

**IN EVERY CITY**

**IN EVERY COMMUNITY**

**IN EVERY COUNTRY . . . . .**



Photo source - PAF

**WHAT PEOPLE SHOULD KNOW ABOUT  
FERAL CATS**



**Pacific Animal Foundation**

A Network of Caring in the Urban Wilderness

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

# Discover The Truth About Feral Cats.

## **A stray cat is not a feral cat.**

A stray is a cat who has been abandoned or who has strayed from home and become lost. Stray cats can usually be re-socialized and adopted.

## **A feral cat is an unsocialized cat.**

Either he was born outside and never lived with humans, or he is a house cat who has strayed from home and over time has become unsocialized to humans.

## **Feral cats should not be taken to local shelters to be adopted.**

Feral cats are not pet cats, and they will be killed at most shelters. Because they're unadoptable, they sometimes don't even make it to the shelter, but are killed in the animal control truck. Even no-kill shelters are not able to place feral cats in homes.

## **Feral kittens can be adopted.**

Feral kittens can often be adopted into homes, but they must be socialized in their first weeks of life. This is a critical window and if they aren't handled in time, they will remain feral and therefore unadoptable.

## **Feral cats have about the same lifespan as pet cats.**

And they contract diseases at about the same low rate. The incidence of disease in feral cat colonies is no higher than among owned cats.

## **Feral cats are not the cause of wildlife depletion.**

Studies show that the overwhelming cause of wild life depletion is destruction of natural habitat due to man-made structures, chemical pollution, pesticides, and drought — not feral cats.

## **Trap and remove doesn't work.**

Not only would you have to continue to remove cats, this process is extremely costly. Other cats simply move in to take advantage of the available resources and they breed prolifically, quickly forming a new colony. This "vacuum effect" is well documented.

## **Trap, neuter, and return does work.**

No more kittens. Their numbers gradually go down. The annoying behaviors of mating cats, such as yowling or fighting, stop. The cats are vaccinated and they are fed on a regular schedule. This ongoing care creates a safety net for both the cats and the community.

## **You can make a difference and save lives.**

Together, we can educate people about the humane solution, TNR, and show how efficient and effective it can be. To learn more or to find tools to help you educate people in your area, go to [alleycat.org](http://alleycat.org).

TAKE THE NEXT STEP

**SUPPORT TRAP, NEUTER, AND RETURN**  
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# WHAT IS TRAP/NEUTER/RETURN ? (or "TNR")

## TRAP

- Humanely trap all the feral cats in a colony.

## NEUTER

- Take the cats in their traps to a vet to be spayed or neutered, tattooed, vaccinated and treated as needed.

## RETURN

- Take the cats back to their established outdoor area. Provide food and water daily, make a simple shelter, and keep an eye on their well-being.



Photo source - PAF

# Discover The Truth About Feral Cats And The Vacuum Effect.

## The fact is trap-and-remove doesn't work.

"Trap-and-remove" is a euphemism for capturing and killing feral cats, which is Animal Control's traditional approach to feral cats. Trap-and-remove attempts may temporarily reduce the number of feral cats in a given area, but two things happen: one, unsterilized survivors continue to breed prolifically and, two, other cats move into the now-available territory. This is known as the vacuum effect.

## New cats will move in.

Feral cats establish territories based on the availability of food sources and shelter. When the cats are removed from this environment, other cats move in to take advantage of whatever sources of food and shelter are available and continue to breed. The vacuum effect has been documented worldwide.

## If you stop feeding feral cats, they won't simply go away.

A feeding ban will not make the cats go away and is, in any case, arbitrarily enforced. Why? Cats bond to their territory and are opportunistic scavengers that can, if necessary, survive on garbage. Under a feeding ban, the cats suffer as they search for new sources of food.

## There is a solution. Trap, neuter, and return (TNR) lowers cat populations.

Here's how it works. Colony cats are humanely trapped, sterilized, and vaccinated. Strays and young kittens are removed from the colony and adopted into homes. Adult feral cats are eartipped for identification and returned to their outdoor homes where their numbers gradually go down through attrition. It's simple. TNR breaks the cycle of reproduction and lowers cat populations.



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Photo: Gina Montero

## TNR is cost effective.

TNR, which enlists community volunteers in a comprehensive program, costs one-third to one-half as much as trap-and-remove efforts. Why? Trap-and-remove endeavors require continuous trapping and killing, is not supported by the community, and is an unending budget expense.

## You can make a difference and save lives.

Together, we can help people understand how effective the humane solution, TNR, can be. To learn more or to find tools to help you educate people in your area, go to [alleycat.org](http://alleycat.org).

# alleycat.org



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Photo: Molly Wald

## WHY DO WE HAVE FERAL CATS IN OUR COMMUNITY?

British Columbia has a coastline along the ocean and waterways that flow to the ocean are a conduit for rodent infiltration into the surrounding communities. Feral cats thrive along waterfronts, near rivers and inland lakes because of the incredible numbers of rats and mice.

Grain cars moving through the Province from the Prairies constantly spill grain along their track route, providing rats and mice with a huge and continuous source of food.

Garden compost bins usually contain vegetable peelings, egg shells and other edible waste materials. Rats and mice are attracted to these bins and thus provide another continuous source of food for feral cats. There is a positive aspect to this situation. If we didn't have some feral cats in our communities, we would be dealing with an overwhelming rodent infestation.

Generally mild weather conditions in our province, the ocean location, and a grain source combine to give communities a continuing large number of rats and mice, consequently providing ideal conditions to sustain a large feral cat population.\*

(\*Source – prepared by Pacific Animal Foundation)

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## GOING GREEN TO HELP THE ENVIRONMENT

Did you know . . . ?

Organic farmers list feral cats under their rodent control methods when registering with the United States Dept. of Agriculture.\*

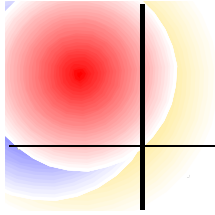
(\*Source – from Alley Cat Allies)

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## VACUUM EFFECT

Feral cats establish territories based on availability of food sources and shelter. If the cats are removed from this environment through “trap and kill”, other new cats quickly move in to take advantage of those resources. These new unsterilized cats will breed to the capacity of this site. The vacuum effect has been documented around the world. \*

(\*Source – Care Feline Rescue, Inc.)



## The Need for Population Control

A single unspayed female cat, her mate and all of their offspring, producing an average of 2 litters per year can total:

1 year:	12
2 years:	67
3 years:	376
4 years:	2,107
5 years:	11,801
6 years:	66,088*

Gestation period for a female cat is 59 – 65 days  
Average litters are 2 – 6 kittens = 4 surviving



# Discover The Truth About Feral Cats And Predation.

## The fact is feral cats are not the #1 predator of wildlife.

We are. Studies show that the overwhelming cause of wildlife depletion is the destruction of natural habitat due to man-made structures, chemical pollution, pesticides, climate change, and drought — not feral cats. In fact, ornithologists estimate about 100 million birds in the U.S. die each year by flying into windows and breaking their necks.

## Cats are opportunistic feeders.

Feral cats eat what is readily available. They are scavengers, relying on garbage and handouts from people. Sterilized cats in a managed colony are fed healthful catfood by volunteers, and often spend their days lying in the sun close to the food bowl.

## Cats are rodent specialists.

Birds make up only a small percentage of a cat's diet when he relies solely on hunting for food. In many areas, feral cats are valued for managing rodent populations. In fact, organic farmers list feral cats under their rodent control methods when registering with the USDA.

## Cats can prey on a population without destroying it.

Just ask the mice. They're still thriving and cats have been hunting them since, well, the beginning. There is no scientific evidence that shows cats have a significant impact on mainland wildlife populations.

## Trap, neuter, and return (TNR) effectively reduces outdoor cat populations.

No more kittens. Feral cat populations gradually diminish. The annoying behaviors of mating cats, such as yowling or fighting, stop. The cats are vaccinated and they are fed on a regular schedule. This ongoing care creates a safety net for both the cats and the community.

## You can make a difference and save lives.

Together, we can help people understand how effective the humane solution, TNR, can be. To learn more or to find tools to help you educate people in your area, go to [alleycat.org](http://alleycat.org).

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Photo: Duane Wilcox



Photo: Molly Wald



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# alleycat.org

## **FERAL CATS AND PREDATION**

Feral cats have often been blamed as the major reason for declining bird populations. Studies have shown otherwise.

### **HABITAT DESTRUCTION, CLIMATE CHANGE AND HUMAN ACTIVITIES**

The major cause of bird species loss - indeed, all species loss – is habitat destruction. Habitat modification, fragmentation and loss is caused by a myriad of human activities, including logging, crop farming, livestock grazing, mining, industrial and residential development, urban sprawl, road building, dam building and pesticide use.

Pesticides are recognized as a major culprit in bird decline – particularly the effect of toxic lawn care products in the decline of the songbird. Insecticides, herbicides, fungicides, and rodenticides are routinely used.

Harsh winters or long periods of drought can also have a devastating effect on wildlife mortality.

### **CATS ARE OPPORTUNISTIC FEEDERS AND RODENT SPECIALISTS**

Feral cats eat what is readily available. They are scavengers, relying on garbage and handouts from people. Birds make up only a small percentage of a cat's diet when he relies solely on hunting for food. In many areas, feral cats are valued for managing rodent populations. In fact, organic farmers list feral cats under their rodent control methods when registering with the United States Dept. of Agriculture

Sources for above:

Feral Cats on the Firing Line by  
Nathan J. Winograd, Former Director, Law & Advocacy,  
The San Francisco SPCA

Alley Cat Allies  
[www.alleycat.org](http://www.alleycat.org)



# Discover The Truth About Cat Viruses: FeLV and FIV.

## Feral cats are just as healthy as owned cats.

Most feral cats enjoy excellent health and are no more likely to be infected with disease than house cats. In fact, house cats and feral cats contract FeLV and FIV at an equally low rate (about 4%).

## FeLV and FIV are not the #1 killers of cats.

Kitten mortality and treatable diseases are also serious health threats. But animal control agencies and shelters nationwide are killing healthy cats—owned, stray, and feral—at an alarming rate.

## Spaying and neutering prevents the spread of viruses in all cats.

Spaying and neutering a feral cat colony creates a healthy, stabilized population. And, because neutering reduces or eliminates the primary mode of virus transmission—fighting and breeding—cats already infected pose little risk to other cats, indoors or out.

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## Trap, neuter, and return (TNR) lowers cat populations.

Stray and feral cats are trapped and their health is evaluated.

Cats too ill for treatment are euthanized. Socialized cats and kittens are removed from the colony and adopted. Healthy feral cats are sterilized, vaccinated, and returned to the location

where they live. The returned cats are fed and watered regularly, and their health is monitored by volunteers. No more kittens are born. Colony numbers gradually go down through attrition.



## Cats that test positive can often live healthy, symptom-free lives.

Veterinarians frequently suggest euthanizing FIV-positive cats, but many of these cats can live symptom free for years. FeLV-positive cats may remain in apparent good health for many months, although most succumb sooner. Also, FIV and FeLV tests can be unreliable. Cats testing positive should be re-tested.

## What are FeLV and FIV?

FeLV and FIV are incurable viruses that only affect cats. Humans cannot catch or transmit them.

## Feline Leukemia Virus (FeLV)

FeLV is a cancer-causing virus that is transmitted from cat to cat through fighting or mating. FeLV cannot survive for long outside a cat's body and is easily destroyed with most disinfectants and detergents.

## Feline Immunodeficiency Virus (FIV)

FIV suppresses a cat's immune system. It is spread through deep bite wounds. Because sterilized cats fight much less than intact cats, neutered FIV positive cats can generally live safely with uninfected cats both in and outdoors. But, while the risk of transmitting the virus to another cat is very low, it is not nonexistent.

**The American Association of Feline Practitioners recommends against routine euthanasia of healthy FeLV- and FIV-positive cats.**



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Photos: Molly Wald

## FACTS AND MYTHS ABOUT FERAL CATS

**MYTH:** Feral cats live short, miserable lives, so it's best to trap and euthanize them.

**FACT:** Studies show that feral cats have about the same lifespan as pet cats.

Some people want to tame the feral cats they care for because of the misperception that feral cats live short, miserable lives. This myth has been swallowed whole by too many groups, including some of the most prominent animal organizations in the country.

The truth is that the well-being of feral cats is most compromised by behaviours associated with mating and giving birth to endless litters of kittens. **Spaying and neutering significantly changes the picture.** Male cats no longer fight and roam. Female cats no longer bear kittens. Vaccination ensures a higher level of health. Feral cats in managed colonies frequently live 10 years and longer.\*

\*(Source: Alley Cat Allies – [www.alleycat.org](http://www.alleycat.org))

“Why Trap-Neuter-Return is the Solution to Feral Cat Overpopulation  
– and Trap-Neuter-Adopt is Not”

**MYTH:** Feral cats are diseased and can make pet cats or children sick.

**FACT:** Feral cats are generally healthy. The incidence of disease in feral cat colonies is no higher than among owned cats.

Feral cats shun human contact. They aren't interested in interacting with you or your children.

**MYTH:** Caregivers cause the establishment of feral colonies.

**FACT:** Feral cats naturally congregate in colonies.

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While feral and abandoned cats may face hardships, we don't think death is better than a less than perfect life. Many animals, such as raccoons, foxes, field mice, and others, face similar hazards and do not live extraordinarily long lives, yet we would never consider killing them "for their own good."\*

(\*Source: “Building a No-Kill Community” by Nathan Winograd)  
Former Director, Dept. of Advocacy, San Francisco SPCA

# What's Best for Cats: Being Alive or Dead?

Many animal control pounds and shelters operate on the notion that if a cat can't live in a human home, it's best to kill her. They use individual anecdotes of sick and abused stray cats to extrapolate that millions of these animals are better off dead than alive. But research shows otherwise. **The bottom line is: being killed is not in cats' best interests.**

- Veterinary studies show that stray cats' incidence of trauma and disease is low, and their infection rate—4%—is the same or lower than in house cats.
- Evolutionary research shows that the natural habitat of cats is outdoors in close proximity to humans. The species *Felis catus* came into existence 8,000 to 10,000 years ago when humans shifted from hunting and gathering to farming. Initially attracted by grain stores with plentiful rodent populations, cats have been living side by side with humans ever since.
- A recent national public opinion poll shows that 81% of Americans believe it is more humane to leave a stray cat outside to live out her life than to have her caught and killed.

From:



September 2008  
[www.alleycat.org](http://www.alleycat.org).

# LOVE CATS?



Slope Street Cats  
Phone: 917.207.5282  
Web: [www.slopestreetcats.com](http://www.slopestreetcats.com)  
Email: [slopestreetcats@yahoo.com](mailto:slopestreetcats@yahoo.com)

# HATE CATS?



Slope Street Cats  
Phone: 917.207.5282  
Web: [www.slopestreetcats.com](http://www.slopestreetcats.com)  
Email: [slopestreetcats@yahoo.com](mailto:slopestreetcats@yahoo.com)

## Re: Feral Cats in Your Community – What to Do?

*The following is a copy of an email, sent by Pacific Animal Foundation in July 2009, to the Mayor and Council of every Municipality in British Columbia.*

Dear Mayor and Councillors:

Feral cats are found in all communities, and often Municipal Councils are asked by residents to deal with out-of-control feral populations. Few people or Councils are aware that there is a very cost effective and humane practice to control and reduce feral cat populations called “**Trap/Neuter/Return**” or “**TNR**”.

TNR has been practiced world-wide. Both experience and research clearly show it is highly successful in reducing feral populations. Many of the large animal welfare organizations in the United States are recognizing its effectiveness.

The definition of a feral cat is an unsocialized cat. Either it was born outside and never lived with humans; or it is a house cat that has been abandoned or has strayed from home and, over time, has become unsocialized to humans.

Adult feral cats, if caught, are **not** adoptable because they can rarely adapt to living in a home situation. If feral kittens are caught young enough (age 5 – 8 weeks) they can often be socialized enough to be adoptable. There is a critical window for socializing kittens and, if they are too old, they will remain wild.

The gestation period for a female cat is 60 days with an average of 4 kittens per litter; 2 – 3 litters per year and populations can expand rapidly. See attached ***Cat Numbers Chart***.

Increasingly, members of the public are demanding TNR for healthy but unadoptable animals, as opposed to having them destroyed for control purposes. This reaction turns out to be a correct one, because attempts at destroying animals are bound to fail. Trap and kill (or remove) is not effective because you create a “vacuum effect”, a well-documented fact from years of research. New, unfixed feral cats will quickly move in to the territory of the removed cats and the cycle of reproduction will continue. When TNR policies are in place, no new kittens are born and these colonies stay stable as the fixed cats will not allow the numbers to grow. Through natural attrition, the numbers decrease.

There have been several recent news stories of BC communities dealing with feral cats.

Creston, BC

<http://www2.canada.com/calgaryherald/news/story.html?id=af06bdfd-4f33-4330-9a46-27edd6cbd01d>

Enderby, BC

[http://www.bcclocalnews.com/okanagan\\_similkameen/vernonmorningstar/news/44412017.html#disqus\\_thread](http://www.bcclocalnews.com/okanagan_similkameen/vernonmorningstar/news/44412017.html#disqus_thread)

If your community has feral cats, the information available in this email will assist both your municipality and the cats. Enacting a TNR program will benefit your community by reducing your animal control costs. Fewer kittens and cats will be entering the system, thus reducing costs for kennel space, vaccines, food, litter and other medical expenses. See attached ***Lowering Animal Control Costs***.

Our non-profit volunteer group, Pacific Animal Foundation, has been practicing Trap/Neuter/Return (or "TNR") in North Vancouver for almost 17 years and has had enormous success in **humanely** reducing the local feral population. We have altered hundreds of feral cats and socialized small kittens for adoption.

The number of phone calls regarding roaming feral cats has dropped dramatically over this time and the decreased numbers of feral kittens being born has been noted by veterinary clinics on the North Shore. **Attached** are two letters to Council from local North Vancouver veterinary hospitals to substantiate this finding.

The following link is to our North Vancouver City Council presentation last October (2008) on the subject of feral cats. The link is from the City's website and should prove very helpful.

<http://www.cnv.org/attach/2008%2010%2006%20item%2005.pdf>

Two articles – Trap and Kill not effective:

<http://stafnj.org/print.php?show=145> and

<http://web.archive.org/web/20071009234949/www.alleycat.org/pdf/TNRnotTNA.pdf>

The idea of spaying and neutering animals started to become a focus in the early 1960's. We've now had nearly fifty years of education and experience impressing upon us the need to spay and neuter.

Media campaigns have helped spread the word. Many vet clinics now offer low-cost spay-neuter services. And yet, every pound, animal shelter, and welfare facility in the country continues to be filled to over-flowing with cats and kittens every year, and animal control costs keep going up. Why?

A recent scientific study published in the Journal of the American Veterinary Association indicates the **majority** of pet cats are neutered.

<http://www.alleycat.org/NetCommunity/Page.aspx?pid=650>

So why is there continued overpopulation? Is it that **the root** of the overpopulation problem is not being addressed? Have you ever stopped and asked yourself – “Why does there continue to be cat and kitten overpopulation? Why are shelters and pounds flooded with kittens every summer, year in and year out?” **The feral cats have NOT been included in animal welfare programs and are ignored.**

Unless there is a Trap/Neuter/Return program operating in a community, **NO** feral cats will be spayed or neutered and therefore they will be reproducing on a continuous basis. Each community needs to implement a TNR program in its animal control contract to reduce the feral population. It cannot and should not be the sole responsibility of a volunteer rescue group to provide this service for a community. It is a “community” challenge that requires a “community” solution. If there is a feral rescue group operating in your municipality then a smooth running TNR program will still be “managed” by caring volunteers in the community who will be the ones (along with residents) who do the actual trapping, etc. but the municipal feral fund will help them. If there is no rescue group operating in your municipality, all the more reason to provide any caring and willing citizen working with feral cats with some spay/neuter financial assistance. See ***Spay-Neuter Stats re pet and feral cats attached.***

More information on feral cats can be found on our website at: [www.pacificanimal.org](http://www.pacificanimal.org) along with our Council presentation for 2007 (including a PowerPoint presentation).

We hope this information is helpful to you.

Sincerely,

Lana Simon, Director  
Pacific Animal Foundation  
[www.pacificanimal.org](http://www.pacificanimal.org)  
Email: [admin@pacificanimal.org](mailto:admin@pacificanimal.org)

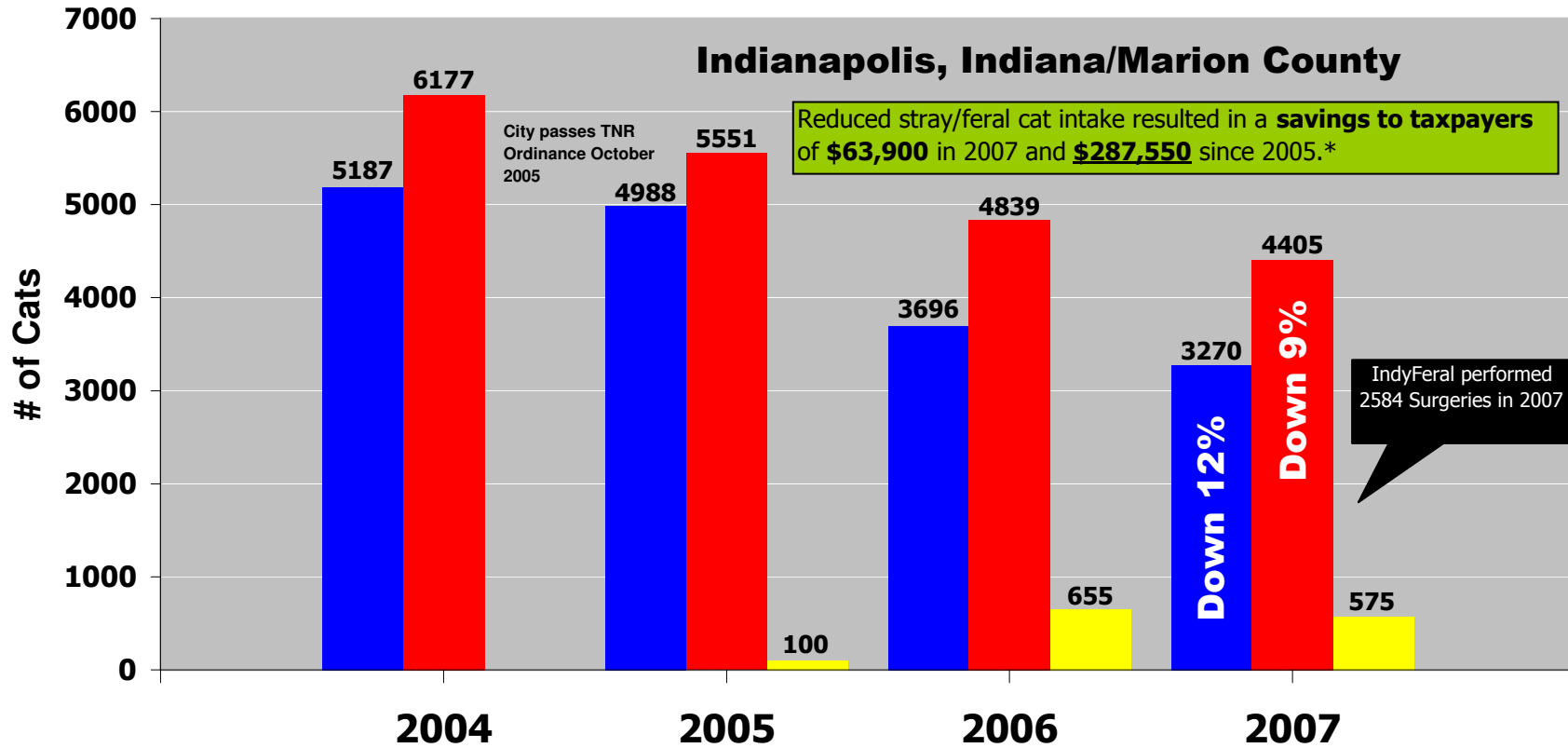
Other helpful websites:

Alley Cat Allies:  
[http://web.archive.org/web/20080112152205/www.alleycat.org/resources\\_ancare.html](http://web.archive.org/web/20080112152205/www.alleycat.org/resources_ancare.html)

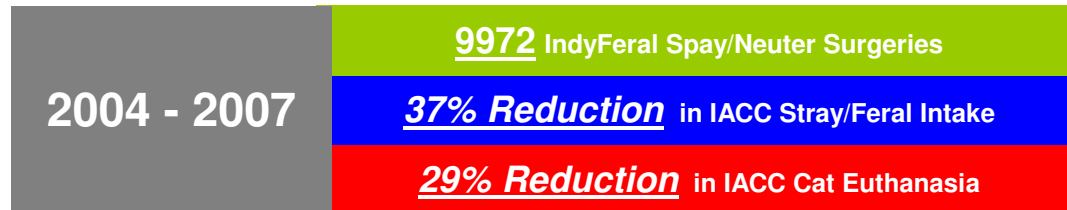
Neighbourhood Cats:  
[http://www.neighborhoodcats.org/RESOURCES\\_ADVOCACY\\_MATERIALS](http://www.neighborhoodcats.org/RESOURCES_ADVOCACY_MATERIALS)



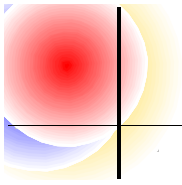
# POSITIVE IMPACT OF TRAP-NEUTER-RETURN (TNR)



- IACC Stray/Feral Cat Intake
- IACC Cats Euthanized (Stray & Owner Surrendered)
- IndyFeral Friendly Cats/Kittens Removed From Colonies and Rehomed



\* Based on IACC estimates of \$150 spent per stray/feral cat impounded and euthanized.



# Lower Your Animal Control Costs through TRAP-NEUTER-RETURN

## BENEFITS OF TRAP-NEUTER-RETURN (“TNR”) PROGRAM

Lower admissions = Tax Dollar Savings

Fewer cats entering Shelter results in a <u>reduction of costs</u> associated with:	Benefits to Animals at a Shelter if fewer admissions:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• kennel space</li><li>• cat food</li><li>• vaccines</li><li>• cat litter</li><li>• spay-neuter expenses</li><li>• medical care expenses<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>eg. deworming</li><li>    flea treatments</li><li>    antibiotics</li></ul></li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• less overcrowding = less disease</li><li>• more staff/volunteer attention</li><li>• <u>more resources</u> for other areas<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>eg. dog and cat grooming at shelter</li><li>    dog walking; dog training at shelter</li><li>    funds for upgrading facilities</li><li>    funds for school and public education programs and campaigns</li></ul></li></ul>

A Trap/Neuter/Return Program **reduces future animal shelter costs** by reducing constant admission of feral cats and kittens. Adult feral cats **do not increase shelter numbers** because, after recovery from spay/neuter surgery, they are returned to their original location. They are not social with humans and prefer to live outdoors.

**No** pound facility jobs need to be lost because of lower intake numbers. Job descriptions can be redefined to accommodate new opportunities opening. eg. re-trained to be animal groomers, dog rehab trainers, community education outreach staff.

# DO THE MATH !

CURRENT OPERATING COSTS  
WITHOUT TNR PROGRAM

VS

INVESTMENT COST TO SHELTER  
WITH TNR PROGRAM

<p><b>STANDARD OPERATING COST TO SHELTER WHEN CAT ENTERS POUND FACILITY:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• cat held at facility 4 – 7 days (depending on impound contract bylaw); needs kennel space and staff</li> <li>• cat requires daily food and litter;</li> <li>• euthanasia drug cost and disposal if cat not claimed within impound contract time (ferals will not be claimed)</li> </ul>	<p>= \$ _____ per day</p> <p>= \$ _____ per day</p> <p>= \$ _____ per cat</p>	<p><b>INVESTMENT COST TO SHELTER WITH FERAL TNR PROGRAM</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• spay or neuter and one vaccination</li> </ul> <p>(*ask all area vet clinics to participate with low-cost <u>community</u> discount)</p>	<p>= \$ _____ per cat</p>
<p><b>TOTAL COST PER FERAL CAT</b></p>	<p>= \$ _____</p>	<p><b>TOTAL COST PER FERAL CAT</b></p>	<p>= \$ _____</p>
<p><b>With no TNR program then:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>continuous</u> flow of feral cats and kittens as they constantly reproduce</li> <li>• <b>AND</b> killing of healthy but unadoptable cats</li> </ul>	<p>= \$ _____ <b>X forever</b></p> <p>= \$ _____ <b>X forever</b></p>	<p><b>With a TNR program then:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>NO</b> more kittens and gradual reduction of adult feral cats in community through attrition</li> <li>• <b>AND NO KILLING</b> of healthy but unadoptable cats = more community support!</li> </ul>	<p><b>No further costs</b></p>

# WHY WE MUST ACT TO START T/N/R PROGRAMS

## THE CAT OVERPOPULATION CRISIS

### DID YOU KNOW?

- Female cats can have a litter of kittens every 60 days with an average of 4 kittens each time
- Female kittens can go into heat as early as 4.5 months old

Unless there is a Trap/Neuter/Return program operating in a community, **NO** feral cats will be spayed or neutered and therefore will be reproducing on a continuous basis.

Every year, in every community, hundreds of feral kittens found in garden sheds, garages, vacant lots, warehouses, and waterfront properties are turned in to animal pounds and shelters by residents and businesses.

These feral kittens are the largest contributor to the cat overpopulation crisis, but feral mother cats are routinely left behind to continually reproduce.

Feral kittens continue to fill pounds and shelters year after year, but the cat overpopulation problem will not be solved **until a comprehensive plan is in place to address the feral cat population.\***

(\*Source – prepared by Pacific Animal Foundation)

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**“Feral cats comprise more than half of all intakes and euthanasias (kills) in our nation’s shelters and animal control facilities.” \***

(\*Source: Association of Veterinarians for Animal Rights)  
Fall 2003 – AVAR – *Directions (USA)*

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Strategies for saving feral cats (and their offspring, who can make up the bulk of the kitten population in shelters) cannot rely solely on aggressive adoption programs or strategies appropriate for adoptable and treatable pets. Although the “Trap,Neuter,Release” method of feral cat colony management has become increasingly accepted within the humane community, organized programs to help feral cats are not nearly commonplace enough. TNR is not only humane; it is the most effective way to reduce the number of homeless cats.\*

(\*Source: “Building a No-Kill Community” by Nathan Winograd)  
Former Director, Dept. of Advocacy, San Francisco SPCA

# The Difference between Euthanasia and Killing

Millions of cats die in U.S. animal control pounds and shelters every year. The pounds and shelters say these animals are “euthanized.” But they’re not—they are killed. An animal is only euthanized when she is terminally ill or untreatably injured.

*Euthanasia n. The act or practice of ending the life of an individual suffering from a terminal illness or an incurable condition, as by lethal injection or the suspension of extraordinary medical treatment.\**

*\* The American Heritage Dictionary*

Genuine euthanasia is a medical decision and is always done in an individual animal’s best interest. It can be an important part of end-of-life care. But most animals who die in pounds and shelters are killed for very different reasons. Facilities kill animals to make room for new ones, to manage disease, or to compensate for inadequate staff or funding. Decisions to kill reflect the operating interests of facilities, not the best interests of animals.

Using the word “euthanasia” masks what really happens to cats in pounds and shelters—they are killed.

From:



September 2008  
[www.alleycat.org](http://www.alleycat.org)

## LIST OF ORGANIZATIONS THAT ARE NOW SUPPORTING AND/OR PRACTICING TRAP/NEUTER/RETURN

- [The American Association of Feline Practitioners \(AAFP\)](#)
  - [The American Animal Hospital Association \(AAHA\)](#)
  - [The American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals \(ASPCA\)](#)
  - [Association of Veterinarians for Animal Rights \(AVAR\)](#)
  - [Best Friends Animal Society](#)
  - [City of Berkeley, California](#)
  - [Cat Fanciers' Association \(CFA\)](#)
  - [The Institute for Animals and Society: \*The Animals' Platform\*](#)
  - [No Kill Solutions](#)
  - [Petfinder](#)
  - [PetsMart Charities](#)
  - [Richmond \(VA\) SPCA](#)
  - [San Francisco Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals \(SF/SPCA\)](#)
- and now The Humane Society of the United States – Media Release October 14, 2005

And here's what some of those groups are now saying about Trap/Neuter/Return:

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

"The number of feral cats in the United States alone is estimated to be in the tens of millions. Sadly, many communities still opt to control populations via outdated methods, including lethal elimination or relocation. Not only are some of these methods horribly cruel, they are ineffective. It's time to focus on feral cats in the fight to end animal cruelty.

The ASPCA endorses Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) as the only proven humane and effective method to manage feral cat colonies."

[http://www.aspca.org/site/PageServer?pagename=cruelty\\_tnr](http://www.aspca.org/site/PageServer?pagename=cruelty_tnr)

### **Best Friends Animal Society**

"Best Friends Animal Society endorses and practices trap/neuter/return (T/N/R) as the most humane and effective way to manage feral cats.

While euthanizing a suffering animal is an act of kindness, killing healthy feral cats, when the life-saving alternative of trap/neuter/return exists, demonstrates a lack of respect for their most basic rights."

[http://www.bestfriends.org/allthegoodnews/specialfeatures/ferals1\\_5.cfm](http://www.bestfriends.org/allthegoodnews/specialfeatures/ferals1_5.cfm)

### **Association of Veterinarians for Animal Rights (AVAR)**

[AVAR does not post a position statement on TNR on their website, but consistently supports it. The following is from the newsletter *Directions*, fall 2003, page 5, "AVMA Revisits Feral Cat Issue in Upcoming Forum."]

"Feral cats comprise more than half of all intakes and euthanasias (kills) in our nation's shelters and animal control facilities. The traditional method of trapping and killing cats that has been in place for decades is reactionary and entirely ineffective in controlling populations of outdoor cats. Animal control agencies report higher euthanasia rates each year and require larger budgets to carry out these ineffective, lethal programs. Research shows that this antiquated policy simply creates a geographic vacuum which will undeniably be filled by breeding populations if sterilized cats are not returned to their original locations. Feral cats are wild and usually cannot be adopted as companion cats, and Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) offers a sound and effective solution to controlling their numbers."

[http://www.avar.org/publications\\_position.asp#p26](http://www.avar.org/publications_position.asp#p26)

### **The American Association of Feline Practitioners (AAFP)**

"The AAFP supports appropriately managed cat colonies. Humane alternatives to the destruction of healthy cats for animal control purposes should be actively pursued by veterinary, humane, and wildlife organizations."

[http://www.aafponline.org/resources/statements/feral\\_cats.htm](http://www.aafponline.org/resources/statements/feral_cats.htm)

### **The Humane Society of the United States**

The HSUS advocates community-based Trap-Neuter-Return programs with on-going responsible management as the most viable, long-term approach available at this time to reduce feral cat populations.

[http://www.hsus.org/pets/issues\\_affecting\\_our\\_pets/feral\\_cats/TNR\\_statement.html](http://www.hsus.org/pets/issues_affecting_our_pets/feral_cats/TNR_statement.html)

### **Petfinder** (from "TNR: The Humane Alternative" in Petfinder's online library)

"Whatever the total number of ferals in the United States actually is, bringing that number under control is a daunting task. TNR is the one program to date that offers a solution without sacrificing healthy cats and the humanity of those who care for them."

<http://www.petfinder.com/journal/index.cgi?keyword=Trap+Neuter+Return>

## New Scientific Study Finds Vast Majority of Pet Cats Are Neutered

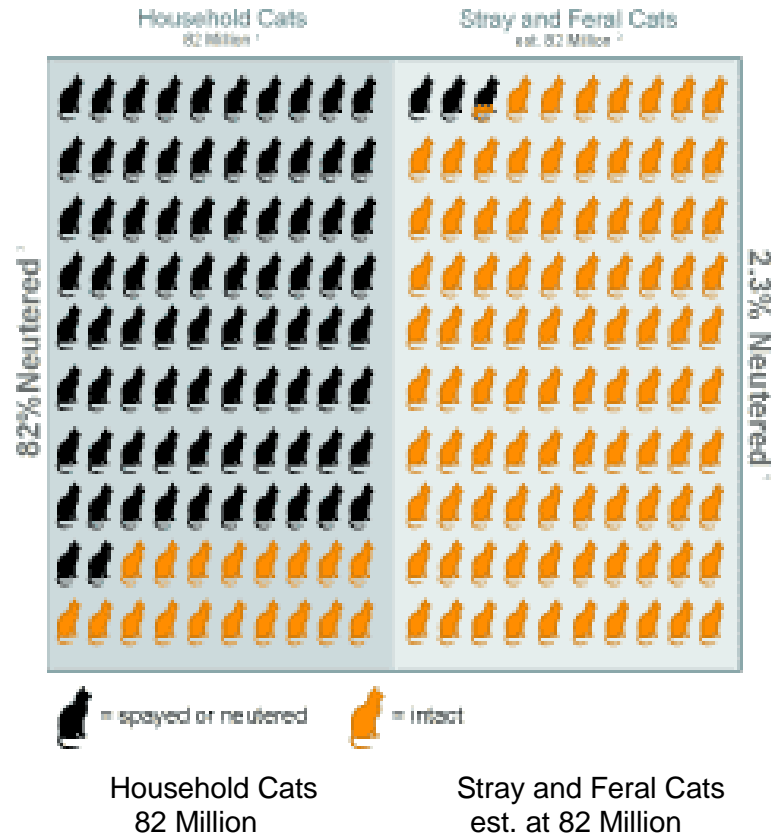
Eighty percent of cats in U.S. households are neutered, according to a new, nationally representative study conducted by Alley Cat Allies and published in the Journal of the American Veterinary Association, a leading peer-reviewed scientific journal.

When looking at the neuter rates of cats in U.S. households, it is important to remember that pet cats represent only a part of the entire U.S. cat population. Scientists estimate that there may be as many stray and feral cats in the United States as there are cats living in people's homes. In contrast to the high neuter rate of pet cats, the most comprehensive research to date indicates that **less than 3% of stray and feral cats are neutered.**

**"[A]ny attempt to increase the proportion of neutered cats in the United States must include stray and feral cats."**

*Journal of the American Veterinary Medical Association, 2009, 234: 1023 – 1030, Chu K. Anderson WM, Reiser MY. Population Characteristics and Neuter Status of Cats Living in Households in the United States.*

## Spay/Neuter Status of U.S. Cat Population





## FUNDING FOR FERAL CAT TRAP-NEUTER-RETURN PROGRAMS

Jurisdictions are beginning to step forward and implement TNR programs in their communities as they see how effective TNR is in reducing costs to taxpayers and lowering euthanasia rates at pounds and shelters.

### DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE – Connecticut, USA

The Connecticut Department of Agriculture first introduced in fiscal year 2007, a new grant program to provide up to \$ 40,000. in vaccination/sterilization benefits for feral cats. After the inception year, FY 2008 saw another \$ 40,000. allocated and 500 vouchers issued to eleven (11) non-profit organizations to achieve the same objectives for feral cats. New legislation titled "An Act Concerning the Expansion of the Animal Population Control Program" was implemented in July 2008. Part of the new legislation will dedicate up to 10% of APCP income to vaccinate and sterilize feral cats. The total amount to be awarded is expected to be between \$40,000. - \$60,000.\*

(\*Source: Animal Population Control – 2010 Feral Cat Grant Program)  
<http://www.ct.gov/doag/cwp/view.asp?A=1367&Q=390078>

### MARICOPA COUNTY – Arizona

Maricopa County spends \$ 61. to trap, hold and euthanize one feral cat, versus \$22.50 to spay or neuter and return a cat. Maricopa County Animal Care and Control encourages communities to adopt TNR by passing associated costs along to them.\*

### SAN DIEGO – California

In 1992, San Diego Department of Animal Control euthanized 15,525 at a cost of \$121. per cat. That year, Feral Cat Coalition San Diego, a private, volunteer organization, began aggressive spay/neuter programs. By 1998, the number of animals killed each year dropped more than 45 percent, with a tax savings of \$859,221.\*

### CAPE MAY – New Jersey

Since implementing communitywide TNR procedures in 2001, Animal Control Officer John Queenan has achieved an 80 percent drop in feral cat complaints.\*

(\*Source: Alley Cat Allies)  
[www.alleycat.org](http://www.alleycat.org)

### The National Animal Control Association (NACA) – Sept/Oct 2008 interview

"Taking a Broader View of Cats in the Community" - by NACA president Mark Kumpf

NACA feral cat policy moves toward management

Cats in many areas are still considered second-class animal citizens – they're not afforded the same protection that dogs are, and there's no funding mechanism that helps deal with cats. . . . . so that kind of leaves the burden on the non-profit sector and donations to handle what is essentially a community issue . . .

(\* Source: – Animal Sheltering Magazine)  
[www.animalsheltering.org](http://www.animalsheltering.org)

# She's lived outside for seven years. She's not homeless.

The truth is, she has a home. And while it may not be inside four walls, she's living a valued life. Like squirrels and birds, feral cats are unsocialized and are content living outside. But where do cats like these come from? Born outside, these unsterilized cats eventually form colonies, making their home wherever they can find food. Tomcats prowl for mates, females become pregnant, and the cycle of reproduction continues.

To help them, Alley Cat Allies has a cost-effective plan that not only reduces feral cat populations, but also improves and extends the lives of colony members. It's called Trap, Neuter, and Return or TNR. That's right, return. To learn about this smart, compassionate, proven method of population control, or to give a gift of time or money, go to [www.alleycat.org](http://www.alleycat.org).

When it comes to caring for feral cats, TNR is the best thing for them.

**SUPPORT TRAP,  
NEUTER, AND RETURN**



7920 Norfolk Avenue • Suite 600 • Bethesda, MD 20814  
[www.alleycat.org](http://www.alleycat.org)



Photographer: Molly Wald

Because alley cats, barn cats, tomcats, & street cats need a different kind of care.

# Why Trap-Neuter-Return is the Solution to Feral Cat Overpopulation — and Trap-Neuter-Adopt Is Not

**F**elis Catus, the domestic cat that plays a pivotal role in our lives, is born and lives in a broad range of circumstances, from pampered house cat to wildest of feral cats. Because cats in differing environments all look so similar, it is easy to imagine that a feral cat is, or wants to be, a creature much like the cat curled up on your sofa. In truth, feral cats are very different from the cats we easily share our homes with. Feral cats are closer to being wildlife than pets.

Alley Cat Allies (ACA) knows of committed caregivers who invest all available resources to provide indoor homes for the feral cats they manage in an attempt to tame them. It is, unfortunately, a time-consuming project with a very low rate of success. And even when a feral cat does “tame up,” he bonds only to the caregiver who brought him in—almost never to other humans or homes.

This is one reason why ACA does not encourage attempts to adopt adult feral cats. To understand other reasons, first let's explore the nature of outdoor cats.

## Free-Roaming Does Not Equal Feral

A common misconception among some caregivers and much of the public is that all outdoor or free-roaming cats are feral cats. In fact, the free-roaming cat population consists of many categories of domestic cats, from roaming household pets to truly feral cats who exist independent of humans.

The “Touch Barrier” diagram, on the next page, shows where cats with different natures and living in different circum-

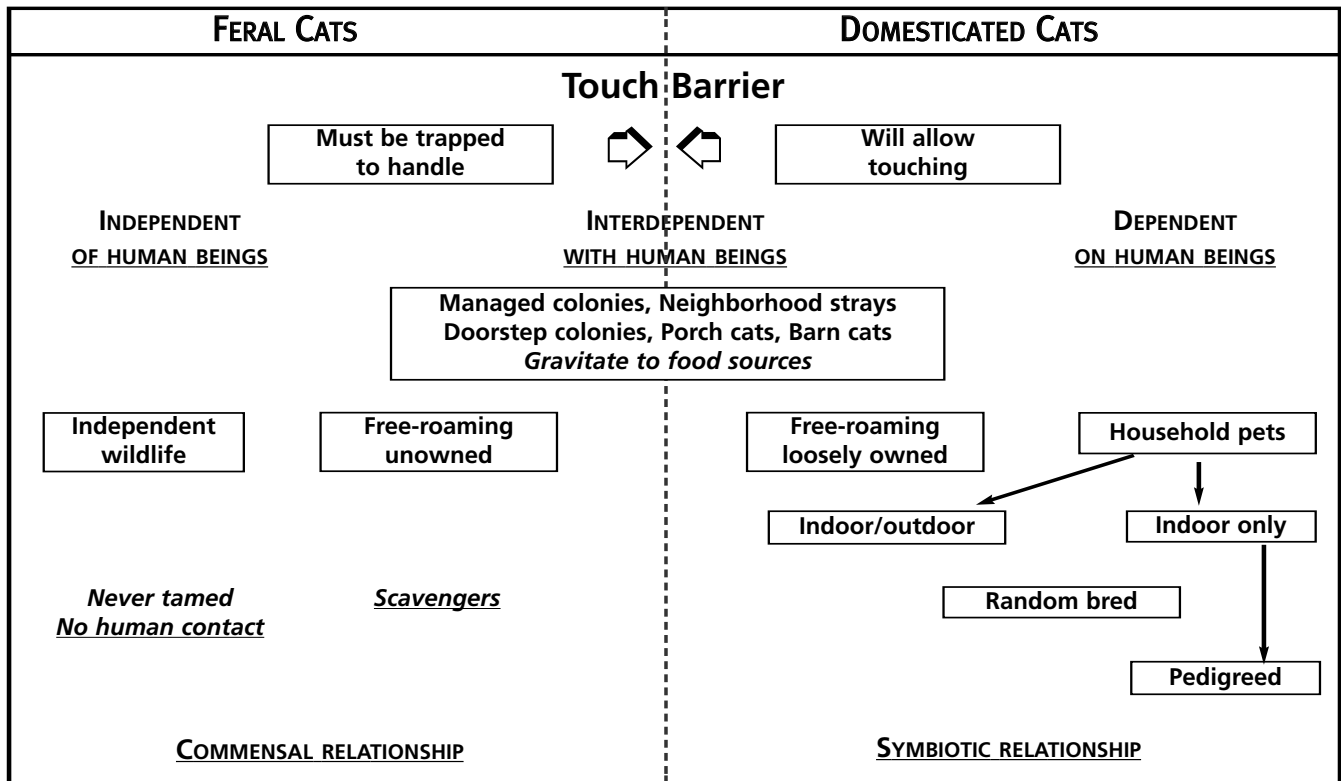
stances fit on the scale from household cat to feral cat. Three quarters of the cats in this diagram spend some or all of their time outdoors. Half of the cats—those to the left of the Touch Barrier—display wariness of human contact and must be trapped to handle. This group includes both strays—adult cats that once lived with human families and in many cases can

**FERAL CAT**—Literally “gone wild,” a domestic cat that was lost or abandoned and has reverted to a wild state, or a cat that was born to a stray or feral mother and had little or no human contact. Adult feral cats can rarely be tamed without months or years of effort and are not suited to living indoors with people. They live outside in family groups called colonies that form near a source of food and shelter. Feral cats can survive almost anywhere and are found worldwide.

**STRAY CAT**—A domestic cat that strayed from home and became lost or was abandoned. Because a stray cat was once a companion animal, he or she can usually be re-socialized and placed in an adoptive home.

**TRAP-NEUTER-RETURN (TNR)**—A nonlethal sterilization method to reduce the numbers of feral cats in the environment both immediately and for the long-term. A comprehensive, ongoing program in which stray and feral cats already living outdoors in cities, towns, and rural areas are humanely trapped, then evaluated, vaccinated, and sterilized by veterinarians. Kittens and tame (stray) cats are adopted into good homes. Healthy adult cats too wild (feral) to be adopted are returned to their familiar habitat under the lifelong care of caring humans. Cats that are ill or injured beyond recovery are not returned to the environment.

## THE TOUCH BARRIER SEPARATES FERAL FROM DOMESTICATED CATS



Adapted from Miller, Joan. *The domestic cat: Perspective on the nature and diversity of cats.* Journal of the American Veterinary Association, Vol 208, No. 4, February 15, 1996

return to such a life—and feral cats—“independent wildlife”—the cats that belong in their outdoor homes. Strays and feral cats often look and act much alike when first trapped. This is why we must carefully assess each cat to determine his true nature and what his future should be.

### The Dynamics of Taming

Why do humans feel compelled to provide indoor homes for feral cats, and why do the cats resist these good intentions? It is inherent in human nature to want to nurture and care for those we perceive to be in need—to make them warmer, cozier, safer, and therefore happier. It is an admirable trait, but not always appropriate. The impulse to bring every feral cat “in from the cold”

reflects our human needs, but it isn’t best for the cat or what the cat wants. Feral cats have lived their entire lives without direct human contact other than, if they are fortunate, daily feeding and monitoring by a caregiver. Their arsenal of survival instincts includes wariness of humans in general and a sharp fear of confinement. A key component of a feral cat’s security is his ability to flee from perceived danger.

Even if you have fed a feral cat for a long time and he has come to trust you in an outdoor setting, he will lose that trust when confined and it may never be regained. Being forced into a house or other structure can be the most frightening experience possible for a feral cat. He may appear to acclimate, or at least may stop hissing and cringing, but he is never at ease and never stops looking for a way to escape. The

stress of such confinement can harm the cat's physical and mental health.

A feral cat's home is where he has spent his entire life. Feral cats form strong bonds with one another and with their home territory, bonds that define their daily existence. It may be difficult to accept that, despite the strong human-animal bond you have formed with the cats, their animal-animal bonds and animal-territory bonds are stronger and more relevant to their well-being. They may be warm indoors, but they are content outdoors.

Another factor that inspires some people to want to tame the feral cats they care for is the misperception that feral cats live short, miserable lives. This myth has been swallowed whole by too many groups, including some of the most prominent animal organizations in the country.

The truth is that the well-being of feral cats is most compromised by behaviors associated with mating and giving birth to endless litters of kittens. Spaying and neutering significantly changes the picture. Male cats no longer fight and roam. Female cats no longer bear kittens. Vaccination ensures a higher level of health. Feral cats in managed colonies frequently live 10 years and longer.

### **Nurturing Through Fostering and Trap-Neuter-Return**

Where, then, can a caregiver's desire to nurture best be expressed? Within a Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) program. A major and critically important component of TNR is socializing and adopting kittens and adult stray cats. When given individual love and attention, feral kittens up to about 8 weeks of age can usually be fully socialized to become household cats. Neonatal kittens accidentally separated from their mothers or discovered in a location dangerous for newborns require bottle-feeding to survive. Adult strays—cats who for one reason or another lost their homes—can often be re-socialized and re-homed. Fostering kittens and strays is an invaluable contribution to the process. It is also the best use of resources.

#### **From *ALLY: the Newsletter of the Alliance for Animals*, Vol. 11, No. 2:**

*"Some people say we should neuter and release feral cats. But they can't mean these cats, these beautiful cats we've been feeding, who are coming to meet us at mealtimes, who even seem to know their names. These cats could be tamed, if someone would just take them in and work with them. We already have quite a few at home and we have been working with them. Some of them are doing great, and we are sure we can find them homes. If only someone would just give them a chance... it is cruel to leave them outside."*

It is an oft-heard story. We are sure we know what is best. Cold is bad. No one should have to live out in the cold. We mean well when we take these feral cats in. We mean well when we expect them to share our homes and lifestyles, join our other feline companions, enjoy our food, our shelter. It may take time, but surely they will come to recognize that we care about them, and mean them no harm. Surely they will come to thank us for rescuing them from their harrowing lives outside....

But it is we who do not understand. It is we who mistake our own needs for those of the cat; it is we who need them, not they who need us. We need to feel important, we need to feel special—we have that "special" touch that will tame a feral cat. We have "saved" them, we are truly compassionate, even heroic. We give up hours of our day to sit with them, nurture them.

We don't see that we are terrorizing them, forcing them into an alien environment because it fits our definition of what is best.

We don't see what is really special—the essential "catness" of the feral cat, her independence, natural wildness, and strength.

The feral cat's life may in fact be shorter than that of the domestic cat on our bed, but it is her life, her relationships with her comrades and her environment, her world. Her every instinct tells her to avoid the human, avoid confinement. She tries desperately to escape from us, to get back to the world she knows and understands. If we understand the cat at all, if we care about her at all, if we can rise above the human need to possess and control, we must let her go. We can cherish her from a distance, admire her spirit, celebrate her life for what it is, help her by honoring her needs as they truly are. Sterilize her, protect from disease, build her a shelter, educate the community about her, but do not try to "own" her. Give her freedom, peace of mind, and dignity.

Donna Bishop, *Founder, Alliance for Animals*

## **The Greatest Possible Good for the Greatest Number of Cats**

The goals of the feral cat movement are:

- to change the way feral cats are routinely treated in this country;
- to recognize their right to live and their niche in the environment;
- to improve the quality of their lives through spay/neuter; and
- to humanely, nonlethally, and substantially reduce their numbers.

In other words: to save and improve the lives of as many feral cats as we can.

Getting ahead of the overpopulation problem through adoption is not possible. Feral cats breed much faster than we can ever tame them; they die in shelters in far greater numbers than can ever be adopted. Even if adoption were the most desirable course, resources do not exist to socialize and adopt the tens of millions of feral cats in this country.

And yet, with the time and energy that goes into trying to socialize one adult feral cat, dozens of cats could be sterilized and dozens of friendly stray cats and kittens could be placed for adoption, thereby having a real impact on saving cats and improving their lives.

It is time to frankly examine our reasons for working on behalf of feral cats. Even caregivers who are involved only with

### **HOW CAN I TELL IF A CAT IS STRAY OR FERAL?**

Observe the cat's appearance and behavior. A stray cat is likely to approach you, although usually not close enough for you to touch him. He may be skittish, but if you put food down a stray cat will likely start to eat it right away. A stray cat is often vocal, sometimes talking insistently, and may look disheveled, as if unused to dealing with conditions on the street. A stray cat may be seen at all hours of the day.

A feral cat is silent, will not approach humans unknown to him, and generally will be seen only from dusk to dawn, unless extraordinarily hungry and foraging for food. A feral cat has adapted to conditions and is likely to appear well-groomed. If you put food down for a feral cat, he will wait until you move away from the area before approaching the food.

the cats they feed on a daily basis are, nevertheless, part of the big picture, of the dynamic movement to help cats that began some 15 years ago in the United States.

If the goal truly is to bring the greatest good to the greatest number of cats, then the only way to reach that goal is through TNR. There is no alternative. Because more kittens are born every day. ■

## Mandatory Cat Licensing: - A LICENCE TO KILL



Passing a law mandating that all owners license their cats will increase the number of cats killed in animal pounds and shelters. The number one documented cause of death for all cats in the U.S. is being killed in animal pounds and shelters. Licensing funnels even more cats into a system which offers them little chance of survival.

### Fatal Consequences for Cats

Mandatory cat licensing ordinances are a license to kill. They operate on the principle that any unlicensed cat should be brought to a pound or shelter, where over 70% of all cats are killed.

A set of tags attached to a collar is usually the only feature which visually distinguishes a licensed cat from an unlicensed one or links a cat to her information in any way. Many cats do not tolerate collars, and those who wear them can easily lose them; nearly all cat collars today are designed to break away easily to prevent strangulation. Yet any cat not wearing a collar—owned or unowned, licensed or unlicensed, socialized **or feral**—is a visible target for animal control.

Even owned and licensed cats risk being killed if their owners do not find them quickly enough or aren't able to pay the sometimes hefty impoundment fees required to claim an animal from a pound or shelter. **For feral cats who do not have "owners" to license them, mandatory cat licensing is a death sentence.**

## Debunking Licensing Myths

Even though mandatory licensing results in more cats killed, some supporters claim licensing is beneficial. Discover why those claims are myths.

**Myth:** Licensing reunites lost cats with their owners.

**Truth:** Animal facilities reunite only 2% of incoming cats with their owners.

Licensing tags are awkward and heavy, and poorly suited to a cat's small frame. If a cat doesn't wear a collar or his collar slips off or breaks away—as nearly all cat collars are designed to do, to prevent strangulation—there is no way to identify her and she will be treated as a stray. If a cat is lost outside of her own jurisdiction, the locally maintained license information will be useless in reuniting the animal with her owner.

In fact, across the country animal facilities reunite only 2% of incoming cats with their owners, according to the National Council on Pet Population Study and Policy. Relatedly, in a recent study published in *The Journal of the American Veterinary Medical Association*, owners report that the majority of lost cats who find their way home do so on their own; only a small minority are recovered due to their owners calling or visiting an animal pound or shelter.

When cat licensing is introduced, cat recovery rates rarely increase, and in some cases decrease; this is most likely because more cats are brought into a system in which over 70% of them are killed, according to the most comprehensive research to date. In San Mateo County, California, enacting mandatory cat licensing increased recovery rates by only 1.5%. In a study of San Diego shelters, “the worst spike in euthanasia we found was L.A. County, where cats reclaimed fell 32 percent the year they instituted cat licensing.”

Cat licensing depends on punitive measures and forced compliance and diverts valuable resources away from activities that actually ensure identification of animals, such as voluntary, subsidized microchipping.



Myth: Licensing generates revenue for animal control.

**Truth: The costs of running licensing programs often exceed the revenue those programs generate.**

Licensing programs are costly to run. Basic operational expenses include staff salaries and benefits, office space and equipment, and database management. Compliance rates are notoriously low, and ensuring even minimal enforcement requires expensive advertising campaigns, door-to-door canvassing, issuing citations, collecting fines, and more.

By its nature, licensing increases the number of cats picked up by animal control and brought to shelters; as a result, it also increases the number of cats killed. All of this increases expenses. Jurisdictions must pay for feeding and boarding seized cats until owners pick them up or until the minimum holding period expires.

Jurisdictions must also pay for killing all animals not claimed or adopted, and for body removal and disposal. **The intake of feral cats in most locations guarantees continual seizures and killing costs, as these animals have no “owners” to claim them and cannot adapt to life in a human home.**

Meanwhile, the revenue generated by these programs is negligible. In many places, the revenue is placed in a general fund where it does not benefit animals. Even in jurisdictions that place the revenue into the animal control program, the program expenses often exceed the revenue taken in.

Myth: Licensing ensures animals are spayed/neutered and vaccinated against rabies.

**Truth: Spay/neuter surgeries alone ensure spaying/neutering, and vaccines alone ensure vaccination—licensing only discourages these by adding licensing fees on top of veterinary costs.**

Licensing does nothing to ensure cats are spayed/neutered or vaccinated. Directly spaying/neutering and vaccinating cats is the only way to ensure both. Licensing merely directs valuable resources away from actual spay/neuter surgeries and vaccinations. Communities who wish to ensure spay/neuter surgeries and vaccination should invest government funds in low-cost, high-volume clinics.

Studies show that the main reason people don't spay and neuter their pets is because of the cost of the procedure and lack of access to clinics. Adding licensing fees on top of veterinary costs is likely to discourage spaying and neutering rather than encourage it, and is another reason licensing compliance rates are so low.

Proponents of licensing sometimes spread fear by depicting rabies as a terrible threat to the community. Licensing fails to increase vaccinations for the same reason it fails to increase spaying and neutering: only vaccines ensure vaccination against rabies, and licensing costs on top of vaccination costs merely discourage it.

It is important to note that cats pose virtually no rabies threat to humans. Rabies has been nearly eradicated from the dog and cat population in the U.S.; it has been a disease of wildlife since 1960. In 2006, only three human deaths were reported: two from bat bites, and one from a dog bite that occurred outside the United States. The last human rabies death caused by a cat bite was in 1975.

From:



September 2008  
[www.alleycat.org](http://www.alleycat.org).

The primary goal of any feral cat management program should be to stabilize and eventually reduce an existing colony through natural attrition.

Animal shelters and welfare organizations can play an important role in programs to manage feral cats, but it is **ultimately the responsibility of the entire community to work together to care for and reduce the numbers of feral cats.**

**Resources within the municipality would include assistance from:**

- **the municipal jurisdiction**
- **any animal control agency**
- **any animal welfare organizations**
- **veterinarians**
- **pet food stores**
- **newspapers and other media**
- **individual residents and businesses**

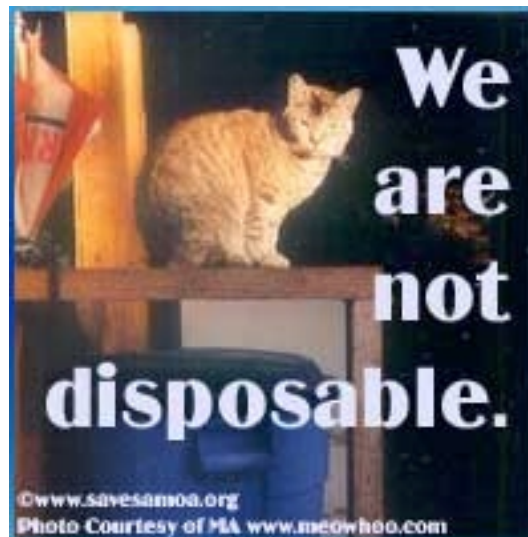


Photo source – [www.straypetadvocacy.org](http://www.straypetadvocacy.org)



**Pacific Animal Foundation**

A Network of Caring in the Urban Wilderness

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

## WHAT CAN YOU DO TO HELP?

Our hope is that each municipality will understand the merits of Trap/Neuter/Return and include it in their animal control contract. Including a TNR program will reduce future municipal animal control costs for taxpayers and gain wide community support because healthy, but unadoptable animals, are not destroyed for control purposes.

Please email your local municipal Mayor and Council and ask them to include funds for a Trap/Neuter/Return Program in the community's animal control contract.

You will be helping both the community and the feral cats!



Photo source – Pacific Animal Foundation

This booklet was prepared by *Pacific Animal Foundation* and is available online at our website.

Feel free to copy and distribute.



**Pacific Animal Foundation**

A Network of Caring in the Urban Wilderness

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