

# Project CatSnop

Peggy Adams Animal Rescue League



**PEGGY ADAMS**  
ANIMAL RESCUE LEAGUE

# PROJECT CATSNIP

**IN PALM BEACH COUNTY** today there is a severe free roaming cat overpopulation crisis. Estimates on the number of cats run into the hundreds of thousands and they can be found in virtually every community, whether it's rural, suburban or urban. These cats are too wild to be handled or easily adopted. They range from lost or abandoned cats whose former owners did not get them spayed or neutered, to pet cats that were unsterilized and allowed to roam.

**COUNTDOWN TO ZERO** is a collaboration between governmental agencies, private organizations, businesses, volunteers and residents working together to end euthanasia of adoptable cats in Palm Beach County. Project CatSnip is key to accomplishing the Countdown to Zero (C2Z) initiative by responsibly spaying and neutering free roaming cats and dogs.

**OUR BELIEF:** Our community has the expertise, the means and thus the obligation to aggressively implement strategies that will reduce the number of animals needing temporary shelter and end the euthanasia of adoptable animals in Palm Beach County.

**OUR MISSION:** At all times and in every way, we are advocates for animals. We ensure their safety and comfort, strive to alleviate their suffering and work to place and keep them in homes that provide a responsible lifetime commitment to them. We speak out publicly to promote and defend their interests. We oppose all forms of animal cruelty. We promote spay/neuter and other critical programs focused on our goal of preventing the euthanasia of adoptable animals in Palm Beach County by 2024. We oppose taking the lives of healthy or treatable animals. We provide services that promote responsible pet ownership and humane attitudes toward all life because we understand the critical role people play in improving the welfare of animals in our community.



# KITTEN RESOURCES

**DID YOU KNOW** that one female cat can start reproducing as early as four months old and can have up to three litters a year. Just one female cat can have as many as 120 kittens in her lifetime. Multiply that by a colony of 10 female and 10 male cats and the overpopulation rate is out of control in a short period of time. Imagine 1,200 cats behind your place of business, grocery store, hair salon, gym... the number of unwanted cats and kittens grow with each female that is not sterilized. High sterilization rates in targeted colonies will drastically reduce the colony size and reduce the number of cats brought to the county shelter, therefore reducing the financial burden on tax payers in Palm Beach County.



## MOTHER KNOWS BEST

It's not unusual to discover a nest of unattended kittens or a single kitten seemingly abandoned by the mother. You want to help, right? Before jumping to the rescue, please consider these facts.

The goal is to keep the mother and kittens together to ensure the best chances for the kittens' survival. In the first weeks of their lives, kittens need their mother's care and antibodies from her milk. And as they grow, the mother will begin to give her kittens the critical training they will need to survive on their own.

Quietly observe from a safe distance to determine if the mother is present. Above all, do not interfere with the kittens or the space they are occupying. It is essential that you do not handle them, or try to create a shelter, or try to keep them warm, or try to feed them, as long as the mother is around. These interventions may stress the mother and cause her to abandon her family.

You can help the mother by providing food and water. Be sure to place dishes far enough away from the nest that you do not disturb mom and her kittens, or draw predators such as raccoons to the nest area. And of course, keep dogs and children far away.

## PREGNANCY CYCLES

The time between late spring and early autumn is known as "kitten season". During this time of year, unaltered cats reproduce very quickly. During Kitten Season, a female cat will come back into heat every 14-21 days until she becomes pregnant.

If you discover unattended kittens, go to <http://www.peggyadams.org/found-kitten-resources> for more information.



# COLONY LEVEL TARGETING

## TRAP, NEUTER, VACCINATE AND RETURN

is a program for “community cats” - free-roaming stray and lost cats who live outside and do not belong to anyone. These cats are captured in humane Traps, brought to Peggy Adams Animal Rescue League to be Neutered and Vaccinated and then Returned to their colony. Once returned, the cat breeding is stopped and the colony will not reproduce.

**TNVR** involves trapping all the cats who live in a colony, getting them spayed and neutered and vaccinated for rabies and other common viruses and marking them for identification by tipping their left ear. Cats that are too wild to be adopted will be returned to the original territory where a caretaker provides food and shelter over the long term and also monitors the colony for any newcomers and any problems that might develop.



**VACUUM EFFECT** is a term to describe when feral cats live in groups called colonies and have strong social bonds with their colony members. They will only gather, live and remain in an area as long as the colony is close to a food source. Reproduction occurs rapidly within the colony.

Traditional animal control efforts remove and euthanize colonies. But since the food source remains, a new colony of unsterilized cats will form at the food source and the cycle continues. This is known as the “Vacuum Effect”.

If you trap, neuter, vaccinate and return the entire colony, there is only enough food supply for them but now they are not reproducing. The cats will live and die by natural attrition. This attrition will eventually free up space for other colonies to migrate to the sterilized colony. For this reason, surrounding colonies must also be targeted for TNVR.

# NEED HELP TRAPPING A CAT?

Need help trapping community cats for TNVR? Call one of our TNVR partners. There are many community cat organizations that provide assistance with TNVR trapping. Some are 501(c)3 nonprofit organizations who use volunteers.

Some operate through your generous donations while others charge a fee per cat. Contact them regarding your specific needs.



Tip 1: If you are trapping a feral cat with the intention of short-term care, be sure to select a cat trap that features a back-door, divider, and some sort of cover. Contact Peggy Adams to rent a humane trap.

Tip 2: Always place the cage on a level surface.

Tip 3: Position the cage against a wall of a building or in a path commonly traveled by the cat.

Tip 4: After setting the trap, it may be helpful to cover the cage with a blanket or burlap sac. Cats often venture into enclosed areas, so covering your trap may result in a quicker catch.

Tip 5: Remove yourself from the immediate area, but stay close so that you can check the cage as often as possible.

Tip 6: After the cat has been caught, place the cover over the cage. This helps to calm the cat.

Tip 7: Please do not allow children or pets near the cage.

Tip 8: When transporting the cat in a car, place a trash bag or tarp under the cage. Keep the cage covered. Please do not transport the cat in the closed trunk of the car.



# COUNTDOWN TO ZERO

## PROGRESS IS BEING MADE!

Reduce the free-roaming cat population by spaying and neutering. Lowering euthanasia rates at shelters supports the C2Z program in Palm Beach County.

Did you know that 7,500 cats are euthanized each year in Palm Beach County? Did you know that it costs taxpayers \$400 per cat, whether the cat is saved or euthanized?

### Facts:

- 1) There are over 220,000 community cats living in Palm Beach County.
- 2) To trap and remove all of the cats based on Animal Care and Control's cost of \$400 per animal, it would cost \$88 million.
- 3) Last year 11,422 cats entered the PBC shelter system.
- 4) Peggy Adams spayed and neutered 4,885 community cats through the trap, neuter, vaccinate and return program in 2014. An increase of 22% over the prior year.
- 5) Typically around 2% of cats are reclaimed by an owner.
- 6) Last year, 4,068 cats were adopted to the public from Animal Care and Control and Peggy Adams. That is 35% of the cats that entered the shelter system.
- 7) Cat intake in Palm Beach County from 2007 to 2013 was reduced to 48%, with euthanasia rates decreasing 53% over the 6 year period. While great progress has been made, we are far away from our goal of **saving all adoptable animals.**



# USEFUL INFORMATION

## COMMUNITY (FERAL) CAT TRAPPING REQUEST FORM

Trapping and transport is provided by various non-profit TNR groups throughout Palm Beach County. Trapping requests will be forwarded to groups working in the area where the cats reside and they will contact you directly. Because of high demand there may be a delay. If you don't hear from a trapper within one week, please contact us.

**\*Date**

mm/dd/yyyy

**\*First Name**

**\*Last Name**

**\*Email**

**\*Street Address**

**\*City**

**\*Zip Code**

**\*Home Phone**

**\*Cell Phone**

Address of Colony (if different from home address)

**\*Property Type**

Residential  Commercial

**\*Estimated total # of cats**

Estimated # of males

Estimated # of females

Estimated # of kittens under 3 months old

Estimated # of pregnant cats

Do you feed the cats?

Yes  No

Do you know of anyone else who feeds the cats?

Yes  No

When are the cats fed?

Where are the cats fed?

**\*Any additional information?**



# **Peggy Adams**

**ANIMAL RESCUE LEAGUE**

3200 N Military Trail  
West Palm Beach, FL 33409  
(561) 686-3663



**YOUR DONATION MAKES A DIFFERENCE!**



**[www.peggyadams.org/general-2014](http://www.peggyadams.org/general-2014)  
[donations@peggyadams.org](mailto:donations@peggyadams.org)**

Adoptions (561) 686-6656  
Behavior Helpline (561) 472-8815  
Spay/Neuter (561) 472-8812  
Vaccine Clinic/Microchip (561) 472-8812  
Foster Program (561) 472-8578  
Humane Euthanasia of Ill or Older Pets (561) 686-3663  
Lost/Found or Surrender a Pet (561) 472-8814  
Berman Memorial Pet Gardens/Columbarium (561) 472-8816  
Thrift Store (561) 833-8131

Please call Animal Care and Control  
to report animal abuse or neglect: 561-233-1211

Project CatSnip was prepared by  
Leadership Palm Beach County - Class of 2015

**LEADERSHIP PALM BEACH COUNTY**  
Educating and uniting leaders to build a better community