always be filled by new cats, as the area was hospitable in the first place, providing the cats with food, intentional or otherwise, and shelter.

Irresponsible people who continue to abandon cats and allow unneutered cats to roam, become the source of those new cats. Without public education and a TNR program with a permanent caregiver to monitor the area, the breeding cycle quickly starts up again.

Trap and kill has been used for decades and there is still a cat overpopulation problem. It is ineffective, costly and inhumane.

Don't community cats cause wildlife decline?

While outdoor cats can kill birds and other small animals, they are not responsible for the decline of entire species (humans can take the blame for that). That being said, APLNJ values all life and seeks to reduce the impact feral cats can have on birds and other wildlife. The key is recognizing that lower cat numbers reduce any incidence of predation and the most effective way to stabilize and reduce feral cat populations is through TNR.

The benefits of a TNR'd colony

☑ the cats are healthier since they have been vaccinated and altered

☑ the population stops exploding because they are altered

☑ there is an initial reduction in numbers as friendly cats/kittens are removed for adoption

☑ over time the number of cats in the area drops

☑ an established colony protects its territory

TNR is the only workable solution

from new cats—the rate of new cats appearing slows dramatically when the colony is managed

☑ all cats are vaccinated against rabies, thus protecting the public's health and eliminating any concern of feral cats transmitting rabies to humans

☑ nuisance behavior associated with unaltered cats stops, resulting in fewer complaints and happier neighbors

What you can do to help feral cats in your community

☑ **Engage in a TNR program.** It can simply be for the cats you feed or it can be part of a larger community effort. Ignoring homeless animals is precisely what perpetuates the problem. TNR is a proactive solution.

☑ **Educate residents** of your community and your local politicians by becoming a spokesperson for feral cats. Uninformed neighbors and town officials can be your biggest obstacle.

☑ **Join our Network** of feral cat caregivers. Learn the basics of TNR, connect with other caregivers, share experiences and resources. Whether you are a novice or experienced trapper, you will benefit from being a part of our statewide network.

Contact us to learn more about feral cats and TNR. We're here to help you and the cats. APLNJ may offer financial support towards responsible TNR management—contact us to see if you are eligible.

APLNJ
PO Box 186
Glen Gardner, NJ 08826
732-446-6808

For online information about community or stray cats, visit: APLNJ.org/TNR

apl Animal Protection League of NEW JERSEY

NEW JERSEY'S HUMANE SOLUTION

TNR

APLNJ's TNR Project: Developing and supporting community cat management in ways that reduce populations, costs and concerns in the most effective, humane and responsible manner.

Community Cats - Questions & Answers

Who is a community cat?

A community cat is any stray, abandoned, lost or born-outside cat with potentially no caregiver. "Feral" describes a wild-like behavior of a cat who has never been socialized or who has become fearful from experience of humans. All of the above are still the same domesticated Felis Catus species.

What is TNR?

TNR stands for Trap-Neuter-Return, the only method proven to be humane and effective at controlling community cat population growth. Using this technique, all cats in a colony (the term used to describe a groups of cats living in one area) are trapped, spayed or neutered (altered) and vaccinated. Feral-acting cats are returned to their territory where caregivers provide them with regular food and shelter and lifelong care. Young kittens as well as friendly adults are placed in foster care and eventually adopted out to good homes.

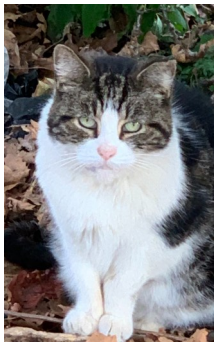
Misconceptions regarding community cats and TNR may cause unnecessary public anxiety. Many believe that these cats carry diseases, are a threat to public safety or are responsible for wildlife decline. Some believe that cats are better off dead than living outdoors or want them rounded up and taken away. Additionally, there are those who think that caregivers managing a cat colony have put the cats there. Not so. The cats were already congregating in that area and are very fortunate if someone recognizes the need to manage them with TNR.

Isn't it true that cats should be kept indoors?

Ideally, yes. Domestic cats are safest indoors. However, because of the overpopulation crisis, there are not nearly enough homes available. The next best thing for feral-acting cats is a managed colony where food, water, shelter and veterinary care are consistently provided.

Do community cats pose public health risks?

Stanford University's Department of Environmental Health and Safety conducted a study which found that these cats pose virtually no risks to the public safety.



Rabies is not commonly found in cat colonies. Overall, the danger of rabies in humans is relatively slight, but the best way to eradicate any risk of rabies from a feral cat is through a TNR program where cats are vaccinated against the disease, thus eliminating concern about transmission to humans.

Aren't feral cats sickly?

By altering, feeding and monitoring a colony, the health of these cats is enhanced. Proper TNR includes keeping a watchful eye on the cats, being on the lookout for illness or injury and providing medical care if needed. FIV (AIDS) and FeLV (leukemia), are two feline diseases that may be found in community cats. However, community cats and indoor domestic cats have approximately the same rate of infection from these diseases, with the percentage of cats infected with FIV being 2-5% and FeLV 3-7%.

Further, the greatest control for the spread of these diseases is sterilization

Can't they just be moved? Or taken to a sanctuary or farm?

There simply aren't enough sanctuaries, barn homes and the like to house the tens of millions of homeless cats estimated to be living in the United States. The only humane and effective way to control this population and give the cats a chance at healthier lives is through TNR.

Under no circumstances should cats ever be relocated or abandoned in an unfamiliar area. They will not be able to survive by hunting. Furthermore, cats are naturally territorial animals and will try to find their way back 'home.'

Why doesn't trap & remove work?

The trap and remove to kill method is usually implemented in response to complaints and is typically not effective. Cats will be trapped for a few weeks and then the area is left alone as the interest and complaints dwindle. Cats who escaped the traps remain, and continue to breed.

Additionally, removing all cats from an area creates the "vacuum effect." Trap and remove creates a void that will almost