



Feral Cat Colonies

Position:

Calgary Humane Society recommends that local Animal Control agencies and community members develop a management plan best suited for their community. An example of effective management would be “trap, spay/neuter, vaccinate and release,” where every colony has dedicated people managing the colony and committed to monitoring the welfare of cats in the colony.

Calgary Humane Society supports the view of the Canadian Federation of Humane Societies (CFHS):

- The goal of feral cat management programs should be to gradually eliminate feral cat colonies by a process of ‘aging out’ their members. In this scenario, colonies would be maintained in a healthy state and prevented from reproducing, leading to the eventual attrition of members. (Canadian Federation of Humane Societies, 2004.)

Rationale:

- Feral cats are not only in danger of dying early deaths due to numerous outdoor hazards, they are also a threat to humans and other animals as they can carry diseases, destroy property or attack.
- Unsterilized feral cats contribute to the pet overpopulation problem as cats reproduce quickly.
- Removing feral cats from a colony does not ultimately reduce the colony size, as other cats move in to take the place of the former members.
- New members do not join a feral cat colony with a stable number of neutered cats.

References:

1. Bekoff, Marc, & Meaney, Carron A. (Eds.) (1998). Encyclopedia of Animal Rights and Animal Welfare. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press.
2. Canadian Federation of Humane Societies (2004). Position Statements.
3. The Humane Society of the United States (2004). HSUS Statement on Free-Roaming Cats. Retrieved September 8, 2004 from <http://www.hsus.org/ace/11857>.

For more information, please see the Canadian Federation of Humane Societies’ document “Feral Cat Factsheet” at

<http://www.cfhs.ca/Programs/HumaneEducation/GeneralPublic/feralcat.pdf>