

A Municipal Approach to a Trap, Neuter, Vaccinate & Manage Program

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THE GOAL OF THIS GUIDE

“The goal of this guide is to offer practical information and tools that municipalities can use to address their own feral/roaming cat population.”



THE “REAL” REALITY

- Rounding up feral cats and holding them for 7 days then euthanizing them is not a solution!
- Why...do the math:
 - 115 shelters holding 100 cats each for 7 days would take 1 full year to euthanize 598,000 cats.
 - While we are doing that the cats left in the wild are reproducing at a rate that will most likely equal the rate of euthanizing....
 - In the meantime....where do we put the stray cats coming from the 2,104,000+ (DOH 5/13) living in homes



THE “REAL” REALITY

- In 2013 from the NJDOH there were **315** confirmed cases of rabies!
- Where did they come from?
 - Raccoons 115, Skunks, 51, Bats 66, 0 dogs, 11 others and ***only 18 cats (of 2.6 million)***
- In 2012 the NJDOH reported **309** cases of rabies, ***20 were cats***.....the number dropped in 2013
- Why is no one proposing rounding up, holding, and euthanizing all the rabies vector wildlife where the real rabies risk lies!!!!



THE PURPOSE OF TNVM vs. TNR

- TNR is Trap, Neuter, **RELEASE**
- TNVM is Trap, Neuter, **VACCINATE**, and **MANAGE**
- It is designed to be a cooperative program between municipalities, their health departments, animal control and care givers within the community
- The purpose of both is the *elimination of all feral & free roaming cats*
- Veterinary Special Interest Group of the APHA endorsed a statement recognizing cat colonies through TNVR as an acceptable tool of controlling zoonotic diseases



WHAT IS A FERAL CAT

Feral cats are not socialized to humans, usually born outdoors and congregating in groups where they reproduce unchecked.

According to the Humane Society of the United States, feral cats are “extremely fearful of people and not welcoming of human attention, making them unsuitable for home environments.”



WHY DO YOU NEED TO MANAGE THEM

- New Jersey has 600,000 to 1,400,000 feral and free roaming cats
- Divide the population in your municipality by either 6 (UC Davis) or 15 (PetSmart Charities) to determine the approximate number of ferals in your community
- Largest rabies vector of **domestic** animals in New Jersey
- Nuisance complaints
- Wildlife concerns



WHY DO YOU NEED TO MANAGE THEM

- Costs: 7 day hold and euthanasia costs reduced
- NJDOH reports 5x more cats euthanized than dogs
- Eventual reduction in number of animal control calls
- Eventual reduction of number of animals in shelter and contingent costs
- Greater compliance with vaccination requirements
- Improved community relations



KEY COMPONENTS

- PARTNERSHIP between municipality and caregiver
- TRAINING: working with caregivers to understand appropriate care of colonies
- COLONY GUIDELINES:
 - Must have approval of property owner
 - Can not be in places that endanger wildlife or cause a public nuisance.
 - Vaccination and re-vaccination required
 - Medical care for cats in colony where feasible
 - Scheduled specific feeding times (food not left out)
 - Compliance with all municipal ordinances and state laws



CAREGIVER (ICAM & AIC Task Force)

“A caregiver is defined as a person(s) or sponsoring agency that monitors the colony and provides a guardianship component to include an adequate level of care that includes food, shelter where possible, basic veterinary care (vaccination, neutering, parasite control) and if possible, veterinary care when ill or injured and humane euthanasia when animal is suffering and veterinary care is not possible or practical included.”



CAREGIVER (cont)

When veterinary care is not possible, and an animal is suffering, humane euthanasia is appropriate.

The caregiver also is responsible for compliance with all municipal ordinances and state statutes relating to the well-being of the animals in the colony."



ASSESSMENT OF NEED FOR TNVM

- Estimate number of free-roaming/feral cats in your community (you can assume 1,000 cats per 10,000 residents)
- Assess animal control data
 - Number of cats impounded
 - Number of cats euthanized
 - Amount of money spent impounding and euthanizing cats
 - Number of complaints about cats



ASSESSMENT OF CAPACITY

- Shelter capacity and ability to help
- Identify local groups to work with
- Identify animal control resources
- Ordinances: what do you have and what will you need?
- Identify funding sources and cost reductions
- Reduction in impoundment and euthanasia costs



ASSESSMENT OF CAPACITY (cont)

- Increase license compliance and revenue using “Municipal Guide to Enhanced Licensing Compliance”
- Ongoing Animal Census/Canvas
- Grants from foundations (Petco, Petsmart, etc)
- Donations and fund raising from caregivers and residents
- Low cost spay/neuter clinics



COLONY LOCATION

- **TNVM DOES NOT CREATE COLONIES** rather it manages the sterilization and vaccination of cats living in the environment
- Best to find existing colonies through residents, animal control, municipal employees, etc.
- NJDOH defers to local officials to determine the appropriateness of allowing a managed cat colony
- Must be managed in co-operation with local animal control, health agencies, wildlife organizations, humane groups, and veterinarians.
- Municipality may require fencing or re-location under certain circumstances



OTHER ITEMS COVERED IN GUIDE

- Legal Concerns
- Nuisance abatement (resolved between parties through negotiation)
- Record-keeping (OPRA)
- Handling new colony arrivals
- Dealing with barn cats
- Impact on Wildlife



“Be the change that you wish to see in the world.”

— Mahatma Gandhi

- *We are asking that each of you read this guide and help to change the way feral/community cats are **cared for and managed** in your communities.*
- **THANK YOU**

