

What Can Be Done About Feral Cats?

By Jay Johnson

Feral or Stray Cats (also called "Community Cats") can be a genuine nuisance to neighborhoods and present health hazards to its residents. Repeated howling, feline spraying on property, digging, roaming, and "night fighting" have kept many of us up wondering, "What can be done about these crazy cats?" With a population of an estimated 100,000 stray cats in Pinellas County, it is a real problem.

To address this issue, the Pinellas County Commissioners have adopted the TNVR Ordinance [Sec. 14-37]. TNVR stands for Trap-Neuter-Vaccinate-Return, and it is considered the best approach for controlling the overpopulation of free-roaming community cats.

TNVR is a humane proven method to stabilize and shrink the community cat population. Here's how the program works. The feral cat is trapped by humane means and transported to the Humane Society of Pinellas, where the animal is rendered unconscious and surgically spayed or neutered. Then it receives a vaccination and has its ear clipped for identification purposes. When it has recovered appropriately, the animal is returned to its original environment. Trap-Neuter-Vaccinate-Return.

Keep in mind that free-roaming community cats help to reduce the rodent population and tend to prevent the introduction of other cat populations into our neighborhood.

If you are having problems with a feral cat or if you need more information, please contact Jay Johnson at 727 289-1136 or gmbf@tampabay.rr.com.