

From: [Krishna San Nicolas](#)
To: [CouncilMail](#)
Subject: Please support CB13!
Date: Tuesday, March 19, 2024 3:39:44 PM

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Hello! I'm a lifetime lover of cats as well as someone who adopted a kitten from the non profit organization, Laurel Cats, and my sweet fur baby is the light of my life. I want to let you know that I firmly support CB13 for the following reasons:

1. Allows animal care organizations, including individuals, to care for community cats without being classified as the owner.
2. Defines a community cat as a free-roaming cat that is sterilized, vaccinated, and ear-tipped.
3. Defines Trap-Neuter-Return program and states that Howard County supports this program as a humane practice for reducing the population of community cats.

Thank you and I hope you support the bill and the animal care groups that are helping the community of cats.

Best,
Krishna San Nicolas
Howard County resident

From: [M.C](#)
To: [CouncilMail](#)
Subject: Support CB13
Date: Tuesday, March 19, 2024 11:54:44 AM

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear council members,

I am a Howard County resident and a volunteer for Laurel Cats. I urge to support the CB13 and endorse trap-neuter-vaccinate-return program. This is an effective and humane way to control the cat population. Thank you for your time and consideration of CB13.

Respectfully,

Miriam Callejas

From: [murky_j](#)
To: [CouncilMail](#)
Cc: [Williams, China](#); murzy.d.jhabvala@nasa.gov
Subject: Committing my Individual Retirement Account to supporting animal welfare (cats); ~\$443,000.00
Date: Tuesday, March 19, 2024 8:42:45 AM

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear Council Members,

I attended the hearing on CB 13 last night and I want to now add some additional information to the letter I sent the Council last week committing the funds in my Fidelity IRA account if CB 13 is passed to financially support non-profit organizations carry out their efforts to help feral cats. One of the speakers opposing CB 13 stated their organization would contribute \$5,000.00 to help control the feral cat population (although not likely in a manner I would hope for). To be clear, I love all animals, cats, dogs, birds, deer, elephants, snakes, etc and support organizations that help all animals. (As well as those in need).

I have attached a copy of the letter I sent last week below as reference. I was reticent last week to divulge how much money was in my Individual Retirement Account (IRA) that I would devote to this effort. However, as I stated in the letter, talk is cheap, so I want the Council to know that as of December 31, 2023 there was **\$443,599.00**. Since it is in an IRA account the value fluctuates but I am committing the **entire** fund to supporting the efforts described by the various animal welfare organizations last night. As I mentioned, I was reticent to provide this detail but now I want the council to know that there is a personal commitment to support CB 13 that extends beyond just vocalization.

Here is a copy of the letter I sent last week (in italics) as reference:

Dear Council Members,

I want to categorically express my support for the bill (CB13) that will effectively end county's ineffective trap-and-kill program and strongly endorse trap-neuter-vaccinate-return as Howard County's preferred method of managing free roaming cats. I have lived my entire life, since 1951, with cats as my dear companions and the thought of killing a cat just for being born in the wild greatly distresses me, saddens me enormously. Over my life, I and my various live-in partners (spouses) have rescued and lived with over 30 wonderful feline companions. People who have cats are bonded not only to their pet but also form very positive bonds with each other. Laurel Cats, for one, has gone to great measures to rescue and safely return feral cats to their

environment, eliminating any need for their extermination.

*However, I realize talk is cheap. I have made contributions to multiple animal rescue organizations over the years in excess of \$300,000. Having worked (and I still am working) for the federal government for over 50 years I am now able to donate a fair amount of my salary to charities I select. Mine and my wife's salaries (she also works for the federal government) are our only sources of income so these contributions stem entirely from our annual savings. For my part, about half goes to animal welfare groups and the other half to organizations helping those in need. My wife also makes contributions to her desired charities. **If this bill is passed, I commit to donate all my savings in my Fidelity IRA account to support a no-kill solution.** I will commit these funds to help defray the costs that established, legitimate, local animal welfare organizations incur to capture, spay/neuter and provide care for these and other cats in Howard county and surrounding areas. I will also continue to support other animal welfare organizations in Maryland and nationally. In Maryland these include Baywater Animal Rescue, Baltimore Humane Society, Last Chance Animal Rescue and Friskies Wildlife. Hopefully, this commitment will help convince the council that the animal welfare organizations will have some financial resources to follow through on their intentions.*

Please free to contact me: cell 443 430-4004. I would be happy to discuss my financial details and take whatever steps to help the Council pass this bill.

Sincerely yours,

Murzy Jhabvala, Ph.D. (Pronouns: He/Him/His)
6277 Linkythorn Lane
Clarksville, MD 21029

From: beckynic4@gmail.com
To: [CouncilMail](#)
Subject: Bill to trap/neuter/& release feral cats
Date: Tuesday, March 19, 2024 1:35:14 AM
Attachments: [facebook.png](#)

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

I am a “cat lover” but am very concerned @ this bill & the problem of feral cats in our county!!! Please keep us, our birds, other animals & children safe!!

I am very concerned about the continuing steep decline of our bird populations. The United States have lost 29% of our birds since 1970. One cause of the decline is free-roaming cats, which kill 1-3 billion birds per year in the U.S. It should be noted that all native birds are federally protected under the International Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918 (MBTA). Legislating the release of cats with full knowledge of their certain continued bird predation constitutes legally sanctioning countless violations of the intent of the long-standing MBTA. Enforcement of violations of this act carry fines and imprisonment. No, it will probably not be enforced, despite the full knowledge that cats--an invasive species when outdoors--will kill scores of native birds, numbering far beyond any prosecuted offenses under the act.

We can agree on two points. None of us want to see cats suffer, and we must do something to lower or stop the negative effects of feral cats on the environment. We do not think the CB-13, which would officially establish a Trap-Neuter-Return program in Howard County, will accomplish those goals.

TNR IS NEITHER HUMANE NOR EFFECTIVE. It is certainly not to birds that die in agony, nor to the cats. TNR returns cats to the outdoors, where they are subject to weather, disease, predators, cars, and food insecurity. Feral cats in the main do not die a natural death. In fact, for this reason, People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals, (PETA) strongly oppose TNR as inhumane, both to cats and their victims. Dr. Michael Fox, former Vice-President of the Humane Society of the United States, also condemns the practice, calling TNR “good in theory only” and “a total failure.”

Peer-reviewed studies have shown that TNR only rarely reduces the numbers of cats. The only studies where numbers have shrunk have been small colonies of less than 50, or in isolated locations that do not allow in-migration of new cats and somewhat effective programs combine aggressive adoption and euthanasia to accomplish the documented

reduction. And TNR does not reduce numbers in the short term, as the cats are put back into place. One can reasonably ask, when will numbers actually begin to decline, and how many TNR colonies actually disappear with time as they are supposed to do? One study which a prominent TNR advocacy organization cites as a “success,” documents a program in the Florida Keys that took 22 years to reduce the number of cats by 55%. The same organization also cites two studies done in California and New Mexico as proof that TNR works, but uses reduction in shelter intake and euthanasia as a measure of success, without measure of colony size. That organization’s “Trap-Neuter-Return Research Compendium” cites but two cases where a TNR colony disappeared. In one case, it took 16 years, in the other, 10 years. One would think if the program was so successful, they would cite numerous cases, rather than just two.

For so-called “successful” TNR colonies, an ecological principle called the “vacuum effect” happens. The niche formerly occupied and patrolled by the decreasing population of TNR cats opens up a vacuum that other feral non-TNR cats, also called “immigrant cats” flow into to continue the hyper predation in that niche. Nature abhors a vacuum is not just a saying: it is a principle and a reality documented by studies. In addition, humans add to the problem. With knowledge of the existence and location of TNR colonies some people dump unwanted and un-TNR treated cats into the cat colonies.

TNR CATS STILL KILL BIRDS AND WILDLIFE. These programs do nothing to help our declining bird populations. The area around a TNR site is likely to become devoid of small passerine birds and other small prey, which, in turn, can no longer support native predators. This process is known as “hyper predation.” Cardinals, Blue Jays, Robins, Juncos, Sparrows, and other ground birds will all continue to be killed. But these are common birds, so you might think that there are lots of them, just like there used to be of the Passenger Pigeon. This predation is already happening with or without TNR, but a key difference here is that you will be legislating it to document your complicity.

TNR AND FREE ROAMING CATS ARE A THREAT TO PUBLIC AND WILDLIFE HEALTH. While the cats are supposed to be vaccinated against rabies and other diseases, they rarely get the periodic booster shots needed to maintain immunity or to receive continuity of care. Lack of continuity of veterinary care meets the CB13-2024 definition of cruelty. Maryland and surrounding states have one of the highest rates of rabies in cats, according

to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Yet TNR programs are not required to treat cats as rabies vectors, which is required of wildlife rehabilitators who deal with species such as racoons or foxes. Proponents of TNR cite low probability of rabies in the program. How many cases of TNR program caused rabies due to lack of vaccination continuity are acceptable to you and the community? Is it one? Is it some higher number?

CATS SPREAD *TOXOPLASMA GONDII*. As the definitive host, they are the only source of the parasite in the environment. Toxoplasmosis is a leading cause of human death from food-borne illness and has been linked to brain and behavioral changes in humans. Of concern is that over 60 million people are infected in the U.S. The CDC states that the best way to keep cats from getting infected by *Toxoplasma gondii* is to keep them indoors. Toxoplasmosis also infects wildlife, and has been found in white-tailed deer. There is no assertion that feral or TNR cats do not carry this parasite, it is a fact. So, understanding this, how many sick residents or worse that become affected by this parasite are acceptable to you if you vote to approve this legislation? Despite not being able to empirically trace any one illness to the TNR program, are you comfortable with endorsing your complicity with this understanding?

HUMANE CAT REDUCTION SUGGESTIONS: The following steps can reduce the number of cats in a humane way, which in turn will benefit wildlife, public health, wildlife health, and the cats.

- Strongly promote adoption programs by animal control agencies and local governments as well as other appropriate solutions such as enclosed sanctuaries-remove them from the ecosystem where neither wildlife nor public health are threatened.
- Aggressively educate the public on the problem of cat overpopulation and the need for neutering and vaccination.
- Encourage cat owners to neuter their cats if not engaged in breeding.
- Encourage cat owners to keep their cats indoors or leashed or fenced when outdoors. A good resource for those wishing to expose their cats to the outdoors without hurting wildlife is the American Bird Conservancy's Cats Indoors! Program.
- Enact and enforce local municipal and county leash and licensing laws, with requirement of microchipping.

- Fully fund municipal and county animal control agencies.
- Provide low-cost or free neutering programs by local governments and humane organizations.
- Require animal control agencies to use euthanasia only as a last resort, while ensuring that genuine pets are not accidentally put down.
- That MOS continues a dialogue on this issue with organizations and government agencies to devise the most appropriate, humane, and conservation-minded solutions to the issues.

To conclude, CB-13 is bad for birds, public health, wildlife health, and the cats themselves.

We urge the Council to table this bill for further study and demonstrable action on the recommendations offered above.

Sincerely,
REBECCA S. Nicodemus
7304 Wildwood Court
Columbia, MD 21046

Howard County Bird Club

P.O. Box 1323
Columbia MD [21044-1323](https://www.howardcountymd.gov/21044-1323)



Visit [HCBC website](#) and
[HCBC Facebook page](#).

[Unsubscribe](#)

Sent from my iPhone

From: sonicsusie@gmail.com
To: [CouncilMail](#)
Subject: lizards and cats
Date: Tuesday, March 19, 2024 8:00:38 PM

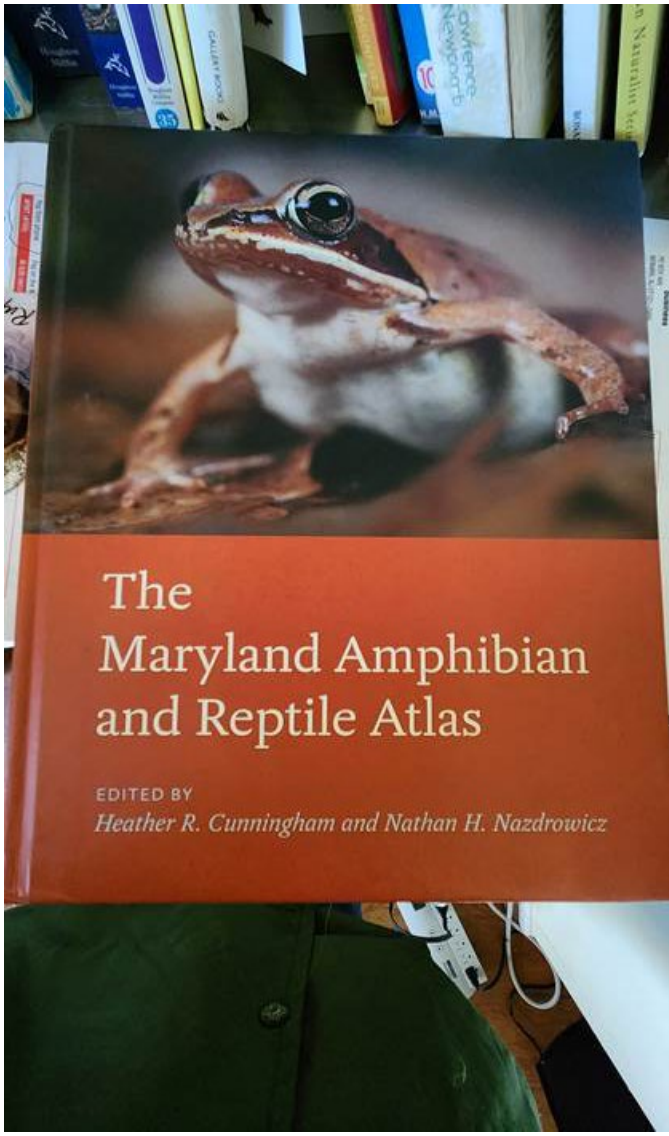
[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Council Members,

I am retired from the Howard County Department of Recreation & Parks (35 years) Natural Resources Office. From 2010-2014, I served as the County Coordinator for the Maryland Amphibian Reptile Atlas. This citizen science project mapped the distribution of all herp species (frogs, toads, salamanders, snakes, turtles and lizards) every 10-square miles across the state. We confirmed over 50 species in Howard County! The one taxa poorly represented, the lizards. We had one location that had a decent population and that was High Ridge Park in Laurel. I guarantee if a colony of feral cats (cleverly renamed "community cats") were to be established in the park, that would be the end of the lizard population. The publication of this study made reference to cats as a contributing factor for the decline of lizards.

As a voting citizen of Howard County and the County Coordinator for this study, I do not want to see CB13 passed.

Sue Muller



The Maryland Amphibian and Reptile Atlas

EDITED BY
Heather R. Cunningham and Nathan H. Nazdrowicz

From: [Donna McCoy](#)
To: [CouncilMail](#)
Subject: Feral cats in Howard County
Date: Wednesday, March 20, 2024 2:46:26 PM

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

I recently learned about an upcoming vote regarding the treatment of feral cats in the area. Apparently they are currently euthanized, rather than trapped, neutered, and released.

Please reconsider the euthanasia policy! Trap/neuter/release is more humane, controls the feral population, and cats that are captured young enough can be adopted by families, or find homes as barn cats.

Thank you for taking the time to read this.

Donna McCoy, Oakland Mills - Columbia.

From: [KTRMATSON](#)
To: [CouncilMail](#)
Subject: Sterilize
Date: Wednesday, March 20, 2024 5:56:41 PM

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Please sterilize feral cats. Not euthanize.

Sent from my Verizon, Samsung Galaxy smartphone

From: [Kurt Schwarz](#)
To: [CouncilMail](#)
Subject: CB13-2024
Date: Wednesday, March 20, 2024 3:01:54 PM
Attachments: [American Bird Conservancy Letter to Howard County Council re CB13-2024.pdf](#)

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

I am disturbed that the testimony sent by the American Bird Conservancy regarding CB-13-2024 has not been entered in to the Public Testimony. It was sent March 13, and at my suggestion that ABC comment. I request it be included promptly. Other organizations have had their testimony posted, and call on the Council to accord ABC the same courtesy.

Kurt Schwarz
Conservation Chair
Maryland Ornithological Society
Howard County Bird Club
krschwal@verizon.net
7329 Wildwood Court
Columbia, MD
410-461-1643

Begin forwarded message:

From: Grant Sizemore <GSizemore@abcbirds.org>
Subject: FW: **Opposition to CB13-2024**
Date: March 13, 2024 at 4:22:23 PM EDT
To: Kurt Schwarz <krschwal@verizon.net>

FYI

Grant Sizemore, M.S., CWB®
Director of Invasive Species Programs
American Bird Conservancy
Phone: 202-888-7480
gsizemore@abcbirds.org
[@gsizemoreABC](https://www.facebook.com/gsizemoreABC)

From: Grant Sizemore
Sent: Wednesday, March 13, 2024 3:21 PM
To: councilmail@howardcountymd.gov
Subject: Opposition to CB13-2024

Chair Jung, Vice Chair Walsh, and Council Members:

Please accept the attached letter on behalf of American Bird Conservancy and our supporters **opposing CB13-2024**, which seeks to establish a trap, neuter, release (TNR)

program. The scientific evidence overwhelmingly indicates that TNR programs fail to reduce cat populations and, while they intentionally re-abandon cats back to the landscape, jeopardize the health and welfare of cats, other domestic animals, wildlife, and people.

While I am sure that TNR proponents will claim that TNR is the only way to reduce cat populations and cite bogus concepts such as the “vacuum effect” ([see claim #1, p. 2](#)), the truth is that the most effective way to control and reduce cat populations (just like with dog populations) is to remove them from the environment and to support responsible pet ownership practices. If individuals want to feed and otherwise care for stray and feral cats, they should be required to do so on private property with property owner consent and to keep those cats sterilized, current on rabies vaccinations, and contained to said property. Otherwise, the cats will roam and cause nuisances for the community, significant harm to local wildlife, conflicts with pets, and serious risks for human health.

I appreciate your attention to this matter and would be more than happy to work with you to identify a responsible and evidence-based strategy for cat management in Howard County. For now, I ask that you **please oppose SB13-2024**.

Respectfully,

Grant Sizemore, M.S., CWB®
Director of Invasive Species Programs
American Bird Conservancy
Phone: 202-888-7480
gsizemore@abcbirds.org
[@gsizemoreABC](#)



Bringing back the birds

3/13/2024

Howard County Council
3430 Court House Drive
Ellicott City, MD 21043

Dear Chair Jung, Vice Chair Walsh, and Council Members:

On behalf of American Bird Conservancy and our members, I am writing to express our **opposition to CB13-2024, Trap-Neuter-Return Program – Establishment**. Trap, neuter, release (TNR) programs fail to reduce cat populations, while purposely re-abandoning and maintaining roaming cats outdoors, a practice that facilitates ongoing nuisances and harms in the community.

Scientific studies have overwhelmingly concluded that **TNR programs are insufficient to reduce cat populations** and may actually be counterproductive. Consider the following evidence:

- In a long-term study of two highly organized TNR programs in California and Florida, researchers found **ongoing cat population growth**, and data indicated that “no plausible life history variables would likely allow for TNR to succeed in reducing [cat] population size.”ⁱ
- A study of two TNR colonies in South Florida indicated that population size remained the same in one colony and actually increased in the other. The study authors concluded that TNR programs “are **not an effective method** to help control the population of unwanted feral and free-roaming cats.”ⁱⁱ
- A study evaluating ten years of intensive TNR in Rome, Italy, concluded that TNR programs were “not sufficient for managing urban feral-cat demography” and resulted in “a **waste of money, time, and energy**.”ⁱⁱⁱ
- A study in Oklahoma found that TNR was “**insufficient to reduce unowned cat populations**” after a 5-year TNR program resulted in “no significant change in free-ranging cat abundance.”^{iv}
- In an evaluation of cat management options, a study found that **TNR “was actually counterproductive”** to cat population management goals.^v

Roaming cats are also a serious public health risk. **Cats are the top source of rabies among domestic animals** in the United States and disproportionately expose more people to the deadly disease.^{vi,vii} An estimated 16% of rabies post-exposure prophylaxis in the U.S. is administered due to exposure from a cat.^{viii} This represents a significant financial, physical, and emotional burden. **Between 2001 and 2020 in Maryland, there were 23x more rabid cats than rabid dogs, and rabid cats accounted for 85% of all rabid domestic animals.** Although some TNR programs provide a single rabies vaccine to each “community cat,” this is insufficient protection. According to the National Association of State Public Health Veterinarians (NASPHV) Compendium on Animal Rabies Prevention and Control, every cat requires an initial vaccine, a follow-up vaccine after one year, and periodic vaccines at one- or three-year intervals to protect the cat and the public.^{ix} As a result of rabies risks, the NASPHV recommends that “**stray dogs, cats, and ferrets should be removed from the community.**”¹³

Cats are also a definitive host for the parasite, *Toxoplasma gondii*, that causes toxoplasmosis. The parasite can only sexually reproduce in the gut of a feline, and cats then excrete up to hundreds of millions of the parasite’s eggs into the environment. **All warm-blooded species, including humans, are**



Bringing back the birds

susceptible to this disease, which is the second leading cause of deaths from foodborne illness in the U.S.^x Infections in people may also result in blindness, memory loss, or even death and is associated with neuropsychiatric diseases such as schizophrenia.^{xi} **It is precisely because of risks of toxoplasmosis (e.g., miscarriage, intellectual disabilities) that pregnant women are advised not to change cat litter.**^{xii} TNR would result in the entire county becoming one giant litterbox.

TNR programs also endanger wildlife. Roaming cats are predators and one of the world's most harmful invasive species.^{xiii} Cats have contributed to the extinction of 63 species in the wild and are the leading source of human-caused bird deaths in the United States and Canada.^{xiv,xv} In the U.S. alone, cats are estimated to **kill 2.4 billion birds every year.**^{xvi} Even well-fed cats will hunt and kill wildlife.^{xvii} Enabling hordes of roaming cats, whether sterilized or not, is a death sentence for local wildlife.

Cat re-abandonment programs, such as **TNR, also expose communities to nuisances and the County to potentially serious legal liabilities.** Cats do not remain where you set them and often create problems for local residents, including property damage, spread of fleas and ticks, fouling garden beds, conflicts with pets, and disease transmission. Who wants a cat colony near their home? What happens if a resident is exposed to rabies or experiences property damage associated with these released cats? Additionally, many wildlife species are protected by a variety of state and federal laws, including the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and the Endangered Species Act. If a released cat "takes" a protected species, the County could be liable, as occurred in a case filed against the State of New York.^{xviii}

For all of these reasons and more, TNR is opposed by the following organizations:

[American Association of Wildlife Veterinarians](#) | [American Ornithologists' Union](#) | [Association of Avian Veterinarians](#) | [International Wildlife Rehabilitation Council](#) | [National Association of State Public Health Veterinarians](#) | [National Wildlife Rehabilitators Association](#) | [National Wildlife Federation](#) | [The Wildlife Society](#)

I appreciate your interest in reducing the stray and feral cat population. However, TNR is not an appropriate solution. **A better solution would be to remove these cats from the environment and to promote responsible pet ownership, such that cats never become stray or feral in the first place.**

I appreciate the opportunity to provide these comments on behalf of our members and would be happy to work with you to develop appropriate management solutions. **Please oppose CB13-2024.**

Respectfully,

Grant Sizemore, M.S.
Certified Wildlife Biologist®
Director of Invasive Species Programs

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- ⁱ Foley P., J.E. Foley, J.K. Levy, and T. Paik. 2005. Analysis of the impact of trap-neuter-return programs on populations of feral cats. *Journal of the American Veterinary Medical Association* 227: 1775-1781.
- ⁱⁱ Castillo D. and A.L. Clarke. 2003. Trap/Neuter/Release methods ineffective in controlling domestic cat "colonies" on public lands. *Natural Areas Journal* 23: 247-253.
- ⁱⁱⁱ Natoli E., L. Maragliano, G. Cariola, A. Faini, R. Bonanni, S. Cafazzo, and C. Fantini. 2006. Management of feral domestic cats in the urban environment of Rome (Italy). *Preventive Veterinary Medicine* 77: 180-185.
- ^{iv} Coe S.T., J.A. Elmore, E.C. Elizondo, and S.R. Loss. 2021. Free-ranging domestic cat abundance and sterilization percentage following five years of a trap-neuter-return program. *Wildlife Biology* 1: 1-8.
- ^v McCarthy R.J., S.H. Levine, and J.M. Reed. 2013. Estimation of effectiveness of three methods of feral cat population control by use of a simulation model. *Journal of the American Veterinary Medical Association* 243: 502-511.
- ^{vi} Gerhold R.W. and D.A. Jessup. 2013. Zoonotic diseases associated with free-roaming cats. *Zoonoses and Public Health* 60(3): 189-195.
- ^{vii} Roebing A. D., D. Johnson, J. D. Blanton, M. Levin, D. Slate, G. Fenwick, and C. E. Rupprecht. 2013. Rabies prevention and management of cats in the context of Trap-Neuter-Vaccinate-Release programmes. *Zoonoses and Public Health* doi: 10.1111/zph.12070.
- ^{viii} Christian K.A., J.D. Blanton, M. Auslander, and C.E. Rupprecht. 2009. Epidemiology of rabies post-exposure prophylaxis--United States of America, 2006-2008. *Vaccine* 27: 7156-7161.
- ^{ix} Brown C.M., S. Slavinski, P. Ettestad, T.J. Sidwa, and F.E. Sorhage. 2016. National Association of State Public Health Veterinarians Compendium of Animal Rabies Prevention and Control. *Journal of the American Veterinary Medical Association* 248: 505-517.
- ^x Scallan E., R.M. Hoekstra, F.J. Angulo, R.V. Tauxe, M. Widdowson, S.L. Roy, J.L. Jones, and P.M. Griffin. 2011. Foodborne illness acquired in the United States—major pathogens. *Emerging Infectious Diseases* 17: 7-15.
- ^{xi} Aguirre A.A., T. Longcore, M. Barbieri, H. Dabritz, D. Hill, P.N. Klein, C. Lepczyk, E.L. Lilly, R. McLeod, J. Milcarsky, C.E. Murphy, C. Su, E. VanWormer, R. Yolken, and G.C. Sizemore. 2019. The One Health approach to toxoplasmosis: epidemiology, control, and prevention strategies. *EcoHealth* 16: 378-390.
- ^{xii} Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Toxoplasmosis and Pregnancy FAQs, https://www.cdc.gov/parasites/toxoplasmosis/gen_info/pregnant.html (accessed 1/9/2019).
- ^{xiii} Lowe S., M. Browne, S. Boudjelas, and M. DePoorter. 2004. 100 of the world's worst alien invasive species: a selection from the Global Invasive Species Database. Invasive Species Specialist Group, Species Survival Commission, International Union for the Conservation of Nature. 12 pages.
- ^{xiv} Doherty T.S., A.S. Glen, D.G. Nimmo, E.G. Ritchie, and C.R. Dickman. 2016. Invasive predators and global biodiversity loss. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 113: 11261-11265.
- ^{xv} North American Bird Conservation Initiative, U.S. Committee. 2014. The State of the Birds 2014 Report. U.S. Department of Interior, Washington, D.C. 16 pages.
- ^{xvi} Loss S.R., T. Will, and P.P. Marra. 2013. The impact of free-ranging domestic cats on wildlife of the United States. *Nature Communications* 4:1396. doi: 10.1038/ncomms2380
- ^{xvii} Loyd K.A.T., S.M. Hernandez, J.P. Carroll, K.J. Abernathy, and G.J. Marshall. 2013. Quantifying free-roaming domestic cat predation using animal-borne video cameras. *Biological Conservation* 160: 183-189.
- ^{xviii} Stipulation of Settlement and Order of Dismissal, ABC v Rose Harvey 2:16-cv-01582, Aug. 4, 2018.

From: [Linda Hilliard](#)
To: [CouncilMail](#)
Subject: Feral cats in Howard County
Date: Wednesday, March 20, 2024 6:09:02 PM

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

To Whom it May Concern,
Regarding the vote coming up....Please sterilize not euthanize.
Thank you for listening.
Linda Hilliard

Sent from my iPhone

From: [M](#)
To: [CouncilMail](#)
Subject: Leave feral cats alone DO NOT murder them!
Date: Wednesday, March 20, 2024 2:26:57 PM

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Not sure if my other two emails went through because they don't show up on sent but just in case this one does go through.

Howard county has many other problems way more important than feral cats as these cats help get rid of vermin without poisoning the streams.

BTW some of those "feral" cats could be somebody's cat allowed to roam so you'll be murdering a pet.

Maria Alvarez
5064 Lake Circle West
Columbia, MD. 21044

From: [Nancy Harry](#)
To: [CouncilMail](#)
Subject: Save the feral cats
Date: Wednesday, March 20, 2024 9:03:01 PM

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Good evening, I have been a Howard county resident and cat lover for three decades. I have taken in and helped rescue and care for various stray or feral cats.

I am so happy to see that there is finally consideration of TNR programs, in lieu of automatic euthanasia. Some of these cats are quickly deemed feral when in fact, they are strays or lost cats. I have personally rescued five who have made wonderful pets over the years.

It is my understanding that Howard County animal control can be a wonderful organization, which does very good work. However, up until this point, I have been unwilling to go anywhere near them with a cat that needs help. I hope the policy against TNR will change, for the betterment of Howard county cats who desperately need our help.

My two current cats were rescued from a TNR program in southern Virginia. They are wonderful pets.





Thank you for this opportunity to share my thoughts.
Nancy Harry
Laurel, MD

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Susie Schreiner](#)
To: [CouncilMail](#)
Subject: TNR Feral cats NOT EUTHANASIA
Date: Wednesday, March 20, 2024 4:42:34 PM

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

My husband and I absolutely are against euthanasia of feral cats but instead are for TNR. TNR is the only humane way of handling feral cat populations. There have been many studies and reports on the success of TNR and we wholeheartedly approve of that method. Please call if you would like to speak with us regarding this matter or to verify our opinions.

Susan Schreiner 443-510-5083

Marvin Parrott 410-279-9796

2335 Adam David Way, Marriottsville, MD. 21104

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Jennifer Hicks](#)
To: [CouncilMail](#)
Subject: End Euthanasia of Feral Cats
Date: Thursday, March 21, 2024 7:19:23 PM

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Hello,

My name is Jennifer Hicks and I am a resident and home owner in Howard County. As someone who owns two rescued cats myself, I urge the council to vote in favor of transitioning to the much more humane TNR program for feral cats. The cascade effects, from less emotional distress for shelter workers handling euthanasia to a decrease in suffering kittens - most of which die before reaching adult age - are numerous and long-reaching. Please end the euthanasia program!

- Jennifer Hicks

From: [Rebecca Straus](#)
To: [CouncilMail](#)
Subject: Feral cats - please do not euthanize
Date: Thursday, March 21, 2024 1:48:21 AM

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Hello, I am a resident of the pines at Dickinson and would like to say that the feral cats in the area should be TNRed and not euthanized. Innocent animals don't deserve to die. For what it's worth, I've lived here since august 2022 and never seen a single feral cat. I would also be happy to volunteer for these cats. Thank you.

[Sent from Yahoo Mail for iPhone](#)

From: [Rose Edwards](#)
To: [CouncilMail](#)
Subject: TNR
Date: Thursday, March 21, 2024 6:05:08 PM

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

I support the Trap/Neuter/Release program for feral cats. This is much more humane than taking lives simply because these cats are feral. It will also decrease their numbers over time.

Rose Edwards

From: [Jacob Carroll](#)
To: [CouncilMail](#)
Subject: [SUSPECTED SPAM] End Cat Euthanasia
Date: Friday, March 22, 2024 8:05:02 AM

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Hello,

I am writing to express my support for a motion that would end euthanasia of feral cats in Howard County in favor of a trap, neuter, release policy.

Regards,
Jacob
Columbia, MD

From: [S VanWey](#)
To: [CouncilMail](#)
Subject: I Support CB-13-2024
Date: Friday, March 22, 2024 2:30:46 PM

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

I support CB-[13-2024](#), the Trap, Neuter, and Release Program for its care of community kitties. Once trapped, care is given to help kitties health, neutering to prevent kittens that can grow up to birth more kittens, and best of all, they are returned to their home territories where they will feel at home and live. Cats have a right to live just as other species do. This program works and it helps communities who feel that there are too many cats.

Three thoughts that come to mind are:

- 1) When cat numbers are reduced by TNR how will communities control the mice and rat population?
- 2) Remember, man (humans) are the largest predators of birds and wildlife (and all species) by cutting down trees (bird and wildlife habitats), by over developing land (removing food sources), and by the use of poisons in lawn fertilizers and other road and garden sprays. Destruction by man of habitats, food, and clean living spaces kill more birds and wildlife, than cats ever do.
- 3) Global warming has affected bird populations.
Global warming with its high heat temperatures has already created a disease that killed thousands of birds right here in Maryland and other states, lest we forget, and global warming's increase of intense storms with high winds, too, have affected bird populations.

I support CB-[13-2024](#) because it helps cats live healthy, cared for lives. Every species has an ethical right to live. There are many variables that affect the lives of birds and wildlife including: man's impact on the destruction of habitats, food, and clean living space, pesticide use, and global warming effects. We should consider all variables when looking at this bill.

From: Kurt Schwarz <krschwa1@verizon.net>
Sent: Saturday, March 23, 2024 10:29 AM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Additional Testimony for CB-13-2024
Attachments: MOS CB-13 II TNR March 2024..pdf

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear members of Howard County Council,

Attached in additional testimony from Maryland Ornithological Society/Howard County Bird Club regarding CB-13-2024. Kindly enter it into the record of testimony.

Kurt Schwarz
Conservation Chair Emeritus
Maryland Ornithological Society
Howard County Bird Club
7329 Wildwood Court
Columbia, MD 21046
443-538-2370
krschwa1@verizon.net



MARYLAND ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY



March ??, 2024

To: Howard County Council
RE: CB-13 Additional Testimony

Dear Members of the Howard County Council:

The Maryland Ornithological Society (MOS) and its Howard County Chapter, the Howard County Bird Club (HCBC), have additional testimony to submit, in light of the hearing which took place on March 18.

TNR advocates stated repeatedly that TNR “works” at reducing cat numbers. However, all those assertions were anecdotal, and not subject to verification by independent authorities. The examples we have cited showing that TNR is not effective in reducing cat colony size, at least in the immediate or near term, were published in peer-reviewed journals.

In our previous testimony, we referred to a prominent TNR advocacy group. The group was Alley Cat Allies. It is telling that in their “Trap-Neuter-Return Research Compendium,” they only cite three instances where the colony was reduced to zero or one. All those examples took over a decade and half for the colony(ies) to wink out.¹

The town of Betterton in Kent County, Maryland, banned feral cat colonies cats in 2017.² Per a recent phone call to the town government, the feral cats and colonies are no longer present.³

At the hearing much was made regarding the fact that all the neighboring counties had adopted TNR. We suggest that, prior to the final vote, the Council consult those counties, and seek out real, verifiable figures on colony size and any reduction. We understand that Laurel Cats does not release its information to the public. We hear stories that these programs in surrounding counties and in Laurel work. We call on them to prove it, with real, documented statistics.

We also call on the County to consult with the town of Betterton, Maryland, and learn from their experience.

We find it disturbing that TNR advocates seek to normalize unsocialized, feral cats as “Community Cats.” That title implies that the cats are somehow approachable, cuddly, etc. They are unadoptable feral cats, which are released outdoors: subject to weather, predators, disease, and food insecurity. They do not respect property lines, but wander about preying on

wildlife, defecating and urinating at will, thereby spreading disease, filth, and odor on unwilling neighbors.

Also, while the advocates that spoke at the hearing maintained that they did keep rabies vaccinations up to date, not all practitioners do. A study in 2013 showed that annual recapture rates were below 10%.⁴

Please keep in mind that all cats are predators by nature. Well-fed TNR and colony cats as well as free-roaming pet cats kill untold numbers of birds, mammals, amphibians, butterflies, and reptiles each year. To illustrate that point, we refer you to two pieces written by respected animal care professionals, which raise very troubling questions about TNR. The first, from PETA equates support Trap-Neuter-Release with support for killing wildlife. PETA provides some gruesome images from the Blue Ridge Wildlife Center⁵ in Boyce, Virginia of victims of feral cat depredations.⁶ In another article published in the magazine Salon in 2022, Stephen M. Vantassel of the Montana Department of Agriculture relates his assessment of TNR, that it does not "remove an invasive predator from the landscape so they are still able to predate and harass native species and spread diseases and disease vectors for which they were not vaccinated for."⁷

We note that many TNR advocates seek to divert attention from the toll caused by free-roaming cats by pointing out that birds also fall victim to climate change, habitat loss, windows, wind turbines, poisoning, etc. The US Fish and Wildlife Service compiled a chart in 2017 that shows the bird losses caused by various means. Cats are by far the top killer, at 1.4 to 3.7 billion per year. The next closest cause is collisions with building glass at a range between 365 million and 988 million.⁸

To illustrate the point, we share a photo taken by one Adam Parr at Sunset Park in Ocean City, circa 2017. Local birders documented continuing preying of songbirds in this well-known birding spot in Ocean City. Sunset Park has attracted a stunning number of bird rarities, and also affords views of water birds. The discovery of the colony prompted MOS to contact the Mayor of Ocean City, and that colony of feral cats was soon removed. The unfortunate bird is an immature male Common Yellowthroat, a wood warbler that winters in the southern US, as well as Latin America, and breeds in Maryland.



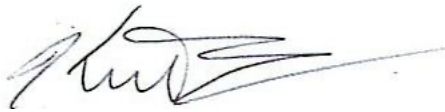
Photo by Adam Parr.

We again ask the Council to table the bill for further study. And we reiterate the steps that will actually reduce the number of cats, while providing for their welfare, and reducing the toll on birds, small mammals, reptiles and amphibians.

- Aggressively educate the public on the problem of cat overpopulation and the need for neutering and vaccination
- Encourage cat owners to neuter their cats
- Encourage cat owners to keep their cats indoors or leashed or fenced when outdoors
- Enact and enforce strong local municipal and county leash and licensing laws
- Fully fund municipal and county animal control agencies, with requirement of mandatory microchipping
- Provide low-cost or free neutering programs by local governments and humane organizations.

- Strongly promote adoption programs by animal control agencies and local governments as well as other appropriate solutions such as enclosed sanctuaries, where neither wildlife nor public health are threatened
- Require animal control agencies to use euthanasia only as a last resort, while ensuring that genuine pets are not accidentally put down
- The Howard County Bird Club is willing to contribute \$5000 to adoption and rehoming efforts.

One further point, we note the bill states that the Animal Control Division may develop guidelines for a Trap-Neuter-Return program. And that the Division may consult animal care organizations. Should the Council approve this bill, we would like to point out that there are other stakeholders which should be consulted, e.g. wildlife and public health officials. And all colonies should be fenced, which would allay several of our concerns. We would much rather see the bill tabled, and that there be rational discussion held to deal with this thorny subject.



Kurt R. Schwarz
Conservation Chair Emeritus
Maryland Ornithological Society

¹ Alley Cat Allies, Trap-Neuter-Return Research Compendium,

² <https://www.alleycat.org/resources/trap-neuter-return-research-compendium/>
[https://webgen1files1.revize.com/bettertonmd/Document%20center/Government/ORDINANCES,%20RESOLUTIONS,%20AND%20BUDGETS/Animal Control Ordinance r4.pdf](https://webgen1files1.revize.com/bettertonmd/Document%20center/Government/ORDINANCES,%20RESOLUTIONS,%20AND%20BUDGETS/Animal%20Control%20Ordinance%20r4.pdf)

³ Personal communication, town of Betterton, 410-348-5522, March 19, 2024

⁴ A. D. Roebing, D. Johnson, J. D. Blanton, M. Levin, D. Slate, G. Fenwick and C. E. Rupprecht, Rabies Prevention and Management of Cats in the Context of Trap-Neuter-Vaccinate-Release Programmes, Zoonoses and Public Health, Page 3, January 3, 2013, <https://vetmed-maddie.sites.medinfo.ufl.edu/files/2014/07/2013-Roebing-Rabies-and-TNR.pdf>

⁵ <https://www.blueridgewildlifectr.org>

⁶ PETA, If You Support Trap-Neuter-Release, You Support Killing Wildlife,
<https://www.peta.org/features/trap-neuter-release-wildlife/>

⁷ Rosza, Matthew, “Trap-neuter-release” programs for feral cats may do more harm than good, experts say” Salon, December 20, 2022,
<https://www.salon.com/2022/12/20/trap-neuter-release-programs-for-feral-cats-may-do-more-harm-than-good-experts-say/>

⁸ US Fish and Wildlife Service, Threats to Birds,
<https://www.fws.gov/library/collections/threats-birds>

From: [Deb Bleakney](#)
To: [CouncilMail](#)
Subject: CB13 -TNR support
Date: Sunday, March 24, 2024 6:28:43 PM

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

To our Howard County Government

I am writing in my supporter of CB13 - supporting funding and programs for the Trap-Neuter-Release programs for feral and stray animals, especially cats. These animals should be taken care of and helped, NOT euthanized.

I am requesting that you will Vote in Favor of supporting the

[F. CB13-2024 - DJ - AN ACT establishing the Trap-Neuter-Return program for community cats, specifying the purpose and administration of the program, defining certain terms; and generally relating to the Trap-Neuter-Return program.](#)

Thank you

Have a great day!

Debbie Bleakney

From: [Debra Barlly](#)
To: [CouncilMail](#)
Subject: Re: Euthanasia/sterilization of feral cats
Date: Sunday, March 24, 2024 8:56:06 AM

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

To whom it may concern,

I am currently a Howard County resident. I live in Beaverbrook @ 5093 Durham Rd West 21044. I'd rather have feral cats in Howard County sterilized instead of euthanized.

Thank you,

Debra Barlly

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Lucas Demas](#)
To: [CouncilMail](#)
Subject: CB13
Date: Sunday, March 24, 2024 11:18:58 AM

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Greetings,

Please support CB13 (Trap Neuter Release) rather than Trapping and Killing feral cats.

Thank you,
Lucas Demas
Howard County Resident

[Sent from AOL on Android](#)

From: [jmgitel](#)
To: [CouncilMail](#)
Subject: CB13
Date: Sunday, March 24, 2024 1:12:28 PM

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

We are both Howard County residents and strongly support this bill.
Thank you for your consideration.
Margaret and Joseph Gitelman.

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Michelle Demas](#)
To: [CouncilMail](#)
Subject: CB13
Date: Sunday, March 24, 2024 10:22:05 AM

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Greetings,

Please support CB13 (Trap Neuter Release) rather than Trapping and Killing feral cats.

Thank you,

Michelle Demas
5469 El Camino,
Columbia, MD 21044

[Sent from AOL on Android](#)

From: [A Tufano](#)
To: [CouncilMail](#)
Subject: TNR for feral cats
Date: Monday, March 25, 2024 10:29:37 AM

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Hi there,

I wanted to put my vote forward for TNR for feral cats. Euthanasia is just not the answer.

If there is a website or survey available to relay this vote, please send it over.

I'm a HoCo resident in support of TNR.

Thank you!

Allyson
[Sent from Yahoo Mail for iPhone](#)

From: [Bettye Maki](#)
To: [CouncilMail](#); CouncilDistrict1@howardcountymd.gov; CouncilDistrict2@howardcountymd.gov;
councildistrict3@howardcountymd.gov; CouncilDistrict4@howardcountymd.gov;
CouncilDistrict5@howardcountymd.gov
Subject: Agreement with Maryland Ornithological Society position on CB13
Date: Monday, March 25, 2024 3:05:18 PM

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear Members of the Howard County Council:

I want to confirm my position as a person in favor of TNR.

I wrote earlier to the council making this position clear, however I have learned that I am on the list as those against TNR.

PLEASE CORRECT MY POSITION ON THIS ISSUE.

Respectfully.

Bettye Maki

From: sig29@aol.com
To: [CouncilMail](#)
Subject: CB13-2024 TNR Input----"Catio" Concept and Rationale
Date: Tuesday, March 26, 2024 3:33:36 PM

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Please add this input about Catio (Cat patios) into the CB13-2024 TNR Public Testimony. Councilman Jung asked me for a win-win solution for cats and native fauna. Adoption of catio for released cats is good for both.

[Gregg Petersen](#)

President, [Howard County Bird Club](#)

Cell: 202-256-8166

From: sig29@aol.com <sig29@aol.com>
Date: Monday, March 18, 2024 at 3:43 PM
To: councilmail@howardcountymd.gov <councilmail@howardcountymd.gov>, councildistrict1@howardcountymd.gov <councildistrict1@howardcountymd.gov>, councildistrict2@howardcountymd.gov <councildistrict2@howardcountymd.gov>, councildistrict3@howardcountymd.gov <councildistrict3@howardcountymd.gov>, councildistrict4@howardcountymd.gov <councildistrict4@howardcountymd.gov>, councildistrict5@howardcountymd.gov <councildistrict5@howardcountymd.gov>
Cc: Kurt Schwarz <krschwa1@verizon.net>, Jo & Bob Solem <odenata@msn.com>, Sue Muller <smuller@howardcountymd.gov>, Mary Lou Clark <doctorfx_99@yahoo.com>, Val Swan <valnjeff55@gmail.com>, Charles Stirrat <stirrcr1@gmail.com>, Robin Todd <robintodd1948@gmail.com>
Subject: CB13-2024 TNR "Catio" Concept

Esteemed council members-

As part of a more humane, healthy, and environmentally friendly strategy, the Maryland Ornithological Society, Howard County Bird Club, and other organizations such as the American Bird Conservancy have proposed the use of "catios" to **contain** rather than to **release** Trapped, Neutered, Vaccinated feral cats. The pictured catio was built by a friend that truly cares for her community cats, their welfare, native wildlife, and the welfare of her community. We recommend Community Cat advocates act to build and maintain these structures at their own expense both for the good of the feral cats they so fiercely advocate for and for the good of our community.

The benefits of a catio are as follows: humane environment for cats: safe from the elements, not in danger of being run over, no exposure to diseased feral, non-TNR cats, and safe from larger predators. With regard to public health, the TN cats are not hunting on, encroaching on, or defecating on neighbors' property with its attendant identified health risks. With regard to our precious native fauna, this ceases the TNR cats' unnecessary slaughter of native small mammals, birds, and herps (reptiles and amphibians). A feral cat or any cat for that matter, is an invasive, apex-predator, and still hunts for sport even if they have a reliable source of cat food.

This pictured catio is 12' X 30', double-screened to keep out mosquitoes, has ½" by ½" square screening to keep cats in and predators out. This catio has air conditioning and heating simply because the owners like spending time year-round with their cats. This fairly elaborate design is not a prescription, but an example of what has been done demonstrating loving care and respect for cats while not demanding that our community sanction and bear the unnecessary risks posed by free roaming cats.

Respectfully,

[Gregg Petersen](#)

President, [Howard County Bird Club](#)

Cell: 202-256-8166

Columbia, MD

From: [Sandi Comcast](#)
To: [CouncilMail](#)
Subject: TNR...yes!!!
Date: Tuesday, March 26, 2024 11:13:49 AM

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

I have cared for a feral cat colony for many years, and have used the TNR method. For all these years, we only had a few kittens until we were able to trap and provide vet care for all the females and males. Since then we have had NO more kittens. All of the ferals pretty much live on my patio and in my back yard. In all this time only three or four have never returned. We have plenty of shelters for them and most of them are loving and happy! All that said, why not allow a county TNR program where the cats and the birds and even the goldfish can live in healthy harmony???

Caring for cats and other pets and loving them is like raising children. Sometimes they're naughty, sometimes funny, always return your love. How can anyone say "just trap and kill them? Would you do that too your children?

Allow us to responsibly trap, neuter and release them.

From: [Mark Woodward](#)
To: [CouncilMail](#)
Subject: Trap neuter release
Date: Wednesday, March 27, 2024 2:39:39 PM

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Sacramento CA started TNR 19 years ago and populations tripled! TNR goals shift from reducing populations to stabilizing populations to accommodating ever increasing populations and calling them community cats. This happens to all large cities that adopt TNR policy.

We've lived next to TNR feeding sites twice. The neighborhood of my elderly parents had a huge 100 or so cat feeding site. In all cases constant flea bites that pose legitimate public health concerns as does the biohazard feral cat feces loaded with parasites and diseases. Property damage. Constant putrid smell of cat feces and urine. All the cat food builds dense populations of rats along with rabies reservoir skunks, raccoons and fox. Always more dead and dying cats and kittens. Those feeding sites "colonies" turn into kitten mills though feral cat hobbyists insist all the cats are neutered but feral cat hobbyists believe there always should be feral cats they get to feed.

Pet food conglomerates and corporate TNR charities put out incredible disinformation because it's a huge money maker. They hire journalist to spin falsehoods like, "the vacuum effect". That's taken from ecological science of an environment's carrying capacity or a few native animals competing for limited resources. Cats are a domestic animal and limitless food = limitless population growth, cats readily join feeding sites. They they say you have to feed chowders of feral cats so more will show up to be neutered. Other lies are that cats play a natural roll in ecosystems. No, cats are a destructive alien animal, invasive species, one of our worst! "Cats are well cared for", no, only 4% or 10% of feral cats city wide are neutered/spayed vaccinated and they never get rabies boosters. There are far too many to be cared for due to cost in time trapping and vet care. TNR enables feed and breed people doing their rounds dumping cat food breeding cats. Cat colonies become permanent and often balloon. Feral cat feeders refuse to stop long enough for cats to go into traps. These people want feral cats and putting them in charge in asking the fox to guard the hen house.

The worst part are the fights between neighborhoods and feral cat hobbyists. Many of us who complain find more cats and cat food dumped and cats are allowed to breed even faster in our neighborhoods. That often escalates into feral cat hobbyists vandalizing people's property and threatening anonymous phone calls from those in TNR clubs. They then do really horrible things like doxing, passing the "cat haters" picture around, faults police reports with hysterical accusation, a form of swatting.

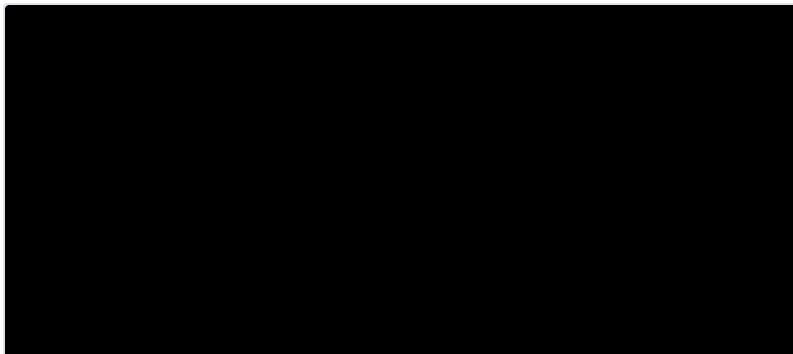
Look at the science and results not testimonials from feral cat hobbyists and corporations that benefit.

Science vs. the Cat Hoarders |



Science vs. the Cat Hoarders |

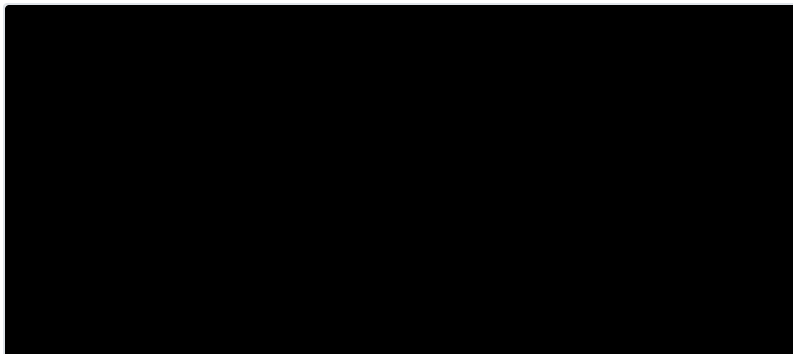
[Why "trap-neuter-release" programs for feral cats may do more harm than good](#)



Why "trap-neuter-release" programs for feral cats may do more harm than ...

For decades public health authorities have spayed feral cats and released them back into the wild. Experts say t...

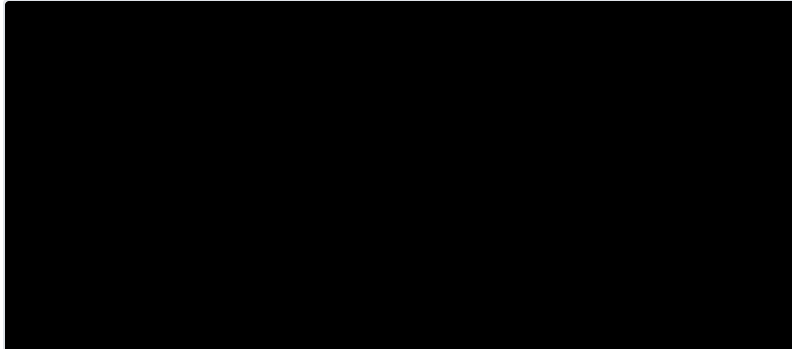
[Trap-Neuter-Release: Does TNR Really Save Cats? | PETA](#)



Trap-Neuter-Release: Does TNR Really Save Cats? | PETA

Is it ever OK to abandon cats? TNR proponents think so. You may change your mind about trap-neuter-release after...

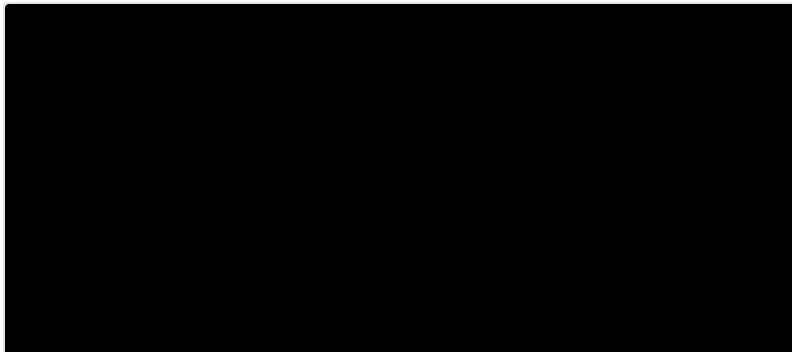
[Trap, Neuter, Release](#)



Trap, Neuter, Release

Trap, Neuter, Release programs have failed to reduce feral cat populations. Instead, they keep cats on the lands...

[Cats Are Surprisingly Bad at Killing Rats](#)



Cats Are Surprisingly Bad at Killing Rats

Smithsonian Magazine

Over a 79-day period, feral felines killed just two rats, instead opting to hunt less challenging prey

From: green12205@gmail.com
To: [CouncilMail](#)
Subject: CB13
Date: Wednesday, March 27, 2024 6:59:53 AM

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Hello,

When voting for or against CB13, please look at these photos. I found this cat colony in Jessup. Do you want to look at a colony like this in your neighborhood?



There were 2 cats present in middle of the day and this one does not appear to have a tipped ear. This means it is not vaccinated.



What is alarming is that approximately 400' away is a human homeless camp. I can't believe these cats don't wander over to where the people are. I find it hard to understand that someone feeds the cats but not the people. What if a cat is rabid?

I also noticed the building nearby had rodent poison out around the building.



Look at these filthy bowls (complete with what appear to be botflies) laying all around the colony. There is a lot of food sitting in these bowls in middle of the day. Could this be why there is a rodent problem around the building? I will say at least the person/persons feeding these cats are using glass bowls that don't blow into the woods. Most colonies have plastic bowls or Styrofoam bowls blowing all over the place creating litter.



Imagine trying to sell your house with this mess behind your house. Please vote this bill down.

Sue Muller, I live and vote in Howard County

From: [Deb](#)
To: [CouncilMail](#)
Subject: Please support CB13-2024 establishing TNR in Howard County
Date: Thursday, March 28, 2024 10:51:04 PM

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear Howard County Council Members,

I am writing to urge you to vote for CB13-2024, and join all the surrounding counties and most of the state of Maryland in establishing a TNR program for the feral cats in Howard County.

I support this program for several reasons. First of all, the current Howard County Animal Control practice of immediately euthanizing any cat that is not deemed “tame” is inhumane, costs the county money, and does nothing to solve the problem of uncaught stray or feral cats continuing to reproduce. I do not want my tax dollars to support this cruel, outdated, ineffective practice.

Second, establishing a TNR program in Howard County would cost the County little, if any, money. Instead, it would immediately make grant money available to be claimed by rescue organizations like Laurel Cats, Sunshine’s Friends, and Metro Ferals, just to name a few, who operate in the surrounding counties, and enable them to operate in Howard County. Howard County’s lack of a TNR program means that no organization can obtain this grant money, which is readily available, to help control the feral cat population in Howard County.

And finally, I support TNR because I have volunteered with organizations that practice TNR and I know it works. I would also like people who care about cats in and around Howard County to be the ones in charge of solving this problem. For too many years, people who dislike cats have been legally able to kill feral cats just because they are alive. Rescue groups staffed with volunteers who care about cats and want to help them will do a much better job of managing and reducing the feral/stray cat population than people who just want to eradicate them. TNR programs work, and judging from the testimony provided at the legislative hearing, rescue organizations and their volunteers are eagerly awaiting approval of this bill so they can get started in Howard County. Please look at the work Laurel Cats has done in Laurel and the testimony from officials and rescue groups from surrounding counties who all support TNR programs.

I believe TNR is the most humane and cost-effective way to manage the stray and feral cat population in Howard County. Please vote for CB13-2024 and establish a TNR program in Howard County.

Thank you.

Deb DeHaas

Jessup MD

From: [Kim P](#)
To: [CouncilMail](#); [Ball, Calvin](#)
Subject: Support for CB13-2024
Date: Thursday, March 28, 2024 3:06:04 PM

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

I'd like to speak out in strong support of CB13-2024 and applaud Deb Jung for stepping forward to break the decades old and ineffective use of euthanization as the primary method to control the community cat population throughout Howard County. Howard County often claims to be on the forefront of transformation across the state, but has fallen far behind EVERY other nearby county when it comes to supporting a local TNR program. This archaic mentality is embedded in the minds of Animal Control leadership and staff who are comfortable performing their jobs as they always have - kill whatever cats they catch. It needs to change NOW.

It's time for Howard County to review the vast evidence that clearly shows that Trap-Neuter-Return programs are actually MORE effective and less costly than killing the cats, and does NOT have the damaging impact on birds and wildlife that others might claim. As we all know, humans are the primary culprit when it comes to harming wildlife - destroying their homes and food sources, poisoning the environment, building tall structures with windows that hapless birds fly into, etc.

Approving this bill will finally bring Howard County into 21st century in its treatment of community cats. Other counties have developed effective programs, often in conjunction with local animal services organizations, a few of which are listed below.

Anne Arundel County: <https://aacsavecats.org/#about>

Baltimore County: <https://www.baltimorecountymd.gov/departments/animal-services/TNR/>
<https://bmorehumane.org/>

Baltimore City: <https://www.barcs.org/blog/community-cat-program/#>

Carroll County:
<https://hscarroll.org/spay-neuter/>

<https://www.carrollferalcatcare.org/tnr-information>

PG County:
<https://www.princegeorgescountymd.gov/departments-offices/environment/animal-services/community-cats-tnvr/get-help-tnvr>

Howard County desperately needs support for the effective implementation of a robust TNR program - educating the population about the need for spay-neuter, offering regular low cost clinics for TNR, pet spay-neuter, vaccinations, microchips. The county also needs to provide a viable non-lethal option for people who can no longer keep their pets. The population in Howard County has exploded - the adoption centers and animal services staff need to grow as well. Howard County needs to focus more on Animal SERVICES vs Animal CONTROL.

While there is unfortunately a need for the police/control aspect of the , that should not be the core focus of a county animal services organization.

Local rescues are constantly called upon to help cats in need because no one trusts Howard County animal control not to just kill them out of convenience, lack of funding or space - euthanization is the perceived easy way out. Oftentimes, caretakers don't have funding to get individual colonies fixed and can't trust anyone not to trap and kill them - so the cat population continues to grow. Caretakers are often threatened with eviction or harassed because it's "illegal" to take care of community cats. With the proper education and support, we can humanely reduce the population through TNR, reduce the negative behaviors associated with unfixed cats, and establish outdoor shelters and feeding areas so that the cats and surrounding community are kept safe and clean.

IMPACT ON BIRDS ARGUMENT

One of the main counter arguments against TNR programs is the supposed impact on birds and wildlife. After reading the "statistics" on the number of birds killed by cats, I had to wonder - how on earth did they come up with those numbers (yes, I have an operations research background). A 2020 article titled "Wildlife impacts of free-roaming cats: Estimates vs. evidence" (<https://www.felineresearch.org/post/issue-brief-wildlife-impacts-of-outdoor-cats>) questions the validity of those estimates and the actual impact on the environment. A few of the highlights from the article:

In the mid-1990s, University of Wisconsin researchers published estimates suggesting that rural cats alone were killing up to 219 million birds annually in the state. *Despite weaknesses associated with the underlying methods used to reach this estimate, the number attracted national attention and was subsequently used to lobby the Wisconsin Conservation Congress, which soon approved a measure that would have allowed the hunting of "feral cats." The Congress later reversed course, dropping the measure.*

More recently, researchers from the Smithsonian Migratory Bird Center and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) estimated that free-roaming cats in the contiguous U.S. kill 1.3–4.0 billion birds and 6.3–22.3 billion mammals annually. *Again, the estimates attracted national attention. And, again, questions were raised about their validity and what, if anything, such estimates say about the population-level impact of cats on wildlife.*

Still, these unprecedented mortality estimates were used by some to argue for the removal of "all free-ranging cats from the landscape by any means necessary".

An earlier review of dozens of predation studies, published in 2000, found that *"there are few, if any studies apart from island ones that actually demonstrate that cats have reduced bird populations". A review of the scientific literature currently available suggests that little has changed today: evidence of population-level impacts from anywhere but small islands remains elusive.*

It's important to remember that even large mortality estimates must be compared with population estimates — and at a geographic scale small enough to be meaningful from a management perspective. *Estimates of the number of birds killed annually across the contiguous United States, for example, might make for good headlines, but these numbers — often published without context — provide little guidance for those interested in effectively*

managing bird (or cat) populations.

It's also *important to distinguish between mortality estimates and population impacts*. It's well understood that predators — including cats — tend to prey on vulnerable individuals (e.g., sick, weak, young) considered the “doomed surplus,” resulting in little or no impact on the population of a species. In fact, *two peer-reviewed studies have shown that birds killed by cats are, on average, significantly less healthy than birds killed in collisions with windows or cars.*

Studies suggesting that free-roaming cats have a negative impact on various species (especially those considered native) are common. *However, relatively few stand up to careful scrutiny. Indeed, many are contradicted by empirical evidence.*

The mortality estimates sometimes attributed to free-roaming cats, for example, cannot be reconciled with the best population estimates available, or with the population trends documented by the annual North American Breeding Bird Survey. *In some cases, these mortality estimates actually exceed the total number of birds estimated to populate an area. In addition, such estimates leave no accounting for other well-documented causes of bird mortality, such as pesticide use, oil spills, habitat loss, window strikes, or other anthropogenic causes.*

Although it's true that cats can have significant negative impacts on island species (especially seabirds), it's important to distinguish these cases from mainland contexts, and especially in urban areas where most cats are found. Moreover, the complete eradication of cats from islands has at times caused more significant harm to native wildlife than was originally caused by the cats themselves.

The 2014 State of the Birds report, published by the North American Bird Conservation Initiative, notes that *“habitat loss is by far the greatest cause of bird population declines”*. *Targeting free-roaming cats (another anthropogenic factor) not only raises ethical questions but can also distract from efforts to mitigate these other, more concerning, factors.*

There is general agreement that free-roaming cats can pose a significant risk to wildlife populations; however, the credible evidence is quite clear that this risk is limited to very specific contexts (e.g., small islands) and even then is likely only one part of a larger story. Sweeping claims that lack necessary context (e.g., conflating island and mainland environments) confuse the issue and impede productive conversation about how best to manage free-roaming cat populations

It will take work to establish an effective TNR program in Howard County and will require active collaboration with rescues and veterinarians, but it is clearly the right path to take. We need to build trusted partnerships and stop forcing rescues to work under cover of darkness to hide our "illegal" activities which actually help not only the cats, but the overall community. Rescues need support from the county and the county needs support from the rescues.

Trap-neuter-return (TNR) is a humane and effective method for managing and reducing the population of free-roaming and feral cats. This approach involves trapping feral cats, spaying or neutering them, and then returning them to their original location. TNR has been endorsed by numerous animal welfare organizations and has been proven to be successful in reducing

the number of feral cats in communities.

One of the main arguments in support of TNR is that it is a humane approach to dealing with the overpopulation of feral cats. Instead of resorting to lethal methods such as euthanasia, TNR allows for feral cats to live out their lives in their natural environment. By spaying and neutering these cats, TNR helps to reduce the number of kittens being born into a harsh and often short-lived existence on the streets.

Another important argument for TNR is that it is a practical and cost-effective solution to managing feral cat populations. Traditional methods of controlling feral cat populations, such as trapping and euthanizing, are often expensive and do not address the root cause of the problem. TNR, on the other hand, has been shown to be more cost-effective in the long run, as it prevents new litters of kittens from being born and helps to stabilize the feral cat population over time.

In addition to being humane and cost-effective, TNR has also been proven to be an effective method for reducing feral cat populations. Numerous studies have shown that TNR programs can lead to a significant decrease in the number of feral cats in a community. By spaying and neutering feral cats, TNR helps to prevent them from reproducing and creating more kittens that would otherwise add to the population of feral cats.

TNR also has benefits for the cats themselves. Spaying and neutering not only prevents unwanted litters of kittens, but also has health benefits for the cats. Neutering male cats can reduce their risk of developing certain types of cancer, while spaying female cats can prevent them from developing uterine infections and other reproductive health issues. By providing medical care to feral cats through TNR programs, we can help to improve their quality of life and reduce their suffering.

Furthermore, TNR has been shown to have positive effects on the overall community. By reducing the population of feral cats, TNR can help to decrease the spread of diseases such as feline immunodeficiency virus (FIV) and feline leukemia virus (FeLV) among cats. Additionally, feral cats can be a nuisance to residents, creating noise, odors, and potentially spreading parasites. TNR helps to mitigate these issues by reducing the number of feral cats in a community.

Opponents of TNR often argue that it does not completely eliminate the problem of feral cat populations and that it can be difficult to monitor and manage these populations over time. While it is true that TNR programs may not completely eradicate feral cat populations, they have been shown to be an effective tool in reducing and stabilizing these populations. With proper management and support from the community, TNR programs can help to maintain a healthy balance between feral cats and the surrounding environment.

In conclusion, TNR is a humane, cost-effective, and effective method for managing and reducing feral cat populations. By spaying and neutering feral cats and returning them to their original locations, TNR helps to prevent overpopulation, improve the health and well-being of the cats, and benefit the overall community. With the support of animal welfare organizations, communities can implement successful TNR programs that make a positive impact on feral cat populations and the surrounding environment.

From: [Beverly Ousley](#)
To: [CouncilMail](#)
Subject: TNR Program in Howard County
Date: Friday, March 29, 2024 12:48:33 PM
Attachments: [Generic Template TNR Letter of Support.pdf](#)

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Sent from my iPad

Dear Howard County Council,

As a Maryland resident, animal lover, and animal advocate, I am writing to you in support of CB-13 2024: Trap-Neuter-Return Program Establishment. Trap-Neuter-Return, or TNR, is the humane way to care for the outdoor cat population while simultaneously reducing the number of outdoor cats in our communities.

As a volunteer at the Baltimore Animal Rescue and Care Shelter (BARCS) in Baltimore City, I have seen firsthand the positive impact of TNR. BARCS treats every cat as a respected creature, whether friendly or feral, and has multiple programs in place, including TNR, to ensure feral cats receive the same humane care as friendly cats. Running TNR clinics allows caretakers who feed community cats to get the cats vaccinated and spayed/neutered, providing a better quality of life for the cat while also ensuring the cat cannot reproduce. And BARCS is not the only shelter in Maryland who has seen the benefits of TNR. In fact, every other county in Central Maryland has TNR programs available to its residents aside from Howard County.

There is a great deal of research that exists which demonstrates the effectiveness of TNR. In 2018 the National Institute of Health published "A Case Study in Citizen Science: The Effectiveness of a Trap-Neuter-Return Program in a Chicago Neighborhood." Their research found an 82% reduction in population due to the impact of TNR. While this did take time, approximately 9 years, it demonstrates what we see here at BARCS and what so many other Maryland counties see all the time: TNR works. This link will provide you with many other studies that demonstrate the effectiveness of TNR:

<https://humanepro.org/page/community-cats-scientific-studies-and-data#:~:text=TNR%20Reduces%20Cat%20Numbers,-Targeted%20TNR%20resulted&text=in%20neighborhood%20study-.Citizen%20science%20was%20employed%20to%20document%20the%20impact%20of%20TNR,end%20of%20the%20study%20period>

Opponents of TNR will say that outdoor cats are harmful for other animals, such as birds, and they therefore feel feral cats should be euthanized to protect the bird populations. The challenge with that way of thinking is that euthanizing feral cats does not reduce the outdoor cat population, and therefore will not change the impact that outdoor cats have on birds. Rather, by implementing a TNR program, the number of outdoor cats will steadily decrease, and therefore the impact on birds will as well.

As someone who believes all animals deserve the chance to live and be treated humanely, I strongly urge you to pass CB-13 2024 and establish a TNR program in Howard County.

Sincerely,



From: Daniel Sharareh
To: CouncilMail
Subject: [Possible Scam Fraud]TNR Opinion
Date: Friday, March 29, 2024 10:39:53 AM

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

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The sender may pose as an out-of-town breeder, offering pets for adoption.

If you do not know the sender or cannot verify the integrity of the message, please do not respond or click on links in the message. Depending on the security settings, clickable URLs may have been modified to provide additional security.

Dear Howard County Council,

I write this letter to you as a Howard County resident in strong support of CB-13 2024: Trap-Neuter-Return Program Establishment. Trap-Neuter-Return, or TNR, is the humane way to care for the outdoor cat population while simultaneously reducing the number of outdoor cats in our communities.

I live in a neighborhood with many outdoor cats. My wife and I have tried to interact with these cats, but they are feral (not socialized to humans) and will not let us get close to them. When we lived in Baltimore City, we were able to use their TNR program to help cats like this. We did not realize when we moved to Howard County that this same resource was not available. In fact, when we looked it up we found that every other county in Central Maryland has TNR programs available to its residents aside from Howard County. It is sad to know there is nothing we can do to help these cats, and I am writing in hopes that you can help to change that.

There is a great deal of research that exists which demonstrates the effectiveness of TNR. In 2018 the National Institute of Health published "A Case Study in Citizen Science: The Effectiveness of a Trap-Neuter-Return Program in a Chicago Neighborhood." Their research found an 82% reduction in population due to the impact of TNR. While this did take time, approximately 9 years, it demonstrates what so many other Maryland counties see all the time: TNR works. This link will provide you with many other studies that demonstrate the effectiveness of TNR: <https://humanepro.org/page/community-cats-scientific-studies-and-data#:~:text=TNR%20Reduces%20Cat%20Numbers.-Targeted%20TNR%20resulted&text=in%20neighborhood%20study-.Citizen%20science%20was%20employed%20to%20document%20the%20impact%20of%20TNR.end%20of%20the%20study%20period>

Opponents of TNR will say that outdoor cats are harmful for other animals, such as birds, and they therefore feel feral cats should be euthanized to protect the bird populations. This type of thinking does align with the "choose civility" that our county proudly boasts. The challenge with that way of thinking is that euthanizing feral cats does not reduce the outdoor cat population, and therefore will not change the impact that outdoor cats have on birds. Rather, by implementing a TNR program, the number of outdoor cats will steadily decrease, and therefore the impact on birds will as well.

As a Howard County resident who believes feral cats deserve to be treated humanely and not euthanized, I strongly urge you to pass CB-13 2024 and establish a TNR program in Howard County.

Sincerely, Daniel Sharareh

From: [B.Nix](#)
To: [CouncilMail](#)
Subject: TNR Bill - please pass this important bill.
Date: Friday, March 29, 2024 9:42:57 AM

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

When I moved into my condo community in 2010, we saw many feral cats who appeared to be in rough shape from fighting. A few dedicated community members began to trap, neuter and return these cats and we soon realized we saw fewer signs (and sounds) of fighting AND other roaming cats. The community now has a stable contingent of TNR'd cats, many of whom have been adopted and converted to indoor cats. These cats are vetted and cared for and do not contribute to the kitten explosions every Spring.

As I understand it, all surrounding jurisdictions have passed TNR legislation. Stray and feral cats are here to stay, and their population will grow exponentially without TNR programs. We cannot continue to expend resources on trying to "kill" our way out of the feral cat quandary. Please - I urge you to vote to pass the TNR bill. Thank you.

Sincerely,
Debbie E. Nix
21044

From: Erin Saul <e2329@aol.com>
Sent: Friday, March 29, 2024 9:52 AM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: CB-13 2024

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear Howard County Council,

As a Maryland resident, animal lover, and animal advocate, I am writing to you in support of CB-13 2024: Trap-Neuter-Return Program Establishment. Trap-Neuter-Return, or TNR, is the humane way to care for the outdoor cat population while simultaneously reducing the number of outdoor cats in our communities.

As a volunteer at the Baltimore Animal Rescue and Care Shelter (BARCS) in Baltimore City, I have seen firsthand the positive impact of TNR. BARCS treats every cat as a respected creature, whether friendly or feral, and has multiple programs in place, including TNR, to ensure feral cats receive the same humane care as friendly cats. Running TNR clinics allows caretakers who feed community cats to get the cats vaccinated and spayed/neutered, providing a better quality of life for the cat while also ensuring the cat cannot reproduce. And BARCS is not the only shelter in Maryland who has seen the benefits of TNR. In fact, every other county in Central Maryland has TNR programs available to its residents aside from Howard County.

There is a great deal of research that exists which demonstrates the effectiveness of TNR. In 2018 the National Institute of Health published "A Case Study in Citizen Science: The Effectiveness of a Trap-Neuter-Return Program in a Chicago Neighborhood." Their research found an 82% reduction in population due to the impact of TNR. While this did take time, approximately 9 years, it demonstrates what we see here at BARCS and what so many other Maryland counties see all the time: TNR works.

This link will provide you with many other studies that demonstrate the effectiveness of TNR:

<https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fhumanepro.org%2Fpage%2Fcommunity-cats-scientific-studies-and-data%23%3A~%3Atext%3DTNR%2520Reduces%2525&data=05%7C02%7Cianderson%40howardcountymd.gov%7C46cd8307d4474ccc63c608dc4ff76b5e%7C0538130803664bb7a95b95304bd11a58%7C1%7C0%7C638473171296844375%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWlJoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzliLCJBTiI6Ikl1haWwiLCJXVCi6Mn0%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=dDkix3K5iNPAZ3JrhcBc1J0Gv35V5kYbRbncSXVZhk%3D&reserved=0%20Cat%20Numbers,-Targeted%20TNR%20resulted&text=in%20neighborhood%20study-,Citizen%20science%20was%20employed%20to%20document%20the%20impact%20of%20TNR,end%20of%20the%20study%20period>

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As someone who believes all animals deserve the chance to live and be treated humanely, I strongly urge you to pass CB-13 2024 and establish a TNR program in Howard County.

Sincerely,
Erin Saul

From: [Jason Arndt](#)
To: [CouncilMail](#)
Subject: Support CB-13 2024
Date: Friday, March 29, 2024 10:32:45 AM

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear Howard County Council,

As a Maryland resident, animal lover, and animal advocate, I am writing to you in support of CB-13 2024: Trap-Neuter-Return Program Establishment. Trap-Neuter-Return, or TNR, is the humane way to care for the outdoor cat population while simultaneously reducing the number of outdoor cats in our communities.

As a volunteer at the Baltimore Animal Rescue and Care Shelter (BARCS) in Baltimore City, I have seen firsthand the positive impact of TNR. BARCS treats every cat as a respected creature, whether friendly or feral, and has multiple programs in place, including TNR, to ensure feral cats receive the same humane care as friendly cats. Running TNR clinics allows caretakers who feed community cats to get the cats vaccinated and spayed/neutered, providing a better quality of life for the cat while also ensuring the cat cannot reproduce. And BARCS is not the only shelter in Maryland who has seen the benefits of TNR. In fact, every other county in Central Maryland has TNR programs available to its residents aside from Howard County.

There is a great deal of research that exists which demonstrates the effectiveness of TNR. In 2018 the National Institute of Health published "A Case Study in Citizen Science: The Effectiveness of a Trap-Neuter-Return Program in a Chicago Neighborhood." Their research found an 82% reduction in population due to the impact of TNR. While this did take time, approximately 9 years, it demonstrates what we see here at BARCS and what so many other Maryland counties see all the time: TNR works. This link will provide you with many other studies that demonstrate the effectiveness of TNR: <https://humanepro.org/page/community-cats-scientific-studies-and-data#:~:text=TNR%20Reduces%20Cat%20Numbers,-Targeted%20TNR%20resulted&text=in%20neighborhood%20study-.Citizen%20science%20was%20employed%20to%20document%20the%20impact%20of%20TNR,end%20of%20the%20study%20period>

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As someone who believes all animals deserve the chance to live and be treated humanely, I strongly urge you to pass CB-13 2024 and establish a TNR program in Howard County.

Jason A.

From: [Jennifer Kirschnick Duffy](#)
To: [CouncilMail](#)
Subject: SUPPORT CB-13 2024: Trap-Neuter-Return Program
Date: Friday, March 29, 2024 11:49:27 AM

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear Howard County Council,
As a Maryland resident and former Howard County resident, animal lover, and animal advocate, **I am writing to you in support of CB-13 2024: Trap-Neuter-Return Program Establishment.**

As you may be aware, Trap-Neuter-Return, or TNR, is the **humane way to care for the outdoor cat population** while simultaneously reducing the number of outdoor cats in our communities. As a volunteer at the Baltimore Animal Rescue and Care Shelter (BARCS) in Baltimore City, I have seen firsthand the positive impact of TNR. BARCS treats every cat as a respected creature, whether friendly or feral, and has multiple programs in place, including TNR, to ensure feral cats receive the same humane care as friendly cats. Running TNR clinics allows caretakers who feed community cats to get the cats vaccinated and spayed/neutered, providing a better quality of life for the cat while also ensuring the cat cannot reproduce. And BARCS is not the only shelter in Maryland who has seen the benefits of TNR. In fact, **every other county in Central Maryland has TNR programs available to its residents aside from Howard County.** There is a great deal of research that exists which demonstrates the effectiveness of TNR. In 2018 the National Institute of Health published "A Case Study in Citizen Science."

As someone who believes all animals deserve the chance to live and be treated humanely, **I strongly urge you to pass CB-13 2024 and establish a TNR program in Howard County.** Your kids and grandkids who love animals will thank you!

Jennifer Duffy
Catonsville, MD

From: [Jessica Sharareh](#)
To: [CouncilMail](#)
Subject: [Possible Scam Fraud]Support CB-13 2024: Trap-Neuter-Return Program Establishment
Date: Friday, March 29, 2024 10:25:15 AM

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

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Dear Howard County Council,

I write this letter to you as a Howard County resident in strong support of CB-13 2024: Trap-Neuter-Return Program Establishment. Prior to moving to Howard County in 2022, I was a Baltimore City resident for over a decade. In that time, I had the honor of volunteering with the Baltimore Animal Rescue and Care Shelter (BARCS) and supporting their Trap-Neuter-Return, or TNR, program. TNR, is the humane way to care for the outdoor cat population while simultaneously reducing the number of outdoor cats in our communities. During TNR, a cat is humanely trapped, brought into the shelter, vaccinated, spayed/neutered, and returned to their outdoor colony.

In my time volunteering with Baltimore's TNR program, I was able to witness first-hand the positive impact of TNR on both cats and humans in the community. In one example, I spent about a year supporting a colony caretaker with TNR in her back alley. Over the years, the amount of cats in her alley grew from 2-3 to over 20. She reached out to BARCS for help, and I was the volunteer assigned to support her. During that year, I went out every few weeks to trap the cats in the alley, bring them to the shelter for vaccines and spay/neuter, then bring them back to that alley. Many residents in the neighborhood inquired about what we were doing, and educating them about TNR changed many attitudes about the cats living there. Some residents resented the cats and didn't want them around, but when they understood the goals of TNR and how over time, the population would decrease, they supported our efforts. Now, instead of multiple litters of kittens being born in that alley each year, many of which sadly would not survive (which upset residents to see), the population is managed and new kittens are not showing up every spring and summer.

I also had the experience of outdoor feral cats showing up near my own home. Knowing that I could reach out to BARCS, rent a trap, and schedule a TNR appointment meant I knew I could help these cats, and I utilized their TNR program on multiple occasions. Every resident wants to feel like they can do good, and that their government provides programs that allow them to do so. Living in Baltimore City and utilizing the TNR program empowered me to do good in my community, while also connecting me with neighbors, therefore building stronger bonds and a deeper sense of community.

Moving to Howard County, I was shocked by the stark differences. I was excited to move to a place that branded itself with slogans like, "Choose Civility". But not long after moving here, I learned that the Howard County shelter euthanizes almost every feral cat that comes to their shelter. What is civil about euthanizing cats simply because they are not socialized to humans? That is the opposite of civil, and I find it deeply disheartening. To be honest, it has made me question whether I made the right choice to move here. Over my time living in Howard County, there have been a few outdoor cats in my neighborhood. None of them are socialized to humans, and therefore will not let me get close to them. These feral cats are the perfect candidates for TNR. But Howard County does not have TNR. So then I am left with two options. Do I trap the cats and bring them to the shelter, knowing it is a death sentence? Or do I watch them live outside knowing they are unvaccinated and therefore unprotected from illness, and that they could easily reproduce and add more outdoor cats to the neighborhood? Neither are good options. I have chosen not to bring them to the shelter, because I believe every animal has the right to live. But I desperately wish the county had TNR services so that I could do right by these cats.

This is why I urge you to pass CB-13. Howard County says they choose civility, so this is the chance to act on that. Animals deserve civility just like humans do, and feral cats are no different. If you want more information about the data that shows the effectiveness of TNR, please follow this link: <https://humanepro.org/page/community-cats-scientific-studies-and-data#:~:text=TNR%20Reduces%20Cat%20Numbers,-Targeted%20TNR%20resulted&text=in%20neighborhood%20study-.Citizen%20science%20was%20employed%20to%20document%20the%20impact%20of%20TNR,end%20of%20the%20study%20period>

Sincerely,
Jessica Sharareh
Howard County Resident
BARCS volunteer and foster

From: [Karen "Kitty" Irene Tolson Carroll](#)
To: [CouncilMail](#)
Cc: [Karen Carroll](#)
Subject: Feral Cat Colonies.
Date: Friday, March 29, 2024 6:39:10 PM
Attachments: [SavNotoFeralCatColonies.pages.pdf](#)

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Karen 'Kitty' Irene Tolson Carroll
hawkmom74@gmail.com

<https://www.instagram.com/falconerkitty/>

www.birdsofprey.net

www.birdstrikeforce.com

Say NO!!! to Feral Cat Colonies:

I am responding to the proposal of feral cat colonies as a way to manage the excess populations of stray cats. As a licensed wildlife educator I always mention how the average housecat living free-range as a pet or as an un-owned feral is a really bad idea. Cats are an introduced species in this continent. They are lovely animals, but need to not be allowed to roam free. Studies have shown that outside cats and especially feral cats are highly destructive to our native wildlife. Cats kill over four BILLION birds a year in the United States alone. Our bird populations are down by 40 % in the past decade. Outside cats around human habitation and un-owned ferals are a major factor in this decline. Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission supports the 'Cats Indoors' grass roots program started by the American Bird Conservancy (www.abcbirds.org/cats). Several threatened and endangered species are adversely affected by outside free-ranging cats or feral cat colonies. The cute and charming burrowing owl is one of several species that outside cats are a major factor in their decline. Does your community really want a bunch of stray cats running around? Would YOU as a business owner want cats hanging around your door, begging for food from outside dining patrons? Hilton Head is dealing with a lawsuit due to feral cats attacking visitors: https://www.islandpacket.com/news/business/article229716834.html?fbclid=IwAR0Cv2SD9iDVjJa9lq_iCjBaEt2J2qj0qcMcrpVs1wiE_MF1vrV8HkAVFhU Do you want cats raiding your dumpsters and trashcans? Defecating, leaving feces around your business, fighting, spraying and stinking up the area? Toxoplasmosis that which is carried by cat feces is a major health threat. Any sandbox, mulched landscaping or sandy area becomes a litter box. **The food left out for the stray and feral cats also attracts other unwanted vermin: pigeons, gulls, crows, rats, rodents, raccoons, skunks, opossums, stray dogs, coyotes, and creates nuisance bears. The cat feeders enable a huge disruptive factor. For the feeding unintentionally escalates AND supports higher populations of raccoons, opossums, rats, etc.. This makes the populations MUCH higher than the carrying capacity of the environment. A factor often overlooked. And is a disaster for other wildlife. The feeding stations become infection epicenters where the other wildlife feeds. Thus, spreading diseases to other wildlife, and consequently humans in the community.** https://www.fredericknews.com/news/cat-astrophe-west-virginia-city-faces-feline-flood/article_8cb5d605-1b42-5daf-b04b-d3e5cb7e6b66.html?fbclid=IwAR3EXoUU85Bm8yuv-EKJdzWZsjlrqslRMu1AE7eRIP1xnpkHwh2NPhVvDLg

Note: Example of the mentality of cat feeders: "Got mice, get more by leaving cat food out for your new cats". My neighbor "We have rats because we left cat food out so get more cats so more cat food so more rats so get more cats so more cat food so more rats so get even more cats so more cat food so more rats so get more cats so more cat food so more rats so get more cats so more cat food so more rats so get more cats..." DUH! isn't one definition of insanity is doing the same thing but expecting a different result? DUH!-----This is what can happen if cat leash laws are not enacted and enforced: https://www.clickorlando.com/news/brevard-county-deputy-wounded-in-shooting?fbclid=IwAR0AdbvMIIRKgr784UuOiUco9IiEUdlwR6t7Mb_zWHhQR2gjBkKyyJvhRw4 Basically, TNR degrades community esthetics and standards. And is a HUGE imposition on public safety and health. And the poor police are caught in the middle: <http://www.brevardsheriff.com/home/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/Trap-Neuter-Return.pdf?fbclid=IwAR1ebLCjRWkAz3Lcx1U3ndq7MWMn-HwNhp1t2fWd0FziBZKgycoK73wqpc>

I think not. *It is a poor image for the community, reduces property values* for homeowners and a bad plan. Also, even well - fed cats **still hunt**. This is a fact of nature. The feeding will not stop the hunting and killing of our native songbirds and wildlife by the feral cat(s). *And feeding makes female cats more 'fertile' with larger and more frequent litters of more unwanted kittens.* Also, research has shown that feral colonies have the trend to become a dumping ground for un-wanted cats. Cat scratch fever is a real condition. Cat bites and scratches are highly septic. Even a minor injury to you can become a serious infection. <https://newsnetwork.mayoclinic.org/discussion/when-cats-bite-1-in-3-patients-bitten-in-hand-hospitalized-infections-common>. Even the smallest bite or scratch injuries to a wild bird by a cat will result in the death from infection of the bird within a day or two. These same well-fed cats climb trees, raid bird nests and decimate cottontail rabbit and quail populations. Not to mention that cats are a 4:1 ratio in the spread of rabies compared to dogs. And **cats** are now **the number one rabies vector** to humans per the CDC. In some states, such as Florida's mild winters where there is no winter die-off, the smell, odors, fighting, feces, spraying from TNR colonies have started to adversely affect property values. TNR colonies are now considered 'nuisances' and **real estate property values fall due to the presence of a stray/feral/TNR colony**. In several areas in Florida; there are new reports of feral cat colonies becoming such a problem that residents are moving away. One example is the Lee County (Ft. Myers) area. Residents are moving out of neighborhoods due to the presence of cat colonies and the resulting problems they cause. Link: <http://www.nbc-2.com/story/26804217/lee-county-program-inadvertently-floods-stella-street-neighborhood-with-cats#.V3caVJMrKRt>.....Here is another example: <https://keprtv.com/news/local/cat->

[colony-a-nuisance-richland-parks-businesses-consider-relocating-feral-felines?
fbclid=IwAR2YbxA4bWfSSgGds9x8xEsDLtfjDdaaoVO5TyEHFa8PmO78Y-GUorRJsho](https://www.kens5.com/article/life/animals/a-chaotic-situation-in-del-rio-ends-in-tragedy-after-black-bears-seen-roaming-neighborhood/273-de259594-3a67-4577-b895-0e031cd5ae48?fbclid=IwAR2YbxA4bWfSSgGds9x8xEsDLtfjDdaaoVO5TyEHFa8PmO78Y-GUorRJsho)

Feral and stray cat feeders were the underlying cause that eventually caused the death of a mother bear: [https://
www.kens5.com/article/life/animals/a-chaotic-situation-in-del-rio-ends-in-tragedy-after-black-bears-
seen-roaming-neighborhood/273-de259594-3a67-4577-b895-0e031cd5ae48?
fbclid=IwAR1K2KCOfmUcGc4_vZXh6XumSVnhIMwFYXhalc4xcgEXKxxAYJNVmmU3ExM](https://www.kens5.com/article/life/animals/a-chaotic-situation-in-del-rio-ends-in-tragedy-after-black-bears-seen-roaming-neighborhood/273-de259594-3a67-4577-b895-0e031cd5ae48?fbclid=IwAR1K2KCOfmUcGc4_vZXh6XumSVnhIMwFYXhalc4xcgEXKxxAYJNVmmU3ExM)

[https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/publication/uw468?
fbclid=IwAR19shocleui2Z_rlyO3o3R5wK6qzCmjFZRVvWBTs2h0k4WteJh9ILNutNI](https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/publication/uw468?fbclid=IwAR19shocleui2Z_rlyO3o3R5wK6qzCmjFZRVvWBTs2h0k4WteJh9ILNutNI)

Here is an estimate of the costs of TNR to communities: This is a rough estimate based on census data and without looking at populations or other demographics and not taking too much of my time. There are approximately 19,500 incorporated towns/cities in the U.S. If each town/city were to TNR 1000 cats in one year, that would amount to 19,500,000 cats total. At an average cost of \$50 per cat (just neuter and RV) this would amount to \$50,000 for the year per town or \$950 million nationwide. This would be easy for the few largest cities in the country but almost or completely impossible for smaller towns. There is not enough money or grant funding to accomplish this. And 19.5 million cats is still a long way from the estimated 90 million free-roaming. If somebody wants to crunch more numbers for a more accurate estimate and look at populations and area of towns, then estimate the numbers of cats in each town (90 million cats over 3.8 million square miles is 23 cats per sq mile - not evenly distributed of course - more in urban than wilderness areas or 1/4 free-roaming cat per person) perhaps we could have some theoretical data to present.

I am calling out to community leaders and commissioners: You are failing your community and residents. Trap-neuter-release (**really Trap Neuter Re-Abandon**) is a failure everywhere it has been implemented. Usually started by an over-emotional, highly vocal, zealous, and strident minority of people that pressures a community to adopt TNR. Shelters are under great pressure to reduce the euthanasia rate and TNR is a poor way to deal with it. It is unusual for a city to call for volunteers to deal with this issue. If large, corporate pet store chains are funding TNR, they need to be told to get lost.

Explosions of feral cat populations follow them everywhere they go. In addition explosions of pest wildlife that feed at the feeding stations as well. Rats, raccoons, opossums, skunks all eat at feeding stations. In two years that's what will happen in your town, and there will be calls to "adopt" un-adoptable cats. These super-sized corporate run pet stores, are determined to fill our nation with dumped, abandoned cats in order to fatten their bottom line, it is a HUGE money train for them to supply cat supplies, vet care and food. There are certain reasonable speculations and studies about the effects of toxoplasmosis on the human brain that add an extremely disturbing element to the nature of their actions. FYI: Toxoplasmosis is in the syphilis family of diseases and follows the same morphology, and is explained here: [https://www.adn.com/opinions/2017/06/21/
do-feral-cats-have-special-needs-or-is-their-plight-all-in-our-heads/](https://www.adn.com/opinions/2017/06/21/do-feral-cats-have-special-needs-or-is-their-plight-all-in-our-heads/) TNR advocates are acting like Big Tobacco of the 60's and 70's. TNR advocates ignore the science of the damage that TNR cat colonies do to wildlife, humans, neighborhood esthetics, quality of life, property values, and even the quality of life of the cats themselves. TNR needs to STOP before it is too late for our communities and wildlife.

Example: ONE cat destroyed an entire colony of Terns..... <https://www.mdpi.com/2076-2615/9/7/445>

Rabies: [https://www.jdnews.com/news/20190813/update-father-says-son-has-begun-treatment-cautions-against-
feeding-feral-cats?fbclid=IwAR1w80WJfzNinCCIO4cJ9hIhD08Nj0f0gwyPywVEp99zUVWa4tVmNpO3SgPA](https://www.jdnews.com/news/20190813/update-father-says-son-has-begun-treatment-cautions-against-feeding-feral-cats?fbclid=IwAR1w80WJfzNinCCIO4cJ9hIhD08Nj0f0gwyPywVEp99zUVWa4tVmNpO3SgPA)

Just do some research and see how bad an idea that feral cat colonies really are. The American Bird Conservancy, (abcbirds.org) National Wildlife Federation, National Audubon Society, National Geographic Society, Smithsonian, Florida Fish & Wildlife Commission, Florida Wildlife Federation, Florida Audubon, Florida Wildlife Rehabilitators, and many other well-respected wildlife groups are against feral cat colonies. There are also laws being enacted across the US to stop the spread of this ill-conceived idea. The idea of having feral cat colonies just 'kicks the can down the road', delaying the real core problem: Too many cats and not enough homes or resources to keep them out of the ecosystem. **Cat colonies 'community cats' and their feeders (who's food dumping practices at colonies also end up feeding nuisance wildlife) are basically "hoarders without borders". Not wanting or to deal with or ignoring the unintended (yet known) consequences to their community and others of their ill-conceived, yet well meaning position. All at the expense of our native wildlife populations, public health, community esthetics and property values.**

Unfortunately, the sad, difficult decision to euthanize has to be done. And feral cats become vectors to several diseases: Rabies, distemper, Typhus: <https://www.nbclosangeles.com/news/local/Public-Health-Reports-Several-Cases-of-Typhus-495197621.html>

Do some research, then I think you will also say NO to Feral Cat Colonies.

Instead, encourage and pass leash laws (and enforce) with stiff fines and mandatory micro-chipping, cat owners to keep cats indoors, leashed when outside or in a 'catio'; an enclosed outside area to allow cats to be outside without entering the ecosystem.

Sincerely,

Kitty Tolson Carroll

Live Oak, Florida

Links: www.abcbirds.org cats indoors <http://www.tnrfactcheck.org> www.birdsofprey.net links page

Nature Magazine: [https://www.nature.com/articles/ncomms2380?](https://www.nature.com/articles/ncomms2380?fbclid=IwAR2a5nT5F9i4EOp2D444z3fHvU6luIHwXZ1sR2-1Fai_bpVgxeHPogpz0No)

<http://www.merrietherald.com/feral-cat-program-nixed/>

<http://wildlife.org/jwm-study-domestic-cat-attacks-cause-variety-of-wildlife-deaths/>

Video of feral cat eating baby birds: https://www.facebook.com/bpctnz/?hc_ref=NEWSFEED&fref=nf

https://www.facebook.com/bpctnz/?hc_ref=NEWSFEED&fref=nf

Video of CDC recommendations rabies vaccinations.

<https://www.adn.com/opinions/2017/06/21/do-feral-cats-have-special-needs-or-is-their-plight-all-in-our-heads/>

<https://www.nbclosangeles.com/news/local/Public-Health-Reports-Several-Cases-of-Typhus-495197621.html>

www.stoptoxoplasmosis.com

[https://www.abqjournal.com/1261521/uptown-residents-sue-city-over-cat-program.html?](https://www.abqjournal.com/1261521/uptown-residents-sue-city-over-cat-program.html?fbclid=IwAR1Eu6vTruiqrXXedXJEKJ6NCrAAOW5DoNqxcHy1pW4J41gz6ZdoMrK5TNc)

[fbclid=IwAR1Eu6vTruiqrXXedXJEKJ6NCrAAOW5DoNqxcHy1pW4J41gz6ZdoMrK5TNc](https://www.abqjournal.com/1261521/uptown-residents-sue-city-over-cat-program.html?fbclid=IwAR1Eu6vTruiqrXXedXJEKJ6NCrAAOW5DoNqxcHy1pW4J41gz6ZdoMrK5TNc)

<https://newsnetwork.mayoclinic.org/discussion/when-cats-bite-1-in-3-patients-bitten-in-hand-hospitalized-infections-common>.

: <http://www.nbc-2.com/story/26804217/lee-county-program-inadvertently-floods-stella-street-neighborhood-with-cats#.V3caVJMrKRt.....>

Here is another example: [https://keprtv.com/news/local/cat-colony-a-nuisance-richland-parks-businesses-consider-relocating-feral-felines?](https://keprtv.com/news/local/cat-colony-a-nuisance-richland-parks-businesses-consider-relocating-feral-felines?fbclid=IwAR2YbxA4bWfSSgGds9x8xEsDLtfjDdaaoVO5TyEHFa8PmO78Y-GUorRJsho)

[fbclid=IwAR2YbxA4bWfSSgGds9x8xEsDLtfjDdaaoVO5TyEHFa8PmO78Y-GUorRJsho](https://keprtv.com/news/local/cat-colony-a-nuisance-richland-parks-businesses-consider-relocating-feral-felines?fbclid=IwAR2YbxA4bWfSSgGds9x8xEsDLtfjDdaaoVO5TyEHFa8PmO78Y-GUorRJsho)

<https://www.nbclosangeles.com/news/local/Public-Health-Reports-Several-Cases-of-Typhus-495197621.html>

[https://www.islandpacket.com/news/business/article229716834.html?](https://www.islandpacket.com/news/business/article229716834.html?fbclid=IwAR0Cv2SD9iDVjla9lq_iCjBaEt2J2qj0qcMcrpVs1wiE_MF1vrV8HkAVFhU)

[fbclid=IwAR0Cv2SD9iDVjla9lq_iCjBaEt2J2qj0qcMcrpVs1wiE_MF1vrV8HkAVFhU](https://www.islandpacket.com/news/business/article229716834.html?fbclid=IwAR0Cv2SD9iDVjla9lq_iCjBaEt2J2qj0qcMcrpVs1wiE_MF1vrV8HkAVFhU)

<https://www.foxnews.com/us/philadelphias-stray-cat-population>

[http://extensionpubs.unl.edu/publication/9000016367320/feral-cats-and-their-management/?](http://extensionpubs.unl.edu/publication/9000016367320/feral-cats-and-their-management/?fbclid=IwAR0ljRuAkHozQgpmeoDgDJRCHrpZ2wmAU8frj0ZLuGJ-Wnoo33sP2NaSmlg)

[fbclid=IwAR0ljRuAkHozQgpmeoDgDJRCHrpZ2wmAU8frj0ZLuGJ-Wnoo33sP2NaSmlg](http://extensionpubs.unl.edu/publication/9000016367320/feral-cats-and-their-management/?fbclid=IwAR0ljRuAkHozQgpmeoDgDJRCHrpZ2wmAU8frj0ZLuGJ-Wnoo33sP2NaSmlg)

[Sea Otters dying from toxoplasmosis from cat feces: https://www.nytimes.com/2019/08/28/science/california-sea-otters-cats.html?fallback=0&recId=1Q3PsaA7VMlzAl2siERhvrGHSdf&locked=0&geoContinent=NA&geoRegion=NY&recAlloc=control&geoCountry=US&blockId=home-discovery-vi-prg&imp_id=945680853&action=click&module=Discovery&pgtype=Homepage&fbclid=IwAR1BZ4XFVSppic9xB2-zBoin3UXsLFaccz48tbjJkMa00anHxrEu4sg5YVg](http://extensionpubs.unl.edu/publication/9000016367320/feral-cats-and-their-management/?fbclid=IwAR0ljRuAkHozQgpmeoDgDJRCHrpZ2wmAU8frj0ZLuGJ-Wnoo33sP2NaSmlg)

[https://www.nytimes.com/2019/08/28/science/california-sea-otters-cats.html?](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/08/28/science/california-sea-otters-cats.html?fallback=0&recId=1Q3PsaA7VMlzAl2siERhvrGHSdf&locked=0&geoContinent=NA&geoRegion=NY&recAlloc=control&geoCountry=US&blockId=home-discovery-vi-prg&imp_id=945680853&action=click&module=Discovery&pgtype=Homepage&fbclid=IwAR1BZ4XFVSppic9xB2-zBoin3UXsLFaccz48tbjJkMa00anHxrEu4sg5YVg)

[fallback=0&recId=1Q3PsaA7VMlzAl2siERhvrGHSdf&locked=0&geoContinent=NA&geoRegion=NY&recAlloc=control&geoCountry=US&blockId=home-discovery-vi-prg&imp_id=945680853&action=click&module=Discovery&pgtype=Homepage&fbclid=IwAR1BZ4XFVSppic9xB2-zBoin3UXsLFaccz48tbjJkMa00anHxrEu4sg5YVg](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/08/28/science/california-sea-otters-cats.html?fallback=0&recId=1Q3PsaA7VMlzAl2siERhvrGHSdf&locked=0&geoContinent=NA&geoRegion=NY&recAlloc=control&geoCountry=US&blockId=home-discovery-vi-prg&imp_id=945680853&action=click&module=Discovery&pgtype=Homepage&fbclid=IwAR1BZ4XFVSppic9xB2-zBoin3UXsLFaccz48tbjJkMa00anHxrEu4sg5YVg)

[lloc=control&geoCountry=US&blockId=home-discovery-vi-prg&imp_id=945680853&action=click&module=Discovery&pgtype=Homepage&fbclid=IwAR1BZ4XFVSppic9xB2-zBoin3UXsLFaccz48tbjJkMa00anHxrEu4sg5YVg](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/08/28/science/california-sea-otters-cats.html?fallback=0&recId=1Q3PsaA7VMlzAl2siERhvrGHSdf&locked=0&geoContinent=NA&geoRegion=NY&recAlloc=control&geoCountry=US&blockId=home-discovery-vi-prg&imp_id=945680853&action=click&module=Discovery&pgtype=Homepage&fbclid=IwAR1BZ4XFVSppic9xB2-zBoin3UXsLFaccz48tbjJkMa00anHxrEu4sg5YVg)

[prg&imp_id=945680853&action=click&module=Discovery&pgtype=Homepage&fbclid=IwAR1BZ4XFVSppic9xB2-zBoin3UXsLFaccz48tbjJkMa00anHxrEu4sg5YVg](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/08/28/science/california-sea-otters-cats.html?fallback=0&recId=1Q3PsaA7VMlzAl2siERhvrGHSdf&locked=0&geoContinent=NA&geoRegion=NY&recAlloc=control&geoCountry=US&blockId=home-discovery-vi-prg&imp_id=945680853&action=click&module=Discovery&pgtype=Homepage&fbclid=IwAR1BZ4XFVSppic9xB2-zBoin3UXsLFaccz48tbjJkMa00anHxrEu4sg5YVg)

[ppic9xB2-zBoin3UXsLFaccz48tbjJkMa00anHxrEu4sg5YVg](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/08/28/science/california-sea-otters-cats.html?fallback=0&recId=1Q3PsaA7VMlzAl2siERhvrGHSdf&locked=0&geoContinent=NA&geoRegion=NY&recAlloc=control&geoCountry=US&blockId=home-discovery-vi-prg&imp_id=945680853&action=click&module=Discovery&pgtype=Homepage&fbclid=IwAR1BZ4XFVSppic9xB2-zBoin3UXsLFaccz48tbjJkMa00anHxrEu4sg5YVg)

[https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/02/03/breaking-news/sick-monk-seal-picked-up-from-ko-olina-diagnosed-with-infection-spread-by-cats/?fbclid=IwAR0mnBHeLdeBDN1QiaMOKzCmWXlz_gGbKxB3BeVWtdEL_N2jWNLC1qjUQWM](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/08/28/science/california-sea-otters-cats.html?fallback=0&recId=1Q3PsaA7VMlzAl2siERhvrGHSdf&locked=0&geoContinent=NA&geoRegion=NY&recAlloc=control&geoCountry=US&blockId=home-discovery-vi-prg&imp_id=945680853&action=click&module=Discovery&pgtype=Homepage&fbclid=IwAR1BZ4XFVSppic9xB2-zBoin3UXsLFaccz48tbjJkMa00anHxrEu4sg5YVg)

[https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/02/03/breaking-news/sick-monk-seal-picked-up-from-ko-olina-diagnosed-with-infection-spread-by-cats/?](https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/02/03/breaking-news/sick-monk-seal-picked-up-from-ko-olina-diagnosed-with-infection-spread-by-cats/?fbclid=IwAR0mnBHeLdeBDN1QiaMOKzCmWXlz_gGbKxB3BeVWtdEL_N2jWNLC1qjUQWM)

[fbclid=IwAR0mnBHeLdeBDN1QiaMOKzCmWXlz_gGbKxB3BeVWtdEL_N2jWNLC1qjUQWM](https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/02/03/breaking-news/sick-monk-seal-picked-up-from-ko-olina-diagnosed-with-infection-spread-by-cats/?fbclid=IwAR0mnBHeLdeBDN1QiaMOKzCmWXlz_gGbKxB3BeVWtdEL_N2jWNLC1qjUQWM)

[https://www.fbherald.com/news/not-all-approve-of-tnr-program/article_592ec51d-16dd-5c74-b65a-ff3f1377ec29.html?fbclid=IwAR2EDGpeDG0UkP1s0lGLI_czShr5YDmbH3R0kG_dnBQzUww66PpPhI-JSVQ](https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/02/03/breaking-news/sick-monk-seal-picked-up-from-ko-olina-diagnosed-with-infection-spread-by-cats/?fbclid=IwAR0mnBHeLdeBDN1QiaMOKzCmWXlz_gGbKxB3BeVWtdEL_N2jWNLC1qjUQWM)

[https://www.fbherald.com/news/not-all-approve-of-tnr-program/article_592ec51d-16dd-5c74-b65a-ff3f1377ec29.html?fbclid=IwAR2EDGpeDG0UkP1s0lGLI_czShr5YDmbH3R0kG_dnBQzUww66PpPhI-](https://www.fbherald.com/news/not-all-approve-of-tnr-program/article_592ec51d-16dd-5c74-b65a-ff3f1377ec29.html?fbclid=IwAR2EDGpeDG0UkP1s0lGLI_czShr5YDmbH3R0kG_dnBQzUww66PpPhI-JSVQ)

[JSVQ](https://www.fbherald.com/news/not-all-approve-of-tnr-program/article_592ec51d-16dd-5c74-b65a-ff3f1377ec29.html?fbclid=IwAR2EDGpeDG0UkP1s0lGLI_czShr5YDmbH3R0kG_dnBQzUww66PpPhI-JSVQ)

[JSVQ](https://www.fbherald.com/news/not-all-approve-of-tnr-program/article_592ec51d-16dd-5c74-b65a-ff3f1377ec29.html?fbclid=IwAR2EDGpeDG0UkP1s0lGLI_czShr5YDmbH3R0kG_dnBQzUww66PpPhI-JSVQ)

Toxoplasmosis linked to risky behavior and alcohol addiction:

[https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/28946032?](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/28946032?fbclid=IwAR1B3aM40vPkuIg94TymhALmclnP8K6b9tDuucbC8YCaHyXncjreBsLKGBC)

[fbclid=IwAR1B3aM40vPkuIg94TymhALmclnP8K6b9tDuucbC8YCaHyXncjreBsLKGBC](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/28946032?fbclid=IwAR1B3aM40vPkuIg94TymhALmclnP8K6b9tDuucbC8YCaHyXncjreBsLKGBC)

<https://www.midwayusa.com/product/953365521/ci-copper-22-ammunition-22-long-rifle-21-grain-copper-hollow-point-lead-free>

To: Editor, Kingston Daily Freeman

From: Annie Mardiney

April 26, 2017

Dear Editor:

The Town of Ulster Board is considering a cat control ordinance. I have urged them to vote "yes". Cats should be legally treated the same as dogs: be up to date on vaccinations, never allowed to roam free outside, be licensed, and owners held legally and financially accountable for any property damage they cause. Feeding "cat communities" should be illegal, and backed by a hefty fine.

I am baffled why the Town of Ulster Board, prior to this hearing, in a private conversation, agreed to allow the UC-SPCA to go ahead and trap, neuter and release feral cats, AND pay them \$40/cat. The UC-SPCA plans to keep friendly cats for adoption (good) and return the feral cats where they were found (wrong on SO many levels!). From the Freeman's own report: "We've already tried this two or three times in this neighborhood and had it fail," Supervisor James Quigley said." And yet, here we go again! Even PETA confirms that TNR does not work in the long term, does not protect wildlife and dooms unowned cats to the cruelest, and shortest, existence.

Just in the past 10 days, I took in the following cat-injured wildlife: 2 nestling mourning doves (one died, one had to be euthanized), a crow (maimed so bad it had to be euthanized), a baby rabbit (died after 3 days of treatment), a woodpecker (still alive and slowly recovering, which is simply a miracle given the very deep gash in his neck). The phone calls from people who allow their cats outside are flooding in now. When your cat brings in one baby rabbit or bird after another, but you refuse to keep the cat inside, why are you calling me? So you feel you did the "right thing?" Seriously?!

Cat owners: keep your cats inside, on leash, or purchase a "catio" which will allow your cat to be safe outside without hurting wildlife. Look on-line, there are many affordable catios. Perhaps the SPCA could help with funding by giving \$40, or more, to cat owners who agree to do the right thing and keep their cats under control and safe.

Town of Ulster residents, I urge you to write to Supervisor Quigley immediately, and ask that the Board vote YES to their proposed cat control ordinance.

Annie Mardiney

NOTE TO THE EDITOR: PLEASE DO NOT PUBLISH MY CONTACT INFO.

P.O. Box 65, Rosendale, NY 12472

amardiney@gmail.com

845-943-8098

<https://www.facebook.com/sal.grey.9/videos/o.36144203115/1825947610993242/?type=2&theater>



Take Action: Florida's Native Birds and Wildlife Need Your Voice

Urge members of the Florida House Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee to vote NO on SB 1320.

SECURE3.CONVIO.NET

I'm sending the following letter to our local paper re a proposal to make people who capture and vet feral/outside cats to register with the Town first. For what it's worth. Long, I know.

December 22nd, 2016

Dear New Patlz Times Editor:

I just read your latest edition, which included a rather slanted article about a cat rescuer registry proposal, recently presented to the Town and Village Boards of New Paltz. I am against any proposed laws that support TNR programs, the care of feral cat communities, or that require professionals who capture/rescue outside cats to register with area governments.

How about some couple completely different cat proposals? Pet cats should be licensed and vaccinated. Pet cats should be required to have an ID chip in their body, just like responsible dog owners do with their dogs, so that lost pet cats can be quickly re-connected to their owners. TNR programs do not work, and should not be publicly funded. Feral cats should be humanely caught. Those that might make good pets should be put up for adoption. Those that are too sick or feral, should be humanely euthanized. Plain and simple, pet cats should be monitored and controlled just like dogs.

I think it is important, especially when writing about lightning-rod subjects such as outdoor cats, to look at facts. Cats are not a native species. They are not part of a healthy, native environment. They are an extremely destructive invasive species. TNR programs do not stop cats from killing. Feeding feral cats does not stop them from killing. 5.4 million cats are hit by cars each year in the U.S., according to the National Traffic Safety Administration. Picture a pile of dead kittens. Feel sick? I do. If you let your cats wander, you are contributing to that pile.

The leading cause of death in cats is Feline Leukemia, which is picked up outside from cats getting scratched or bitten by infected strays.

America's estimated 150 million outdoor cats kill up to 3.7 billion wild birds per year, according to a 2015 report from the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service and the Smithsonian's Migratory Bird Center. A University of Nebraska study from 2010 states that cats have been responsible for the extinction of 33 wild bird species worldwide.

In a "kitty cam" study by the University of Georgia and National Geographic Society, tiny video cameras were attached to people who owned pet cats but let them roam outside. The footage revealed 44 % of their pets were cutthroats, averaging one kill every 17 hours. They only brought 23% of their kills back home.

In 2015, NY Governor Cuomo vetoed legislation that would have used public funds to support statewide TNR programs. The governor called the proposed bill "problematic" for many reasons, including evidence that shows TNR does not reduce feral cat populations and that feral cats have a major negative impact on wildlife, "including threatened and endangered species, habitats, and food sources for native predators."

Based on all this evidence, the logical and humane conclusion is that cats should NEVER be allowed outside, for their own safety (from vehicles, coyotes, fishers, dogs, toxoplasmosis, ticks, lice, mites, untreated wounds, rabies, etc.) and for the protection of native wildlife.

Little by little, many towns and states (Delaware) now have laws against letting cats run loose. Eliminating feral cat populations is extremely important, as is keeping pet cats inside. It's the safest and kindest position to take if you are a cat owner, for the sake of the cat and of wildlife.

Annie Mardiney

PO Box 65

Rosendale, NY 12472

cell: 845 943 8098 (please do not publish)

NYS DEC Wildlife Rehabilitation Permit #1043

NYS Permit to Possess (wild bird for education purposes) #755

USFWS Migratory Bird Rehabilitation Permit #MR191121-0

USFWS Permit to Possess (wild birds for education purposes) #MB 18982-8

I have been volunteer wildlife rehabilitator and wild bird educator for over ten years

WARNING: This is a long post. [Gail](#), this is the letter I just sent Mr. Quigley.

Dear Mr. James Quigley,

As per our conversation yesterday, I have included some information with sources below that may assist you with the feral cat issue you are experiencing in Ulster County. Aside from the known negative effects feral and outdoor cats have on wildlife, which we discussed, there are significant human health concerns and property rights considerations that must be taken into account when developing strategies to mitigate damages caused by feral and outdoor cats.

Ultimately, the only way to immediately and permanently remove the multiple threats feral and outdoor cats pose to wildlife, the physical environment, property, and people is to physically remove the cats. This removal can take place in three different ways, involving first the capture of these cats, and then the adoption of friendly cats, containment in fenced sanctuaries of social or truly feral animals, and/or euthanasia of unadoptable cats.

It's important to recognize that the main argument against trapping and removing cats is not really a cat issue. It's part of the broader No-Kill, anti-euthanasia movement, and we see the same mentality among those who advocate for other feral domesticated animals, especially horses out west. Unfortunately this is not a subject which has middle ground for No-Kill advocates, and makes removal of unwanted cats especially difficult as local shelters are under constant pressure to become No-Kill, to the detriment of the communities they serve. No-Kill shelters by default can no longer be open

admission shelters as cages fill up quickly and remain full until contained animals are adopted out, and thus people attempting to trap and remove problem animals on their property are either forced to take matters into their own hands, or the animals are taken by the shelter and either put back onto the landowner's property via a Trap-Neuter-Return (hereafter TNR) program, or taken to a feral cat colony that is often run by volunteers on property that is not their own (colonies are often located on commercial property and sometimes exist without the knowledge of the business owner). I do not know what the eventual goals are of the Kingston SPCA. I have been out of touch with the policies of this shelter for a while. However, the vast majority of SPCAs across the country openly support TNR and are moving towards No-Kill. The law governing Animal Control in Ulster County (Chapter 75) looks like it needs to be updated to give Animal Control the legal authority to remove cats. Currently, Chapter 75 only discusses cats during rabies requirements, which unfortunately do not currently apply to feral and unowned cats in New York State law. In fact, state law specifically excludes property owners from ownership of feral animals and thus rabies vaccine requirements (Title 4, Article 21: https://www.health.ny.gov/.../com.../zoonoses/rabies/title_4.htm). Inevitably, Animal Control will be the service responsible for managing stray cats, just as they currently do with dogs. I'll discuss this more below when I propose short- and long-term solutions to your feral cat issue.

I will not focus on the impacts wildlife populations here aside from discussing disease concerns, but instead will focus on the human health aspect of feral and outdoor cats and why these free-roaming domesticated animals should be contained and/or removed. I grew up in Hurley but have spent the majority of my professional career in Georgia. We have similar issues with feral and free roaming pet cats here in Georgia, and thus some of my documentation will be Georgia related.

There are two main diseases (although others also exist) that are deeply concerning that can be transmitted from feral and outdoor cats to humans: rabies and toxoplasmosis. Rabies is a fatal disease in mammals. To date, rabies is the only documented virus that causes nearly 100% fatality in humans after neurological symptoms have developed, and less than 10 humans in all of history have survived a rabies infection. Vaccinating domesticated animals against rabies is thus of utmost importance to protecting humans from this deadly disease. Although people who promote TNR may claim that a single rabies vaccine can provide lifetime immunity to trapped feral cats, this is summarily untrue. I have been in contact with my colleagues in Columbus, Georgia, who are currently fighting TNR legislation (I misspoke yesterday, I believed they defeated a bill, when in actuality they've been fighting legislation that was passed years ago). I believe they have sent you letters from the Center for Disease Control, the National Association of the State Public Health Veterinarians' Compendium of Animal Rabies Prevent and Control, and the Georgia Department of Public Health stating that all felines are required to have a booster vaccination one year after the initial rabies vaccine, regardless of the age of the animal at initial vaccination. If for some reason you did not receive this documentation please let me know, I can send it your way. You can also call Sal Grey directly (number removed for privacy). She's been working very closely with the commission in Columbus and knows far more about their successes than I do.

Feeding feral and outdoor cats poses tremendous risk to people due to possible rabies transmission. Unlike a sickened wild animal, people are less likely to acknowledge danger when a free-roaming cat approaches them outdoors, increasing the risk of rabies transmission from cats to people. Additionally, leaving food out for feral and outdoor cats attract animals that can carry rabies (skunks, foxes, raccoons, etc.) and can thus expose cats, people, livestock, and companion animals to rabies. Most recently on December 23, 2016, a resident who was feeding a stray cat in Watertown, New York, had to undergo post-exposure rabies shots after the cat got into a fight with a skunk and contracted rabies (source: <http://www.wwnytv.com/.../341232.../rabid-cat-found-in-watertown>). In fact, the most expensive rabies event in North American history occurred in New Hampshire in 1994 when a rabid kitten of unknown origin was sold by a pet shop. The kitten was infected with a rabies variant usually associated with raccoons. Approximately 665 people received rabies post-exposure prophylaxis at a cost of \$2 million (source: <https://wonder.cdc.gov/wonder/prevguid/m0038110/m0038110.asp>). A rabid feral cat in Allegheny County, Pennsylvania, exposed multiple persons to rabies in October, 2016 (source: <http://www.wpxi.com/.../allegheny-county-health-dep.../458506568>), and I fear it is only a matter of time before we begin seeing cases of human rabies exposure due to feral and outdoor cats in the Hudson Valley. As the vast majority of my family and friends still live in Ulster County, the avoidable transmission of rabies and other diseases transmitted by feral and free-roaming cats to humans is of great concern to me.

It's also important to note that feral cats are contracting rabies even in areas with extensive TNR programs (Sacramento, California, source: <http://www.sacbee.com/entertai.../pets/article121737573.html>), likely due to inadequate vaccinations. Thus, the Center for Disease Control recommends the enforcement of existing appropriate animal control laws that include the removal of stray or unwanted cats rather than relying on indirect population management strategies such as TNR (article attached, see "Rabies Prevention and Management of Cats in the Context of Trap-Neuter-Vaccinate-Release Programmes"). I have also attached a map of all incidents of rabies in domesticated cats in the United States in 2014. As you can see from the figure, the northeast is a hotspot of cats contracting rabies, due to a combination of factors. These data highlight the short- and long-term importance of giving Animal Control the authority (and funding) to deal with feral and stray cats, if they don't already have this authority.

Toxoplasmosis is the second disease I will focus on in this email. Toxoplasmosis is a parasitic disease caused by

Toxoplasma gondii. Although many people who become infected with this parasite may never exhibit symptoms, damage to the brain, eyes (blindness can occur, and has happened to children on playgrounds if infected sand gets in their eyes), and other organs can occur in susceptible individuals. In humans the illness can also cause miscarriages, and the disease has been linked to mental health disorders such as schizophrenia (CDC publication: https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/eid/article/9/11/03-0143_article). The parasite can only complete its life cycle and reproduce in the gut of a cat. Toxoplasmosis can be transmitted by eating raw or undercooked contaminated meat, drinking infected water, receiving an infected organ transplant or blood transfusion, or by coming in contact with infected soil through gardening or sandboxes at playgrounds. It's important to note that all of these transmission sources begin with cat feces, typically deposited in the environment by feral and outdoor cats. While wild felids such as bobcats can shed T. gondii oocytes, native predators occur at such low densities and occur in relatively remote areas away from people that they rarely cause infection in people and livestock. It is the domestic cat that is responsible for the prevalence of toxoplasmosis infections in people. The Center for Disease Control discusses toxoplasmosis, and ultimately recommends to keep cats indoors and not to adopt or handle stray cats, especially kittens (source: https://www.cdc.gov/parasi.../toxoplasmosis/gen_info/faqs.html).

In summary, problem cats must be removed, adopted, contained, and/or euthanized to remove threats to people, pets, and property. The long-term solution requires a different, multi-staged strategy. I've attached a letter from Dr. Jonathan Ambrose, Chief of the Nongame Division of the Georgia Department of Natural Resources, who discusses this strategy on the last page.

In short, the Georgia Department of Natural Resources recommends:

- Control populations of feral cats through humane capture, medical evaluation, neutering, vaccination, and adoption, if possible. Humane euthanasia of diseased or otherwise unadoptable cats will be a necessary component of this program.
- Cats and dogs should have similar laws regarding containment (enclosure and leash laws), vaccination schedules, and fines for violating these laws.
- Existing laws that protect human health, livestock, and property from feral and free-roaming domesticated animals, cats included, should be enforced.
- Require that cats trapped, neutered, vaccinated, and adopted by individuals or organizations be kept indoors or in an enclosed or fenced facility that prevents cats from roaming.
- Support the American Bird Conservancy's "Cats Indoors" educational program.
- Encourage microchipping of all pet cats, including cats sold commercially, adopted through animal welfare or control facilities, or released into managed enclosures or fenced areas. This will help identify owners of lost cats or the facilities from which the stray cats came.

I have also attached a draft ordinance written by the commission of Winter Park, Florida, who had similar issues of people feeding feral cats in the park, in case this may be of assistance to you.

It was a pleasure speaking with you yesterday. If I can do anything more to assist you please don't hesitate to ask.

Final Alaska Letter:

My proposal to the Alaska Board of Game for revising language in AAC 5 Chapt. 92.029 (submitted 05/01/17):

Thank you for submitting a proposal to Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Boards Division.

Please save the Log Number below for future reference.

LOG NUMBER: EG-F17-067

DETAILS:

Management Unit or Area (if applicable):

Topic (if applicable):

Additional Topics (if applicable): Prohibit Feral Animal Release

Meeting Name: Statewide Regulations

AAC: 5 AAC Chapt. 92.029

Issue:

Respectful Greetings to members of the Alaska Board of Game:

My proposal is to add language to 5 AAC Ch. 92.029 specifically prohibiting release of feral or stray domesticated cats (Felis catus) into the outdoors, or maintaining them unconfined anywhere in the state of Alaska, as part of any so-called "no-kill" management scheme touted to be a "viable alternative" to euthanasia or other lethal means of animal control currently provided for by existing State regulation.

Such schemes are identified under various acronyms such as: TNR-- "Trap, Neuter, Release"; TVNR-- "Trap, Vaccinate, Neuter, Release"; RTF-- "Return-to-Field", etc. Proponents' claims to the contrary notwithstanding, these programs have proved utterly worthless for control or reduction of feral cat populations, and they pose a growing public health threat to our citizens, zoonotic disease threat to our valuable native wild mammals (terrestrial and marine, game and non-game), and a egregious threat by direct depredation to Alaska's smaller native mammal and bird populations.

I submit this proposal because misguided "animal welfare activists" in Alaska have proposed to this Board that exemptions be made to the existing language of 5 AAC 92.029 prohibiting release of domesticated animals into the wild, and which prohibits maintaining feral domesticated animals as defined, per AS 16.05.940 "...if the animal is not under direct control of an owner, including being confined in a cage or other physical structure, or being restrained on a leash."

Such "humane" activists—specifically the Anchorage-based group "Mojo's Hope" and Wasilla-based group "Clear Creek Cat Rescue" desire exemptions to 5 AAC 92.029 so they can feed and maintain unconfined feral cat colonies in our environment. These groups already maintain such colonies in Anchorage and in the Matliu Valley illegally—they have admitted this on their websites and I've obtained screenshots of said admissions, which I will print and provide upon request during the period for public input or as the Board directs.

Last May an Anchorage Animal Control Officer verbally acknowledged to me that at least two illegal feral cat colonies in Anchorage were "managed" or otherwise cared for by members of "Mojo's Hope". The group's president Shannon Basner volunteers at the Anchorage animal shelter. One of her online statements suggest the illegal cat colonies may have been moved to locations which are being kept secret.

The irresponsible practice of trapping, neutering, vaccinating and then returning feral cats where they were trapped represents egregious threats to public health and wildlife conservation, and does nothing whatsoever to reduce feral cat presence in our environment—quite the opposite. The following examples constitute some of the reasons for my proposal and opposition to Ms. Basner's proposal which she unsuccessfully attempted to submit to the Board last year. Please be advised that I can provide peer-reviewed scientific reports substantiating every example listed below, and again, will provide said documentation on Board request:

(1) Since the advent of "no-kill" feral cat programs, cats have become the primary domesticated rabies vector in the US. Nearly one-third of human rabies exposures—about 13,000 annually—are cat-vectoring. This has been the case for nearly three decades.

(2) One reason for this is that TNR colony "care-takers" only give the initial rabies shot when they trap a cat. The required annual rabies booster is never given, because once trapped the cats become wary and difficult to re-trap (so the caretakers simply don't bother).

(3) The worst incidence of human rabies exposure in US history was due to a TNR feral cat colony in one New Hampshire town in 1994. A rabid raccoon attracted to food left out for the cats transmitted the virus to four feral kittens. The colony "caretakers" subsequently gave (or sold) these kittens to a local pet store, which distributed them to the public. 665 individuals had to receive post-exposure prophylactic inoculations for rabies. It cost that municipality nearly \$2 million to treat them. Rabies is nearly always fatal.

(4) Cats are also the definitive host of a highly dangerous pathogen—*Toxoplasma gondii*—which reproduces exclusively in feline digestive tracts. In the US between 40% and 70% of free-roaming cats are infected with it, usually throughout their lives. The pathogen's oocysts are its infectious agents, and infected cats shed hundreds of millions of them with their feces. The oocysts persist and remain infectious for up to 45 years, and—again thanks to "no-kill" programs like TNR and the resulting proliferation of feral cats—they now occur in our environment at densities of from three to 434 per square foot.

(5) Although it's almost certain *T. gondii* oocyst density in Alaska is less than in the lower 48—if for no other reason than because of our colder climate and smaller feral cat population—a pregnant woman in Anchorage consumed toxoplasmosis-infected flesh from a moose which her husband shot in October 2013, and passed the oocysts she ingested with her meal to her unborn child, who nearly died. The child recovered thanks to heroic measures, but may still lose his eyesight to ocular lesions caused by toxoplasmosis. He will in any event be infected for life.

(6) Per the CDC toxoplasmosis is the leading cause of pathogenic blindness—mostly but by no means exclusively in children—and the second-leading cause of fatal food-borne illness, surpassed only by Salmonella. 4,500 Americans are hospitalized with toxoplasmosis-related food-borne illness each year. Nearly 10% of them die.

(7) The incidence is far greater in areas where there are large populations of free-roaming cats: 50% of Ohio's white-tailed deer population is now infected with toxoplasmosis. It's now unsafe to eat venison from these animals unless it's cooked to a core temperature of at least 157 degrees F, or frozen to at least -21 degrees F for at least two weeks to destroy the infectious oocysts.

(8) In British Columbia some Inuit mothers have been afflicted with chronic miscarriages and birth defects after consuming toxoplasmosis-infected beluga meat. The prevalence of infection in belugas is such that Canadian health agencies now attempt to screen beluga for toxoplasmosis before allowing its consumption.

(9) Toxoplasmosis causes up to 5,000 stillbirths, blind, hydrocephalic, microcephalic, severely deformed and mentally debilitated infants in the US each year.

(10) *T. gondii* oocysts survive in seawater, which they enter with runoff into the nearshore marine environment, where they are taken up into the tissues of oysters, mussels, anchovies and sardines. Cetaceans, pinnipeds and otters from Arctic Canada to New Zealand and from the US Pacific Coast to the United Kingdom consume these contaminated organisms and die from it—by the thousands. Apparently all species of terrestrial mammals—and several bird species—are just as susceptible to toxoplasmosis as marine mammals.

(11) *T. gondii* oocysts contaminate above-ground rural and/or urban drinking water supplies if they're inadequately filtered—chlorination does not kill them. This has caused toxoplasmosis outbreaks in several regions.

(12) The oocysts can and do aerosolize. Inhalation or ingestion of one oocyst is sufficient to blind, permanently debilitate or kill a child, elderly or immuno-compromised person. Possibly one-fifth of the US population is infected with toxoplasmosis. A healthy immune system suppresses its symptoms. However, everyone's immune system will degrade with age, and the oocysts will still be present—toxoplasmosis infection is for life—there is no cure.

(13) I have mentioned only two of the more than three dozen deleterious and/or potentially fatal zoonotic diseases which cats carry—some others are bartonellosis, tularemia, leishmaniasis, MRSA, toxocarriasis and plague. These diseases are more prevalent and infectious in regions with large stray and feral cat populations. My purpose in submitting this proposal in opposition to legalizing TNR or other worthless "no-kill" programs in my state is to prevent Alaska from becoming like those regions.

(14) Describing TNR as "worthless" is by no means an overly harsh assessment. Since the advent of this program in the US, two- and three-decades old feral colonies have become commonplace, for example in Washington DC and Disneyland (Anaheim). Even more telling, TNR was first practiced in the UK. Despite a half-century of TNR, the British stray and feral cat population has more than doubled—from 4.1 million in 1965 to 9.1 million today.

Solution:

Put simply, to specifically and by name outlaw TNR and all other "no-kill" programs predicated on trapping and treating feral domesticated cats and then returning them to the wild, or feeding and maintaining colonies of such cats unconfined, anywhere in the state of Alaska. An example of my proposed textual additions are given below in bold, italicized, underlined font:

Example: AAC 92.029 Permit for Possessing Live Game(d) Under this section, and in accordance with the definition of "game" as in AS 69.05.940 (which includes feral domestic animals), a game animal defined as deleterious exotic wildlife or nonindigenous gallinaceous bird is feral if the animal is not under direct control of the owner, including being confined in a cage or other physical structure, or being restrained on a leash; feral animals shall not be maintained unconfined in Alaska under the aegis of

'no-kill' management programs such as TNR, TVNR, RTF or any other such program not providing for secure and continuous confinement of such animals at all times. Owners of such animals shall apply for permits issued by the department for all animals in their care, and shall abide by all conditions required by said permits.

In support of the above I include text from AAC 92029 Permit for Possessing Live Game (h): "Upon application" (for temporary release for hunting...field trials, etc) the board will add a species to the list in (b) of this section if there is clear and convincing evidence that the species is (1) not capable of surviving in the wild in Alaska; (2) is not capable of causing a genetic alteration of a species that is indigenous to Alaska; (3) is not capable of causing a significant reduction in the population of a species that is indigenous to Alaska; (4) is not capable of transmitting a disease to a species that is indigenous to Alaska; (5) does not otherwise present a threat to the health or population of a species that is indigenous to Alaska; (6) is not captured from the wild for use as a pet; (7) does not present a conservation concern to the species' native habitat outside of this state; (8) can reasonably be maintained in good health in private ownership; and (9) does not present a likelihood that concerns about, or threats to human health and safety will lead to adverse consequences for captive animals.

The underlined, italicized font in items (1), (3)-(5) and (9) clearly disqualifies feral cats from being considered as a species suitable for even temporary release into the wild.

The alternative solution I propose would be to reclassify feral cats as "vermin" and allow unlimited take, year-round.

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Return to Boards Process Home*

There's good reason for people to be cautious around cats. It's well known that pregnant woman should never clean a cat's litterbox. Cats are vectors for a parasite called *Toxoplasma gondii*.

Cats play an important role in the spread of toxoplasmosis. When allowed outdoors, they become infected by eating infected rodents, birds, or other small animals. The parasite is then passed in the cat's feces in an oocyst form, which is microscopic.

Kittens and cats can shed millions of oocysts in their feces for as long as 3 weeks after infection. A *Toxoplasma*-infected cat that is shedding the parasite in its feces contaminates the litter box. If the cat is allowed outside, it can contaminate the soil or water in the environment as well.

Eating vegetables from a garden in which a cat has urinated or defecated can spread the parasite to you. Aquatic life is threatened by runoff and sewage. (In Hawaii, for example, cats are responsible for the deaths of animals 50 times their size; the endangered monk seal.) On farms, barn cats' excrement can infect livestock. Consuming meat from animals exposed to barn cats can cause latent infections within us... It's estimated 30- 80 million Americans are already infected.

Next, consider the safety of your cat.

Cats should be kept indoors and never allowed to roam outdoors. Outside, cats are at risk for a plethora of dangers. Being run over by a vehicle, being harmed by malicious people, getting injured in fights with other cats, being bitten and infected with feline HIV (among other diseases), being harmed by another animal such as a dog or-unlikely, but entirely possible- being captured by a hawk or coyote; being bitten by a snake, falling into a hole or sewer system, stepping on glass shards or nails or glue traps or into oil, ingesting poisonous or toxic substances such as antifreeze, being burned by vehicle exhaust pipes or a hot engine... the list goes on. Your cat is best cared for when kept within the safety of your home.

Finally, understand that domestic cats are not "natural". Cats don't belong on every continent upon our earth or upon any islands.

Why indeed ARE they everywhere, then? Put simply, we created them and we carried them to every corner of the globe. Just as we manipulated the evolution of wolves to create the abomination known as a poodle (heh, you know it's funny), we humans took the larger, wild, natural ancestors of cats and manipulated their descendants into smaller, more manageable companions.

As we spread across the world, we brought our cats with us. Cats bred and multiplied. We created distinct breeds for our own enjoyment. We didn't stop to think that we were introducing an apex predator into ecosystems which didn't evolve to cope with the specific danger known as cats. We upset the balance, literally. Annually billions of songbirds, chipmunks, baby bunnies, lizards, toads, frogs, baby squirrels, prairie dogs, and even insects like our beautiful butterflies are destroyed- just in Northern America alone. On islands, cats have wiped out entire species.

Consider the magnitude of this problem. We all adore cats. Almost everyone you know has at least one cat. Usually we have multiple cats. And out of everyone you know, most of those who own cats allow them time outdoors. There are millions of cats on this earth, and we humans have the ability to control where most of them roam because most of them belong to us. If we each took just one simple step for the betterment of life on earth by keeping the cats we own inside our own homes, think of the animals we'd save.

It's been estimated that any single cat kills up to 60 other creatures within a single night of being allowed outdoors. This has been estimated from hard data- attaching cameras to cats' collars for weeks and recording the results. Our cats are by nature hunters. We haven't bred that out of them. They hunt even if they aren't hungry; cats hunt for amusement. The small animals and birds they target can't typically recover from the piercing, puncturing sharp teeth and claws of our cats, even if the cats

decide not to actively kill the animal. Our beloved kitties maim or kill each time they are allowed outside. Multiply this by home after home after home of cat owners, and you can begin to envision the scale of the harm we humans are causing with our affinity for felines.

Let's all keep our cats indoors. Let's invest in their lives. Purchase more climbing trees. Buy more toys. Spend time with your cat playing every day. Make sure you take the time and initiative to enrich your cat's life personally- instead of putting them out the door to ease boredom.

Let's not be lazy any longer; and let's not be apathetic. Native wildlife is in danger. If we all put forth a little effort, we can begin to turn the tide of damage.

Let's do it before it's too late.

Additional information:

<https://www.cdc.gov/parasites/toxoplasmosis/epi.html>

http://www.vet.cornell.edu/.../Health_Infor.../brochure_toxo.cfm

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/.../another-black-mark-against.../>

Terrible, clickbait- style title. Fascinating story of a toddler who became infected with *Toxoplasma gondii*. <https://youtu.be/DuGsc6FkyTY>

<https://www.nature.com/articles/ncomms2380>

<http://www.conservationmagazine.org/.../pet-owners-wont-admi.../>

Now for some real numbers. Cats are to blame for the extinction of at least 33 species across the globe thus far, with more recent studies (2016) showing 63 species driven to extinction by domestic cats.

<http://www.pnas.org/content/113/40/11261.abstract><http://www.bbc.com/news/science-environment-21236690>

From RAC:

Dear Mayor Carnrike , Honorable Members of the Norwich Common Council, and Supervisors McNeil and Jeffrey:

I am writing on behalf of Responsible Animal Care USA, LLC, an organization based in Rensselaer County, New York. Our membership is comprised of retired law enforcement, animal control, animal lawyers, professors, seasoned liaisons to the New York State legislature, as well as experts in wildlife, the ecosystem, and the species *felis catus*.

You are faced with a highly emotional, controversial issue: how to handle feral cats in your city. We are faced with the same issues, as is the rest of the country. It is epidemic.

Organizations such as Alley Cat Allies, and even the Humane Society of the United States (in this issue) are persuasive, and garner much support from those who do not understand the implications and consequences of feeding outdoor cats, including but [not] limited to the ramifications for wildlife, the threats of rabies, toxoplasmosis, the unnatural attraction of wildlife to such feeding areas, and the degradation of property values.

Responsible Animal Care USA, LLC addressed the issue of free roaming cats from a factual, legal and scientific standpoint at the annual meeting of the New York State Association of Towns in New York City, in February. You are not alone: in fact, as a result of the free roaming cat crisis, many New York State and United States municipalities are considering or have instituted animal control and cat licensing.

Please, before you make a decision, we respectfully ask you to consider the facts of the feral cat problem plaguing the nation. No kill and TNR are not the solution and the science proves this fact.

Our website is currently under revision, and thus, in addition to the site in progress, <https://racusa.net/cats/> I

must refer you to a site I have compiled over the years as a professor of animal law. Here you will find numerous fact based materials on the feral cat crisis and what we can do about it. This includes the legal aspect of the presentation I did in New York City for the Association of Towns ("Key Animals Laws in New York State Pertaining to Cats"). <https://libguides.hvcc.edu/animalstudies/cats>

An ordinance to ban the feeding of free roaming cats is not cruel: it is a step of kindness toward what needs to be a systemic reform. Norwich has the opportunity to take a situation presently or soon to be out of control, and make a solution.

The members of Responsible Animal Care USA, LLC love cats. It is for this reason that we have assembled a library of credible, time-tested research and individuals thoroughly knowledgeable about the subject area. It is unfortunate that lawmakers will likely hear mainly from opponents of this proposed ban.

Please do not hesitate to consult us as you encounter the obstacles that are inevitable. We commend you for taking a step in the right direction for your community. Again, we are here to support you. Thank you for your time.

Very truly yours,

Valerie Lang Waldin, J.D., M.L.S.
Vice President, Responsible Animal Care USA, LLC

If feral cats are like "good bacteria" there is overgrowth and fermentation and bloating are now occurring. The feral cats are also attracting rats and other wildlife and putting public health at risk. Cats don't form colonies, the cat food does.

TNR advocates:

Why do so many TNR advocates seem to have such a severe aversion to data and facts? We publish links to peer-reviewed research and cite sources such as the CDC, The American Medical Veterinary Association, The National Association of State Public Health Veterinarians, The Mayo Clinic, universities, medical professionals, environmentalists, conservation organizations, and wildlife professionals. We also publish news articles from reputable sources about issues relating to TNR and free-roaming cats. We also publish screen-shots of feral cat hobbyists discussing issues with their cats on social media pages. So many TNR advocates seem to think there is some huge conspiracy between scientists and researchers and medical professionals and universities and public health organizations and wildlife professionals and on and on to "demonize" free-roaming cats. Do you think they all meet at some secret location every year to plan out ways to make cats look bad? Nobody is "demonizing" free-roaming cats. They are just presenting facts about these issues because they are serious issues that need to be addressed in a serious way that actually works to mitigate the problem.

We know it's not the cat's "fault". It is the fault of humans who don't spay/neuter and who allow cats to free-roam, including those who re-dump cats into the environment through TNR. It isn't the cat's fault. Cats don't have "fault". They are animals. They just do what they are programmed instinctually to do. But we don't base our solutions on who is at fault. Pythons and feral hogs and lionfish and nutria aren't at fault either. But we remove them. We don't TNR them. We base our solutions on what will work. Both science and real-world experience have shown us that TNR does not work to reduce feral cat populations.

Why do you think it is that you have to sneak around at night to feed your cat colonies? Why do you think it is that sometimes when you do get caught feeding feral cats, the person is upset with you and berates you? Why do you think it is that you have to hide the colonies and be careful not to mention their location in public? It is because the vast majority of people know that feeding and sustaining feral cats in the environment is, at best, a nuisance, and at worst, a public health and environmental threat. No one wants these cat colonies near their home. No one, not even most of the TNR feeders. Most of their colonies are on someone else's property. It's mostly "other people" who have to put up with the stench of urine and feces. It's mostly "other people" who have to put up with cat hair

and fleas on their patio furniture. It's mostly "other people" whose gardens and flower beds are ruined by free-roaming cats. It's mostly "other people" who have to risk toxoplasmosis, hookworm, ringworm, bartonella, rabies, and more. It's mostly "other people" who have to find the native birds and rabbits and chipmunks and other critters that bring them joy in their yards, dead in their yard.

None of the people providing these facts about free-roaming cats are opposed to you "saving" cats. None of the people who don't want cats in their yards killing birds or damaging property or risking their health are opposed to you "saving" cats. Just do it in a responsible way. Do it in enclosures on your own property. Clean up and properly dispose of the feces. Don't keep more than you can manage. If every TNR advocate did this a great many cats could be saved. Don't feed feral cats. Find indoor homes for all the friendly strays that you can. That's great. But realize that not every cat can or should be saved. If you have a cat in a trap and you can't find an enclosed space for that cat, then that cat should be euthanized. Not every cat must be saved. Not every cat can be saved. To the cat, euthanasia starts out in exactly the same way that the neutering process does -- the cat is sedated. The difference is that the cat never wakes up. The cat doesn't know any difference in the process. Humane euthanasia is just that - humane. There is nothing "cruel" about it. It is unfortunate. It is sad. But it is humane. And sometimes it is necessary.

Create Date: 8/19/2019 3:44:58 PM

Reference # W102181-081919

Customer: HajjFHM@aol.com Al-Hajji Frederick Minshall

Category: Other

Description: "Gotta say I'm less than impressed with FWC asking for sightings of possibly FIV-debilitated native felines, selling license plates, etc.--basically anything except what NEEDS to be done to address the increasing occurrence of FIV in FL panthers and bobcats. Specifically, what is required is sustained lethal removal of unconfined *Felis catus* from Florida's environment, just like you're doing with Burmese pythons and lionfish. NOTHING ELSE WILL WORK.

OUTLAW TNR and all other imbecilic, worthless, so-called "humane" methods of stray/feral cat control. THEY.DON'T.WORK. The only impact they've had on stray/feral cat populations is to ACCELERATE their growth, because the "no-kill" nitwits invariably FEED the bloody things. Population growth of ANY population is predicated on FOOD-- doesn't matter whether you're talking yeast or elephants.

OUTLAW unconfined cats PERIOD. Follow Australia's example. They have culled 844,000 feral cats since 2015. How many more public health debacles--like your nearly DAILY rabies alerts, and beach closures from cat-vectored roundworms boring into beach-goers' flesh--and ecological catastrophes will it TAKE for the FWC to stand UP to the bloody cat-ladies and DO WHAT'S NECESSARY?

In terms of ecological policy, the only differences between *Python bivittatus* and *F. catus* is that the former doesn't spread nearly as many zoonotic diseases as the latter, and it only kills when it's hungry. Grow some BALLS, stand up to the cat-nutters and eradicate the bloody cats while you have any wildlife left!"

PS: And in case anyone doubts my previous claims that I'm not a cat-hater, I'll close by mentioning I'm caring for my Mom's SEVEN indoor-only cats while she's recovering from surgery, and I haven't killed any of 'em yet. However, by the the time I'm through this ordeal I don't think I'll be able to honestly claim any longer that I'm not a cat hater--pretty much hate seven of 'em right now, at any rate, and it only gets worse every time I clean the cat boxes, or the puked-up hair balls. Wouldn't do this for anyone else but my Mom.

PPS: to finish on a positive note, I have seen Blanchard's cricket frogs (*Acris blanchardii*), an unusual southern leopard frog (*Lithobates sphenoccephalus*) WITHOUT spots, ornate box turtles (*Terrapene ornata*) and snapping turtles (*Chelydra serpentina*) despite having had almost no time to go out looking for herps so far.

MaSalaam, Fred. Will write again when I can...

POINTS TO KEEP IN MIND for 2 28 2020 meeting on spay neuter

Progressive, Compassionate Solution

The progressive solution to overpopulation embraced by science, responsible animal and cat lovers, conservationists, credible vets, animal welfare experts, and those of us pressing for the most humane, effective and rational solution is 3 pronged:

- Consistent messaging and public education regarding responsible pet ownership including criticality of spay neuter of all OWNED PETS and keeping pets indoors;
- In the interests of feral cats, dogs, birds and wildlife, public health and to avoid discord among citizens of Tulsa, ban outdoor feeding and promote and support enclosed cat sanctuaries and individual enclosed catios for backyards;
- Implement, support and enforce a state-of-the-art spay neuter program of all owned pets.

Specific to TNR:

TNR is an avoidance scheme of death by euthanasia (which is humane), that perpetuates cats in the environment and an absolute certainty of violent or painful death for these cats with marginal, insecure lives until that occurs. Outdoor cats do not die peacefully.

We cannot ignore the humane and compassionate perspective; it's understandable why people have a strong emotional attachment towards outside cats. Cats are popular domestic pets—and internet stars. We don't want them to be cold and hungry. If these same people thoughtfully considered the inevitable fear, suffering and inevitable death on the streets of the cats, how many would re-think TNR? And what about wildlife such as birds and lizards? How can you justify the predation by cats on these living creatures? Many people feel the same way towards them and agonize over the inevitable injuries and deaths to every small animal, bird and creature unlucky enough to be in the path of one of these predators.

There is no justification to ignore the public health risks. Feral cats are the definitive host for toxoplasma gondii. Rabies and other zoonotic diseases are spread by feral cats. Playgrounds, parks, backyards, schoolyards are all at risk through the feces and urine left by these cats.

It's also fair to say the majority of Tulsa citizens would not favor roaming cats regularly at large. We introduce neighbors' divisiveness and discord if we encourage this practice.

It's staggering to consider the amount of City resources required to try to manage cat clowders. Proven and effective solutions and alternatives must be embraced if the City is going to be prudent and exercise fiscal responsibility. The City must understand it's irresponsible to send mixed messages to the public about responsible pet ownership. It makes no sense for the shelter to regularly post messages to bring animals inside when it's freezing or during extreme heat, then allow programs where it's ok to leave other animals outside. Such a policy would be confusing at best, hypocritical at worst. The public won't be able to distinguish feral cats vs ones being fed by feeders. This would also directly lead to abandonment. Every city that has adopted TNR regularly faces the problem of abandonment of cats no longer wanted by people who assume someone else will take care of them.

TNR is not a 'best practice' as claimed by TNR activists. TNR has now been employed for **over a decade** in major U.S. cities and is a proven failure. After all these years, no one can name **one** town, city, or

country anywhere in the world that has “reduced” its feral cat population through TNR. You hear time and time again these cities are still overrun with roaming cats.

Reputable, credible, science-based experts are gaining traction with a progressive educational focused approach aimed at Keeping Cats Indoors and discouraging outdoor feeding, which is truly the rational and compassionate approach to solving our overpopulation issues, together with robust enforcement of affordable spay/neuter programs. We need to focus on spay neuter centric solutions that are sensible, prudent and that do not bear a host of negative consequences to cats, dogs, other animals, wildlife, human health and public property rights.

Additional TNR opposition points:

Efficacy/Empirical Data: The gold standard of efficacy is hard data. Metrics have to start with an accurate count: Unless the fertile population in any location is counted prior to TNR and then after implementation, empirical evidence does not exist, and anecdotal evidence is meaningless. It's disingenuous to measure success by reduced euthanasia rates when this only means the shelter avoids euthanasia, choosing to leave cats on the streets to appease TNR activists.

Feeding and Breeding and Predation Enhancement:

Well-fed animals breed more prolifically. Leaving food out will also be consumed by the surrounding large-scale population of cats better able to reproduce and survive as a result. Uncontrolled immigration of sexually intact animals from surrounding areas is a proven fact.

Skittish strays on the perimeter will feed and breed. The food will also strengthen and enable both sterilized and unsterilized cats' abilities to predate on birds and wildlife.

Abandonment: TNR facilitates abandonment. People can justify to themselves dumping unwanted cats or kittens knowing they will be fed.

No Population Reduction

Even if eventually trapped and sterilized, cats are prolific breeders and can have several litters leading to the births of hundreds of additional kittens. For TNR to reduce the overall population of homeless cats, more than 75% of the fertile population must be fixed EVERY year - not simply 75% of a colony here or there, but more than 75% of the fertile population within the entire geographical area (such as a city or county). If that mark is not met, you are spinning your wheels. The current mark for even the 'best' TNR program is not even 10%. Colony reductions are not population reductions.

Millions of dollars have already been expended on TNR over three decades, yet we have no reduction in the population, but what we do have are increased risks to public health and degradation of the environment through predation and disease transmission and increased divisiveness and discord among citizens.

If all else fails, doing nothing is better than TNR.

TNR is actually worse than doing nothing and allow for natural attrition. If those who think a marginal, insecure life with an inevitable violent or painful death of these cats is preferable to a peaceful, humane euthanasia, at all costs, then at the very least, stop the feeding and leave them be. Any help they get from humans gives them a greater advantage to kill more native birds and animals. You may think letting a cat survive on its own is cruel but consider the cruelty to birds and other animals. If we cannot remove cats from the wild, we should have a ban on outdoor feeding. Providing outside cats with more advantages stacks the deck against our helpless native wildlife, infringes on property rights, increases risks to public health.

and contributes to divisiveness, pitting neighbor against neighbor.

I am a licensed wildlife rehabilitator and, after reading your article, agree you can learn a lot from the rehabilitation community.

It is difficult, if not impossible, to compare a non-native species to native wildlife. So for starters, if an animal can't survive in the wild (and that includes no subsidizing with food), a wildlife rehabilitator would never release that animal. It isn't ethical. Furthermore, if a wild (native) animal was even so much as habituated to humans, it would never be released, for there is a chance it would not hunt successfully and starve to death. For this animal an option would be life in captivity, but even that option is not a decision to be made lightly. Unless a compromised (either physical or mental) animal can live its life relatively stress free in captivity, the ethical choice would be euthanasia. We would never turn the animal back out to the wild with little more than prayers for its survival.

Would you really release a cat with a leg amputation or eye enucleation? Again, this would be considered highly unethical in the wildlife rehabilitation community. I did release a box turtle once who was missing a foot, but it was deemed an old injury (by a veterinarian/herpetologist) and he was surviving just fine (he was taken in not for an injury but because he was discovered in a newly delivered mulch pile). Other than the rare case, birds and mammals missing a foot or leg would be euthanized. In fact, USFWS guidelines mandate that a birds with wing injuries requiring amputation MUST be euthanized.

If you are truly sincere about learning from the wildlife rehabilitators, then I think the cat community needs to start accepting euthanasia for what it is, humane. Otherwise, the population of cats will grow (which it is, exponentially) and that in itself, is unethical. You say you want to "spare animals from all unnecessary suffering." Then learn to deal with euthanasia and embrace it. Then you wouldn't be burdened with the issue of "not knowing," which we would again view as unethical, perhaps even label as selfish.

Every day I see shelters crying out for donations to fix a cat that was run over by a car multiple times or a geriatric "community cat" that was trapped and now needs insulin injections or flea treatment or antibiotics for an oozing abscess. These cats are suffering, both physically and emotionally in that they are too stressed in captivity. And far too often, I see the cat "caretakers" take the easy way out and turn the animal back out side, all for the ability to say "I did my best." No, you didn't. Just because you don't see that animal die, doesn't mean it didn't. So, as a wildlife rehabilitator, my message to the cat "caretakers" is learn to accept euthanasia as a humane treatment for these poor sick and ailing cats that need help.

Euthanizing an animal is never easy, but in the end, you made the best choice for the animal to eliminate continued suffering and you can focus on rehabilitating the animals that can be released.

Department of Health: Outdoor cats are danger to public's health

Written by: [Community Submission](#) February 13 2020

Recent publicity about outdoor cats has understandably raised concerns among Indian River County residents. Some may wonder why this is such a big deal and public health concern. Florida Department of Health in Indian River County (DOH-IR) regularly receives complaints on open feeding of cats, and cat exposures (bites or scratches), requiring a public health response. Feeding cats outdoors attracts native wildlife, like raccoons, that are at high risk for carrying rabies and fight with cats for food. Mixing of animals during outdoor feeding significantly increases rabies risk and public health hazards.

There are an estimated 55,000 outdoor cats, both owned and unowned (stray or feral) in the county. That's a lot of cats.

It is only a matter of time before someone is unknowingly bitten or scratched by a rabid cat, does not report the exposure or seek medical care, and becomes infected with rabies.

Rabies is a fatal disease once symptoms develop.

Several trends were identified by Indian River County Animal Control complaint data from 2010 to 2018. There are a significant number of cats near schools and childcares that are within previous rabies alert areas, and an explosion of cat numbers in our county's most vulnerable, economically disadvantaged areas. The location and number of cats within already vulnerable communities raises serious environmental and social justice questions. There have been 3 rabid cats identified in Florida in the first 15 days of 2020, and 12 rabid cats in 2019. There were 16 rabid cats statewide in 2018, the highest number since 2005. Positive rabies test results do not indicate the prevalence of rabies in the cat/animal population, as only cats/animals with human or pet contact are tested. In 2019, rabies post exposure prophylaxis was recommended for over 1000 people (average cost \$5000 not including medical treatment) in Florida due to cat bites or scratches, where the cat was not able to be located for observation or testing.

When cats live outside, their feces contaminate the soil or sand and accumulate in places like gardens, sand boxes, playgrounds and beaches. With an estimated 55,000 outdoor cats, each producing 32 pounds of feces, it equals 880 tons of poop annually countywide. Cats' feces can carry other diseases that are harmful to people, especially to children or people with weakened immune systems. These include hookworm (up to 75 percent of feral cats are infected), toxoplasmosis (approximately 20 percent of U.S. infected), and cat scratch disease, among others.

Existing Indian River County ordinances and state laws, enacted to protect public health and control rabies, require proper rabies vaccination, licensing and containment of all pets, including cats.

DOH-IR follows the Rabies Prevention and Control in Florida Compendium; the preeminent authority on the control of rabies in Florida.

The concept of managing free-roaming/feral domestic cats (*Felis catus*) is not tenable on public health grounds because of the persistent threat posed to communities from injury and disease. While the risk for disease transmission from cats to people is generally low when these animals are maintained indoors and routinely cared for, free-roaming cats pose a continuous concern to communities. Children are among those at highest risk for disease transmission from these cats, because they are more likely to approach and interact with them, and have environmental exposures to their feces in the soil and sand.

Outdoor cats create substantial public health challenges. These animals do not receive ongoing veterinary care, such as regular vaccination, parasite and flea control. One rabies vaccination does not ensure immunity.

Cats should be kept safe from harm. Cats should be in an enclosed area or indoors, safe from interaction with other high-risk animals like raccoons, safe from man-made hazards like cars or trucks, and receive regular veterinary care. This is responsible pet ownership, and is key to reducing numbers of outdoor cats.

When a cat is protected, people are protected, and so is the public's health.

Written by: Miranda C. Hawker, MPH

Health Officer / Florida Department of Health in Indian River County

From a wildlife rehabilitator responding to a an 'exhausted' TNR colony feeder.

From a wildlife rehabilitator responding to a an 'exhausted' TNR colony feeder.

Ya know what I'm &&%\$#@ tired of?

Aside from the countless dead cats I see on the roads, the parasite and toxoplasmosis contaminated cat feces in my garden.

I'm tired of cat spray stink permeating air.

I'm tired TNR becoming a dumping area for unwanted, injured, sickly, dying cats and mangy, pregnant cats with ribs showing and worm swollen bellies and their scraggly, scabies covered, worm bloated kittens in the neighborhood.

I'm tired of the TNR feeding stations attracting and artificially increasing the numbers of dumped cats.

I'm tired of other wildlife (raccoons, opossums, rodents) who's numbers also increase exponentially from the feeding stations and become a nuisance to the community.

I'm tired of getting in baby rabbits with holes in their bellies.

I'm tired of baby birds with broken legs and wings, and adult birds with puncture wounds and half their feathers missing. I'm tired of seeing snakes, turtles and frogs with gaping wounds and fragmented or missing limbs.

I'm tired of sleepless nights spent treating bites and scratches, knowing the future is grim

I'm tired of countless animals dying in my hands from outside and TNR cats.

I'm tired of the entitled attitude of TNR and outside cat nutters that think this fine.

I'm tired of people acting like it's cute their cat bring them a half dead bird.

I'm tired of this entitled "savior" attitude of TNR folks who think cat abandonment through TNR is 'noble' and acceptable.

I'm tired of the TNR people ignoring that fact of native wildlife abuse and slow, painful death at the claws and septic saliva of these cats.

I'm tired of their self righteous attitude that TNR hoarding is an acceptable alternative to euthanasia. TNR is simply 'hoarders without borders'.



The Scissortail

NEWSLETTER OF THE
Oklahoma Ornithological Society
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Winter Issue

December 2019

President's Message, Winter 2019

The problem posed by the retirement of the Membership Chair, Linda Adams, and the lack of a member willing to replace her and Bill for the quarterly mailing task has been solved by hiring a mail service provider (MSP). Sooner Mail Service mailed the issue you are now reading. Its presence in your hands is evidence of the success we hoped for with this approach. There will be a nominal increase in annual mailing cost, about \$1 per member as shown below.

Previous Annualized Cost for 200 mailings per quarter:

Annual Bulk Mail Fee: \$235
Postage for 800: \$380 (.475/ea)
Total: \$615

Cost Projected with SMSI for 200 mailings per quarter:

Annual Bulk Mail Fee: None
Labor charge: \$600
Postage for 800: \$208 (.26/ea)
Total: \$808

Annual Increase in Cost = \$808 - \$615 = \$193

Other than hiring an MSP, the other approach we researched and considered for making the Membership Chair position easier to manage was electronic delivery to as many people as would accept it. If you read last quarter's message, you may remember that our postage would increase from the bulk mailing rate to the regular first class rate if we go below 200 mail pieces. There would be a cost increase if the elimination of printing and mailing expense for members accepting exclusive electronic delivery didn't offset the increase to first class postage on the remaining snail mail. One idea to offset an increase in postage cost would be to decrease the size of the bulletin by 1/4 inch in width so that it would fit in a 6-inch wide letter-size envelope along with a folded newsletter. This idea was strongly opposed by some board members, and fortunately it's not relevant if we get good performance from Sooner Mail.

On another subject, research published in the October 4 issue of *Science* by Rosenberg et. al. puts the decline in North American avifauna at 2.9 billion birds or 29% since 1970. The research did not specifically address causation, but it is noted that anthropogenic effects correlate with losses in grasslands and agricultural areas. An article in *Science News* (available on line) on the research which contains interview material from Rosenberg and others cites studies showing cat predation and building collisions. The ongoing public controversy over free roaming cats illustrates how the public's values influence acceptance of scientific reporting and reactions by policy makers. The research pub-

lished by Loss et. al. in 2013 put the number of annual bird kills by cats in the range of 1.4-4.0 billion, a number of the same magnitude as the population loss reported by Rosenberg et. al. Advocates of TNR (Trap/Neuter/Return) and other supporters of free roaming cats do not believe that kills by cats, whatever the actual number, have a significant effect on the populations of birds and other wildlife. The people on the other side of the issue do believe that cat predation is significant and serious. What is noteworthy about this controversy is that both sides have as personal values empathy for animals and concern for their protection. Most cat advocates will admit that cats kill birds. Their value system just doesn't rate that killing as high in importance as the happiness and welfare of cats. The magnitude of the number of birds killed is almost immaterial in the debate between the two opposing groups because the effect on bird populations is obscure. As far as human values go, killing is widely accepted as necessary or natural for defense of the country, for the table, for preventing overpopulation by wildlife, for sport and for controlling damage by rodents and insects. It is only when a population suffers severe decline that the public becomes concerned enough to act in a significant way in the policy realm. The Migratory Bird Treaty Act and the DDT ban are two examples of such significant policy actions. What may be lacking in the case of the cat issue is the absence of evidence that cat predation actually threatens the survival of a species in the way that DDT threatened the survival of Bald Eagles, Peregrine Falcons and Ospreys. A way to resolve the issue, one way or the other, would be to publish well-researched population models for individual species which take into account not only cat predation but also habitat change and loss, weather and climate effects, building collisions, disease, natural predators, pesticides and changes in insect populations, etc.

Bill Diffin

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From: [Nicole Hartig](#)
To: [CouncilMail](#)
Subject: Opposition to bill CB13-2024
Date: Friday, March 29, 2024 11:42:47 AM

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Hello,

I have lived in Baltimore City for 15 years, most of that time my City has had a TNR program, and our outdoor cat problem has only gotten worse. Every week there are multiple people in just my community who share they've found either a dead, abandoned or free-roaming cat. Just a few weeks ago someone reported that they watched a person pull over next to a local park, toss a cat out of their SUV and drive away.

Why should all of this be the case? Because the presence of a TNR program perpetuates the misconception that cats are "fine" outside. If you can't take care of your cat, it can just go live outside with all of the others. No education on humanely caring for domestic cats is possible in the presence of a program which pretends domestic cats belong outdoors.

In reality, cats live far shorter lives outside, often dying violently - I found an older kitten under my deck that had died after a fight with a Tom I heard the previous night, I found a young stray in my local park suffering from advanced metastatic cancer who needed to be put down, a relative's loved indoor/outdoor 4yo cat was killed by car, and I have seen many other cats in my neighborhood who have been hit by cars.

During those far shorter lives, they are subject to predation (a recent study put the stomach contents of urban coyotes at 30% domestic cat), abuse by intolerant humans, environmental hazards, and diseases - diseases, like toxoplasmosis, they can also spread to humans and other wildlife.

Cats are the only organism in which toxoplasmosis can complete its life cycle. After consuming an infected organism (rodents with toxo have been shown to be attracted to cat urine/lose their fear of cats), they shed oocysts for up to 2 weeks and multiple times per year, and those oocysts can survive in the environment for up to 18 months until another mammal inhales/ingests them and becomes infected. Toxoplasmosis lives in the human brain for life and we still don't fully understand the consequences, though birth defects, blindness, and schizophrenia have been linked to infection. I could not eat vegetables from my urban garden during the years I was pregnant, and I have many gardener friends who are plagued by cats using their yards as litter boxes.

Rabies is also spread by outdoor cats, and cats are the most common domestic vector for rabies in the country. Herring Run Park near my home had rabies cases in a feral cat colony a few years ago, a rabid feral cat was found in Ellicott City in 2021, and there are similar recent cases all over the state, including a feral cat found in Frederick in 2023.

Beyond the half-lives these outdoor cats will live and the dangers they pose to humans, they will also cut short the lives of thousands of other animals, whether they are well-fed or not. Cats regularly practice kill - what we observe as play. When an animal survives such an encounter, that animal can easily later succumb to a puncture wound if not treated with antibiotics, as cat saliva is notoriously rife with bacteria. Even if a bird's skin is not punctured,

while preening it can ingest enough bacteria to kill it from saliva that ends up on its feathers. I worked in the 12 acre Glen Arboretum of Towson University where an established feral cat colony existed. In those 2 years, I found many played with - some dead, some still living - birds and snakes. There used to be a white-footed mouse population in the Glen, long-studied by the University's Biology Department, but it was declared locally extinct, due to the cats, shortly after the colony was established.

In a time when bird and wildlife populations are on a drastic decline, we should not be introducing even more environmental hazards for them to navigate.

Dumping a cat outside is the most thoughtless and short-sighted action we can take in trying to deal with the overpopulation of domestic cats. We would never condemn dogs to these fates. Cats deserve the same protections. We should consider pet ownership and breeding licences, transitional enclosed cat sanctuaries, and actually enforcing roaming laws. In line with the conclusions of conservation science and animal welfare organizations, we should never consider TNR as an option.

In considering this program, we need to ask ourselves what kind of future urban environment we desire: an environmentally-friendly one peppered with native plants and urban gardens that's a welcoming haven to birds and wildlife, or one dominated by cats living where they can't humanely that's a trap for wildlife as well as a danger to human health?

Thank you for your time. I fully oppose this bill and hope you will consider the logic of this program over the loudness of those advocating for it.

Nicole Hartig
2917 Glenmore Ave
Baltimore, MD, 21214

From: [Rose Glenn](#)
To: [CouncilMail](#)
Subject: Support CB-13 2024
Date: Friday, March 29, 2024 10:24:33 AM

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear Howard County Council,

As a Maryland resident, animal lover, and animal advocate, I am writing to you in support of CB-13 2024: Trap-Neuter-Return Program Establishment. Trap-Neuter-Return, or TNR, is the humane way to care for the outdoor cat population while simultaneously reducing the number of outdoor cats in our communities.

As a volunteer at the Baltimore Animal Rescue and Care Shelter (BARCS) in Baltimore City, I have seen firsthand the positive impact of TNR. BARCS treats every cat as a respected creature, whether friendly or feral, and has multiple programs in place, including TNR, to ensure feral cats receive the same humane care as friendly cats. Running TNR clinics allows caretakers who feed community cats to get the cats vaccinated and spayed/neutered, providing a better quality of life for the cat while also ensuring the cat cannot reproduce. And BARCS is not the only shelter in Maryland who has seen the benefits of TNR. In fact, every other county in Central Maryland has TNR programs available to its residents aside from Howard County.

There is a great deal of research that exists which demonstrates the effectiveness of TNR. In 2018 the National Institute of Health published "A Case Study in Citizen Science: The Effectiveness of a Trap-Neuter-Return Program in a Chicago Neighborhood." Their research found an 82% reduction in population due to the impact of TNR. While this did take time, approximately 9 years, it demonstrates what we see here at BARCS and what so many other Maryland counties see all the time: TNR works. This link will provide you with many other studies that demonstrate the effectiveness of TNR: <https://humanepro.org/page/community-cats-scientific-studies-and-data#:~:text=TNR%20Reduces%20Cat%20Numbers,-Targeted%20TNR%20resulted&text=in%20neighborhood%20study-.Citizen%20science%20was%20employed%20to%20document%20the%20impact%20of%20TNR,end%20of%20the%20study%20period>

Opponents of TNR will say that outdoor cats are harmful for other animals, such as birds, and they therefore feel feral cats should be euthanized to protect the bird populations. The challenge with that way of thinking is that euthanizing feral cats does not reduce the outdoor cat population, and therefore will not change the impact that outdoor cats have on birds. Rather, by implementing a TNR program, the number of outdoor cats will steadily decrease, and therefore the impact on birds will as well.

As someone who believes all animals deserve the chance to live and be treated humanely, I strongly urge you to pass CB-13 2024 and establish a TNR program in Howard County.

Sincerely,
Rose Glenn

Rose Glenn
St. Mary's College of Maryland Class of 2019
Boston University Class of 2022
Pronouns: she/her/hers

From: [Seneca Hill](#)
To: [CouncilMail](#)
Date: Friday, March 29, 2024 8:57:47 PM

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear Howard County Council,

As a Maryland resident, animal lover, and animal advocate, I am writing to you in support of CB-13 2024: Trap-Neuter-Return Program Establishment. Trap-Neuter-Return, or TNR, is the humane way to care for the outdoor cat population while simultaneously reducing the number of outdoor cats in our communities.

As a staff member on the cat behavior team at the Baltimore Animal Rescue and Care Shelter (BARCS) in Baltimore City, I have seen firsthand the positive impact of TNR. BARCS treats every cat as a respected creature, whether friendly or feral, and has multiple programs in place, including TNR, to ensure feral cats receive the same humane care as friendly cats.

Running TNR clinics allows caretakers who feed community cats to get the cats vaccinated and spayed/neutered, providing a better quality of life for the cat while also ensuring the cat cannot reproduce. And BARCS is not the only shelter in Maryland who has seen the benefits of TNR. In fact, every other county in Central Maryland has TNR programs available to its residents aside from Howard County.

There is a great deal of research that exists which demonstrates the effectiveness of TNR. In 2018 the National Institute of Health published "A Case Study in Citizen Science: The Effectiveness of a Trap-Neuter-Return Program in a Chicago Neighborhood." Their research found an 82% reduction in population due to the impact of TNR. While this did take time, approximately 9 years, it demonstrates what we see here at BARCS and what so many other Maryland counties see all the time: TNR works.

Opponents of TNR will say that outdoor cats are harmful for other animals, such as birds, and they therefore feel feral cats should be euthanized to protect the bird populations. The challenge with that way of thinking is that euthanizing feral cats does not reduce the outdoor cat population, and therefore will not change the impact that outdoor cats have on birds. Rather, by implementing a TNR program, the number of outdoor cats will steadily decrease, and therefore the impact on birds will as well.

As someone who believes all animals deserve the chance to live and be treated humanely, I strongly urge you to pass CB-13 2024 and establish a TNR program in Howard County.

Sincerely,

Seneca Hill

From: [Shari Glenn](#)
To: [CouncilMail](#)
Subject: Support CB-13 2024
Date: Friday, March 29, 2024 1:51:59 PM

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear Howard County Council,

As a Howard County Maryland resident, animal lover, and animal advocate, I am writing to you in support of CB-13 2024: Trap-Neuter-Return Program Establishment. Trap-Neuter-Return, or TNR, is the humane way to care for the outdoor cat population while simultaneously reducing the number of outdoor cats in our communities.

As a volunteer at the Baltimore Animal Rescue and Care Shelter (BARCS) in Baltimore City, I have seen firsthand the positive impact of TNR. BARCS treats every cat as a respected creature, whether friendly or feral, and has multiple programs in place, including TNR, to ensure feral cats receive the same humane care as friendly cats. Running TNR clinics allows caretakers who feed community cats to get the cats vaccinated and spayed/neutered, providing a better quality of life for the cat while also ensuring the cat cannot reproduce. And BARCS is not the only shelter in Maryland who has seen the benefits of TNR. In fact, every other county in Central Maryland has TNR programs available to its residents aside from Howard County.

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As someone who believes all animals deserve the chance to live and be treated humanely, I strongly urge you to pass CB-13 2024 and establish a TNR program in

Howard County.

Sincerely,
Shari Glenn
Ellicott City 21043

From: sshare56@gmail.com
To: [CouncilMail](#)
Subject: CB13-2024
Date: Friday, March 29, 2024 11:45:40 AM

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Sent from my iPad

CB13-2024 TNR

Dear Councilwoman Jung,

I cannot emphasize how strongly I hope that you will support CB13-2024, the Trap, Neuter and Release legislation. You have heard all the statistics in many testimonies on how this would ultimately decrease the feral cat population. Even more so, as a 30 year Howard County resident, I would hope that I live in a county that rules by compassion, ethics and above all, values all living things.

These current policies of euthanizing feral cats (who often through no fault of their own find themselves abandoned by their humans) are equivalent to the antiquated views of old time zoos, circuses, and roadside animal attractions. History will not look kindly on a county that touts itself as progressive and compassionate with these outdated policies.

Thank you so much for considering my point of view. I believe an often used quote from Gandhi fits this situation well...The greatness of a nation and its moral progress can be judged by the way its animals are treated.

Susan Share

6405 Misty Top Pass

Columbia, MD 21044

From: csbierer@verizon.net
To: [CouncilMail](mailto:CouncilMail@howardcountymd.gov); CouncilDistrict1@howardcountymd.gov; CouncilDistrict2@howardcountymd.gov;
councildistrict3@howardcountymd.gov; CouncilDistrict4@howardcountymd.gov;
CouncilDistrict5@howardcountymd.gov
Subject: Support of CB13-2024
Date: Friday, March 29, 2024 2:38:03 AM

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear Howard County Council,

I'm writing to offer my support of Bill CB13-2024, a TNR program to be implemented in Howard County.

I live in the neighborhood of Longfellow and have cared for several feral cat colonies over the last 20 years, including one on the outskirts of my housing development.

One thing we know to be true about feral cat behavior was occurring near my home for many years: cats would appear, settle into one specific area, were caught / euthanized by Animal Control (or chased away by neighbors) only to be replaced by a new group a short while later. This is known as the Vacuum Effect: a territorial opening, or vacuum, that simply does not remain empty. This has been observed with different species but in suburban areas is most notable with feral cats.

The final feral group to pass through my neighborhood appeared in 2011. The cats were trapped, altered and returned. They were fed daily and their medical needs were addressed (one developed asthma and one needed his tail amputated). The few complaints from neighbors were addressed immediately with creative solutions and I quickly learned their irritation was, in part, due to an assumption that their concerns would be ignored. Once the issues were resolved, they were not only satisfied but began leaving cans of food and cold weather shelters at the colony site. Several times neighbors pressed wads of cash into my hand to help offset the cost of care. Friendships developed around a shared commitment to the well-being of the cats. The colony had become, in essence, the living definition of "Community Cats."

As is often the case, the cats were eventually adopted by residents in my neighborhood who kept shelters outside their back doors or if appropriate, allowed the cats inside. Since 2016, **no new cats have taken up residence at this colony site.** The same holds true for the two other locations I assisted with. After the oldest cats passed away in 2019, **no new cats have taken up residence at those sites.**

Simply, TNR worked.

Thanks for your consideration. Should this bill pass, I would be happy to help with the implementation of TNR in Howard County.

Suzanne Bierer

From: [Yemisi Aina](#)
To: [CouncilMail](#)
Subject: Please pass CB-13 2024 and establish a TNR program in Howard County
Date: Friday, March 29, 2024 3:40:16 PM

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear Howard County Council,

As a Maryland resident, animal lover, and animal advocate, I am writing to you in support of CB-13 2024: Trap-Neuter-Return Program Establishment. Trap-Neuter-Return, or TNR, is the humane way to care for the outdoor cat population while simultaneously reducing the number of outdoor cats in our communities.

As a volunteer at the Baltimore Animal Rescue and Care Shelter (BARCS) in Baltimore City, I have seen firsthand the positive impact of TNR. BARCS treats every cat as a respected creature, whether friendly or feral, and has multiple programs in place, including TNR, to ensure feral cats receive the same humane care as friendly cats. Running TNR clinics allows caretakers who feed community cats to get the cats vaccinated and spayed/neutered, providing a better quality of life for the cat while also ensuring the cat cannot reproduce. And BARCS is not the only shelter in Maryland who has seen the benefits of TNR. In fact, every other county in Central Maryland has TNR programs available to its residents aside from Howard County.

There is a great deal of research that exists which demonstrates the effectiveness of TNR. In 2018 the National Institute of Health published "A Case Study in Citizen Science: The Effectiveness of a Trap-Neuter-Return Program in a Chicago Neighborhood." Their research found an 82% reduction in population due to the impact of TNR. While this did take time, approximately 9 years, it demonstrates what we see here at BARCS and what so many other Maryland counties see all the time: TNR works. This link will provide you with many other studies that demonstrate the effectiveness of TNR:

[TNR Study](#)

Opponents of TNR will say that outdoor cats are harmful for other animals, such as birds, and they therefore feel feral cats should be euthanized to protect the bird populations. The challenge with that way of thinking is that euthanizing feral cats does not reduce the outdoor cat population, and therefore will not change the impact that outdoor cats have on birds. Rather, by implementing a TNR program, the number of outdoor cats will steadily decrease, and therefore the impact on birds will as well.

As someone who believes all animals deserve the chance to live and be treated humanely, I strongly urge you to pass CB-13 2024 and establish a TNR program in Howard County.

Sincerely,
Yemisi Aina

From: [Janine Pollack](#)
To: [CouncilMail](#)
Subject: Opposed to CB13-2024
Date: Saturday, March 30, 2024 12:10:45 PM
Attachments: [Against-TNR.pages](#)

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Hello Council Members,

Attached is a copy of the testimony I delivered during the public hearing on March 18. As I stated at the time, I am opposed to the county establishing a trap-neuter-return (TNR) policy for a number of reasons, though chief among them is the irreparable harm to native wildlife.

The feral cat problem is one created by humans, as we did not follow through on the responsibilities that come with domesticating a wild animal. TNR supporters could still accomplish many of their goals without needing legislation. Absolutely go into the cat colonies which already exist and help sick individuals.

Also, adopt out as many of the cats as possible. No one is opposed to that, in fact this is how my current cats came into my life. But, for those cats which are deemed too wild to be pets, there is unfortunately no perfect solution. I don't want to see any animal die needlessly, but by allowing these cats to return, you are choosing the cat's life over hundreds to thousands of other native creatures it will encounter in the wild. Those small creatures are dying needlessly as the cats are often not even hunting for food, but for sport. And, as for humane, I urge you to search the web for pictures of what domesticated cats will do to wildlife. While not pleasant, I would argue that euthanizing a feral cat is much more humane than the deaths that our native birds, mammals, amphibians, insects, etc. will face from these non-native predators.

The pro-TNR contingent is loud and vociferous. Please do not be swayed by the sheer volume of their argument. Instead, I urge you to research the issue, consider the plethora of other threats facing our native wildlife (habitat loss, climate change, pollution, etc.) which are already causing populations to plummet, and make the fair, morally responsible choice by opposing this legislation.

Thank you,

Janine Pollack
6401 Saddle Drive
Columbia - District 2

PS: One of my kittens enjoying nature the only way he should - through a window.



Hello, my name is Janine Pollack. I want to thank the Council members for the opportunity to speak on CB13-2024.

What is the ultimate goal of the proposed TNR legislation? To have fewer cats in the natural environment. This is something both sides agree on. Then, why the opposition?

Let's start by talking about cats. They're our pets, companions, even family members. And with their antics and sweet faces, it's hard not to love them. Since moving to Howard County in 1999 I've had seven of these furballs in my life, so I am definitely pro-cat. But all of them have been strictly indoors. My primary concern was always for their safety as I worried about cars. But I also know cats are predators, it's in their nature to hunt. Cat owners, you know what I'm talking about. Pull a string across the floor and those sweet, innocent babies have only one thing on their mind – must kill!

Even with a full belly, that instinct remains. A good-natured house cat outside will still hunt everything in their path. The statistics are staggering: cats kill an estimated 1 to 3 billion birds per year(1). But, cats are opportunistic hunters, also killing things like chipmunks, rabbits, even frogs and butterflies. And while I'm pro-cat, I'm also pro-wildlife. Cats are non-native, highly efficient predators - our native wildlife doesn't stand a chance. With all of the other man-made threats out there, such as climate change, habitat loss, pollution, etc., our wildlife is already struggling. So today, consider me like Dr. Seuss's Lorax. I may not be speaking for the trees, but I am speaking for all of those small animals that also deserve a chance for a humane life. They are the ones meant to be in the ecosystem here in Howard County... not cats, who were introduced by us and are now an invasive species.

The TNR legislation also seems to be in direct opposition to so many other efforts that the County has brought forth, like the Trees for Bees, Bee City, and green infrastructure initiatives. I'm an active Weed Warrior, helping to remove invasive plants from open space. These efforts all encourage pollinators and other wildlife back into our communities. With the potential to decimate these populations, how can we allow cats to roam?

If TNR worked as advertised, I would support it. Unfortunately, the research shows otherwise. In the vast majority of cases, cat populations do not decrease. Also by legislating TNR, you are normalizing cats being outdoors. Citizens come away with the false impression that this is not only acceptable but even encouraged. More pets are allowed to roam outdoors and dumping of unwanted pets increases. In the end, TNR only exacerbates the very problem we're attempting to solve.

Rather than passing TNR legislation, let's invest our energy and resources into methods for limiting cat populations that are not only good for cats but for ALL of the animals we treasure.

From: [Kelsey Tyson](#)
To: [CouncilMail](#)
Subject: CB13
Date: Saturday, March 30, 2024 2:55:23 PM

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

I am writing to express my support for CB13 TNR and hope you will too when the vote occurs on April 1. TNR humanely reduces the number of community cats through spay and neuter and rehomeing of friendly cats.

Thank you,
Kelsey Tyson
33 year Howard county resident (Clarksville)

From: green12205@gmail.com
To: [CouncilMail](#)
Subject: CB13 and private property
Date: Saturday, March 30, 2024 8:53:58 AM

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Council Members,

I am writing about CB13. I remember at the public testimony there was a testimony about cat colonies being on private property. I'm sure there are some colonies on private property but many of them reside on other properties. Here is a photo of a TNR cat (note the clipped ear) that is waiting for food behind Harris Teeter in Kings Contrivance. The forested area that borders the parking lot where the cats no doubt go, is not private property. This is open space owned by the Columbia Association. Is the Columbia Association aware this colony is on their property? I doubt it. This property borders Hammond High School on the other side. There is also the Kings Contivance Community Center that borders this property. Way too many opportunities for these cats to interact with children. This colony uses paper and styrofoam plate/bowls to feed the cats and often blow away in the wind causing litter.



Here is the same cat now in the CA open space.



Here is trash blowing into the CA open space.



Please do not pass this proposed bill.
Sue Muller
Columbia, MD

From: [Megan Bolcar](#)
To: [CouncilMail](#); CouncilDistrict1@howardcountymd.gov; CouncilDistrict2@howardcountymd.gov;
councildistrict3@howardcountymd.gov; CouncilDistrict4@howardcountymd.gov;
CouncilDistrict5@howardcountymd.gov
Subject: Agreement with Maryland Ornithological Society position on CB13
Date: Sunday, March 31, 2024 5:31:05 PM

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear Members of the Howard County Council:

I am a resident of Columbia, MD, and a member of the Maryland Ornithological Society (MOS) and the Howard County Bird Club (HCBC). I support the position taken by MOS and HCBC; I DO NOT support CB13-2024.

The supporters and opposers of this bill can agree on two points. None of us want to see cats suffer, and we must do something to lower or stop the negative effects of feral cats on the environment. I do not think the CB-13, which would officially establish a Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) program in Howard County, will accomplish those goals.

A literature review conducted by the University of Florida, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (IFAS) Extension program investigated peer-reviewed, scientific literature to determine the effectiveness of TNR, as well as whether the TNR method is humane (<https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/publication/UW468>). The authors concluded that “the lack of scientifically applied monitoring in studies makes reliable estimates of population sizes and TNR outcomes unreliable.” Many studies that claim TNR to be effective in reducing feral cat populations do not use scientifically vetted population data collection or analysis methods. I have concerns about the claims that local TNR groups make about the effectiveness of their programs. Before moving forward with this bill, I urge the council to request local organizations that claim their TNR programs are effective to provide a detailed report of their data collection methods and analysis, and engage an external group with no potential conflicts of interest to perform an evaluation of the success of the program.

As clearly outlined by the testimony submitted by MOS and HCBC, TNR is neither humane nor effective, to wildlife nor the cats that are released; TNR cats kill birds and wildlife; and TNR and free roaming cats are a threat to public and wildlife health. In addition, the MOS and HCBC provide several humane cat reduction suggestions, which benefit wildlife, public health, and the cats themselves, including:

- Strongly promote adoption programs by animal control agencies and local governments as well as other appropriate solutions such as enclosed sanctuaries- remove them from the ecosystem where neither wildlife nor public health are threatened.
- Aggressively educate the public on the problem of cat overpopulation and the need for neutering and vaccination.
- Encourage cat owners to neuter their cats if not engaged in breeding.
- Encourage cat owners to keep their cats indoors or leashed or fenced when outdoors. A good resource for those wishing to expose their cats to the outdoors without hurting wildlife is the American Bird Conservancy's Cats Indoors! Program.
- Enact and enforce local municipal and county leash and licensing laws, with requirement of microchipping.
- Fully fund municipal and county animal control agencies.
- Provide low-cost or free neutering programs by local governments and humane organizations.
- Require animal control agencies to use euthanasia only as a last resort, while ensuring that genuine pets are not accidentally put down.
- That MOS continues a dialogue on this issue with organizations and government agencies to devise the most appropriate, humane, and conservation-minded solutions to the issues.

To conclude, CB-13 is bad for birds, public health, wildlife health, and the cats themselves.

I urge the Council to table this bill for further study and demonstrable action on the recommendations offered above.

Sincerely,

Megan Bolcar

From: [T.C](#)
To: [CouncilMail](#)
Cc: [Ball, Calvin](#)
Subject: Council Bill 13-2024 Trap Neuter Release (TNR)
Date: Sunday, March 31, 2024 10:32:57 PM

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear Members of the Howard County Council:

I am in opposition to CB13-2024 (Trap-Neuter-Release (TNR)) which is also the position taken by the Maryland Ornithological Society (MOS) and the Howard County Bird Club where I am a member along with family members including my ten year old grandson, Teddy.

Feral cats are a very serious problem in our environment, namely that they kill millions of birds a year along with other wildlife disrupting the ecosystem. TNR programs do nothing to help our declining bird populations and potentially make the situation worse.

Cats are a public health hazard as they spread toxoplasma gondii. As the definitive host, they are the only source of the parasite in the environment. Toxoplasmosis is a leading cause of human death from food-borne illness and has been linked to brain and behavioral changes in humans.

Feral cats suffer a cruel existence living in the wild. They are considered a nuisance and may be treated as such by local residents, are subject to poor weather conditions, starvation and disease, predation and death. Feeding these cats by volunteers often results in environmental problems of styrofoam and paper containers littering the areas where they are fed.

This bill encourages cruelty to TNR and free-roaming cats. While the cats are supposed to be vaccinated against rabies and other diseases, they rarely get the periodic booster shots needed to maintain immunity or to receive continuity of care. Lack of continuity of veterinary care meets the CB13-2024 definition of cruelty.

While I am opposed to the bill, I would support tabling CB13-2024 for further study and to discuss further options, including the following:

- Strongly promote adoption programs by animal control agencies and local governments as well as other appropriate solutions such as enclosed sanctuaries-remove them from the ecosystem where neither wildlife nor public health are threatened.
- Aggressively educate the public on the problem of cat overpopulation and the need for neutering and vaccination.
- Encourage cat owners to neuter their cats if not engaged in breeding.
- Encourage cat owners to keep their cats indoors or leashed or fenced when outdoors. A good

resource for those wishing to expose their cats to the outdoors without hurting wildlife is the American Bird Conservancy's Cats Indoors! Program.

- Enact and enforce local municipal and county leash and licensing laws, with requirement of microchipping.

- Fully fund municipal and county animal control agencies.

- Provide low-cost or free neutering programs by local governments and humane organizations.

- Require animal control agencies to use euthanasia only as a last resort, while ensuring that genuine pets are not accidentally put down.

- That MOS continues a dialogue on this issue with organizations and government agencies to devise the most appropriate, humane, and conservation-minded solutions to the issues.

To conclude, CB-13 is bad for birds, public health, wildlife health, and the cats themselves.

Thank you for your consideration of my opinion on this bill.

Sincerely,

Terry Chaconas

3242 Jones Road Woodbine 21797

From: Megan Bottino <meganxelizabethe@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, April 1, 2024 2:41 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: CB-13 2024

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear Howard County Council,

As a Maryland resident, animal lover, and animal advocate, I am writing to you in support of CB-13 2024: Trap-Neuter-Return Program Establishment. Trap-Neuter-Return, or TNR, is the humane way to care for the outdoor cat population while simultaneously reducing the number of outdoor cats in our communities.

As a volunteer at the Baltimore Animal Rescue and Care Shelter (BARCS) in Baltimore City, I have seen firsthand the positive impact of TNR. BARCS treats every cat as a respected creature, whether friendly or feral, and has multiple programs in place, including TNR, to ensure feral cats receive the same humane care as friendly cats. Running TNR clinics allows caretakers who feed community cats to get the cats vaccinated and spayed/neutered, providing a better quality of life for the cat while also ensuring the cat cannot reproduce. And BARCS is not the only shelter in Maryland who has seen the benefits of TNR. In fact, every other county in Central Maryland has TNR programs available to its residents aside from Howard County.

There is a great deal of research that exists which demonstrates the effectiveness of TNR. In 2018 the National Institute of Health published "A Case Study in Citizen Science: The Effectiveness of a Trap-Neuter-Return Program in a Chicago Neighborhood." Their research found an 82% reduction in population due to the impact of TNR. While this did take time, approximately 9 years, it demonstrates what we see here at BARCS and what so many other Maryland counties see all the time: TNR works. This link will provide you with many other studies that demonstrate the effectiveness of TNR:

<https://humanepro.org/page/community-cats-scientific-studies-and-data#:~:text=TNR%20Reduces%20Cat%20Numbers,Targeted%20TNR%20resulted&text=in%20neighborhood%20study,.Citizen%20science%20was%20employed%20to%20document%20the%20impact%20of%20TNR,end%20of%20the%20study%20period>

Opponents of TNR will say that outdoor cats are harmful for other animals, such as birds, and they therefore feel feral cats should be euthanized to protect the bird populations. The challenge with that way of thinking is that euthanizing feral cats does not reduce the outdoor cat population, and therefore will not change the impact that outdoor cats have on birds. Rather, by implementing a TNR program, the number of outdoor cats will steadily decrease, and therefore the impact on birds will as well.

As someone who believes all animals deserve the chance to live and be treated humanely, I strongly urge you to pass CB-13 2024 and establish a TNR program in Howard County.

Sincerely,

From: T C <tmchaconas@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, April 1, 2024 6:40 PM
To: CouncilMail
Cc: Ball, Calvin
Subject: Audubon articles on cats/birds - Spring 2024 Council Bill 13-2024 Trap Neuter Release (TNR)

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear Council Members,

I just picked up our mail and my grandson Teddy showed me that the Spring 2024 Audubon Magazine issue has two articles about cats and birds. I realize your vote is tonight, but we send this along to suggest that tabling the bill may give you additional time to consider more options when voting on Trap-Neuter-Release legislation.

This article outlines the perilous nature of cats in the outdoors, plus offers that after habitat loss and fragmentation, those mind-boggling figures (cats being responsible for the killing of billions of birds and mammals annually in the US), made outdoor cats the number two cause of avian mortality, deadlier than building and wind turbine collisions combined. Peter Marra, ornithologist, dean of Georgetown University's Earth Commons Institute said "Outdoor cats are contributing to the unraveling of the complex, interwoven web of species of plants and animals that make up nature,"

There's helpful information including what other jurisdictions are doing which may help to inform your decision on this bill.

<https://www.audubon.org/news/why-it-so-hard-keep-cats-indoors>

Thanks for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Terry Chaconas
3242 Jones Road
Woodbine, MD 21797

On Sun, Mar 31, 2024 at 10:32 PM T C <tmchaconas@gmail.com> wrote:

Dear Members of the Howard County Council:

I am in opposition to CB13-2024 (Trap-Neuter-Release (TNR)) which is also the position taken by the Maryland Ornithological Society (MOS) and the Howard County Bird Club where I am a member along with family members including my ten year old grandson, Teddy.

Feral cats are a very serious problem in our environment, namely that they kill millions of birds a year along with other wildlife disrupting the ecosystem. TNR programs do nothing to help our declining bird populations and potentially make the situation worse.

Cats are a public health hazard as they spread toxoplasma gondii. As the definitive host, they are the only source of the parasite in the environment. Toxoplasmosis is a leading cause of human death from food-borne illness and has been linked to brain and behavioral changes in humans.

Feral cats suffer a cruel existence living in the wild. They are considered a nuisance and may be treated as such by local residents, are subject to poor weather conditions, starvation and disease, predation and death. Feeding these cats by volunteers often results in environmental problems of styrofoam and paper containers littering the areas where they are fed.

This bill encourages cruelty to TNR and free-roaming cats. While the cats are supposed to be vaccinated against rabies and other diseases, they rarely get the periodic booster shots needed to maintain immunity or to receive continuity of care. Lack of continuity of veterinary care meets the CB13-2024 definition of cruelty.

While I am opposed to the bill, I would support tabling CB13-2024 for further study and to discuss further options, including the following:

- Strongly promote adoption programs by animal control agencies and local governments as well as other appropriate solutions such as enclosed sanctuaries-remove them from the ecosystem where neither wildlife nor public health are threatened.
- Aggressively educate the public on the problem of cat overpopulation and the need for neutering and vaccination.
- Encourage cat owners to neuter their cats if not engaged in breeding.
- Encourage cat owners to keep their cats indoors or leashed or fenced when outdoors. A good resource for those wishing to expose their cats to the outdoors without hurting wildlife is the American Bird Conservancy's Cats Indoors! Program.
- Enact and enforce local municipal and county leash and licensing laws, with requirement of microchipping.
- Fully fund municipal and county animal control agencies.
- Provide low-cost or free neutering programs by local governments and humane organizations.
- Require animal control agencies to use euthanasia only as a last resort, while ensuring that genuine pets are not accidentally put down.
- That MOS continues a dialogue on this issue with organizations and government agencies to devise the most appropriate, humane, and conservation-minded solutions to the issues.

To conclude, CB-13 is bad for birds, public health, wildlife health, and the cats themselves.

Thank you for your consideration of my opinion on this bill.

Sincerely,

Terry Chaconas

3242 Jones Road Woodbine 21797

Anderson, Isaiah

From: Tom Mateya <tmateya1@outlook.com>
Sent: Monday, April 1, 2024 5:46 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Support CB-13 and save the cats

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

I am a 39-year resident of Howard County and am writing to urge the County Council to support CB13. The trap-and-kill program and replace it with a trap-neuter-vaccinate return program to manage free roaming cats.

Many other Maryland counties trap-neuter-vaccinate and return cats without many problems. I am familiar with other States that also save cats, not kill them.

The cats will be out there in the wild, let's help them and improve our situation too.

I feel strongly it is important that we value all animal life.

Tom Mateya

240-210-6135

From: k c <cheshirekathy@yahoo.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 3, 2024 5:56 PM
To: tellhoco; Jung, Debra; Walsh, Elizabeth; Rigby, Christiana; Jones, Opel; Yungmann, David; CouncilMail
Subject: Re: Vote on CB13-2024 - TNR Program Establishment

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

I am so disappointed in this decision and am particularly disappointed in the two votes to abstain.

It is my understanding that Liz Walsh was a no vote before it even got started as well, which hardly seems appropriate of an elected official.

I would like to know exactly what was or was not contained in the testimony that kept Ms. Walsh from changing her vote to yes, and why she was opposed to it to begin with.

TNR is humane. It allows reduction in cat populations by keeping cats from breeding and also keeps homeless cats from being euthanized due to the irresponsible actions of humans.

Given the amount of positive testimony and the clear fact that the majority of constituents testifying were for passage of this proposal (which is well past due) I do not understand the failure to pass this bill, which would have offered assistance to those of us who are already doing our best to TNR on our own, find homes for the dumped cats so the Animal Control office does not euthanize them and allow us to apply for grants to assist in the not insignificant expense of doing the work we love.

Howard County claims to be a leader, but here we are still, with no TNR program while other counties have had them in place for a long while.

Please advise how to bring this bill back a second time to allow additional testimony, or put it on a ballot and allow ALL Howard County citizens to have a say, not just a handful of councilman. (Honestly, the lady who testified that cats spread the avian flu seemed to not understand that the avian flu comes from...birds!)

Additionally, since the Council is not on board with TNR as a humane and proven way to control the pet population, and in particular cats, perhaps a bill can be submitted and passed that requires all pet owners in Howard County to Spay or Neuter with no exceptions. That would undoubtedly lessen the homeless population of animals so the volunteers can maybe one day rest easy knowing the job was finally done.

In closing, please put this bill back on the docket for reconsideration.

Thank you all for your time.

Kathy Cesca

On Wednesday, April 3, 2024 at 10:41:16 AM EDT, <tellhoco@howardcountymd.gov> wrote:

Good morning!

I am reaching out to provide you with an update on CB13-2024, a bill which proposed to establish a Trap-Neuter-Release program in Howard County for cats.

The County Council met in Legislative Session Monday night and CB13-2024 was voted down. You can watch a recording of the vote [here](#) and see an overview of the votes [here](#) (under motions/votes).

Prior to the session last night, I expressed my desire to the bill sponsor to table the bill, which would have allowed for several additional weeks to consider the proposal. I was working to gain a better understanding of how implementation would work, and the outcomes and experiences of other jurisdictions that have implemented a TNR program. Unfortunately, I was still waiting to receive some of this data, which would have allowed me to feel confident in my vote. Without this information, I did not feel ready to take a position, which is why I ultimately abstained.

Thank you again for taking the time to share your thoughts on this program with me.

Yours, in service,

Christiana Rigby – *she/her/hers*
Councilwoman, District 3
Serving North Laurel, Savage, Columbia, Jessup, Elkridge, and Guilford

Howard County Council
3430 Court House Drive, Ellicott City, MD 21043
crigby@howardcountymd.gov
410.313.4101



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