



WHY ARE THERE STRAY CATS and WHAT IS A "HOLDING CAPACITY" ?

A common complaint sent to PAWS :

*" There are so many cats in our house/garage/yard/condo/office!
They're not ours. What can we do to get rid of them? "*

Stray cats, whether feral or formerly-owned, will only frequent an area where there is a constant food source.

IMPORTANT NOTE:

Disposing or relocating a cat or cat colony to another place will only create a vacancy for a new set of cats to take over the area due to what is called the "holding capacity".



WHAT IS A "HOLDING CAPACITY" ?

It could be any area that serves as a food source, usually exposed food wastes or a person habitually feeding strays, thus attracting animals – be it dogs, cats or rats.

All areas that have food scraps which stray animals can subsist on has a "holding capacity". Clean, highly-commercialized establishments & communities that practice effective garbage collection and keeping systems have a smaller holding capacity and are unlikely to attract stray animals.

Despite some residential subdivisions and barangays implementing proper garbage management (from disposal to collection), the stray holding capacity is still not completely eradicated due to neighboring residential areas NOT practicing the same proper garbage management system.



WHAT IS THE MOST EFFECTIVE LONG-TERM SOLUTION ?



TNR or "TRAP-NEUTER-RETURN" is considered the most effective method of stray population control. A sterilized cat will not mate and breed. Hence, no unwanted litters to deal with. The current number in the colony will not increase. Also other cats will less likely enter a colony with spayed and neutered residents.

Fixed cats tend to protect their food source and will guard their territory from other newcomers while unfixed cats will reproduce and naturally share their food with their youngs. Consequently, the kittens will reach sexual maturity. And so the vicious cycle continues.

If all cats in the colony are neutered/spayed, their numbers will either remain as is or decrease with every lifespan expiry. The only chance a new batch of strays will take over the holding capacity is if all the original cats have died and food source is still available.

WHO SHOULD CATCH STRAY ANIMALS ?

PAWS does not take in stray dogs and cats. The City Pound or Animal Control of the municipality is responsible for capturing and impounding stray animals. Unfortunately, these agencies use the "TRAP and KILL" method which is considered a short-sighted and ineffective solution because it does not address the root cause of the problem.

Without a MASSIVE SPAY & NEUTER PROGRAM, enforcers will only end up doing this "remedy" over and over again. Regrettably, most LGUs (Local Government Units) have yet to launch such a program on a wider scale.

WHAT CAN YOU DO ?

Approach community leaders (barangay captain, subdivision president) and propose a TNR operation or campaign in your area. Coordinate with a licensed veterinarian who is experienced with spay/neuter surgery and willing to offer a charity rate for such services.

When a community coordinates with PAWS for a TNR program, the agreement is as follows:

- ① The City Pound shall not be called upon to catch/trap the strays. The effort, cost and resources spent on spaying/neutering will go to waste if the fixed strays will only end up being killed.
- ② The entire community shall cooperate and abide by the following TNR guidelines:
 - humane trapping - animals should not be hurt or subjected to unnecessary stress
 - managed feeding - feeding limited to regular time and area
 - non-taming of cats - no touching, petting or socializing
 - information dissemination on "ear-notching" - all residents must know that "ear-notched" cats have already been TNR'ed, thus left alone or cared for accordingly

To start a TNR program in your community, email PAWS at philpaws@yahoo.com or call 475.1688. Monday to Saturday, 10am to 5pm only.



BE A RESPONSIBLE FEEDER

“ I was just feeding one or two cats at first.
But now there are so many of them! And my neighbors
are starting to complain. What shall I do ? ”

Stray cats will only go to a place where there is a food source.

IMPORTANT REMINDER

**If you decide to feed stray cats,
it is very important to have them spayed or neutered.**

Otherwise, they will mate and breed, resulting to more unwanted litters, thus increasing the stray cat population — a problem which you may have partly had a hand in creating, albeit unintentionally.

Feeding without the necessary effort to spay/neuter the strays is a misguided act of compassion despite the good intentions.

Irresponsible feeders often end up being persecuted and are at the receiving end of complaints from their neighbors and community residents so one must have the strays one feeds fixed or they must initiate or organize a TNR program in the area.



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