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STAFF REPORT: Planning & Building Services Department



REPORT TO: Council
MEETING DATE: August 27, 2012
REPORT NO.: B.12.19
SUBJECT: Feral Cat Program – Request for Assistance
PREPARED BY: D. Finbow, Director, Planning & Building Services

A. Recommendations

THAT Council receive Staff Report B.12.19 and that Council make a determination with respect to the Town's support of a Feral Cat Program (Trap/Neuter/Return) proposed by Blue Mountain Veterinary Services and the Georgian Triangle Humane Society.

B. Background

Council at its meeting of July 16, 2012 adopted the following resolution:

THAT Council of the Town of The Blue Mountains supports, in principle, the Feral Cat Program of the Georgian Triangle Humane Society and Blue Mountain Veterinary Services; and

THAT Council refers support of the Feral Cat Program to the Planning and Building Department for report to Council on the costs associated with support of the Program through By-law Enforcement Assistance including staff capacity.

As Council will note, the resolution requested a report related to two items, costs associated with support of the Feral Cat Program and Staff Capacity.

FERAL CAT PROGRAM:

The feral cat program proposed by Dr. Tina Grey and the Georgian Triangle Humane Society is comprised of trapping, neutering and returning (TNR) the feral cat. The ASPCA provides the following information related to TNR:

How Does TNR Help Feral Cats?

Through TNR, feral cats can live out their lives without adding to the homeless cat population. "It is very important to have all feral cats spayed/neutered because it is the only 100-percent effective way to prevent unwanted kittens," says Aimee Christian, ASPCA Vice President of Spay/Neuter Operations. "Feral cats are prolific reproducers."

Furthermore, by stabilizing the population, cats will naturally have more space, shelter and food, and fewer risks of disease. After being spayed or neutered, cats living in colonies tend to gain weight and live healthier lives. Spayed cats are less likely to develop breast cancer and will not be at risk for ovarian or uterine cancer, while

neutered males will not get testicular cancer. By neutering male cats, you also reduce the risk of injury and infection, since intact males have a natural instinct to fight with other cats. Spaying also means female cats do not go into heat. That means they attract fewer tom cats to the area, reducing fighting. If cats are sterilized and live in a colony that has a caretaker, they may live more than 10 years.

How Does TNR Benefit the Community?

TNR helps the community by stabilizing the population of the feral colony and, over time, reducing it. At the same time, nuisance behaviors such as spraying, excessive noisemaking and fighting are largely eliminated, and no more kittens are born. Yet, the benefit of natural rodent control is continued. Jesse Oldham, ASPCA Senior Administrative Director of Community Outreach and the founder of Slope Street Cats, an organization dedicated to feral cat welfare, notes, "TNR also helps the community's animal welfare resources by reducing the number of kittens that would end up in their shelters—TNR creates more space for the cats and kittens who come to them from other avenues."

COSTS:

In order to understand the potential costs, as well as the human resources required to support the proposed program, Dr. Tina Gray advised that the ask of the Town is for the Town to provide the following:

1. 2 – 3 traps
2. Provide "bait"
3. Set, bait and collect traps based on clinic availability
4. Deliver trapped feral cats to Blue Mountain Veterinarian Services
5. Maximum 2 or 3 cats per week
6. Collect feral cat post sterilization/vaccination and release/return cat

Capital & Equipment Costs

With regard to the capital costs, these are limited to the purchase of traps and bait.

Traps – approximately \$300.00

Gloves – approximately \$50.00

Bait – approximately \$240.00 per annum

Fuel – approximately \$100.00 per annum (consideration of work that can be completed while on regular patrol has been included – only fuel dedicated to Program noted)

The remaining infrastructure, i.e. vehicles, telephone, misc. equipment, is currently owned by the Town.

Staff Costs

To determine staff costs, the following assumptions have been made:

- Two traps are set once per week for two days, 26 weeks of the year
- The traps are monitored on a bi-hourly basis during regular work hours (humane treatment)
- Capture and/or completion of trap monitoring, on a daily basis, is assumed to be within 4 – 6 hours of setting trap
- 3 visits per trap (6 in total over two days)

Based on the above noted assumptions, the following time analysis is provided (consideration of work that can be completed while on regular patrol has been included - only dedicated time to Program noted):

Setting Traps – 0.5 hours

Monitoring Traps – 1.5 hours

Delivery of trapped cats to Blue Mountain Veterinarian Services and return to regular patrol – 1.5 hours

Record Keeping/Reporting – 1 hour per week

Total Weekly Time – Approximately 6.5 hours

Total Annual Time (26 weeks) – Approximately 169 hours

NOTE: The setting of traps and monitoring may have to occur during evening/night time hours for the Program to be successful, this may involve overtime hours.

Staff Costs (including benefits) – Approximately \$5,492.50 per annum

Total Annual Cost

Approximately \$5,800.00 (also see note under Staff Capacity)

STAFF CAPACITY:

Council completed a Service Delivery Review of By-law Services in 2011 and confirmed the delivery of certain services and established priorities and service levels through this process. Subsequent to the 2011 Service Delivery Review, Council at its meeting of April 11, 2012 considered the implementation of Short Term Accommodation Enforcement on a priority basis and adopted certain changes to By-law Enforcement Service Levels so as to accommodate this. Currently, By-law Enforcement has one Officer dedicated to Short Term Accommodation Enforcement and one other dedicated to all other enforcement services.

With regard to staff capacity, given current service levels as directed by Council, capacity does not exist within By-law Enforcement Services. Should Council determine that the Town's support of the proposed Feral Cat Program is desirable by way of the provision of staff resources, By-law Enforcement service levels will be required to be adjusted once again. In this regard, it is recommended that should Council determine that they wish to provide assistance by way of municipal staff that Council direct that By-law Enforcement suspend parking, littering, work within public right-of-ways and watering enforcement (with it being noted that the suspension of parking enforcement will relate to a decrease in parking enforcement revenue of approximately \$1,500.00).

OTHER ISSUES:

1. Feral Cat versus Stray Cats/Cats at Large

Municipal Law Enforcement Officers who are trained and experienced in animal control are able to distinguish, for the most part, the difference between a feral cat and a stray cat or a cat at large (appearance, behaviour, presence of tags, collar, microchip, tattoo, etc.) however, there may be instances where a stray cat or a cat at large is mistaken for a feral cat.

2. Enabling By-law

If Council determines to proceed with support of a Feral Cat Program in the municipality, either supported by Town forces or otherwise, it is recommended that a Feral Cat Control By-law be enacted similar to the one adopted by the City of Cornwall (Appendix "A"). As Council will note, the City of Cornwall By-law is **not** a licencing by-law. The purpose of this By-law would be to provide authority for the capture, impoundment, treatment, sterilization and/or euthanasia of a cat at large.

Note: *The Animals for Research Act* also contains relevant provisions with respect to impounding and euthanasia.

3. Location of Traps

Trapping on privately owned land and on publically owned land is envisioned, in both instances same should only be done with the owner's consent.

4. Monitoring of Traps

It is critical that traps be monitored on a regular basis for humane purposes as there is potential for a cat, feral or otherwise, harming themselves due to being caged; changing weather conditions; potential for other animals to be trapped (skunks, racoons, etc.). Further, the setting of the trap and monitoring may have to occur during evening/night time hours creating the potential for overtime costs.

It is recommended that should Council decide to proceed with supporting a Feral Cat Program that appropriate operating practice be developed whereby monitoring of the trap be done on a regular basis and that trapping is not conducted in extreme weather circumstances (i.e. above and/or below certain temperatures).

5. Health & Safety

There is a high risk of bites and scratches from feral cats, even with proper personal protective equipment, some risk is associated with handling trapper feral cats.

6. Euthanasia of Feral Cats

Feral cats, by their very nature, may be required to be euthanized. Staff cannot advise on numbers or percentages that would be required to be euthanized.

7. Feral Cat return to a Colony

The return of a feral cat post sterilization may not be successful.

8. Regional Issue

Staff are aware that there is a feral cat issue within adjacent municipalities, should this be explored in the greater context?

9. Other Municipal Programs

It is noted that there are a number of Feral Cat Programs in North America, including Ontario. For the most part, these are operated by Humane Society's or Municipal Animal Control Programs. Many of these programs are extremely successful however many suffer from inadequate funding (Appendix B - Northumberland Humane Society).

Attached as Appendix "B" is a copy of a FAQ Sheet from The Humane Society of the United States with respect to Feral Cats.

SUMMARY:

Council support of a Feral Cat Program can be done in many ways including:

- Funding (for treatment, sterilization or the hiring of another party to conduct the trapping)

- Providing traps to property owners who are experiencing issues with feral cats
- Providing Staff Resources
- Enacting a Cat at Large By-law similar to the City of Cornwall's By-law so as to legitimize and address the risk associated with the capture, treatment and sterilization of cats at large that are feral cats

C. The Blue Mountains' Strategic Plan

Supporting the development of social and recreational programs to meet the broad range of needs in the community.

D. Environmental Impacts

N/A

E. Financial Impact

Research, discussion and preparation of Staff Report – +/-6 hours - \$450.00

Additional time to prepare a draft by-law, advertise and hold a public meeting - +/- \$1,000.00

Indeterminate hours to implement Feral Cat Program

Annual costs if Town Staffing involved - +/- \$5,800.00

Lost opportunity costs - indeterminate

F. In Consultation With

G. Miller, Manager, Building & By-law Services/CBO
B. Doyle, Municipal Law Enforcement Officer

G. Attached

- A. City of Cornwall Feral Cat Control By-law
- B. Northumberland Humane Society Article
- C. FAQ Sheet from The Humane Society of the United States - Feral Cats

Respectfully submitted,

David Finbow
Director, Planning & Building Services

**The Corporation of the City of Cornwall
Bylaw # 072 - 2008**

A Bylaw to allow the O.S.P.C.A. to Control the Feral Cat Population
and that this Bylaw be known as the
Feral Cat Control Bylaw

WHEREAS the Ontario Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (O.S.P.C.A.) desires to establish a program to aid in the control of feral cats in the City of Cornwall; and

WHEREAS in recent years, traditional, trap, sterilize, and release programs have been supplanted by more responsibly managed programs than trap, test, vaccinate, alter, release and monitor free-roaming cats; and

WHEREAS the Corporation of the City of Cornwall deems it advisable, having regard among other matters to the potential for health and safety of the citizens of Cornwall.

WHEREAS to undertake the program, the O.S.P.C.A. requires Council to enact provisions to advise that cats running at large may be subject to the program.

NOW THEREFORE Be it Resolved the Council of the Corporation of the City of Cornwall enacts as follows:

DEFINITIONS AND INTERPRETATIONS

1. For the purpose of this bylaw:

Cat - shall mean either the male or female of the feline family.

City - shall mean The Corporation of the City of Cornwall.

Council - shall mean the Council of the City of Cornwall.

Feral Cat - shall mean any homeless, wild or untrained stray cat.

O.S.P.C.A. Officer - shall mean the Poundkeeper appointed through the Ontario Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals.

Owner - shall mean any person owning, possessing or harbouring a cat.

Pound - shall mean such premises and facilities designated by the Corporation of the City of Cornwall as the City Pound.

Poundkeeper - shall mean a person, persons, association or society appointed by the Corporation of the City of Cornwall to maintain and administer the pound.

2. Explanatory notes included in this Bylaw are intended to assist in the interpretation of the provisions, but shall not derogate from any powers or duties created or imposed by the Bylaw.
3. If any section, subsection, sentence, clause, phrase or other portion of this Bylaw is for any reason held invalid or unconstitutional by any Court of competent jurisdiction, that portion shall be deemed a separate, distinct and independent provision and the holding of the court shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions of the Bylaw.

RUNNING AT LARGE

4. (1) The owner of a cat shall ensure that the cat is not running at large.
 - (2) Where a cat is running at large, the owner or occupant of that property on which the cat is running at large may make a complaint to the O.S.P.C.A.

IMPOUNDMENT AND CAPTURE

5. (1) Where an O.S.P.C.A. officer receives a complaint of a cat running at large, said officer may at his discretion and if deemed necessary seize and impound any cat found running at large.
 - (2) Where a cat is impounded, the O.S.P.C.A. may
 - (a) Hold a cat until claimed by the owner of a cat or disposed of;
 - (b) Attempt to notify the owner of the cat, if known, of the impoundment, however, no liability whatsoever shall attach to the City, the Animal Control Officer or the Poundkeeper by reason of failure in contacting the owner.
 - (c) In the case of feral cats or cats running at large, sterilize a cat and, following post operative care, release a cat to the same environment.
 - (3) An owner of a cat which has been impounded may claim the cat by:
 - (a) Providing reasonable proof of ownership to the O.S.P.C.A.; and
 - (b) Paying a reasonable impoundment charge and a housing charge, as set by the O.S.P.C.A.
 - (4) An O.S.P.C.A. Officer or a Veterinarian may take immediate action to humanely destroy any sick or injured cat found within the City where, in his opinion immediate destruction of the cat is necessary to avoid unnecessary suffering by the animal.

CAT IDENTIFICATION

It shall be the owner's responsibility to identify any household cats to assist in identification if captured running at large.

LIABILITY

In passing this Bylaw, the City places all responsibility and liability for operating the program with the O.S.P.C.A. The O.S.P.C.A. shall provide an annual report to the City on the effectiveness of the program.

EFFECTIVE DATE

This Bylaw shall come into effect on the date of passing and be effective until December 2009, unless extended by Bylaw.

READ a Third Time, PASSED, SIGNED AND SEALED in Open Council this 28th day of April, 2008.


DENISE LABELLE-GÉLINAS
CLERK


BOB KILGER
MAYOR



Northumberland Humane Society suspends feral cat program

Jeanne Beneteau
April 7, 2012

NORTHUMBERLAND -- Despite its value to the community, the local humane society can no longer run its feral cat program alone, says the shelter manager.

From December, 2011 through March 29 this year, the Northumberland Humane Society spent approximately \$10,000 on activities associated with its Feral Cat Program, which is a trap-neuter-return program for feral cats, said manager Lynne Brightman.

"Although a worthwhile program, costs were spiralling, and as a charity, with no funding from any level of government, we just can't do it," said Ms. Brightman. "The board decided to suspend the program, while it reviews policies and procedures and looks for community partners, perhaps municipalities, to help with funding."

She said the explosion in the population of free-roaming cats, especially in areas without bylaws to address the problem (Trent Hills, Brighton and Cramahe Township) is both an animal control and a health issue. "It is the society's mandate to humanely live-trap, sterilize, rabies vaccinate, and release feral cats back to their colonies, said Ms. Brightman. More than 850 cats have been spayed and neutered through the program since it started in 2009. Similar programs exist in other areas of Ontario and have proven to contain the explosion of free-roaming cat populations, she said.

Interested volunteers to assist with live-trapping and transportation are encouraged to contact Ms. Brightman at 905-885-4131 or board chairwoman Shari Seymour at 905-342-9619. Financial assistance to fund the program is also welcome. For more information on the humane society, visit www.northumberlandhumanesociety.com.



Feral cat. NORTHUMBERLAND -- The Northumberland Humane Society has suspended its feral cat control program due to the cost. The society hopes to find community partners willing to share in some of the costs associated with the program. April 2, 2012
Submitted photo

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**THE HUMANE SOCIETY
OF THE UNITED STATES**

*We're the nation's largest
and most effective animal
protection organization.*

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APRIL 27, 2010

Feral Cats: Frequently Asked Questions

Here are the answers to some commonly asked questions about feral cats
The Humane Society of the United States



What is the difference between a stray cat and a feral cat?

Why are there feral cats? Where do they come from?

Where do feral cats live?

How do feral cats survive—find food, stay warm, etc.?

What is Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR)?

Do people take care of feral cats? What do they do?

Why can't animal shelters rescue feral cats?

Would it be better if feral cats were euthanized?

What are problems associated with unneutered/unspayed feral cats?

Why doesn't simply removing feral cats from an area work to reduce their numbers and nuisance behavior?

Why don't feeding bans work to eliminate feral cats?

How does TNR solve common complaints associated with feral cats?

What can I do to help feral cats?

What is the difference between a stray cat and a feral cat?

A stray cat is a pet cat who is lost or abandoned. Feral cats are the offspring of lost or abandoned pet cats or other feral cats who are not spayed or neutered. Stray cats are accustomed to contact with people and are tame, but feral cats are not accustomed to contact with people and are typically too fearful and wild to be handled. Whereas stray cats may be reunited with their families or adopted into new homes, feral cats do not easily adapt or may never adapt to living as pets in close contact with people. However, there are many things you can do to help improve the health and quality of life of feral cats.

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Why are there feral cats? Where do they come from?

Feral cats are the offspring of lost or abandoned pet cats or other feral cats who are not spayed or neutered. Females can reproduce two to three times a year, and their kittens, if they survive, will become feral without early contact with people. Cats can become pregnant as early as 5 months of age, and the number of cats rapidly increases without intervention by caring people.

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Where do feral cats live?

Feral cats typically live in a colony—a group of related cats. The colony occupies and defends a specific territory where food (a restaurant dumpster, a person who feeds them) and shelter (beneath a porch, in an abandoned building) are available. Since feral cats typically fear strangers, it is likely that people may not realize that feral cats are living nearby because the cats are rarely seen.

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How do feral cats survive—find food, stay warm, etc.?

Many don't survive. If they do survive, their lives aren't easy without human caretakers. Females may become pregnant as young as 5 months of age and may have two to three litters a year. Being pregnant so young and so often, and having and nursing kittens, is even more stressful on female cats who are struggling to survive. More than half of the kittens are likely to die without human intervention. Males who

roam and fight to find mates and defend their territories may be injured and transmit diseases to one another through bite wounds. Feral cats may find food in a restaurant dumpster or someone may feed them. They may find shelter from the elements beneath a porch or in an abandoned building. But often they are without a reliable source of food and adequate shelter.

Trap-Neuter-Return is a non-lethal strategy to reduce the number of feral cats and improve the quality of life for cats, birds, wildlife, and people.

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What is Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR)?

Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) is a strategy for improving the lives of feral cats and reducing their numbers. At a minimum, feral cats who are TNRed are spayed or neutered so they can no longer reproduce, vaccinated against rabies, and surgically ear-tipped on one ear (ear-tipping is the universally-recognized sign of a cat who has been TNRed). Dedicated caretakers feed and provide shelter for TNRed cats, monitor the TNRed cats for sickness and remove new cats for TNR if feral or possible adoption if tame.

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Do people take care of feral cats? What do they do?

Many people see a roaming cat and start feeding the cat even though many communities have feeding bans meant to discourage feeding. Ideally, the person quickly does more to help the cat:

If the cat is tame, the person should take steps to find the cat's owner. If unsuccessful, the person should take steps to find a permanent home for the cat.

If the cat is feral, unapproachable and wary after several days of feeding, the person should find out if there are any groups in their community that are currently doing TNR and consult one of the many resources to learn about Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR).

Once a cat or colony of cats has been TNRed, a dedicated caretaker provides food, water and shelter, monitors the cats for sickness and removes new feral cats for TNR or new tame cats for possible adoption. TNR is a strategy that many dedicated caretakers pay for out of their own pockets to help improve the lives of feral cats and reduce their numbers. Without TNR and a dedicated caretaker, the population of the colony would continue to increase.

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Why can't animal shelters rescue feral cats?

Animal shelters already care for and try to find homes for thousands of lost, injured, abandoned and relinquished pet cats. Whether the shelter is an independent non-profit organization or is an animal care and control agency funded by the municipality, many do not have the resources to do TNR.

Animal shelters that receive complaint calls or calls of concern from the public may attempt to humanely trap and remove feral cats. Or, they may provide information and loan traps to citizens interested in humanely trapping feral cats.

If there is a local group helping feral cats, the shelter may refer callers to that group.

Feral cats brought to the shelter, especially those who cannot be identified as members of a known TNRed colony, are likely to be put down right away or after a mandatory holding period. It is difficult to accurately identify a feral cat without a holding period, yet safely caring for a feral cat in a typical shelter cage, is very

stressful for a feral cat. In addition, if space is limited at the shelter, an adoptable cat may be put down to make room to hold a feral cat.

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Would it be better if feral cats were euthanized?

Some people feel sorry for feral cats because of their difficult and dangerous life. Others are annoyed by the cats' behaviors and want the cats removed. But many people don't feel that the cats should be euthanized. Even if there were enough people and money to remove and euthanize feral cats, other feral cats would move into the vacant territory to take advantage of the food source and shelter now made available. It's an endless cycle.

The alternative is Trap-Neuter-Return. When feral cats are TNRed, their health improves because they no longer have kittens and fight over mates, and nuisance behaviors are greatly reduced or eliminated. The colony's dedicated caretaker provides food, water and shelter, watches over the health of the cats and removes any newcomers for TNR (if feral) or adoption (if tame).

TNR improves the quality of life for existing colonies, prevents the birth of more cats, and reduces the number of cats over time. Additionally, many groups that provide resources for TNR have calculated that the costs associated with TNR are considerably less than those associated with removal, shelter care, and euthanasia of feral cats.

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What are problems associated with unneutered/unspayed feral cats?

A colony of unneutered/unspayed feral cats can produce a number of problems, including:

- a growing population of cats
- frequent and loud noise from fighting and mating behavior
- strong foul odors from unneutered male cats spraying to mark their territory
- flea infestations
- visible suffering from dying kittens and injured adults.

In addition, the shelters in a community with a large, unneutered feral cat population may experience:

- higher intake rates of cats into shelters due to the rescue of feral kittens and the capture of feral adults
- higher euthanasia rates for all cats due to the unadoptability of feral adults and the necessity to euthanize adoptable animals due to limited cage space
- higher animal control costs due to trapping efforts and/or costs associated with caring for and euthanizing feral cats
- a constant rate of nuisance complaints about feral cats.

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Why doesn't simply removing feral cats from an area work to reduce their numbers and nuisance behavior?

There are many reasons why feral cat problems are rarely solved by efforts to trap and remove them. Feral cats live at a certain location because it offers food and shelter. If a colony is removed, some feral cats from surrounding colonies may move in to take advantage of the newly available resources. The cycle of reproduction and nuisance behavior begins all over again.

If all the cats in a colony are not trapped, then the ones left behind tend to have more kittens. In addition, more kittens will survive because there are fewer cats competing for the available food. The population will continue to increase until the level that can be supported by the available food and shelter is reached.

Other factors which usually make removing feral cats ineffective include:

- the lack of cooperation of the cats' caretakers—the only people who really know the cats' numbers and patterns and who can control whether or not they're hungry enough to enter a baited trap
- the unwillingness of volunteers to trap cats who face an uncertain fate upon capture
- the lack of animal control resources available to accomplish this task
- the difficulty of catching all the cats in a colony

the ongoing abandonment of unaltered pet cats who can also repopulate a vacated territory Trap and remove will only result in a temporary reduction in the numbers of feral cats in a given area.

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Why don't feeding bans work to eliminate feral cats?

The logic behind bans against feeding feral cats is that if there is no food available, the cats will go away. This is not true.

Feral cats are territorial animals who can survive for weeks without food and will not easily or quickly leave their territory to search for new food sources. Instead, they tend to move closer into human habitations as they grow hungrier and more desperate. Their malnourished condition will make them more susceptible to parasitic infestations, such as fleas, which they will spread into work places, garages, homes, etc., within their territory.

The cats will also continue to reproduce despite the effort to "starve them out," resulting in the visible deaths of many kittens. As a result, feeding bans, if enforced, tend to make the situation much worse instead of improving it.

A second reason why feeding bans are rarely effective is that they are nearly impossible to enforce. Repeated experience has shown that people who care about the cats' welfare will go to great lengths, risking their homes, jobs and even their liberty, to feed starving animals. Someone determined to feed the cats will usually succeed without being detected, no matter the threatened penalties. In addition, there may be more than one feeder and other sources of food, including dumpsters, garbage cans, and other animals.

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How does TNR solve common complaints associated with feral cats?

When feral cats are trapped, neutered and returned to their territory, they no longer reproduce. The cessation of sexual activity eliminates the noise associated with mating behavior and dramatically reduces fighting and the noise it causes.

Neutered feral cats also roam much less and become less visible and less prone to injury from cars. Foul odors are greatly reduced as well because neutered male cats no longer produce testosterone which, when they are unaltered, mixes with their urine and causes the strong, pungent smell of their spraying.

When the colony is then monitored by a caretaker who removes and/or TNRs any newly arrived cats, the population stabilizes and gradually declines over time.

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What can I do to help feral cats?

Helping feral cats can be very rewarding. There are many options for you to be involved; please see our website for more information. First, you may want to look for an existing feral cat group or individuals who are practicing TNR in your area to help you learn the ropes.

If there one or more feral cats in your area that does not have a caretaker, you can become their caretaker. Feral cat caretakers practice Trap-Neuter-Return, feed, provide shelter, monitor the cats for any problems, trap new cats who arrive. If the new cats are feral, they are TNRed; if they are kittens young enough to be socialized or tame lost or abandoned pet cats, they are evaluated for adoption.

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