



ASSOCIATED HUMANE SOCIETIES

TINTON FALLS BRANCH

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TNR Position Statement

Across the country, feral cat populations are exploding. Here in Monmouth County, cats are in crisis. In 2016, 665 cats were euthanized in shelters in Monmouth County and 12,364 euthanized statewide, mostly feral cats. This is unacceptable. Our community must come together to help save more lives.

The Associated Humane Societies has taken a leadership role in implementing a program proven to succeed in saving lives – Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR). TNR specifically addresses the growing feral cat population in a humane way. Feral cats are trapped, spayed or neutered, and returned to the community to live in managed colonies. Kittens and “friendly” stray cats are put up for adoption at the Associated Humane Societies, immediately reducing the population of ferals in the community.

We understand that TNR is controversial. We did our homework. Many think the Trap-Remove, which really means Trap-Kill, is the only solution to feral cats. However, Trap-Kill has been proven NOT to work, while TNR does.

1. There are not enough animal control resources to trap all cats in a municipality. A female cat can start having litters at 4 months old and can have four litters in one year. One mating pair can regenerate the population very quickly. With the animal control resources available it is impossible to trap every feral cat in a short enough time span to keep up with reproduction. TNR uses teams of volunteers to humanely trap, transport and then care for the feral cats. More people are willing to help with TNR than Trap-kill.

2. There is a “vacuum effect” where new cats fill the void due to migration from other colonies to take advantage of available food sources. With TNR, the cats are released into managed colonies with registered caregivers who are the only people allowed to feed feral cats. This stops late night “drive by” feeding by well-meaning people. The caregivers keep careful statistics on the population and most importantly, track the success of TNR.

3. Without community education, the source of the problem – people – will not change. Our TNR program includes comprehensive humane education programs to educate the community about feral cats, the importance of keeping owned cats inside, and the vital importance of spay/neuter. Education is backed up by ordinances that include steep fines for the abandonment of cats into the community.

There are many myths out there about feral cats. Feral cats cannot be “rehabilitated.” Feral cats cannot be “fenced in.” There is no farm or sanctuary that can take all the feral cats in Monmouth County.

Advantages of TNR:

1. Population is immediately reduced via adoption of kittens and “friendlies”
2. Spayed/Neutered cats roam less, don’t yowl or fight (typical mating behaviors)
3. Neutered male cats mark less often and with significantly less odor
4. Disease is reduced since the cats get vaccinated (rabies etc)
5. Fewer nuisance calls about feral cats
6. Most importantly, lives are saved!

TNR is an effective and humane way to control feral cats. TNR works because it is a multi-tiered approach. TNR humanely stops the reproductive cycle, adoptable kittens and cats are brought into the Associated Humane Societies and not released back out, feral colonies are actually managed, and most importantly, comprehensive community education is provided to change human behavior.

The fact is these cats are out there. TNR means they are not reproducing, are disease-free, are fed and cared for and cause less trouble in the municipality. Our plan is to stabilize the population, so the colonies reduce in population through natural attrition. Together we can reach our goal to significantly decrease the feral cat population in Monmouth County over the next five years with our Community Cats Campaign.

Help us save lives, support our TNR initiatives!