# Support Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) Programs for _____'s Stray and Feral Cats

(insert town name)

**Target:** _____

(insert town council or local government)

## Background information:

The preferred non-lethal method of controlling feral or stray cats is by implementing a trap-neuter-return program. In practicing TNR, cats are caught by humane traps, spayed/neutered, vaccinated, and returned to the site to live out their lives. Kittens/cats that are friendly or can be socialized should be placed into an adoption program (coordinated by a rescue organization) to find permanent homes. TNR immediately reduces colonies, because all kittens and tame cats are removed. Those who are truly "feral" should be returned to the site, where supervised, long-term care is ensured by dedicated volunteers.

The benefits of TNR are numerous. It stabilizes populations at manageable levels, by stopping the reproductive cycle. Over time, the natural cycle of attrition will maintain the stable numbers and any new cats to the colony will be sterilized. At the same time, TNR reduces euthanasia rates at local county shelters, by reducing the number of unwanted kittens being born and freeing up space at the shelters, for cats who are relinquished by their owners.

TNR is also more effective/less costly than repeated eradication (catch and kill) attempts. **Catch and kill attempts fail and in some cases are counterproductive** because they cause a vacuum effect. Biologist Roger Tabor, explains that removing cats all together will allow for more cats to quickly fill in the vacant space. However, "if a colony is neutered and returned to its area it will continue to hold the location and keep other cats out by its presence." In addition, in numerous cases when feral cats are removed from an area, the rodent populations explode, causing further problems.

Sterilization also eliminates "annoying" mating behaviors, such as fighting, yowling, and "spraying;" which are common neighborhood complaints about cats. TNR is humane to the animals and fosters compassion within the community.

Lastly, cats that have been trapped and evaluated by a veterinarian are healthier and are less likely to transmit diseases (to other cats and to humans). Those that have been spayed (females) are less susceptible to uterine, ovarian, or mammary cancer, and males that are neutered are less likely to get testicular tumors or have prostate problems. In addition, cats that are "fixed" tend to be less aggressive (fight less, which decreases disease transmission) and wander less (they will keep other cats from joining the colony and it makes managing them easier). Lastly, a three-year rabies vaccine is administered; which in studies have shown to be effective for longer than three years. Vaccinated cats will also provide a buffer zone between wildlife and humans.

## Petition:

We, the undersigned, call on _____ to support the implementation of trap-neuter-return
(insert town council)
(TNR) programs for all stray and feral cats living in _____.
(insert town name)

We support TNR programs whereas friendly cats and kittens and those who can be socialized are removed and placed into foster and adoption programs to find permanent homes.

We support TNR programs that sterilize, vaccinate, ear-tip, and return unsocialized or feral cats to their sites to live out the rest of their natural lives, where they will be supervised and cared for by a dedicated volunteer.

Thusly, we support TNR programs as the preferred non-lethal management plan of all stray and feral cats, and petition _____ to pass an ordinance making it legal for TNR programs to be
(insert town council)
implemented and made the standard method of controlling cat populations in _____.
(insert town name)

| **Name (print)** | **Signature** |
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