Community Cats

WHY DO THEY EXIST

HOW TO MANAGE THEM

CONFLICT RESOLUTION
A little bit about me

I am Dog Person

I do have 3 cats
Why do we have Community Cats

BECAUSE SOMEONE IS FEEDING THEM

YES, BUT THERE IS SO MUCH MORE
Why do we have Community Cats

Because someone dumped them

IF YOU THROW A CAT OUT OF THE CAR WINDOW
IS IT CONSIDERED KITTY LITTER!

memegenerator.net
Why do we have Community Cats

Because Humans Feed Wildlife

Bird Feeders are a consistence source of food for cats, fox, coyotes and snakes. If you feed the prey – the predator will follow.
Why do we have Community Cats

Because we will not live with rodents
natural predators

Cats have filled the void of rodent control where there is a low population of fox, raccoons and snakes.

Rodents are everywhere – having a healthy population of snakes will deter unfed cats from congregating in that area.
Why do we have Community Cats

Raccoon and Fox prey on rodents and birds

Yes, we all know they are rabies vectors – but they also keep the natural balance in check
Why do we have Community Cats

We congregate our garbage

Dumpsters, trash cans, cooking outdoors all provide rodents free meals
Why do we have Community Cats

We build houses close together
Why do we have Community Cats

Birds of Prey find it difficult to hunt

This hawk flew into a building – 3 months later was released 3 miles away
And Why Do We Have Community Cats

- Irresponsible Pet Owners
- We feed birds
- We kill snakes
- We will not live with rabies vectors
- We build homes and business close together making it difficult for birds of prey

Nature has a way of maintaining a balance – no matter how hard humans attempt to mess it up.
Meet Wilson – He’s named after my husband 😊

All my goats are named after my husband
The Million Cat Challenge is a shelter-based campaign to save the lives of one million cats in North America over the next five years. The core strategy of the campaign will focus on five key initiatives that offer every shelter, in every community, practical choices to reduce euthanasia and increase live outcomes for shelter cats.
THE MILLION CAT CHALLENGE

- Alternatives to Intake
- Managed Admissions
- Return to Field
- Capacity for Care
- Removing Barriers to Adoption
Alternatives to Intake

- **Owners Surrenders**
  - Spay/neuter assistance
  - Pet Food Banks
  - Vaccination Clinics
  - Information or assistance for behavioral problems

Offer resources for Good Samaritans – They may be willing to give the cat/kitten a permanent home.
Managed Intake

- Schedule Owner Surrenders – offer resources to allow the cat to stay with the owner until space is available

- Provide alternatives to surrendering to an Animal Control Shelter – provide contact information of local rescue groups

- Provide information of re-homing the pet – how to screen potential new owners
Return to Field

- Trap, Neuter, Vaccinate, Return

- Healthy community cats who are thriving where they are aren’t well-served by admission to a shelter. They’re not homeless; the community is their home.

- Check with your Vet Clinic, there is a rabies vaccination approved for 8 week old kittens.
Return to Field
Return to Field

HERDING CATS

RETURN Top: One of the feral cats is released into its colony last Wednesday. Above: A cat waits to be transported to the veterinarian's office where he will be neutered. Photos by A. Bellebuono.
Capacity for Care

- The Five requirement for Capacity of Care:
  - Freedom from hunger and thirst
  - Freedom from discomfort
  - Freedom from pain, injury, or disease
  - Freedom from fear and distress
  - Freedom to express normal behavior
Removing Barriers to Adoption

- Take the time to educate a potential adopter
- Reduced or waive fees – Observe Adopt a Shelter Cat Month
- Senior Citizens/Veterans discounts
Local Leaders and Laws

- Educate and inform commissioners, councils, and managers about why having community cats is good.
- Talk about animal control’s role and the conflicts it creates between neighbors.
- Explain that every situation is different and a one size fits all approach will not fit.
- Seek out local rescue groups to help convince leaders. They will also have “volunteers” to help the TNVR projects.
Look for Free Money

- PetsMart Charities - [http://www.petsmartcharities.org/](http://www.petsmartcharities.org/)
- Partner with local non-profit groups, humane societies and ASPCA
- Seek grants from local businesses – EMC, Walmart, etc. to help reduce adoption fees and prepare animals in your care for permanent homes.
Looking at the Big Picture

- **Take the time to educate**
  - Community cats take the place of rodents natural predators
  - It’s better to have sterilized, vaccinated cats than new unvaccinated, unsterilized cats
  - The same human behaviors that attracts community cats will also attract raccoon, fox, skunk, coyote and snakes

- You will not be able to make everyone happy – strive to get them to understand both sides
NACA’s on Community Cats

Animal care and control personnel should be empowered to manage all feral, stray and owned cats within the community. Management may include but is not limited to enactment & enforcement of cat related laws, education, public/private partnerships for cat care & control, targeted spay / neuter programs and properly regulated cat caretaker programs.
NACA on Community Cats

The basis of the policy is to protect the public and cats living in the wild so as to minimize the potential for a rabies outbreak. A feral cat is defined as a cat that has been born in the wild or forsaken by the original owner for an extended period of time. A stray cat is one that is at large or escaped from an owner. An owned cat has been claimed by a person who provides the essentials including food, water, shelter, and veterinary care.
NACA on Community Cats

In order to protect feral, stray and owned cats, all local or state governments should pass laws requiring the vaccination and license of all cats in their community. The law should also require that all owned cats be identified with a traceable license, microchip, or tattoo so as to identify them from feral cats. NACA recognizes that in some circumstances, alternative management programs, including Trap Neuter Vaccinate & Return (TNVR) programs may be effective, and recommends that each agency assess the individual need with their community and respond accordingly. NACA advocates for effective public education related to cats, active spaying & neutering initiatives for cats and responsible ownership for all cats.
Questions???

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- [http://www.millioncatchallenge.org/](http://www.millioncatchallenge.org/)
- [http://www.neighborhoodcats.org/RESOURCES_ORDINANCES](http://www.neighborhoodcats.org/RESOURCES_ORDINANCES)