



Trap Neuter Return (TNR) vs. Alternative Approaches

TNR is an effective method for reducing feral cat populations. In this approach, feral cats are trapped in humane traps, spayed/neutered and vaccinated, and then returned to where they are being fed. Socialized adult cats and kittens are adopted into homes whenever possible.

Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR)	
Pros	Con
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is less expensive than other approaches because caregivers and other volunteers assist. • Cats are healthier after being spayed/neutered. • Nuisance behaviors like fighting, yowling and spraying are reduced or eliminated. • Cats are ear-tipped for identification so it is easy to see which cats still need to be fixed and if a new cat shows up that need to be TNR'd. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You have to trap the cats

Alternative Approaches

Do Nothing	
Pro	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Takes no effort 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cats will continue to breed, and there will be more cats. • Nuisance behaviors like fighting, yowling, spraying and breeding will continue. • The cats suffer without human assistance. • Kittens will have to endure life on the streets.

Stop Feeding	
Pro	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No pro for the cat in this approach. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It doesn't reduce the number of cats. • Hungry cats will remain where they are and take greater risks to get food. • Cats will continue to breed. • The cats and kittens will be less healthy and more prone to disease, infection and parasites. • There will be more suffering for the cats. • It is illegal to knowingly withhold food from a domesticated animal.

Trap and Remove Options

Volunteers and caregivers are not typically willing to help trap cats for any of the following options, so for all these approaches there is the added cost of paying someone to trap the cats.

Trap and Take to a Shelter	
Pro	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The cats you can catch are removed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you are not feeding the cats, you don't know for sure the total number of cats at the location. • The shelter may not take feral cats. • If you aren't the caregiver you could trap your neighbor's pet cat. • It is difficult to trap cats who are being fed elsewhere and aren't hungry. • Even if you remove all the cats, new cats will move in. Also, any remaining cats will breed and the number of cats will increase again. This is often referred to as the "vacuum effect".

Trap and Take to a Sanctuary	
Pros	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The cats you can catch are removed. • It feels like the perfect solution as the cats are relocated and can live happily and safely at a sanctuary. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very few sanctuaries exist. • They are typically full. • Expensive to operate so few new ones are created and those that do open quickly fill. • Same issues as trap and take to a shelter

Trap and Abandon Elsewhere	
Pro	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No pro for the cat in this approach. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is illegal to abandon a domestic animal. • It is cruel and inhumane to abandon a domestic animal to fend for themselves. • The cat faces tremendous danger and suffering.

Trap and Relocate to a Barn or other Location	
Pro	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The cats you can catch are removed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Few barn homes exist, and finding them is time consuming. • Relocation success is not guaranteed. • Requires confining the cat(s) for up to a month to acclimate them to the new location. • Large farm animals can harm cats – especially cats not accustomed to large animals.