix, support the claim that when conducted appropriately, non-lethal strategies can achieve the desired outcome.

In addition, lethal trap-and-remove efforts (as proposed in Proposal 63) are ineffective in curbing



populations, and will never achieve the desired results for a variety of reasons. Trap-and-euthanize is extremely costly and labor intensive, not to mention unpopular with the vast majority of American citizens. Cats are now America's number one companion animals and Americans want to see them treated humanely, regardless of the cats' temperament.

Lethal trap-and-remove efforts end up being a haphazard approach that addresses too few cats, often targets household pets, and has little impact on animal welfare, environmental, wildlife or public health issues. These efforts are also incredibly costly, in terms of both financial and human labor/mental welfare impacts. On the other hand, non-lethal strategies such as those put forth in Proposal 62 are widely favored by the public and are supported through volunteer activity and time, as well as financial donations.

We are also providing our publication, "[Managing Community Cats: A Guide for Municipal Leaders](#)," as well as a fact sheet on [public health concerns](#) to provide further information regarding the efficacy and benefits of non-lethal management for unowned cats. Thank you for considering our comments in support of Proposal 62 and in opposition to Proposal 63. We are available to answer any questions the Board may have regarding effective and humane cat management.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Katie Lisnik".

Katie Lisnik  
Director, Cat Protection and Policy

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Heather Carpenter".

Heather Carpenter  
Western Regional Director



# Managing Community Cats

*A Guide for Municipal Leaders*



THE HUMANE SOCIETY  
OF THE UNITED STATES

I • MA



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## FOREWORD

Few animal-related issues facing local leaders are potentially more difficult and time-consuming than those involving un-owned cats in the community. Complaints or concerns regarding cats often represent a disproportionate share of animal-related calls to elected officials and local animal care and control agencies.

“Community cats” are typically un-owned or semi-owned cats, comprised of both strays (lost and abandoned former pets who may be suitable for home environments) and ferals (extremely fearful of people and not welcoming of human attention, making them unsuitable for home environments), who are the offspring of other feral or stray cats. Some community cats can be considered loosely owned, meaning that concerned residents feed them and may provide some form of shelter in their own homes or on their own property, but do not always identify the cats as their own personal pets.

This guide examines the role of community cats (sometimes called free-roaming cats) in cat overpopulation and the concerns shared by officials, animal care and control agencies, and constituents about these animals. It provides recommendations for strategies to manage community cat populations.

This guide can assist municipal leaders in evaluating the presence of cats in their communities and determining how to address these populations effectively.





## WHY THIS GUIDE IS IN YOUR HANDS

Local officials and agencies are mandated to protect public health and safety by managing animal control issues such as zoonotic diseases, nuisance animals, and animals running at large. Agencies also commonly receive calls from constituents about community cats.

The issue of managing community cats can create unnecessary conflict. Dissent often arises among neighbors; between cat advocates and wildlife advocates; and among animal care and control leaders, local government leaders, and their constituents.

Often excluded from animal care and control budgets and mandates, community cats might not be managed by field officers who neither have the training to handle them nor a holding space to house them. Whether by choice or regulation, many animal care agencies deal with community cats only when there is a specific nuisance complaint about them or concern for their welfare.

In past decades, many local governments approached community cat populations using solutions like trap and remove, which usually involves killing the trapped cats. Those conventional approaches are now widely recognized as mostly ineffective and unable to address the larger community animal issue. New research (Hurley and Levy, 2013) reveals that this non-targeted, selective response to a population which is reproducing at high rates doesn't help

to reduce cat populations and nuisances in our communities, improve cat welfare, further public health and safety, or mitigate the real impact of cats on wildlife.

Instead, sterilization and vaccination programs, such as trap-neuter-return (TNR), are being implemented to manage cat populations in communities across the country. Well-managed TNR programs offer a humane and proven way to resolve conflicts, reduce population, and prevent disease outbreaks by including vaccinations against rabies and other potential diseases. This guide provides you with the tools and information you need to implement a well-planned and effective community cat management program.

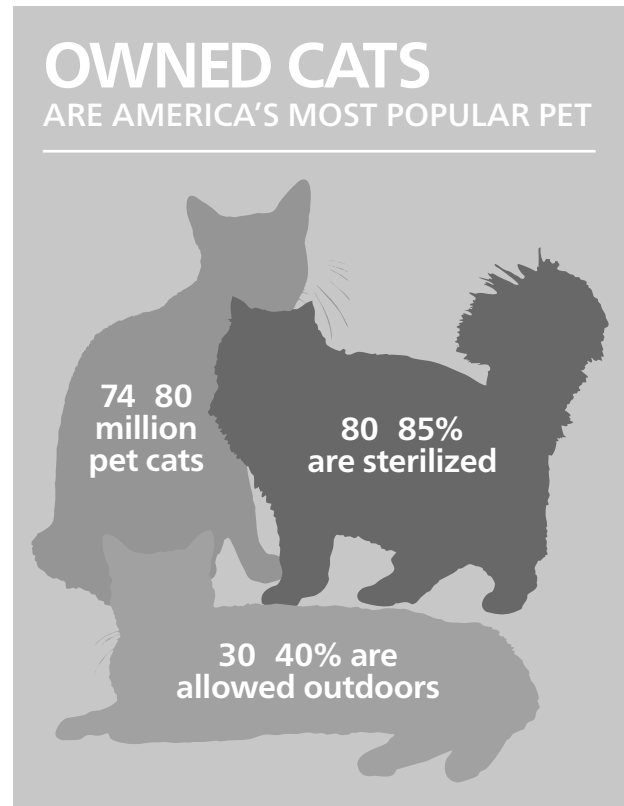
*“A well-managed TNR program will provide both cost control as well as long-term, community cat population control for a municipality. In Somerdale, we recognize this value and the positive impact it will have on our animal and residential population. We also recognize that this proactive approach is the most humane and effective means by which we can care for and manage our community cat population.”*

*—Gary J. Passanante, Mayor,  
Borough of Somerdale, NJ*

# WHY ARE THERE SO MANY CATS?

## Owned Cats

Cats are the most popular pet in the United States according to the American Veterinary Medical Association's 2012 *U.S. Pet Ownership & Demographics Sourcebook* (AVMA 2012). Approximately 30% of households own cats, and overall owned cat numbers have been increasing as the number of households in the U.S. rises. The majority (approximately 85%) of owned cats have been spayed or neutered, but they may have had one or more litters—intended or accidental—before being sterilized. In underserved communities, rates of sterilization in owned cats tend to be much lower, with cost and transportation being the biggest barriers. Accessible spay/neuter services for cat owners are critical for the overall welfare and management of cats. Approximately 65% to 70% of owned cats are kept indoors at least at night, and this trend has been on the rise, up from approximately 20% in the 1970s (APPA 2012).



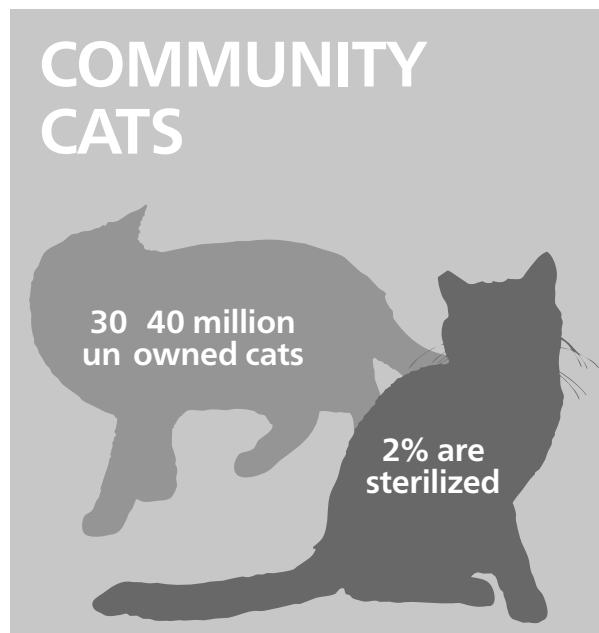
## Un-Owned Cats

Unsterilized community cats (un-owned or semi-owned) contribute about 80% of the kittens born each year and are the most significant source of cat overpopulation (Levy & Crawford, 2004). Estimates vary greatly for the number of community cats in the United States, ranging all the way from 10 to 90 million (Loyd & DeVore, 2010). The limited evidence available indicates that the actual number may be in the 30–40 million range (Rowan, 2013). The real problem is that only about 2% of them are spayed or neutered (Wallace & Levy, 2006) and continue to reproduce generations of outdoor cats. For this reason, large-scale and targeted reproductive control of community cats is critical to reduce cat populations in your community.

*“When cat populations are present, the choice is not between having cats or not having cats. The choice is between having a managed community cat population, or an unmanaged one.”*

*—Bryan Kortis, Program Manager,  
PetSmart Charities, Phoenix, AZ*

Community cat population numbers are greatly affected by the community in which they live. Human demographics, types of land usage, climate, presence of predators, and availability of resources all affect the cat population and determine how many cats can be supported in a given area. Population estimates vary greatly and provide only a loose number that can be further



refined as program work takes place. Experts differ on recommended calculations, with a range of formulas from human population divided by six (Levy & Crawford, 2004), to human population divided by 15 (PetSmart Charities, 2013). For a mid-range estimate of the number of community cats in your area, divide your human population by 10. This estimate is exactly that—an estimate. Cold weather areas with freezing temperatures or locales with robust predator populations that limit survival may have fewer cats than estimated, while rural areas with lots of barns and farms may have more than estimated. Warm climates tend to support larger populations of cats. Densely populated areas with shelter and adequate food sources for outdoor cats may have very large concentrations or relatively few cats depending on the neighborhood’s demographics.

## MEET THE PLAYERS

Knowing the stakeholders in your community and working cooperatively with them leads to better outcomes and a more cohesive community cat management plan.

Most animal care and control agencies are operated by local governments, but some jurisdictions contract with nonprofit organizations to perform these important functions. Regardless, their primary role is to manage public health, safety, and disease concerns as well as complaints from community residents. These agencies are also expected to take care of and redeem lost pets, as well as re-home pets who no longer have homes. For people concerned with the welfare of outdoor cats or those who find them a nuisance, animal

care and control agencies are often the first points of contact. Animal care and control agencies and public health departments need to be prepared to respond effectively to these complaints and proactively address community cat populations when possible.

One of the biggest challenges is maintaining adequate resources (i.e. budget). Few local governments find themselves swimming in the extra money needed to adequately fund a complete animal sheltering operation, including programs addressing community cats. This underscores the importance of volunteers and nonprofit organizations in the community who are willing to devote their resources to helping manage community

### PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENTS' APPROVAL OF TNR



#### New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene

[nyc.gov/html/doh/html/  
environmental/animals-tnr](http://nyc.gov/html/doh/html/environmental/animals-tnr)

Lists local TNR groups on  
its website

#### New Jersey State Department of Health & Senior Services

[state.nj.us/health/  
animalwelfare/stray](http://state.nj.us/health/animalwelfare/stray)

Lists TNR as an approach  
for managing community cats



Delaware Department of  
Health & Social Services,  
Division of Public Health  
[dhss.delaware.gov/dhss/  
dph/oaw/foundstraycats.  
html](http://dhss.delaware.gov/dhss/dph/oaw/foundstraycats.html)

Lists TNR as an approach  
for managing community cats

Baltimore City  
Health Department  
[neighborhoodcats.org/  
uploads/File/Resources/  
Ordinances/Baltimore\\_  
TNRRegs.pdf](http://neighborhoodcats.org/uploads/File/Resources/Ordinances/Baltimore_TNRRegs.pdf)

Issues regulations for  
practicing TNR



*“Collectively, our goal is to eliminate the free-roaming cat population and decrease the spread of rabies in our communities. The only approach that has proven effective is conducting large-scale, targeted sterilization and vaccination programs that result in healthier cats and healthier communities.”*

— Dr. Karyl Rattay, Delaware Division of Public Health Director, Wilmington, DE



cats. We strongly encourage municipalities to develop comprehensive volunteer programs and partnerships and agreements with other community organizations. It's also important that agencies evaluate their intake and outcomes regularly to ensure that current resource allocations are appropriate. For example, an agency with high euthanasia rates for cats may want to reconsider its intake policies and reallocate those resources spent housing cats for euthanasia on proactive cat management.

*“The Vet PH SPIG encourages communities to discuss trap, neuter, vaccinate and return (TNVR) as a management practice to control community cats, and to adopt this practice where possible.”*

*—American Public Health Association—  
Veterinary Public Health Special  
Interest Group Policy*

#### **Read about municipalities where animal care and control provides services to reduce community cat populations:**

Pittsburgh, PA ([pittsburghpa.gov/animalcontrol/spay\\_neuter.htm](http://pittsburghpa.gov/animalcontrol/spay_neuter.htm))

Elk Grove, CA ([elkgrovecity.org/animals/feral-cats.asp](http://elkgrovecity.org/animals/feral-cats.asp))

Dallas, TX ([dallasanimalservices.org/trap\\_neuter\\_return.html](http://dallasanimalservices.org/trap_neuter_return.html))

Sacramento County, CA ([animalcare.saccounty.net/spayneuter/pages/feralcatsandkittens.aspx](http://animalcare.saccounty.net/spayneuter/pages/feralcatsandkittens.aspx))

San Jose, CA ([sanjoseca.gov/index.aspx?nid=2382](http://sanjoseca.gov/index.aspx?nid=2382))

Camden County, NJ ([ccasnj.org/spay\\_neuter\\_clinic/feral\\_cats.html](http://ccasnj.org/spay_neuter_clinic/feral_cats.html))

## Private Animal Shelters and Humane Societies

Around three billion public and private dollars are spent each year operating animal shelters across the country (Rowan, 2012). The primary role of most private animal shelters is the housing and adoption of homeless cats and dogs, but shelters are often the receptacle for injured or sick wildlife and cats and dogs who might be considered unadoptable by some. Many community cats fall into this category.

These organizations play an important role in the community, often serving as a point of contact, and are widely recognized by the public for enforcing local and state humane laws and ordinances. They are often involved at a policy level, lobbying for animal protection laws and programs.

*“After we implemented a shelter, neuter, return (Return to Field) program in 2010, it changed the way we do business and it has improved our ability to do more to help all animals. It convinced us that more was possible. Last year alone, there were 3,000 fewer cats and kittens in our shelter. As a result, the capacity and savings that we have enjoyed have allowed us to do more to help the cats in our care and it has even benefitted the dogs because those resources don't have to be spent on more cats.”*

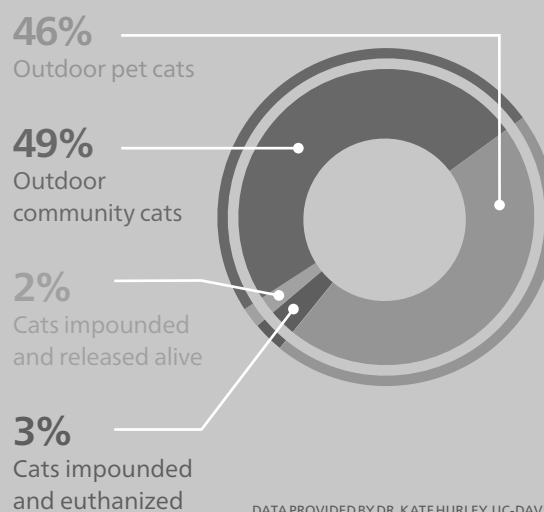
*—Jon Cicirelli, Director, Animal Care and Services, San Jose, CA*

Approximately 6–8 million cats and dogs enter U.S. animal shelters annually, with approximately half being euthanized (HSUS, 2013). That number includes as many as 70 percent of cats who enter shelters (ASPCA, 2013). These cat-related intake and euthanasia activities cost more than a billion dollars annually (Rowan, 2012), while affecting only a tiny fraction of the total number of cats in a given community and doing nothing to manage overall cat populations. This haphazard approach has little impact on welfare, environmental, or public health issues. It stresses shelters, overwhelming their resources and far exceeding capacity, and it gives false expectations to citizens coming to these agencies for help resolving problems.

The pie chart from the state of California shows the estimated percentages of outdoor community cats (red) and owned cats (blue) who go outside, compared with the number of cats handled by the California sheltering system who are either euthanized or adopted out (green and purple combined) (CA Dept of Public Health, 2013). Clearly, the tiny sliver of cats handled by the

## SHELTER AND COMMUNITY CAT DYNAMICS

CALIFORNIA 2010



## RETURN TO FIELD

Some shelters care for feral colonies on their own property, either by themselves or in collaboration with local TNR groups. Others with high euthanasia rates for cats are embracing “Return to Field” programs as a way to reduce euthanasia while focusing energy and resources on spaying and neutering.

In the Return to Field program, healthy, un-owned cats are sterilized, eartipped, vaccinated, and put back where they were found. The rationale is that if the shelter has no resources, a healthy cat knows how to survive and should not be euthanized to prevent possible future suffering. Using resources for sterilization has a larger impact than focusing resources on intake and euthanasia.



California sheltering system pales in comparison to the total cat population, demonstrating that these hard-working agencies are still making little long-term impact. (Koret, 2013).

## Animal Rescue Groups

These privately run organizations—usually, but not always, with nonprofit tax status—typically do not have a facility and are foster-based. Rescue groups are primarily focused on finding homes for animals in the community. Often, rescue groups and shelters have cooperative relationships in which shelters transfer animals to the care of rescue groups whose foster homes and volunteers help to stretch resources and increase opportunities for homeless animals. There are many rescue groups that specialize in cat rescue, including those that participate in TNR activities.

## TNR Groups

Thousands of nonprofit organizations exist around the country for the primary purpose of assisting community cats. These organizations are often funded by private donations and

operate on small budgets, but they work hard—often as unpaid volunteers—to trap, neuter, and return cats living outdoors. They may also be involved in local politics, lobbying for improved animal-related ordinances and funding. Some TNR groups also consider themselves rescue groups, and vice versa.

## Wildlife Agencies and Conservation Groups—Public and Private

The federal government has not adopted or taken a specific position on TNR. Federal wildlife agencies, such as the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, oppose the management of TNR colonies in or near wildlife conservation areas, and individuals in federal agencies have adopted a variety of positions with regard to TNR programs. State wildlife agencies, such as departments of natural resources or fish and wildlife agencies, are funded through a variety of state and federal sources, such as taxes placed on all firearms and ammunition sold. These







state agencies have traditionally focused on the management of game (i.e. hunted) species, but increasingly are becoming involved in broader conservation agendas that include non-game and threatened and endangered species. They typically do not regulate or get involved with TNR programs outside of protected wildlife areas.

Private wildlife groups, such as the National Audubon Society or the World Wildlife Fund, are funded by donations and private grants and operate primarily to protect wildlife from harm and habitat degradation. These groups are often actively involved in lobbying for public policy changes that affect vulnerable wildlife species. Concern regarding outdoor cat predation on wildlife has become a hot topic in the conservation community, but all stakeholders (both cat and wildlife advocates) share the same end goal of reducing outdoor cat populations. See the Concerns about Wildlife section on page 22 for more details.

## Veterinarians

Many veterinarians support the concept of TNR and may offer various forms of assistance, but they are also business owners who have a bottom line to meet. While many would like to offer discounted services or to expand their offerings for community cats, they still need to make a living.

The involvement of local veterinarians is a key component of any sterilization program. Communities and organizations need to understand the unique challenges of the veterinary community and to consult local veterinarians when drafting program plans. Sterilization capacity will be determined by how many surgeries your local veterinary partners can handle above and beyond their everyday business. Even if your agency

*“I am very proud to be a part of the profession that puts the “N” in TNR. Nationwide, increasing numbers of veterinary professionals are participating in this life-saving strategy. More and more veterinary practices treat free-roaming cats and the number of high-quality, high-volume spay/neuter clinics continues to grow. This is all in recognition of the fact that discontinuing the breeding cycle and then returning the cats to their original environment is the only scientifically proven effective and humane approach to stabilizing, and ultimately decreasing, free-roaming cat populations, as well as protecting potentially affected wildlife. The veterinary profession should be applauded for being such an integral part of the solution to a problem that has plagued our country for decades.”*

—Susan Krebsbach, DVM, Humane Society  
Veterinary Medical Association  
Veterinary Advisor, Oregon, WI

hires a staff veterinarian, you should continue to work with other local veterinarians. They can be strong partners for your program, filling in when extra capacity is needed, helping with injured and ill cats, and providing other kinds of medical support.

## The Public

Most people care about cats and want to see

them treated humanely. Communities that embrace effective cat management programs will be rewarded with goodwill from their residents. Many communities are learning about what officials in San Jose, California experienced: that a public who readily understands and supports decisions made in the best interest of the cats turns out to be the best at reducing conflicts between cats and humans and cats and other animals.

Some residents might complain about cats in their backyard or cats adversely affecting their property. Many of these complaints can be resolved with information about humane deterrents and civil dialogue with neighbors, which agencies can help facilitate. Animal control officers can be an integral part of this approach, or if there are no resources to support this, other successful models include enlisting the aid of a local nonprofit to help mediate cat-related conflicts.

Large-scale sterilization programs depend on volunteer support. A significant portion of the public (approximately 10% to 12%) already feeds community cats (Levy & Crawford, 2004) and might be willing to help, especially when low-cost, high-quality sterilization programs are available. Non-lethal management programs will be readily supported by the majority in your community, while lethal control will not receive the same support and may actively be opposed by concerned residents. Policies designed to support and enable TNR activities are critical; those that place barriers to public engagement in TNR activities or threaten caretakers with penalties for their goodwill and volunteerism need to be amended or removed. Agencies that do not recognize the need to adopt non-lethal solutions often become the focal point of community criticism over high levels of cat euthanasia in the shelter.

## WHAT WOULD YOU DO ABOUT UN-OWNED CATS IN THE STREET?

81%

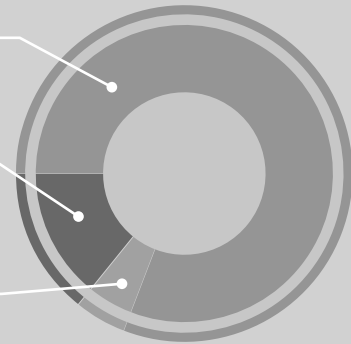
Leave the cats alone

14%

Trap and kill the cats

5%

Other



An overwhelming majority of Americans believe that leaving a community cat outside to live out his life is more humane than having him caught and euthanized, according to a nationally representative survey conducted for Alley Cat Allies by Harris Interactive in April and May 2007.

U.S. PUBLIC OPINION ON HUMANE TREATMENT OF STRAY CATS  
LAW AND POLICY BRIEF, ALLEY CAT ALLIES

## SEVEN IN 10 PET OWNERS



say they believe animal shelters should be allowed to euthanize animals only when they are too sick to be treated or too aggressive to be adopted.

Only a quarter of the people who took part in a recent *AP-Petside.com* poll said animal shelters should sometimes be allowed to euthanize animals as a population control measure ([ap-gfcpoll.com/featured/ap-petside-com-latest-poll-findings](http://ap-gfcpoll.com/featured/ap-petside-com-latest-poll-findings), conducted Oct. 13–17, 2011).

# MANAGING COMMUNITY CAT POPULATIONS: WHAT DOESN'T WORK

Many conventional strategies have been used over the years to attempt to manage community cats. You might have tried them or have contemplated trying them, but here is why they don't work.

## Trap and Remove or Relocate

Trap and remove may at first glance seem to be the logical approach to solving community cat problems. However, unless it is consistently performed with very high levels of resources and manpower and addresses over 50% of a targeted population, it doesn't offset the root of the problem: ongoing reproduction of un-trapped cats (Andersen et al, 2004). The resources (money, manpower, etc.) required to capture this many cats simply do not exist, either in the budgets and capacity of government

agencies or in terms of public support.

Haphazard lethal control efforts only result in a temporary reduction in the cats' numbers, essentially putting a band-aid on the problem and further distance from real solutions.

Moreover, while some advocates of this approach claim that the cats just need to be removed and placed elsewhere, there is no "elsewhere." Relocating cats is a complex task that is usually unsuccessful and creates more problems than it resolves. The vast majority end up "relocated" to shelters that have no other recourse but to perform euthanasia. Euthanasia in shelters is typically performed to end the lives of ill, dangerous, or suffering animals in a humane manner. When euthanasia is performed on healthy but unsocialized cats, it can be characterized as unnecessary, calling into question whether their deaths are actually humane.

Opposition from many in the community who oppose killing cats and insufficient resources to achieve the level of removal/euthanasia necessary to actually achieve results can often prove to be insurmountable barriers to lethal control programs. Communities that use trap and euthanize strategies typically do not realize reductions in the number of cat complaints, and cat intake at local shelters stays constant or continues to rise. Therefore, the only result



of trap and remove/euthanize programs is turnover—new feline faces in the community, but not fewer.

## Feeding Bans

The logic behind banning the feeding of outdoor cats is that if no one feeds them, they will go away. However, this doesn't work because cats are strongly bonded to their home territories and will not easily or quickly leave familiar surroundings to search for new food sources. Instead, they tend to move closer to homes and businesses as they grow hungrier, leading to more nuisance complaint calls, greater public concern for the cats' welfare, and underground feeding by residents. People who feed cats will ignore the ban, even at great personal risk, and enforcement is extremely difficult, resource intensive, and unpopular.

*“As a nation, we have over 50 years of witnessing the ineffectiveness of trap and kill programs and their inability to reduce community cat numbers. It's time we try the only method documented to work—TNR.”*

*—Miguel Abi-hassan, Executive Director,  
Halifax Humane Society,  
Daytona Beach, FL*

## Licensing Laws, Leash Laws, and Pet Limits

Laws intended to regulate pet cats and their owners don't work to reduce community cat populations, because community cats do not have “owners” in the traditional sense.



*“Bans on feeding feral cats do nothing to manage their numbers. Bans force feral cats to forage through trashcans and kill wildlife, such as birds, squirrels, and rabbits. Establishing feeding stations ensures a healthier colony and allows a human being to interact with the colony and provide care for any cat that is under stress or who needs medical attention. Feeding stations also bring feral cats to a central location and help establish a trust, making trapping [for sterilization] an easier task.”*

*—Wayne H. Thomas, Councilman,  
Hampstead, MD*

Instead, they're cared for by volunteer resident caretakers who happen upon them. These caretakers should not be penalized for their goodwill; they are essentially supplementing the community's cat management protocols with their time and resources. Rather, laws should be designed to incentivize people in the community to care for these cats and to protect those who do so.



Caretakers don't choose how many cats there are, so pet limits are of little use. Because these cats are not owned, caretakers don't control the cats' movements, so leash laws are equally ineffective. Requiring community cats to be licensed by caretakers is a bad idea from an enforcement and compliance standpoint, and forcing caretakers to register colony locations often causes people concerned for the cats' welfare to go underground and off the municipal radar screen. Additionally, cat-licensing projects rarely pay for themselves and further drain already limited resources. Policies that impose penalties on caretakers are barriers to sound community cat management. However, proactive, non-lethal control programs can enlist the support of caretakers by gaining their trust, and they can in turn provide data on the cats people care for.

## Relocation and Sanctuaries

Some individuals or organizations may call for un-owned cats to be relocated or placed in sanctuaries. While this may seem like a humane alternative to lethal control, it is unrealistic due to the sheer numbers of

cats in communities. Relocation is time-consuming and usually unsuccessful. Cats are strongly bonded to their home areas and may try to return to their outdoor homes. In addition, if the food and shelter that initially attracted the cats cannot be removed, other unsterilized cats will move in to take advantage of the available resources.

Some shelters and rescues have implemented successful barn cat programs, where unsocialized cats can be relocated to barns and farms to provide rodent control. But these programs require management and are by their nature limited. They can't address the large number of un-owned cats in the community.

Sanctuaries might be available in some areas, but those that provide quality care for animals quickly fill to capacity and are too expensive to maintain for large numbers of un-owned cats. Cat populations vastly out-scale availability at sanctuaries, making them an unrealistic option in most cases. Many unfortunate examples exist of sanctuaries that grew too large and resulted in neglect and cruelty. Moreover, these organizations cause an additional burden on communities, requiring law enforcement intervention and resulting in a large group of cats again needing to be removed and relocated. If you are able to secure a spot in a sanctuary, always visit it in person before sending the cat there, to ensure that all animals receive proper and humane care.

*“While licensing a cat (like dogs) seems responsible, the unintended consequences of it are damaging. Licensing owned cats does not take care of feral cats that are not owned by anyone.”*

—Councilman Rod Redcay, VP  
Denver Borough Council, PA



# MANAGING COMMUNITY CAT POPULATIONS: WHAT DOES WORK

Properly managed sterilization-vaccination programs do not create cat overpopulation—the cats are already there. Your choice is between proactive, effective management of an existing problem or continuing to react in crisis mode to an unmanaged problem. Well-designed and implemented community cat programs reduce the numbers of unsterilized and unvaccinated cats, are in line with public opinion and can mobilize an army of compassionate, dedicated people to take action for cats, wildlife, and their communities. To be most effective, these programs must be adopted by more communities and supported by more animal care and control agencies and municipal officials. The HSUS strongly recommends proactive, effective community cat management programs (including TNR and other sterilization programs), legislation that allows for and supports them, and coalition-based approaches that involve community leaders, citizens, and stakeholders.

Solving community cat problems requires many strategies, including:

## TNR

Trap-Neuter-Return and its variants are non-lethal strategies intended to reduce the numbers of community cats, improve the health and safety of cats, and reduce impacts on wildlife. At minimum, TNRed community cats are spayed or neutered so they can no longer reproduce, vaccinated against rabies, marked to identify them as sterilized (the

universally recognized sign of a sterilized cat is an ear-tip, a surgical removal of the top quarter inch of the of the cat's ear, typically the left), and returned to their home territory.

Community-wide TNR programs are effective because they:

- Halt reproduction of existing cats through sterilization, leading to long-term management, reduction and eventual elimination of outdoor cat populations
- Vaccinate cats against rabies (and other diseases, depending on available resources), addressing public health and safety risks
- Decrease nuisance complaints by eliminating or dramatically reducing noise from cat fighting and mating and odor from unneutered male cats spraying urine to mark their territory
- Ease the burden on community resources such as animal shelters flooded with cats and their offspring
- Bring new financial resources and volunteer workforces into the community
- May in some instances create an immediate reduction in cats due to:
  - Kittens young enough to be socialized can be routed into adoption channels, depending on available shelter or rescue resources
  - Friendly adult cats being evaluated for potential reunification with lost owners, transition into home of caretakers, or rehoming through rescue and shelter channels depending on situation and resources and the input of caretakers and feeders bonded with the cats
  - Both of these options are recommended only if a live outcome for the cats is likely. If that is not the case we recommend sterilization, vaccination, and return to territory for all cats.
- Can improve community and neighborhood

- relations and lead to new collaborations
- Allow private nonprofit organizations that help community cats and volunteers to mediate conflicts between the cats and residents of surrounding communities
  - Maintain the health of colony cats (cats living together in a given territory) and allow caretakers to trap new cats who join the colony for TNR or other live-outcome options

## Targeting Efforts

TNR and sterilization efforts are constantly evolving and improving. Through better data collection on cat intake, complaint calls, and euthanasia, and with the advent of GIS software, we are now able to target and focus resources on areas where projects can have the biggest impact. Many projects have had success focusing their funding and efforts within certain zip codes, neighborhoods, or specific locations, such as apartment complexes.

Through an assessment of the data for a given community, geographical “hotspots” become visible. By targeting the appropriate amount of resources—including trappers, surgeries, and marketing—to fully address that target zone, programs can effectively stop the

reproduction and get a handle on that population set before moving on to the next target area. This approach has a much faster and more visible impact on cat populations than a scattered, random approach centered on complaint calls across a wide geographical area. Targeted efforts allow you to reach a high enough rate of sterilization (ideally as close to 100% as possible) to quell population growth. Assessing your community, mapping cat hot spots, and targeting your approach can also help reduce impacts on wildlife by identifying sensitive and vulnerable wildlife areas and focusing efforts in those areas.

*“One of the most important recent advances in TNR is the strategy of targeting. By focusing resources like surgeries, outreach, and trappers on areas with high concentrations of free-roaming cats, populations can be reduced faster and more efficiently, resulting in lower intake and euthanasia at shelters as well as fewer complaints.”*

*—Bryan Kortis, Program Manager,  
PetSmart Charities,  
Phoenix, AZ*



## Animal Control/ Shelter Innovations

In their efforts to combat cat overpopulation, the majority of municipal agencies and private organizations are spaying and neutering animals before they are adopted, providing subsidized spay/neuter for pet owners with low incomes, and supporting community cat caretakers with low-cost spay/neuter services, training, equipment and increased legal protections. Programs like these can also attract private funding and grants and engender public goodwill. Most citizens want to do the right thing for their cats, but barriers such as cost or transportation exist in communities across the country. In order to truly address cat overpopulation, these barriers need to be removed for all members of our communities.



## Services for Pet Owners

Services for pet owners in the community must be accessible to all residents. They should include preventative and wellness care, such as vaccinations, tips for finding pet-friendly rental housing, and information on keeping pets in their homes by resolving unwanted behaviors and managing allergies. It's important to promote keeping cats indoors and using collars, visible identification, and possibly microchipping for pet cats so that those who do go missing can be reunited with their families. It's also important to let community members know that shelters and rescue groups provide adopters with resources when they face problems with their cats. Shelters and rescues can provide behavior assistance and potentially medical assistance when cats face severe injury or disease.

*“Veterinary students at the University of Florida have been performing TNR in the Gainesville area since 1998. Since Operation Catnip started focusing on litter prevention in community cats, the euthanasia rate for cats at our local shelter has plummeted from more than 4,000 in 1998 to less than 400 in 2012. Residents were wary at first, but 40,000 cats later, it’s well-recognized that the program to sterilize, vaccinate, and treat parasites in free-roaming cats has made our community better for people and for cats.”*

—Julie Levy, DVM, PhD, Diplomate ACVIM, Director, Maddie’s® Shelter Medicine Program at the University of Florida Gainesville



## Collaboration

Each community is different. There is no one-size-fits-all solution for managing community cats. Stakeholders must work together to create programs that address specific needs and maximize their community's available resources. By working together, municipal agencies, shelters, veterinarians, and cat rescue groups can humanely reduce community cat populations while protecting the public, cats, and wildlife. The returns are plentiful: fewer free-roaming cats; lower cat intake and euthanasia; municipal cost savings; greater volunteer participation; more adoptions; better use of limited shelter, animal control, and public health resources; increased goodwill towards shelters; and more lives saved.



*“One of the new programs we created was our TNR program, the Apartment Cat Team (ACT). Our data showed us that apartment complexes and mobile home parks were “ground zero” for abandoned cats, feral cats, and litters of unwanted kittens. The ACT program focuses on teaching and empowering apartment residents and managers in the benefits of TNR, spay-neuter, rabies vaccination, and microchips. In addition, we are recruiting kitten foster homes and rescuing kittens out of feral life, socializing them, and adopting them into new homes. The ACT program is a vital program that is contributing to a reduction in euthanasia—along with other innovative programs we have recently put into place to save cats and kittens. The ACT program gives us a chance to try a different approach that is not only more humane, but that also builds rapport between manager and tenant. The result is a public better educated about humane treatment of animals.”*

*—Mike Oswald, Director, Multnomah County Animal Services, Troutdale, OR*



# ADDRESSING CONCERNS ABOUT COMMUNITY CATS

## Concern

### The cost to the municipality

Long-term solutions like TNR may sound expensive, but they usually end up costing less than repeated cycles of trap-house-euthanize. TNR is a long-term investment in a community. The cost of TNR is often covered out-of-pocket by individuals who care about community cats and by nonprofit organizations. But animal care and control agencies and nonprofit organizations with self-funded TNR programs have often found the cost of TNR less expensive than admitting, holding, euthanizing, and disposing of healthy cats. The money saved can be put towards more TNR. There are also many grant opportunities available for targeted TNR programs that can offset budgets and improve efforts.

## Concern

### By allowing TNR, the municipality may be liable for any future conflicts with cats

A municipality would be liable for an injury or damage only if it committed an act of negligence. Implementing or permitting a TNR program to reduce the community cat population and resolve nuisance complaints is reasonable government behavior, not negligent conduct. In addition, liability for harm caused by animals typically stems from ownership—but no one “owns” a community cat just as no one “owns” a squirrel who might cause damage.

Even if a person is bitten or scratched, a TNRred cat likely would have been vaccinated against rabies. Rabies prophylaxis treatment will likely still be advisable, but the real risk of rabies is reduced. Consider an alternate situation, where a person is bitten and sues the municipality because officials turned down a TNR program that would have dealt with an overpopulation issue and vaccinated cats against the disease. At least 34 states require rabies vaccination for cats, and efforts should be made to revaccinate cats when possible (AVMA, 2013).

## Concern

### Community cats transmit diseases

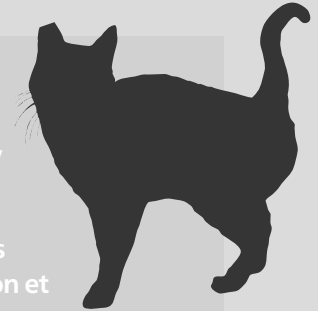
Many animals, both wild and domestic, can pass diseases to people. Rabies is a disease of significant concern, and focusing on prevention is the best medicine. Vaccination against rabies should be a standard protocol for TNR practitioners.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC, 2013), over the last 100 years, rabies in the United States has changed dramatically. The number of rabies-related human deaths in the United States has declined from more than 100 annually at the turn of the century to one or two per year in the 1990s (CDC, 2013). In the United States, human fatalities associated with rabies occur in people who fail to seek medical assistance, usually because they were unaware of their exposure. Modern day prophylaxis has proven nearly 100% successful (CDC, 2013). The CDC also reports that the number of reported cases of rabies is decreasing in both wild and domestic animals. In 2010, wild animals accounted for 92% of reported cases of rabies (CDC, 2013). The World Health Organization hasn't recommended removing dogs to control rabies since 1983 because vaccine programs have been more successful (WHO, 1984).

Although the majority of rabies cases occur in wildlife, domestic animals are the source of the majority of human cases that require post-exposure treatment because people are more likely to handle unknown dogs and cats than wildlife. Most rabies cases in cats occur in areas with large raccoon populations, like the Northeast.

Vaccinating community cats against rabies as part of a TNR program should be supported as a preventative measure against the potential spread of the disease. Some public health officials have concerns about revaccinating community

There has not been a proven case of cat to human transmitted rabies in four decades, and the more vaccinations administered through TNR programs, the more likely this trend is to continue. (Anderson et al, 1974; Roebeling et al, 2014)



cats when vaccines expire. Because the lifespan of community cats is typically much shorter than that of pet cats, a vaccine with three-year immunity may provide protection for the life of many community cats. It's clearly better than no vaccine at all. Well-managed programs should attempt to re-trap cats for further vaccinations. These programs also have the benefit of potentially reducing cat roaming. They can manage feeding so that fewer people come into contact with the cats. In this way, while the risk of rabies transmission from cats may not be entirely eliminated, it can be significantly reduced.

Sterilized cats are typically healthier overall (Scott et al., 2002) and have greater immunity against a host of other diseases and parasites (Fischer, et al., 2007). Sterilized cats are also less likely to transmit feline diseases that are largely spread through mating behavior and mating-related fighting (Finkler, et al., 2011). People who feed community cats should use feeding strategies that do not attract wildlife (e.g. not leaving food out overnight), as should people who feed their pet cats outdoors. Not all states have mandatory rabies vaccination laws for cats, so it is important to determine whether your state does (or should). You should offer low-cost vaccination options for low-income cat owners. Refer to the appendix for additional public health information and documents about rabies and other diseases.

## Concern

Cats will continue to be a nuisance to residents

With TNR, nuisance behaviors can be drastically reduced or eliminated. Neutered cats typically don't yowl late at night or fight over mates (Finkler et al., 2011), so noise is greatly reduced. The odor from male urine spray is mostly eliminated because testosterone is no longer present, and spraying to mark territory may stop entirely. Altered cats, no longer in search of mates, may roam much less frequently (Scott et al., 2002) and become less visible. Because they can no longer reproduce, over time there will be fewer cats, which in itself will result in fewer nuisance behaviors, complaint calls, and a reduced impact on wildlife.

To prevent community cats from entering areas where they're unwanted, such as yards or gardens, residents can try blocking access to shelter areas and securing garbage containers. If these solutions don't work, many humane cat-deterrent products are available in stores and online. Check the appendix for a list of simple solutions to common complaints.

Remember that many cat nuisance cases are the result of neighbor disputes. Facilitating dialogue and mutually agreed-upon resolutions in those cases is often a much more effective outcome than removing the cat(s) in question.





## Concern

### TNR is illegal in our community

Some existing ordinances may have components that pose barriers to practicing TNR. Ordinances are typically written for pet cats, so it's important to review local and state laws to know where amendments are needed to allow your community to implement TNR. For example, laws might ban feeding animals outdoors, limit the number of cats that can be owned (with "owners" defined in a way that includes colony caretakers), prohibit returning cats to the community under abandonment language, prohibit cats from roaming freely, or require that all cats be licensed. In order for an effective TNR program to thrive, your community should amend these provisions to exempt managed community cats and their caretakers or enact an ordinance that explicitly legalizes TNR. Our website and the appendix include examples.

Even when conflicting regulations don't exist, some municipalities may still choose to enact an ordinance authorizing TNR and defining the roles and duties of all parties. Or a community might prefer, as a matter of local culture, to allow TNR informally. In such cases, a TNR ordinance might be unnecessary and actually hinder the functioning and growth of an already successful program.

The goal of a TNR ordinance is a successful sterilization program. Your program will succeed only if your community encourages participation and full engagement by caretakers and removes overly burdensome requirements and restrictions that discourage their involvement.

*"Carroll County has a law that is in effect in Hampstead, which states that if you care for an animal for more than three days, the animal is considered yours. Therefore, anyone caring for feral cats for more than three days would be considered their owner and if it were more than three cats, that person would be in violation of the Hampstead limit of three cats.*

*The code change I proposed and got passed exempted persons participating in a TNR program with continued care of feral cats from the limit of three cats. This allowed citizens to participate in the TNR programs and management of feral cat populations."*

*—Wayne H. Thomas, Councilman,  
Hampstead, MD*



## Concern

### Welfare of cats

The idea that community cats are at great risk for suffering and untimely death if not admitted to a shelter is a long-standing one. However, a growing body of evidence suggests that this is not the case. Data from clinics that sterilized more than 100,000 cats nationwide revealed that they are generally fit and healthy, with less than one percent requiring euthanasia to end

suffering (Wallace & Levy, 2006). Common feline diseases, such as feline immunodeficiency virus (FIV) or feline leukemia virus (FeLV), occur at the same rate as in the pet cat population (Lee et al., 2002). Our article "*Keeping Feral Cats Healthy*" ([animalsheltering.org/resources/magazine/sep\\_oct\\_2008/keeping\\_feral\\_cats\\_healthy.html](http://animalsheltering.org/resources/magazine/sep_oct_2008/keeping_feral_cats_healthy.html)) offers more details.

## Concern

### Welfare of wildlife

There are no easy answers to the issue of cat predation on wildlife. What to do about it has been a concern for more than 100 years. However, neither cats nor wild animals are well served by a polarized, divisive, and expensive "cats vs. wildlife" controversy. Practical solutions include humanely reducing cat populations using TNR and managing cats (individuals and colonies) so they do not impinge on designated wildlife areas and at-risk wildlife populations. Not all cat colony situations are the same. For example, cats may need to be removed when they congregate in or near a sensitive wildlife habitat, whereas they could be effectively managed behind a shopping center in a suburban town.

When predation by community cats is an issue, respectful dialogue and productive collaboration between cat and wildlife advocates is essential. There are several examples of such dialogue

(e.g. in Portland, Oregon, and New Jersey) that communities might seek to follow. It is not always easy to arrive at a solution that protects all interests to the greatest extent. Effective TNR programs seek to reduce the population of community cats, eventually bringing it to zero. Although TNR might not work as quickly as some would like, there are numerous successful examples of population reduction.

Wildlife and cat advocates can also help protect wildlife by joining forces in non-controversial collaborative projects such as informing cat owners about keeping owned cats indoors, seeking support and funds for installing cat-proof fences around sensitive natural areas, humanely relocating cat colonies that pose unacceptable risks to wildlife, and, of course, continuing community cooperation to improve the efficiency and economy of TNR programs.

## FINDING FUNDING

Adequate funding is critical to a successful TNR program. When all stakeholders are engaged in targeted efforts to reduce cat populations they'll likely offer resources to help the program succeed. Municipalities that operate TNR programs through their agency or a contracting agency should include funding for these activities in the budget, but financial assistance and grant opportunities can offset budgets and help stretch dollars. A successful community TNR program can also generate savings through lower intake and euthanasia—funds that can help the program continue running.

If an incorporated nonprofit animal welfare organization runs the TNR program, it can raise funds through direct mail, grants, and special events. Many grant-making organizations

exist; some provide grants to government agencies, whereas others focus their efforts on nonprofit organizations. Many states have local or statewide community foundations that may support a program that encompasses law enforcement, public health, animal welfare, and wildlife conservation. Grant-makers are very interested in collaborations between private organizations and municipal agencies—an additional incentive to partnerships between those stakeholders.

For a list of grant-making agencies to get you started, please check out our list in the appendix. You can find information on necessary supplies, vaccines, etc. that require funding in the *Neighborhood Cats Handbook* ([neighborhoodcats.org/uploads/File/Resources/NC\\_TNR\\_Handbook\\_WEB\\_v5-4.pdf](https://neighborhoodcats.org/uploads/File/Resources/NC_TNR_Handbook_WEB_v5-4.pdf)).





## FINAL THOUGHTS

Properly managed TNR programs do not create cat overpopulation—the cats are already there. Your community must choose between progress or an unmanaged, ever-growing problem. Well-designed and well-implemented programs that focus on non-lethal control and involve all community stakeholders are in line with public opinion. They can mobilize an army of compassionate, dedicated people who care about the cats, wildlife, and their communities.

By working together, municipal agencies, shelters, veterinarians, and cat rescue groups can humanely reduce community cat populations while protecting the public, cats, and wildlife. The returns are plentiful: fewer community cats; lower cat intake and euthanasia in shelters; municipal cost savings; greater volunteer participation; more adoptions; better use of limited shelter, animal control, and public health resources; increased goodwill towards shelters; and more lives saved.

Doing nothing or repeating failed approaches is no longer an option. Proactive, effective approaches exist and need to be fully embraced and implemented in a majority of our communities if we're going to have a lasting impact. Please join us in making our communities safer for all.

*“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. With the help of citizen trappers, we are able to spay or neuter these cats before they contribute to our community’s homeless cat population. TNR is saving lives in Fairfax County.”*

*—Dr. Karen Diviney, Former Director,  
Fairfax County Animal Shelter,  
Fairfax, VA*



## SELECTED SCIENCE ON COMMUNITY CATS

In the ongoing and polarized dialogue concerning the role of non-lethal management, including trap-neuter-return (TNR), in managing community cats, reference is often made to studies that demonstrate that this approach does not work. This selected bibliography points to studies that, among others not summarized here, comprise a body of work that shows TNR as a valuable tool in managing cat populations at the local level. Clearly, additional research would help us determine how non-lethal strategies can be best maximized as a tool for controlling cat populations, but we believe that the argument that it is indeed possible is past us now and that it is time to move forward with improving and perfecting this approach.

– Dr. John Hadidian, Senior Scientist, Wildlife Protection, The Humane Society of the United States

### TNR Reduces Cat Numbers

#### ***An 85% reduction in population over 11 years***

Before implementing a TNR program on the University of Central Florida campus, periodic trap and removal efforts tried to keep the population at bay when it increased to nuisance levels. This 11-year study followed a population of 155 free-roaming campus cats from 1991, when the TNR program began, to 2002. No kittens were observed on site after 1995. Additional stray or abandoned cats arrived, but they were neutered and adopted before they could reproduce. The campus cat population decreased by 85% to 23 cats in 2002, demonstrating that a long-term program of neutering plus adoption or a return to the resident colony can reduce free-roaming cat populations in urban areas (Levy et al., 2003).

#### ***TNR can control feral cat populations***

Robertson reviewed the scientific literature on feral cats and feral cat control and concluded that there is scientific evidence that, under certain conditions, TNR can control feral cat populations. The practice of TNR on a far greater scale, as well as continued and increased funding and endorsement of TNR by private welfare organizations and municipal and government agencies, is essential for the success of TNR (Robertson, 2008).

#### ***In the long run, TNR programs are cost-effective***

For many years, Texas A&M University attempted to control its campus cat population with a trap-and-euthanize approach. Two years after a trap-test-vaccinate-alter-return-monitor (TTVARM) program was implemented on campus, there was a 36% reduction in the number of cats and fewer nuisance complaints to the university's pest control service. The authors also note that although the initial costs of starting up TTVARM programs can be substantial in terms of time and money, these costs tend to decrease with time as fewer new cats need to be caught (Hughes and Slater, 2002).

#### ***Trap-and-remove efforts can have the opposite effect***

To determine the population impact of trap and remove (culling) efforts on two open population sites in Tasmania, researchers used wildlife cameras and cat counts to track the number of cats at each site. Despite culling efforts, researchers found large increases in cat numbers: one site had a 75% increase, while another had a staggering 211% increase. Researchers suspect that the populations increased because new cats moved into the sites to take advantage of



resources that became available when previously dominant cats were removed. Another explanation could be that kittens born to the unsterilized remaining cats had a better survival rate thanks to more readily available resources (Lazenby et al., 2014).

## TNR Reduces Nuisance Behaviors and Complaints

### ***Neutered free-roaming males exhibit less aggression***

This study compared four free-roaming cat colonies in urban Israel: two that were managed by TNR and two that were not managed at all. Less aggression was observed in the neutered groups, specifically between males, which resulted in reduced fighting and vocalizations. The study concludes that TNR reduced the noise associated with mating and fighting and could lead to fewer nuisance complaints (Finkler et al., 2011).

### ***Reduced nuisance behaviors in reality and perception***

Researchers at a federal facility and hospital in Louisiana studied 41 cats in a TNR program. Three years later, 30 of the original cats remained. Their overall health had improved and nighttime vocalizations were greatly reduced, and no new litters of kittens were found. Although cats were seen as a nuisance prior to the program, human attitudes changed by the end of the three-year period (Zaunbrecher and Smith, 1993).

## TNR Adoption and Return-to-Field Programs Reduce Shelter Intake and Euthanasia

### ***Dramatically reduced shelter intake, impound and euthanasia numbers***

This study examined the impact of a municipal shelter's Return to Field program in San Jose, California. These programs are shelter-based and include sterilizing, vaccinating, ear tipping and returning healthy, impounded community cats to the place they were found, with or without an identified caregiver. Over four years, the shelter's program garnered decreases in cat intakes (from 70% to 23%), cat and kitten impounds (by 29.1%) and euthanasia for Upper Respiratory Disease (by 99%) (Johnson and Cicirelli, 2014).

### ***Significant reductions in shelter intake and euthanasia numbers***

A two-year program in Alachua County, Florida, was implemented to capture and neuter at least 50% of the estimated community cats in a single zip code. If the cats were friendly, they were adopted out. If not, they were returned to the area. Researchers then compared trends in shelter cat intake from the target zip code to those of the rest of the county. After two years, per capita shelter intake was 3.5 times higher and per capita shelter euthanasia was 17.5 times higher in the non-target area than in the target area. Clearly, high-impact targeted TNR combined with the adoption of socialized cats and nuisance resolution counseling for residents is an effective tool for reducing shelter cat intake (Levy et al., 2014).



## TNR's Effects on Community Cats and Disease

### ***Including vaccinations in TNR programs can protect feral cats for many years***

A TNR program for feral cats in Florida included vaccinations at the time of sterilization. Researchers were able to compare a cat's antibody titers (a measurement that indicates the strength of the body's immune response to a given disease) before the vaccinations and then 10 weeks post-vaccination. Many cats had an excellent immune response, indicated by the increase in protective antibody titers post-vaccination: panleukopenia (90%), herpes (56%), calicivirus (93%) and rabies (98%). Other studies have shown that post-vaccination immunity persists for a minimum of three to seven years in most cats, which means that many feral cats are protected for much of their remaining lifespan. The authors conclude that TNR programs that include vaccinations are likely to protect individual cats and possibly reduce diseases in feral cats in general (Fischer et al., 2007).

### ***Unowned free-roaming cats don't have higher FeLV infection rates than owned cats***

In this study, 1,876 unowned free-roaming cats who were treated in TNR programs in North Carolina and Florida were tested for FeLV infection and FIV antibodies. The results indicate that the prevalence of FeLV infection and FIV antibodies in unowned free-roaming cats are similar to infection rates reported for owned cats (Lee et al., 2002).

### ***The secondary effects of neutering can improve community cat welfare***

Body condition scores can help evaluate a cat's overall health and welfare. This study analyzed the body condition of 105 adult feral cats at the time of neutering and found that they were lean

(but not emaciated). Fourteen of the original cats were trapped one year later and showed significant increases in weight and improvements in body condition similar to those of confined pet cats. Caretakers also noted that neutered cats roamed less. The researchers conclude that in addition to halting reproduction, neutering may have other effects that improve the welfare of community cats (Scott et al., 2002).

### ***Despite popular belief, toxoplasmosis is not definitively associated with exposure to cats***

According to the authors, the transmission of toxoplasmosis from cats to people rarely occurs from direct contact. They state that people most commonly acquire toxoplasmosis by eating the cyst form of toxoplasmosis in undercooked meat. A case study of toxoplasmosis in pregnant women did not show a significant association with having an adult cat or kitten at home, cleaning the litter box or having a cat who actively hunts. The authors also cite a study of HIV-infected adults that did not show any association of toxoplasmosis with cat ownership or exposure (Kravetz and Federman, 2002).

## Public Perceptions

### ***American adults favor the non-lethal treatment of community cats***

Adults in a national survey conducted by Harris Interactive were given two options: leave a community cat as-is or catch and kill the cat. More than four out of five people thought it was more humane to leave the cat. The survey then added a twist: what if the community cat would die two years later after being hit by a car? More than 70% of respondents still chose to let the cat remain in the community. The authors conclude that an overwhelming majority of Americans believe that leaving a stray cat outside to live out his life is more humane than having him caught and killed (Chu and Anderson, 2007).



### ***Wildlife management practices should be based on shared opinions***

Conflicts over cat management practices often prevent or delay the implementation of policies that could reduce cat populations, improve animal welfare and reduce risks to wildlife. This study reveals the differences of opinion that lead to these conflicts, specifically among Audubon members, the public and TNR program participants. They also note areas of agreement among the groups and suggest that stakeholders focus on these shared opinions when developing policies. For example, mandatory pet identification, rabies vaccination and non-lethal methods of management could satisfy all groups (Wald et al., 2013).

## Wildlife Predation

### ***Opposing parties should compromise on cat management approaches***

The authors suggest ways that conflicts between cat colony caretakers and bird conservation professionals can be managed more productively. For example, bird conservation professionals' values could guide cat colony management in high conservation priority areas, whereas cat colony caretaker values could guide management in low conservation priority areas. The authors conclude that bird conservation professionals must develop innovative and collaborative ways to address threats posed by feral cats instead of advocating for euthanasia in all situations (Peterson et al., 2012).

### ***Current methods of measuring predation rates could be inaccurate***

This study found that many cat owners overestimate their cats' predation rates. The authors conclude that surveying predation rates with questionnaires alone isn't sufficient since the self-reported numbers aren't always accurate. They note that further extended studies are needed, especially in

large urbanized areas with varied habitat types, cat densities and prey availability. The authors recommend using the "what the cats brought home" method at a larger scale in time and space. At a larger scale, this method would more accurately assess the seasonal variation in predation rates, individual hunting behavior throughout the year and the actual impact of cat predation on prey populations (Tschanz et al., 2011).



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## Appendix

TNR is supported by The Humane Society of the United States and many other national groups, including:

Alley Cat Allies

American Animal Hospital Association

American Association of Feline Practitioners

American Humane Association

American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA)

Association of Shelter Veterinarians

Best Friends Animal Society

Cat Fanciers' Association

Humane Society Veterinary Medical Association

National Animal Control Association

Petco Foundation

Petfinder

PetSmart Charities

Find Local Organizations and Agencies in the United States and Canada Supporting TNR

[humanesociety.org/assets/maps/feral-cats.html](http://humanesociety.org/assets/maps/feral-cats.html)

Find Grant Opportunities for Organizations and Agencies

[animalsheltering.org/how-we-help/strengthen-your-shelter/financial-assistance/grant\\_listings.html](http://animalsheltering.org/how-we-help/strengthen-your-shelter/financial-assistance/grant_listings.html)

## Links Found Throughout the Document

### Municipal Programs

Pittsburgh, PA: [pittsburghpa.gov/animalcontrol/spay\\_neuter.htm](http://pittsburghpa.gov/animalcontrol/spay_neuter.htm)

Elk Grove, CA: [elkgrovecity.org/animals/feral-cats.asp](http://elkgrovecity.org/animals/feral-cats.asp)

Dallas, TX: [dallasanimalservices.org/trap\\_neuter\\_return.html](http://dallasanimalservices.org/trap_neuter_return.html)

Sacramento County, CA: [animalcare.saccounty.net/SpayNeuter/Pages/FeralCatsandKittens.aspx](http://animalcare.saccounty.net/SpayNeuter/Pages/FeralCatsandKittens.aspx)

San Jose, CA: [sanjoseca.gov/index.aspx?nid=2382](http://sanjoseca.gov/index.aspx?nid=2382)

Camden County, NJ: [ccasnj.org/spay\\_neuter\\_clinic/feral\\_cats.html](http://ccasnj.org/spay_neuter_clinic/feral_cats.html)

### Departments of Health

New York City, NY: [nyc.gov/html/doh/html/environmental/animals-tnr.shtml](http://nyc.gov/html/doh/html/environmental/animals-tnr.shtml)

State of New Jersey: [state.nj.us/health/animalwelfare/stray.shtml](http://state.nj.us/health/animalwelfare/stray.shtml)

Baltimore, MD: [neighborhoodcats.org/uploads/File/Resources/Ordinances/Baltimore\\_TNRRegs.pdf](http://neighborhoodcats.org/uploads/File/Resources/Ordinances/Baltimore_TNRRegs.pdf)

State of Delaware: [dhss.delaware.gov/dhss/dph/oaw/foundstraycats.html](http://dhss.delaware.gov/dhss/dph/oaw/foundstraycats.html)





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- "Cats and Wildlife: An HSUS Perspective"  
[hsus.typepad.com/wayne/2013/01/cats-wildlife-hsus-perspective.html](http://hsus.typepad.com/wayne/2013/01/cats-wildlife-hsus-perspective.html)
- "Finding Common Ground: Outdoor Cats and Wildlife"  
[humansociety.org/news/news/2011/11/ferals\\_wildlife.html](http://humansociety.org/news/news/2011/11/ferals_wildlife.html)
- "Prowling the Divide"  
[animalsheltering.org/resources/magazine/jul\\_aug\\_2009/creature\\_feature\\_prowling\\_the\\_divide.html](http://animalsheltering.org/resources/magazine/jul_aug_2009/creature_feature_prowling_the_divide.html)
- "Keeping Feral Cats Healthy" *Animal Sheltering* September/October 2008; 51–53  
[animalsheltering.org/resources/magazine/sep\\_oct\\_2008/keeping\\_feral\\_cats\\_healthy.html](http://animalsheltering.org/resources/magazine/sep_oct_2008/keeping_feral_cats_healthy.html)

## Videos

"Fixing Cat Overpopulation"  
[youtube.com/watch?v=fTCTuJRkvnq](http://youtube.com/watch?v=fTCTuJRkvnq)

"How to Perform a Mass Trapping"  
[neighborhoodcats.org](http://neighborhoodcats.org)



## Other Online Resources

### **The HSUS's Position Statement on Cats**

[humanesociety.org/animals/cats/facts/cat\\_statement.html](http://humanesociety.org/animals/cats/facts/cat_statement.html)

### **FAQs**

[humanesociety.org/issues/feral\\_cats/qa/feral\\_cat\\_FAQs.html](http://humanesociety.org/issues/feral_cats/qa/feral_cat_FAQs.html)

### **Handouts**

*"Can You Help This Cat?"*

[marketplace.animalsheltering.org/product/can\\_you\\_help\\_this\\_cat](http://marketplace.animalsheltering.org/product/can_you_help_this_cat)

*"Helping Homeless Cats"* handout in English and Spanish (can be printed on both sides of paper)

[humanesociety.org/assets/pdfs/pets/helping-homeless-cats\\_english.pdf](http://humanesociety.org/assets/pdfs/pets/helping-homeless-cats_english.pdf)

[humanesociety.org/assets/pdfs/pets/helping-homeless-cats-spanish.pdf](http://humanesociety.org/assets/pdfs/pets/helping-homeless-cats-spanish.pdf)

Self-Paced Online TNR Course for Caretakers and Webinar Series

[humanesociety.org/outdoorcats](http://humanesociety.org/outdoorcats)

Community Assessment Toolkit: HSUS Pets for Life program

[animalsheltering.org/how-we-help/work-for-change/pets-for-life/pets-for-life-toolkit.html](http://animalsheltering.org/how-we-help/work-for-change/pets-for-life/pets-for-life-toolkit.html)

Community cat information sheets on cat ordinances, protecting public health, rabies concerns, humane deterrents, and more can be found on our website: [humanesociety.org/outdoorcats](http://humanesociety.org/outdoorcats)

**Books** (Available at [marketplace.animalsheltering.org](http://marketplace.animalsheltering.org))

*Publicity to the Rescue* shows how you can use the power of publicity to raise more money, recruit volunteers, and boost adoptions.

*Coalition Building for Animal Care Organizations* describes how coalition building can maximize the positive impact of animal-related organizations on their communities. The book demonstrates that, by finding common ground and putting aside their differences, groups can tackle difficult problems that can't be solved by any one agency.

*Fund-Raising for Animal Care Organizations* demystifies the fund-raising process and breaks down this daunting task into practical, manageable steps.

*Funds to the Rescue* will save you from wasting time as you search for new revenue streams to support your humane organization. The book begins with "The Hows and Whys of Fundraising" and follows with 101 entertaining and creative ideas.

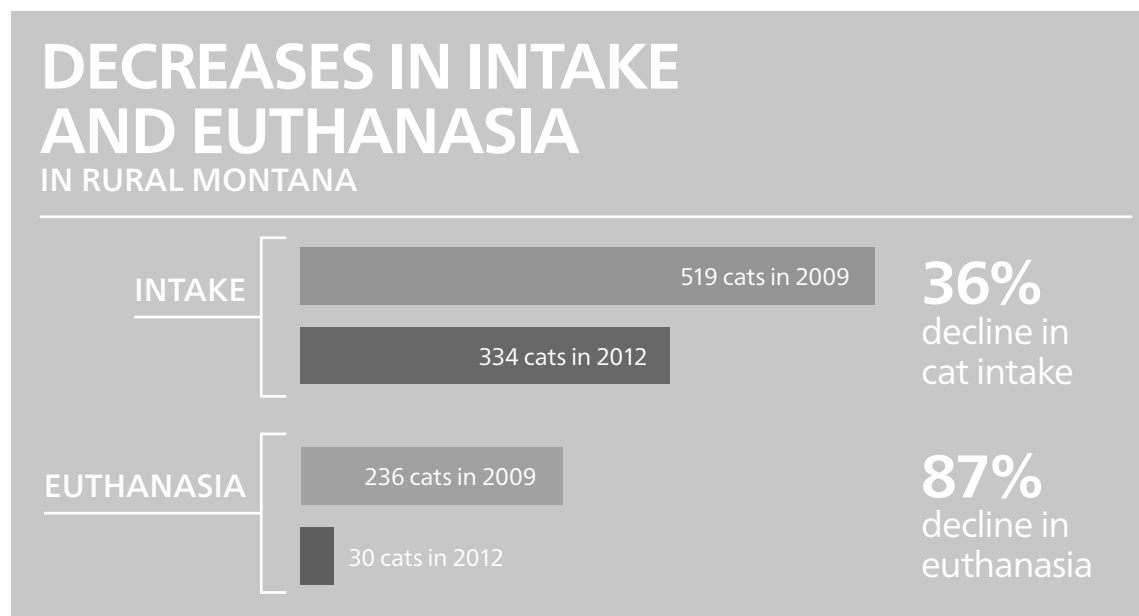
*Neighborhood Cats Handbook*, 2nd Edition:

[neighborhoodcats.org/RESOURCES\\_BOOKS\\_AND\\_VIDEOS](http://neighborhoodcats.org/RESOURCES_BOOKS_AND_VIDEOS)



## Data from Successful Targeted TNR Programs

(Provided by PetSmart Charities)



**Group:** Fox Hollow Animal Project

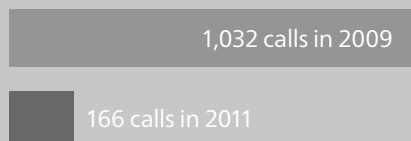
**Target area:** Ravalli County, MT (pop. 40,000; 2400 sq. miles)

**Project:** 1,329 spays/neuters of community cats from July 1, 2010 through 2012

**Results:** Cat intake from Ravalli County to the Bitter Root Humane Association (open admission) went from 519 in 2009 to 334 in 2012 (36% decline) and cat euthanasia went from 236 in 2009 to 30 in 2012 (87% decline).



## DECREASES IN COMPLAINT CALLS IN RURAL MONTANA



**84%**  
decline in  
cat related calls

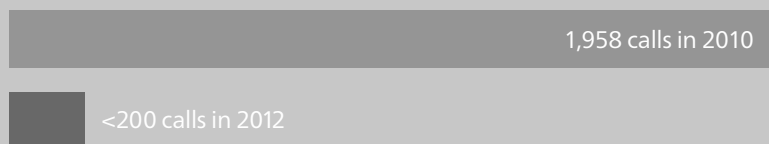
**Group:** Thompson River Animal Care Shelter (TRACS)

**Target area:** The five towns located in Sanders County, MT (pop. 11,000; 2700 sq. miles)

**Project:** 755 spays/neuters of community cats from July 1, 2010 through July 1, 2012

**Results:** Cat-related calls to TRACS, the only animal shelter in the county, went from 1,032 in 2009 to 166 in 2011 (84% decline).

## DECREASES IN COMPLAINT CALLS IN SUBURBAN TEXAS



**90%**  
decline in  
cat related calls

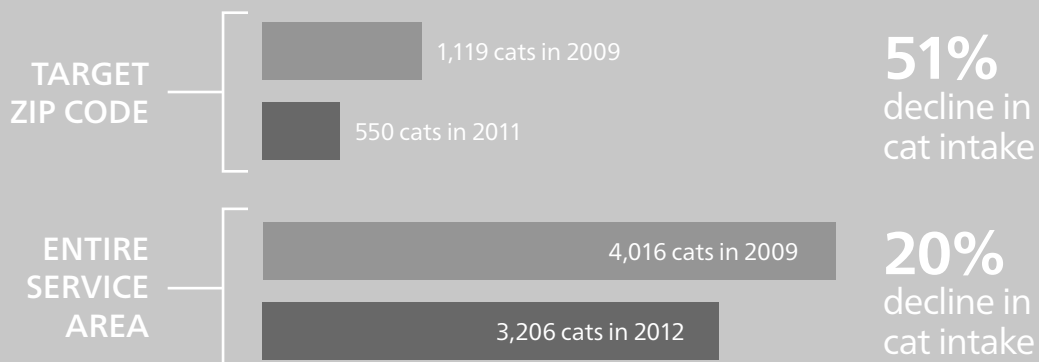
**Group:** PETS Low Cost Spay and Neuter Clinic

**Target area:** Wichita Falls, TX (pop. 104,000)

**Project:** 1,188 spays/neuters of community cats from 2011 through 2012

**Results:** Community cat related complaint calls to Wichita Falls Animal Control went from 1,958 in 2010 to less than 200 in 2012 (at least 90% decline).

## DECREASES IN INTAKE IN URBAN KENTUCKY



**Group:** Alley Cat Advocates

**Target area:** Began as one zip code in Louisville, KY (later expanded to total of five zip codes)

**Project:** 2,000 spays/neuters of community cats in the five zip codes

**Results:** Cat intake excluding owner surrenders from the original zip code to Metro Animal Services went from 1,119 in 2009 to 550 in 2011 (51% decline). Cat intake excluding owner surrenders in the rest of the shelter's service area went from 4,016 to 3,206 (20% decline). As a result of the project, the Councilwoman for the original target zip code sponsored TNR-enabling ordinance that passed the City Council.



## Other Organizations' Policies

American Animal Hospital Association, [aahanet.org/Library/AAFPPosition.aspx](http://aahanet.org/Library/AAFPPosition.aspx)

American Association of Feline Practitioners,  
[catvets.com/guidelines/position-statements/free-roaming-abandoned-and-feral-cats](http://catvets.com/guidelines/position-statements/free-roaming-abandoned-and-feral-cats)

American Humane Association,  
[americanhumane.org/assets/pdfs/about/position-statements/animal-position.pdf](http://americanhumane.org/assets/pdfs/about/position-statements/animal-position.pdf)

American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA), [aspc.org/about-us/aspc-policy-and-position-statements/position-statement-on-feral-cat-management](http://aspc.org/about-us/aspc-policy-and-position-statements/position-statement-on-feral-cat-management)

Association of Shelter Veterinarians,  
[sheltervet.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/FeralCommunityCatMgmt.pdf](http://sheltervet.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/FeralCommunityCatMgmt.pdf)

Best Friends Animal Society, [bestfriends.org/What-We-Do/Our-Work/Initiatives/Cat-Initiatives/](http://bestfriends.org/What-We-Do/Our-Work/Initiatives/Cat-Initiatives/)

Cat Fanciers' Association, [cfainc.org/CatCare/OverpopulationLegislativeIssues/FeralCats.aspx](http://cfainc.org/CatCare/OverpopulationLegislativeIssues/FeralCats.aspx)

Humane Society Veterinary Medical Association, [hsvma.org/legislation#feralcats](http://hsvma.org/legislation#feralcats)

National Animal Control Association, [nacenet.org/guidelines.html#community](http://nacenet.org/guidelines.html#community)

Petfinder, [petfinder.com/helping-pets/feral-cats/what-is-a-feral-cat/](http://petfinder.com/helping-pets/feral-cats/what-is-a-feral-cat/)

PetSmart Charities, [petsmartcharities.org/pro/grants/spayneuter-grants/free-roaming-cat-spayneuter-grants](http://petsmartcharities.org/pro/grants/spayneuter-grants/free-roaming-cat-spayneuter-grants)

This publication (*Managing Community Cats*) is intended to provide general information about community cats. The information contained in this publication is not legal advice and cannot replace the advice of qualified legal counsel licensed in your state. The Humane Society of the United States does not warrant that the information contained in the *Managing Community Cats* publication is complete, accurate, or up-to-date and does not assume and hereby disclaims any liability to any person for any loss or damage caused by errors, inaccuracies, or omissions.

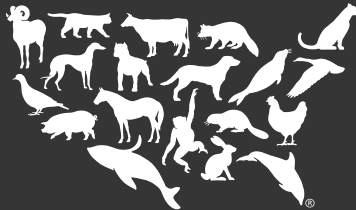
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## About The HSUS

The HSUS is the nation's largest and most powerful animal protection organization backed by 11 million Americans, or one in every 28.

Established in 1954, The HSUS seeks a humane and sustainable world for all animals, including people. We are America's mainstream force against cruelty, exploitation, and neglect, and also the nation's most trusted voice extolling the human animal bond.



**THE HUMANE SOCIETY**  
OF THE UNITED STATES



## Community Cats and Public Health

Many animals, both wild and domesticated, can pass diseases to people. These are known as zoonotic diseases. Although we should be concerned about such diseases, there are some common myths about the public health risks associated with community cats. In most cases, a compassionate coexistence between cats and humans can be established—and knowing how to prevent zoonotic disease is the best medicine.

### Rabies

Rabies is an extremely rare disease in humans and in cats. According to the Center for Disease Control, there were only 4 reported cases of rabies in humans in 2011, and 49 cases since 1995.<sup>i</sup> None of the cases were attributed to cat bites<sup>i</sup>. Considering that only 303 rabid cats were identified in 2010 in the US<sup>ii</sup>, where the population of cats is estimated at between 25 million and 90 million, the likelihood that a particular cat is rabid is extremely low (0.3 to 1.2 per 100,000 cats), as is the likelihood of coming into contact with a rabid cat. Even so, rabies is a serious concern of a cat bite. Therefore, bites should be treated immediately and appropriately.

For more information, see our fact sheet, —Community Cats and Rabies.”

### Cat Scratch Disease

Cat scratch disease (CSD) is caused by a bacteria, *Bartonella henselae*. Most people get CSD from cat bites and scratches.<sup>iii</sup> Cats that carry *B. henselae* do not show any signs of illness; therefore, it is difficult to know if a cat is infected. Kittens are more likely to be infected with *B. henselae*, although cats, fleas and to a lesser extent, ticks, can also pass *B. henselae* to people. Individuals, such as those undergoing immunosuppressive treatments for cancer, organ transplant patients, and people with HIV/AIDS, are more likely than others to have complications of CSD. You can minimize the chance of getting CSD from cats by taking the following precautions:

- Avoiding rough play and other activities that may lead to scratches and bites, especially with kittens.
- Washing cat bites and scratches immediately and thoroughly with running water and soap.
- Preventing cats from licking open wounds that you may have.
- Controlling fleas and ticks.

Contact your physician if you start developing symptoms, such as infection (pus and swelling) at the scratch or bite site, fever, headache, swollen lymph nodes and/or fatigue, after a cat scratch or bite.

### Toxoplasmosis

Toxoplasmosis is caused by a parasite, *Toxoplasma gondii*. Although infection with the parasite is relatively common in people, actual disease is rare. *About half of the adult*



*human population has been exposed to *T. gondii*, developed protective antibodies and are probably immune to *Toxoplasma infection*.* However, infection could cause serious health problems for the infant of pregnant women who have never been exposed and developed immunity, as well as immune-compromised individuals. Nonetheless, it's not necessary to get rid of your cat to avoid this parasite since cats are unlikely to directly transmit toxoplasmosis to people.

It's important to understand that once a cat has been infected with toxoplasmosis, he or she acquires immunity and can rarely be reinfected or pass potentially infectious feces. Other animals, including people, get toxoplasmosis by accidentally ingesting cat feces or by eating animals already infected with toxoplasmosis. You're more likely to be infected with *T. gondii* from eating raw or undercooked meat or gardening in contaminated soil than from your cat.

The most obvious preventive measures should focus on food and hygiene –cooking meat thoroughly; washing uncooked vegetables and fruit; wearing gloves when working in soil and scooping litter boxes; and washing hands thoroughly following soil and litter box contact – and have little to do with cats.

You can minimize the chance of getting toxoplasmosis by taking the following precautions:

- Cooking meat, eaten by people or cats, thoroughly (for appropriate temperatures, go to [www.cdc.gov/toxoplasmosis/prevent](http://www.cdc.gov/toxoplasmosis/prevent)).
- Washing uncooked vegetables and fruit before eating.
- Avoid consuming raw milk or other unpasteurized dairy products.
- Thoroughly cleaning surfaces/utensils that come into contact with uncooked meat, vegetables and fruit.
- Washing hands thoroughly with soap and water immediately following contact with raw or undercooked meat, uncooked vegetables and fruit, soil, unpasteurized dairy products and litter boxes.
- Boiling water from ponds and streams when camping/hiking.
- Wearing gloves when working in soil and scooping litter boxes.
- Keeping pet cats indoors or confined to their property so they can't roam, hunt infected animals and defecate outdoors.
- Covering all outside sand boxes when not in use to prevent cats from using them as litter boxes.
- Avoiding the litter box, if possible, if you're pregnant or immune-compromised (e.g., ask your spouse, roommate, etc. to scoop and clean the litter box) or scooping it daily, using rubber gloves when doing so, and washing your hands thoroughly afterwards.

## Roundworms

Roundworms can cause a disease in people called visceral larva migrans. This disease is caused by *Toxocara canis* from dogs and, less commonly, *Toxocara cati* from cats. In most cases, *Toxocara* infections are not serious, and many people, especially adults infected by a small number of immature worms may not notice any symptoms and severe cases are rare.

While direct contact with infected dogs and cats increases a person's risk for roundworm infection, most infections come from accidentally eating the worm larvae or from larvae that enter through the skin. For example, children are at risk for infection if they play in areas that may contain infected feces (such as dirt piles and sandboxes), where they pick up the larvae on their hands.

You can minimize the chance of getting roundworms by:

- Having your dogs and cats, especially young animals, treated for worms by your veterinarian.
- Washing hands with soap and warm water after playing with your pets or other animals, after outdoor activities and before handling food.
- Teaching children that it can be dangerous to eat dirt or soil.
- Covering outdoor sandboxes when not in use.
- Avoiding areas that are soiled with pet or other animal feces.
- Cleaning your pet's living area at least once a week. Dog and cat feces should be bagged and disposed of in the trash.

### Ringworm

Ringworm isn't actually a worm; it's a fungal disease. People get ringworm from direct contact with an infected animal's skin or hair; carpets, brushes, combs, toys and furniture and other objects which have come into contact with an infected animal; or from contact with fungal spores in the soil. Cows, goats, pigs, horses, people, and dogs and cats, especially kittens or puppies, may have ringworm that can be passed to people. Children, who are more likely to catch ringworm, shouldn't handle any animal with ringworm. Adults, except for elderly and immune-compromised individuals, seem relatively resistant.

The fungus that causes ringworm thrives in warm, moist areas. You can minimize the chance of getting ringworm by:

- Keeping your skin and feet clean and dry.
- Shampooing regularly, especially after haircuts.
- Not sharing items such as clothing, towels, hairbrushes, combs and headgear.
- Wearing sandals or shoes at gyms, lockers, and pools.
- Not touching pets with bald spots.

### Plague

For many people, the mention of plague (bubonic plague) conjures up images of the infamous Black Death of the Middle Ages, a pandemic that killed a third of Europe's population in the 14th and 15th centuries. Fortunately now, the incident of this disease is almost nonexistent—between 5 and 15 human plague cases are reported each year in the United States.<sup>iv</sup>

Plague is caused by a bacterium, *Yersinia pestis*, and the majority of human cases occur in New Mexico, Arizona, Colorado and California. People usually get plague from the bite of an infected



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flea, although humans can also acquire it as a result of contact with secretions or tissues from infected animals. Infected fleas are more commonly carried by wild animals, such as rabbits and rodents, but a number of other mammalian species, including the cat, can as well. You can minimize the chance of getting plague by taking the following precautions:

- Not picking up or touching dead animals.
- Reporting any sick or dead animals to the local health department or law enforcement officials if plague has recently been found in your area.
- Eliminating potential food sources for rodents, such as pet and wild animal food, around homes, work places and recreation areas.
- Removing nesting places for rodents, such as brush, rock piles and junk cluttered firewood, around homes, work places and recreation areas.
- Applying insect repellents to clothing and skin, to prevent flea bites.
- Wearing gloves when handling potentially infected animals.

Treating pet dogs and cats for flea control regularly if you live in areas where rodent plague occurs and not allowing them to roam and hunt. Information adapted from Centers for Disease Control. More information is available at <http://www.cdc.gov>.

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<sup>i</sup> Center for Disease Control. "Human Rabies," May 3, 2012, [http://www.cdc.gov/rabies/location/usa/surveillance/human\\_rabies.html](http://www.cdc.gov/rabies/location/usa/surveillance/human_rabies.html) (December 20, 2012).

<sup>ii</sup> Blanton JD, Palmer D, Dyer J, Rupprecht CE. Public Veterinary Medicine: Public Health - Rabies surveillance in the United States during 2010. *Journal of the American Veterinary Medical Association* 2011;239(6):773-783.

<sup>iii</sup> Chomel BB, Boulouis HJ, Breitschwerdt EB. Vet Med Today: Zoonosis Update - Cat scratch disease and other zoonotic Bartonella infections. *Journal of the American Veterinary Medical Association* 2004;224(8):1270-1279.

<sup>iv</sup> Orloski KA, Lathrop SL. Vet Med Today: Zoonosis Update - Plague: a veterinary perspective. *Journal of the American Veterinary Medical Association* 2003;222(4):444-448.



Submitted By  
Jennifer Thorne  
Submitted On  
10/26/2017 10:09:02 AM  
Affiliation

Please support Proposal #62 to allow for Trap-Neuter-Vaccinate-Return programs and improve the lives of feral cats in Alaska.



Submitted By  
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10/13/2017 8:47:34 PM  
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Please allow community members and non profit organizations to TNR ( trap, neuter and return ) felines/cats where acceptable/appropriately Alaska - without this effort we will see higher euthanasia rates where acceptable colonies can be managed and live successfully. I support TNR in our communities. I personally foster rescue cats, I am a donor and volunteer in support of animal welfare organizations in Alaska. I have been an Alaskan resident for 30+ years. Thank you for taking the time to read my note in support of TNR in Alaska. JoAnna Tomuro, [joanna.tomuro@gmail.com](mailto:joanna.tomuro@gmail.com), 907-782-9299 cell



Submitted By  
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10/12/2017 1:55:45 PM  
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*I am writing this comment in support of PROPOSAL 62 – 5 AAC 92.029. Permit for possessing live game. This proposal will allow the release of sterilized, feral cats into the wild.*



Submitted By  
Linda von Bose  
Submitted On  
10/10/2017 1:22:12 PM  
Affiliation

TNR(trap, neuter, return) is an important TOOL that will reduce and possibly eliminate the growth of feral cat populations in Alaska. Currently there is NO effective, feasible and especially HUMANE legal procedure to manage these cats and control their breeding--the MANPOWER is there to control and manage these populations, there just needs to be a LEGAL mechanism to allow it.



Submitted By  
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10/10/2017 2:27:57 PM  
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Please support proposed Rule 62, which will be up for approval this November, would allow for trap-neuter-vaccinate-return (TNVR) programs in Alaska.

We truly and sincerely want to save animal lives with this rule change. The lifesaving efforts being focused on community cats would certainly be wonderful thing for these cats and their caregivers. Their caregivers love them just as much as they do their own personal pets. In fact, I would not hesitate to call it their 'Labor of Love'.

Alaska's taxpayers deserve TNVR programs, which are animal-friendly, cost-effective, and reduce the burden and bureaucracy placed on the state's animal shelters. The simple truth is that current methods of animal control relative to community cats are expensive, ineffective and oftentimes inhumane. The proposed rule changes would be better for the cats, for public health and for the wildlife we all want to protect.

With all my heart, I hope that you choose to embrace the Trap-Neuter-Vaccinate-Return program.

Thank you for reading my appeal. I am so hoping we can get this done.





Submitted By  
Mark Ward  
Submitted On  
10/24/2017 11:42:18 AM  
Affiliation

Please support prop. 62!



Submitted By  
Hannah Watkins  
Submitted On  
10/24/2017 6:29:59 PM  
Affiliation  
Democrat

I am commenting to voice my support for Proposal #62 to allow for Trap-Neuter-Vaccinate-Return programs to humanely work toward a solution for the feral cat issues in Alaska.



Submitted By  
Alyssa  
Submitted On  
10/17/2017 1:00:58 PM  
Affiliation

TNR has shown good results in other states where overpopulation is not a problem even though the cats are still in the area.



Submitted By  
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10/25/2017 12:42:27 PM  
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Please support proposal #62 TNVR cats. Thank you.



Submitted By  
Melanie  
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10/14/2017 1:19:52 AM  
Affiliation

I very strongly agree with proposal 62 regarding trapping of animals. I myself have had to catch kittens in my area along with momma cat but due to the cats being so unused to people, they could not be rehabilitated and adopted. I have also trapped individual cats which were also too feral to be adopted. Because these cats are running loose without being neutered and spayed, the problem continues. Should this proposal pass, this would greatly impact the amount of feral litters being born. Although I do not want kittens running around loose, I would prefer them to be running around neutered and spayed along with vaccinations to ensure that they are not creating huge litters and running the risk of biting and harming children and house cats. This proposal will pay for itself because animal shelters will not have to put down cats that are unavoidable and will not have to search and set traps for possible aggressive feral cats. Please take my comment into advisement as I am one who has had to deal with catching feral cats and see the impact they make within the community. As sad as it is, there are people who dump animals they no longer want and if they can be caught, given vaccinations and spayed/neutered then this will reduce the amount spent on constantly putting down the feral animals.



Submitted By  
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I understand there will be a consideration this November on the trapp spay/neuter and release of ferrel cats. Please pass this.

Thankyou,

Shawna Jerman