

https://www.news-herald.com/news/lake-county/painesville-township-starts-trap-neuter-release-program-for-stray-cats/article_0473b6ba-3bb3-11ea-843b-af8c99db25b2.html

FEATURED

Painesville Township starts trap, neuter, release program for stray cats

By Adam Dodd adodd@news-herald.com @therealadamdodd on twitter
Jan 20, 2020



Painesville Township hopes that the TNR program will reduce the number of stray and feral cats throughout the area.

Submitted

MORE INFORMATION



Eastlake Community Cats encourages feral cat colony registration

Painesville Township is adopting a new approach in handling its stray cat population in 2020.

Officials have implemented a trap, neuter, release/return program, or TNR, which seeks to promote wide-scale sterilization of the feral cat population.

The TNR program would ultimately lower the number of stray cats.

The new program allows township residents to apply for assistance in caring for feral and stray cat colonies by matching, dollar for dollar, the sterilization costs. This immediately doubles their outreach.

The program's main focus is to trap, sterilize and vaccinate the cats before they are released back to their colonies and not into a shelter. As the program outlines, as the number of sterilized felines rises, the number of stray cats will conversely drop.

The township goes on to state that the program is also accepting donations on behalf of residents who are aware of a feral/stray cat colony but are financially unable to assist.

Cats that have been processed through the TNR program will have one of their ears cut or notched as a visual indicator that it has already been neutered and vaccinated and does not need to be processed.

The township released a statement that read, in part, "Due to rising concern in our community in regards to stray and feral cat populations, the Painesville Township trustees have teamed up with a local non-profit organization, Community Cat Companions, and together have created a program for Painesville Township residents.

"For every sterilization and vaccination sponsored by the applicant or donor, Painesville Township will match that sponsorship. Program is strictly situation based, there are no income requirements for qualification."

Community Cat Companions President Cindy Valerio said in an email to The News-Herald, this program is the first of its kind in Lake County.

"Instead of penalizing residents who care for stray and feral cats or creating a lot of requirements, the township trustees recognize that financial assistance with regards to sterilization will be a more effective approach to managing the population," she stated.

She added that they are "using the 'carrot' rather than the 'stick' approach by incentivizing residents to proactively help lower the number of strays, rather than some form of punitive fines or citations."

The organization has seen success with similar programs currently enacted in Mentor, Eastlake and Willowick. In a recent interview with The News-Herald, Valerio stated that since their involvement, beginning in March of 2017, the stray population within Mentor has dropped by 22 percent. She said, "There are no kittens in any of the colonies that we've TND'd, so no births."

That's not only good news for cats but organizations like Lake Humane Society which will not be as overburdened by an influx of strays. Executive Director Lee Nesler explained newborn kittens

require specialized nursing and foster care for up to two months until they can be neutered or spayed. This severely limits the space they can afford other animals seeking shelter.

Nesler detailed the Lake Humane Society's support for TNR programs and highlighted the ongoing creation of their own on-site TNR clinic. They anticipate completion ahead of kitten season, which typically arrives in early April.

For more information on either a TNR program application or sponsorship, visit www.painesvilletwp.com.

Want local news?

Sign up for our newsletter and stay informed

Enter your email to subscribe

SIGN UP

Adam Dodd

@therealadamdodd on twitter

Beat reporter for News Herald; Content Strategist for PressureLife magazine; independent writer/researcher