To TNR or not to TNR
An Animal Control Advisory Board
Brief Summary on TNR

Please note this is a brief compilation of articles and opinions on this subject. Many of the studies found can be countered by another study from another source and ideally should be evaluated in their entirety to understand the true outcomes. There will be ample opportunity for discussion and this presentation is not meant to be all inclusive nor to represent the opinions of the presenter.
Overview

• What is the problem
• Important definitions
• TNR/TNTNR brief overview
• Legal – State and City Ordinances
• Who is doing what (other Cities)
• What do other organizations think (AVMA/AAHA/AAFP/etc)
• Financial Implications
• What/Who is it going to take
## 2011 Virginia Beach Animal Control Report

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Species</th>
<th>Reclaimed By owner</th>
<th>Adopted</th>
<th>Transferred In State</th>
<th>Transferred out of State</th>
<th>Died</th>
<th>Euth</th>
<th>Misc</th>
<th>On Hand Dec 31</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2011 Cats</td>
<td>163</td>
<td>547</td>
<td>271</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>2067</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>193</td>
<td>3307</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010 Cats</td>
<td>171</td>
<td>494</td>
<td>379</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>2004</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>3180</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009 Cats</td>
<td>192</td>
<td>495</td>
<td>477</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>1938</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>3210</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>526</td>
<td>1536</td>
<td>1127</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>4209</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>355</td>
<td>9697</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

***2011 Feral Cat Count = 1,322 (40% of total cat arrests)***  
***2010 Feral Cat Count = 1,272 (40% of total cat arrests)***  
***2009 Feral Cat Count = 1,284 (40% of total cat arrests)***
What is the real problem

• We don’t like killing 1300 cats a year

• We understand 1300 free roaming feral cats are a “menace” to the community
What outcome are we looking for?

• Reduced kittens in shelter?
• Reduced community cat complaints?
• Reduced feral cat euthanasia?
• Reduced disease?
• Reduced numbers of feral cats in our community?
What is success?

- 0 kittens in our shelter?
- Less kittens in our shelter?
- Spay and Neuter all feral cats?
- Euthanize all feral cats?
- No community complaints?
How will we measure success?

• Stage program and evaluate in closed colony?
• Financially – 2011 vs. 2012?
• Cat euthanasia at animal control?
• Number of complaints – 2011 vs. 2012?
• Official scientific study?
**Important Definitions**

- **T** = trap(ideally humanely) – usually by citizens aka “trappers”
- **N** = neuter/make sterile or unable to reproduce (by a veterinarian)
- **R** = return/release
- **Feral** – outdoor cats not socialized to people
- **Managed Colonies** – groups of feral cats who live in a set location and are cared for by a designated person
- **Wildlife** – all species of wild animals, wild birds and freshwater fish
- **Wild animal** – any member of the animal kingdom except domestic animals including Domestic Cat (*Felis catus*), hybrid cats with wild felines
- **Dump** – knowingly desert, forsake, or give up without having secured another custodian any dog, cat or other companion animal in any public place including the right-of-way of any public highway, road or street or on the property of another.
• Companion Animal – domestic or feral cat/dog nonhuman primate, guinea pig, hamster, rabbit not raised for food or fur etc, exotic or native animal, reptile, exotic or native bird, or any feral animal or animal under the care, custody, or ownership of a person or any animal that is bought, sold, traded or bartered by any person. Agricultural animals, game species, or research animals shall not be considered companion animals.

• Abandon – desert, forsake entirely, to give up, or relinquish
• Adequate care – the practice of good husbandry, handling, production management, confinement, feeding, watering, protection, sheltering, transportation, veterinary care and euthanasia to prevent suffering or impairment of health
• Owner – individual legally responsible for care and problems associated with cat (Webster: one who has the legal and rightful title to something whether he is the possessor or not)
• Adoption – transfer of ownership from a releasing agency to an individual
• Veterinary Treatments – treatment by or on the orders of a duly licensed veterinarian.
• Foster Care Provider – an individual who provides care or rehabilitation for companion animals through an affiliation with a pound, animal shelter, or other releasing agency.
Let’s establish that TNR includes testing and vaccination – how often would really be the debate – for a later time.

Ally Cat Allies 1990s (non profit) essentially developed TNR in the for the humane treatment of feral cats and as an alternate solution to the feral cat situation.

Cats are humanely trapped and taken to a veterinarian for neutering / testing and vaccination. After recovery, the cats are returned to their homes – their colony – outdoors.

Kittens and cats who are “friendly and socialized to people” may be adopted into homes.

Alley Cat Allies reports that “TNR improves the lives of feral cats, improves their relationships with the people who live near them, and decreases the size of the colony over time”

Usually partnered with shelter reform including “no longer accepting cats at the shelter” (I was personally confused by this..?)
Proponents of TNR Feel

• Other methods of population control do not work for feral cats
• Trapping and euthanasia does not decrease population or expense to taxpayer for feral cats
• Feral cats are not adoptable into pet homes
• Relocation endangers cat’s lives, causes stress and suffering and creates a vacuum that is filled by remaining cats in the colony or cats of the surrounding colonies.
• Cat sanctuaries do not stabilize the population in the community – not enough of them – creates stress for cats used to living outdoors.
Alley Cats Reported Benefits of TNR

- Stops breeding cycle – therefore improving their lives (reduction of mating/pregnancy stress) while preventing reproduction and reportedly reducing the incidence of hormone related tumors
- Prevents feral cats from being killed in shelters
- Makes the people who live in the community with feral cats feel like the cats are being cared for hopefully minimizing the diseases they spread (after single or maybe multiple vaccines depending on how the colonies are managed) and the disturbance that intact cats cause (roaming/ fighting/ yowling/ spraying)
- Stabilizes feral cat colonies/ improve cats’ condition (weight)
- Potentially may “re-home” a socialized pet cat that is inadvertently in the colony
- Reported approximately 80% of one managed colony of cats lived >6 years
For our purposes we will group TNR with other programs as testing and vaccinating are both components of the TNR programs identified for this presentation.
Opposition to TNR feels

- Trapping can be difficult – public danger
- Does not control the spread of disease or parasites among domestic species – feeding posts promote visitation by other wildlife (rats etc)
- Research supporting TNR is insufficient – “what is the measure of success” – vacuum effect
- Questionable whether vaccination once controls disease long term (zoonosis – domestic species to human) – how does the message of one time vaccination impact the companion population?
- Re-trapping feral cats is very difficult if not impossible.
- Threat to wildlife – predation and disease vectors
- Public health concern (fleas and feces etc)
- Formal programs take away the ability for animal control to do its job and remove “excessive” felines or to remit them to animal shelters or elsewhere
Legal Issues : State

3.2.6503 Care of Companion animals by owner
3.2.6504 Abandonment of Animals – Class 3 misdemeanor to abandon or dump any animal
3.2.6251 Rabies inoculation of dogs and cats
3.2.6525 Regulations to prevent the spread of Rabies
3.2.6546 Disposition of animals by municipal pound
3.2.6548 Disposition of animals by shelter
3.2.6549 Disposition of animals by releasing agencies other than pound or shelter
3.2.6551 Notification by finders of companion animals
3.2.6585 Dogs and cats are personal property
3.2.6587 Part (A) (6) allowing a dog or cat with infections disease to roam or stray from premises
18.2.323 Allowing a dead animal to remain unburied
Legal: City
5-530 Dogs or Cats running at large

a) Any person owning, keeping or harboring any dog or cat within the city that is found running at large shall be guilty of a class 4 misdemeanor. For the purposes of the section, a dog shall be deemed to run at large while roaming, running or self hunting off the property of its owner or custodian.

b) It shall be the responsibility of any person owning, keeping or harboring any dog or cat within the city to keep such a dog or cat confined to the premises of such person. The words “confined to the premises” shall be construed to mean that such dog or cat shall be kept on the owner’s or custodian’s premises, unless in the custody of a responsible person.

c) This section shall not apply where the owner, custodian or trainer has released a dog for the express purpose of hunting game in zoned agricultural, where it is lawful to hunt, or competing in field trials or training, and such dog becomes temporarily out of control of such owner, custodian or trainer or is returning to the place of release after the hunt or chase. If such dog is found violating any other section of this code, or committing an unlawful act under the state law, it shall become subject to impoundment: and the owner, custodian shall be liable for all fines as prescribed by the law.
Continued

Sect. 5-533. Nuisance animals generally

a) No owner shall fail to exercise proper care and control of his animals to prevent them from becoming a public nuisance. Molesting a passerby, attacking without seriously injuring any person without provocation on 2 or more occasions, chasing vehicles, habitually attacking but not seriously injuring other domestic animals, trespassing upon school grounds, or trespassing upon private property in such a manner as to damage property shall be deemed a nuisance. Three or more violations of City Code 5-1 530 in any 12 month period shall also be deemed a nuisance.

b) Any person owning or having in his possession or under his control any animal constituting a nuisance shall be summoned before the general district court of the city to show cause why such animal should not be confined, disposed of or removed or the nuisance otherwise abated and, upon proof that the animal constitutes a public nuisance, the animal in question shall, by order of the general district court of the city, either be confined, removed from the city, or the nuisance activity otherwise abated as such court shall order. It shall be unlawful and shall constitute contempt of court for any person to harbor or conceal any animal which has been ordered disposed of or removed by the general district court, or fail to confine or restrain an animal when such an order has been entered by the court.
c) Any person who owns a dog, cat or other animal that has been adjudicated a nuisance pursuant to this section by the general district court and who appeals that decision to the circuit court shall be responsible for the fees connected with the impounding of the animal by the bureau of animal control. If on appeal the circuit court determines that the dog, cat or other animal is not a nuisance, no such fees for the impounding of the animal shall be imposed.

Section 5-541 Disease Prevention

It shall be unlawful for any owner of any dog or cat with a contagious or infectious disease to permit such dog or cat to stray from the owner’s premises if such disease is known to the owner.
Veterinary Practice Laws

• There are rules regarding treatment of unowned animals. Waiting on call from Virginia state board president.
What do other cities do currently?

• Fairfax County VA – TNR program since 10/2008
• Alley Cats lists: Baltimore, MD; Washington, DC; Austin, TX; Jacksonville, FL; Topeka, KS; San Francisco, CA; LA, CA; Cook County, IL
• Many other cities have created TNR programs
Closed Communities practicing TNR

- Disneyland
- Portland’s Professional Soccer Stadium
- Resort Communities
- College Campuses

• Key point is that these are maintained/managed by the community
What do other organizations think?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Against TNR</th>
<th>Support TNR</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Virginia Chapter of Wildlife Society</td>
<td>• HSUS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• National Animal Control Association</td>
<td>• ASPCA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• American Bird Conservatory</td>
<td>• AAFP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• American Association of Wildlife Veterinarians</td>
<td>• Previously AAHA has supported TNR but currently their position statement has been removed from their website. Articles state “AAHA endorse...”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• National Association of State Public Health Veterinarians</td>
<td></td>
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The AVMA neither endorsed nor opposes appropriately managed cat colonies. See details.
What are the financial obligations?

The president of the New Jersey Animal Control Officers Association estimates that towns pay a minimum of $49 to hold one cat for the seven days required by state law. Some towns pay more than $100 to hold each cat. Towns also pay upwards of $35 to euthanize each cat, with additional fees for body disposal. In total, it costs New Jersey municipalities $85-$200 to trap and kill each feral cat. We can fill in our own numbers here.

TNR cost to: trap, transport, test, treat, spay/neuter, transport

Euthanize cost to: trap, transport, euthanize, dispose
Who is going to do it?

- In most cases trained citizens (who have taken a class) actually trap and care for colonies
- Requires coordination (shelter staff?)
- Someone to alter/test and or vaccinate
- Trainers to teach citizens how to maintain colonies (shelter staff?)
- Community outreach – educating neighbors and addressing their concerns (shelter staff?)
Discussion