



Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) Programs Protect Public Health

To Whom It May Concern:

As a veterinarian on the IndyFeral Advisory Board, I am writing in regards to the program of Trap/Neuter/Release that has been undertaken by the IndyFeral organization in Indianapolis, IN. I have observed and participated in this program that involves an effort to decrease the number of wild or feral felines in the urban and suburban areas in and around Indianapolis. Through monthly surgical neutering days and volunteer monitoring of cat colonies, this organization has worked to control the spread of cat colonies that can be a public health concern to officials and citizens. By neutering these animals as they are trapped, we cut down on the reproduction in these colonies and decrease their numbers, thus minimizing any disease transmission to other animals and people.

Trapping and euthanizing feral cats is a more expensive effort and does not decrease the population over time because the cats can reproduce themselves many times over in just one year. Because these animals generally do not make good household pets, returning them to their home and eliminating their reproductive life decreases the problem of growing cat populations. Work done nationally by similar groups in urban and suburban settings along with community cooperation has produced measurable results. Feral or wild cats are returned to their home, kittens can be adopted out and very ill animals will not be returned to the colony. Managing these populations in this way is cost effective, more humane and acceptable to the community at large.

As these cats are retrieved they are vaccinated for rabies. It has been proven that vaccination of pets has been the best barrier to spread of rabies during the 1900s and this reinforces that philosophy. There has not been a positive cat for rabies in Indiana since 1984. Cats are the domestic animal most commonly diagnosed with rabies in the US. Since these feral cats are the most likely to encounter wildlife and wildlife is the primary source of rabies in this country, we not only protect the cat, but also stop potential transmission of this disease to our human and pet populations.

Your support of this program benefits both the people and animals that share this community.

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