

RESOLUTION NO. 2023-R-28

**A RESOLUTION OF SUSQUEHANNA TOWNSHIP, DAUPHIN COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA
ADOPTING GUIDELINES FOR THE SUSQUEHANNA TOWNSHIP TRAP, NEUTER, AND
RETURN PROGRAM**

WHEREAS, Chapter 2, Section 102 of the Susquehanna Township Code of Ordinances enables the Board of Commissioners to establish a Trap, Neuter, and Return (hereafter "TNR") Program for the purposes of controlling the breeding of feral cats in the community; and

WHEREAS, on February 26, 2014, the Susquehanna Township Board of Commissioners established a TNR Program in partnership with Steelton Community Cats; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Commissioners is desirous of establishing guidelines for the purposes of mitigating potential negative consequences of the TNR Program and for clearer enforcement parameters; and

WHEREAS, the TNR Program guidelines have been attached hereto as Exhibit "A" and made part of this Resolution.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Commissioners of Susquehanna Township hereby adopts the guidelines for the Susquehanna Township Trap, Neuter, and Return Program.

BE IT, AND THE SAME IS HEREBY RESOLVED, this 28th day of September 2023.

**SUSQUEHANNA TOWNSHIP
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

Frank Lynch, President

ATTEST:

David Pribulka, Secretary

Exhibit “A”

Susquehanna Township Trap – Neuter - Release Program Guidelines

Free-roaming and feral cats (aka Community Cats) live in our community and make their homes wherever they can find food and shelter. They are typically un-owned or semi-owned cats, comprised of both strays (lost and abandoned former pets who may be suitable for home environments) and feral (extremely fearful of people and not welcoming of human attention, making them unsuitable for home environments), who are the offspring of other feral or stray cats. Susquehanna Township recognizes the need for innovation in addressing the issues presented by Community Cats. To that end, it recognizes that Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) is an effective and humane method to manage and, over time, reduce the population of Community Cats.

Susquehanna Township is here to help residents manage the Community Cat population by supporting participants in board-approved TNR programs. Participants of the TNR program must comply with the guidelines outlined in this policy as recommended by the Township.

Definitions

Community Cat: A cat that is abandoned, stray, lost, or feral. A community cat is not to be classified as a Public Nuisance Animal merely for being repeatedly found at large.

Community Cat Caregiver: A person who, following Trap-Neuter-Return, provides care, including food, shelter, or medical care, to a Community Cat. A Community Cat Caregiver shall not be considered the owner, harbored, controller, or keeper of a Community Cat.

Ear tipping: The removal of the ¼ inch tip of a Community Cat’s left ear, performed -while the cat is under anesthesia, to identify the Community Cat as being sterilized and lawfully vaccinated for rabies.

Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR): The process of humanely trapping, sterilizing, vaccinating for rabies, ear tipping, and returning Community Cats to their original location.

Health Concerns with Community Cats

Community Cat colonies can cause health concerns among residents of the area. While most feline infectious diseases primarily affect cats, some can be transmitted from cats to people. Cat fecal matter can transmit diseases, as can cat scratches and bites. Mites and fleas are also associated with cats. These health concerns, along with cats getting into trash cans, hiding in cars, destroying gardens and flower beds, attracting insects, and spraying, can impact the quality of life of Township residents.

Rules

The following rules are established as best management practices in participating in a TNR program that can reduce unpleasant smells, sounds, and property damage from Community Cats. Best Practices are important not only for the cats and people who care for them, but for the entire community.

Feeding Times

1. Establish a set time and place to feed the cats each day, during daylight hours, and only feed enough to last one feeding. This practice helps the cats get on a schedule, and it will eliminate attracting other wildlife.
2. Cats should be fed as much as they can eat in a 30-minute period, then all remaining food should be removed.
3. Food should be placed in unset traps for one to two weeks before setting them so the cats can become accustomed to walking into them.
4. Use bowls or plates rather than placing the food directly on the ground, which can leave residue and attract bugs.
5. Replace water regularly, using clean bowls.
6. Automatic feeders cannot be used.

Feeding Station

1. Feeding stations should be placed in areas free of human traffic and in discreet locations that are unlikely to attract attention.
2. The feeding station must be kept neat and tidy. Clean up uneaten food, bowls, cans, and anything else that might be considered trash (and which, if left unattended, might draw attention to the cats).
3. The feeding station should shield the food and water from the elements and allow a cat or two to be inside while eating.
4. Locate the feeding station in a place where traps can be left safely overnight.

Shelter

1. Provide a shelter so the cats are not nesting in places where they are not wanted.
2. Shelters should be hidden and placed in secluded areas to help guide them away from unwanted areas, such as gardens, cars, and .
3. Shelters shall be located away from the property line of neighboring properties.

Cat Waste

1. Establish a litter box. Create a defined sandy area to keep the cats from eliminating in areas you don't want them to.
2. Cover the litter box with a lid to reduce odors from the litter box.
3. The litter box must be located away from neighboring properties.
4. The litter box and any feces outside the litter box must be regularly picked up daily. Always remove cat waste from outdoor areas using a bag and
5. throwing it away.
6. The sand or litter material used in the litter box must be replaced at least monthly.
7. Plant a bed of catnip in the area near the litter area to draw cats away from flowerbeds.

All cats in the colony should be trapped, altered, and vaccinated against rabies. Ear tipping is required once trapped, which allows community members to know how many Community Cats have been sterilized and vaccinated.

More information on deterring cats from your property can be found on the Township website at www.susquehannatwp.com/TNR.