

# **Feral Cats in Oshawa and Trap-Neuter-Release-Manage Program Options**



# Outdoor – Feral vs Stray

	STRAY	FERAL
<b>Socialization to Humans</b>	May approach people, houses, porches, or cars	Will not approach and will likely seek hiding places to avoid people
<b>Socialization to Other Cats</b>	Will likely live alone, not be part of a group	May belong to a colony
<b>Body Language</b>	Might walk and move like a house cat, such as walking with tail up – a sign of friendliness  Will probably look at you, blink, or make eye contact	May crawl, crouch, stay low to the ground, and protect body with tail  Unlikely to make eye contact
<b>Vocalization</b>	May be vocal, meow, or “answer” your voice	Won’t meow, beg, or purr
<b>Schedule</b>	Will be visible primarily during the daytime	More likely to be nocturnal; occasionally out during the day

# Outdoor – Feral vs Stray (cont'd)

	STRAY	FERAL
<b>Physical Appearance</b>	<p>Will probably be dirty or disheveled</p> <p>Will not have an eartip</p>	<p>Will probably have a clean, well-kept coat. A male with a big head and thick neck, muscular body, and/or scars from fighting is more likely to be feral, since these are traits associated with intact males (and only 2% of feral cats are neutered in the U.S.). He may also have a spiky coat from high testosterone levels and less time spent grooming; may also have “stud tail”—hair loss, greasiness, or bumps at the base of the tail due to hormones.</p> <p>Will likely have an eartip if neutered as part of a TNR program</p>
<b>Pregnancy, Nursing, Kittens</b>		<p>A female who is pregnant or lactating is more likely to be feral, since only 2% of feral cats are neutered in the U.S.</p>

# Trapped – Feral vs Stray

	STRAY	FERAL
<b>Touch Barrier</b>	It may be possible to touch the cat eventually or she may tolerate a small amount of touching with an object	Cannot be touched, even by a caregiver
<b>Cage Behaviour</b>	May come to the front of the cage  May eventually rub against the cage in a friendly way	Will likely stay in the back of the cage and retreat as far back as possible  If jolted or frightened, may shake, rattle, or climb the cage, and could become injured banging into the cage
<b>Level of Relaxation</b>	May relax over time	Will remain tense and unsocial

# Trapped – Feral vs Stray (cont'd)

	STRAY	FERAL
<b>Responsiveness</b>	<p>May investigate toys or food placed near the cage</p> <p>May respond to household sounds like cat food cans or bags being opened</p>	<p>Will likely ignore all people and toys, and possibly even food</p> <p>Will not show any familiarity or interest in household sounds</p>
<b>Fear and Anxiety</b>	<p>May hiss or growl to show anxiety</p>	<p>Will be aggressive and lash out if threatened or cornered (signs of aggression include ears back and eyes dilated)</p>

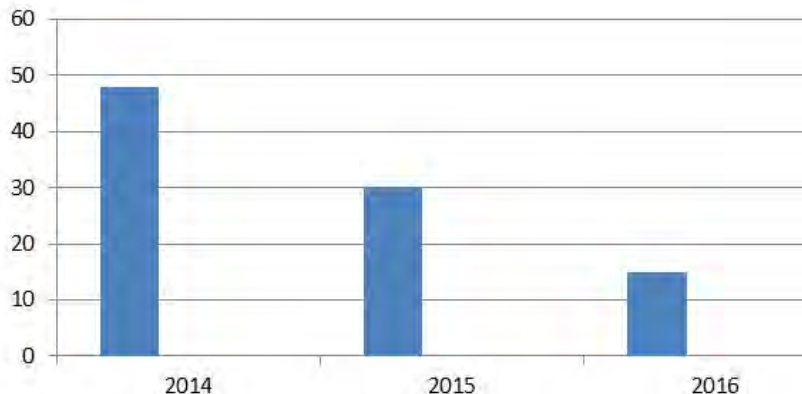
# Oshawa Feral Cat Statistics

- **Complaints:**

- 13 since March 2000

- **Impounded:**

- 48 in 2014; 30 in 2015; and, 15 in 2016



- **A.V.A. Data:**

- 15 known active colonies
- About 75-125 sterilized cats
- Most colonies located in residential areas: south Oshawa; Central Business District; and vicinity of U.O.I.T./Durham College

- **M.L.E. Field Observations:**

- March inspections of the 6 largest colonies
- No indication of the numbers of feral cats still remaining nor colony management (feeding or housing stations)

# Potential Issues

1. Nuisance and property/environmental damage
2. Zoning and land use
3. Responsible Pet Owners (R.P.O.)  
By-law and Animals for Research Act  
(A.R.A.)
4. Trespassing on private property

# 1. Nuisance and Property/Environmental Damage

## Nuisance Behaviours:

- Yowling and fighting (at night)
- Spraying urine
- Fouling areas with urine and feces

## Environmental Impacts:

- Contamination of the environment (urine and feces)
- Hunting small mammals and birds



## 2. Zoning & Land Use

- Zoning By-law 60-94 controls use of land
- Location of managed feral cat colonies are only permitted in areas zoned for agricultural uses
- Agricultural Uses are permitted in:
  - **Agricultural Zones** (AG-A, AG-B, and AG-ORM)
  - **Open Space Zones** (OSU-U, OSR-A, OSR-B, OSH, and OSR-M)
  - **Mineral Aggregate Zones** (MA)
  - **Urban Reserve Zones** (UR)
  - **Airport Zones** (AP-B and AP-D)

### 3. R.P.O. By-law and A.R.A.

#### **Responsible Pet Owners (R.P.O.) By-law:**

- **Running-at-large** – all cats must be under physical control of a person if not on owner's premises
- **Pet Licensing** – all cats in the City (older than 12 months) must be licensed
- **Pet Limits** – maximum of six (6) cats per property

#### **Animals for Research Act (A.R.A.):**

Cats impounded pursuant to a municipal by-law:

- Subject to 72 hour (3 day) redemption period
- Transfer of cat to individual for specific purposes:
  - Pet
  - Use in hunting
  - Working purposes

## 4. Trespassing on Private Property

The trapping of feral cats often occurs on private property.

### **Potential issues:**

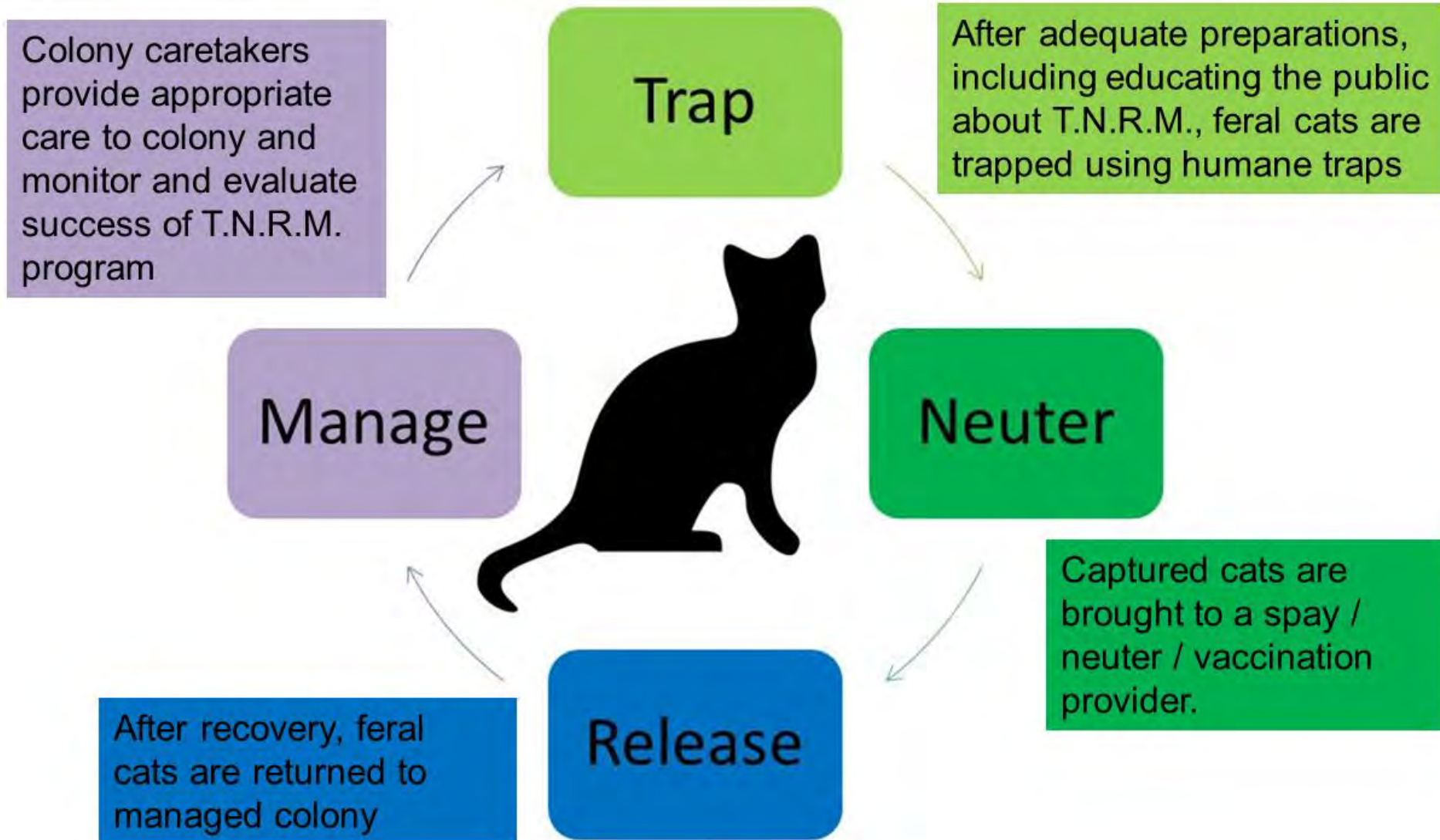
- Trespassing if no consent from property owner
- May inadvertently trap owned/stray cats
- Trapped owned/stray cats may be treated/adopted to new owners



# What is a T.N.R.M. Program?

- Volunteer run program monitored by O.A.S. and M.L.E.
- Under a cat colony management program volunteers manage the colonies:
  - humanely trap, spay/neuter and vaccinate free roaming cats returning them to where they were found or to other suitable locations
  - provide food/basic shelter
  - keep accurate records of treated/released feral cats
  - maintain community relations
  - remove social kittens/cats for adoption

# How Does a T.N.R.M. Program Work?



# Key Facts

- T.N.R.M. may not be suitable in all circumstances
- Many T.N.R.M. programs have failed
- T.N.R.M. programs do not reduce populations immediately; natural attrition requires several years

# **T.N.R.M. Success Factors**

- Program is properly managed
- Significant support from the surrounding community and reliable colony caretakers
- Number of feral cats within a colony is small to begin with
- New cats to a colony is nil or limited
- Cats can be captured and spayed/neutered
- Location of colony is accessible so that pockets of untrapped cats do not remain
- Capture and low/no cost spay and neuter efforts are early, intense and prolonged

# T.N.R.M. Success Factors (cont'd)

Managed cat colonies **should not** be located:

- Near E.S.A.s, wildlife habitats or municipal water sources
- In communities with high rates of nuisance complaints for free-roaming cats
- Areas where terrestrial wildlife rabies is widespread (unless vaccinations exist)



# Options

**Option A: Status Quo - Manage Feral Cats on a Case-By-Case Basis**

or

**Option B: City-Registered T.N.R.M. Program\*  
- Private Property**

and/or

**Option C: City-Registered T.N.R.M. Program\*  
- Public Property**

\* T.N.R.M. volunteer groups are vetted by OAS and registered with the City, which exempts the groups from a number of by-law provisions (licensing, pet limits, etc.) and requires compliance with certain registration and operating standards.

# Option A

## Status Quo - Manage Feral Cats on a Case-by-Case Basis

Division/ Stakeholder	Role
O.A.S.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Impound feral cats dropped off</li><li>• Assessed for potential adoption</li><li>• If not suitable for adoption, not returned to cat colonies</li></ul>
M.L.E.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Continue to apply the provisions of the R.P.O. By-law e.g.<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Running-at-large</li><li>- Pet Licensing</li><li>- Pet Limits</li></ul></li></ul>
T.N.R.M. Group (Volunteers)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• T.N.R.M. group continues to trap feral cats for sterilization/vaccination</li><li>• Sterilized/vaccinated cats must be adopted or transferred to another jurisdiction where feral cats can exist in compliance with the jurisdiction's by-laws (ex. running-at-large, pet licensing, pet limits)</li></ul>

# Option B

## City-Registered T.N.R.M. Program - Private Property

Division/ Stakeholder	Role
O.A.S.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Administers a T.N.R.M. Volunteer Registration Program</li><li>• Monitors and provides yearly updates on colonies and caretakers</li><li>• Initiates a Feral Cat Support Program<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Trap bank</li><li>- Donated food bank</li><li>- Meeting space</li><li>- Public education</li></ul></li></ul>
M.L.E.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Amend R.P.O. by-law<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Running-at-large - Exempt feral cats from section 1.29 (a)</li><li>- Establish conditional exemptions for pet licensing and limit requirements for registered cat colony caretakers</li></ul></li></ul>
T.N.R.M. Group (Volunteers)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Registered T.N.R.M. groups operate a T.N.R.M. program in compliance with City standards</li></ul>

# Option C

## City-Registered T.N.R.M. Program – Public Property

Division/ Stakeholder	Role
<b>O.A.S.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Administers a T.N.R.M. Volunteer Registration Program</li><li>• Monitors and provides yearly updates on colonies and caretakers</li><li>• Initiates a Feral Cat Support Program<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Trap bank</li><li>- Donated food bank</li><li>- Meeting space</li><li>- Public education</li></ul></li></ul>
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<b>T.N.R.M. Group (Volunteers)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Registered T.N.R.M. groups operate a T.N.R.M. program in compliance with the City standards</li></ul>

# Next Steps

- All feedback received will be used by City staff to recommend a preferred option to Council September 2017

# Thank You

