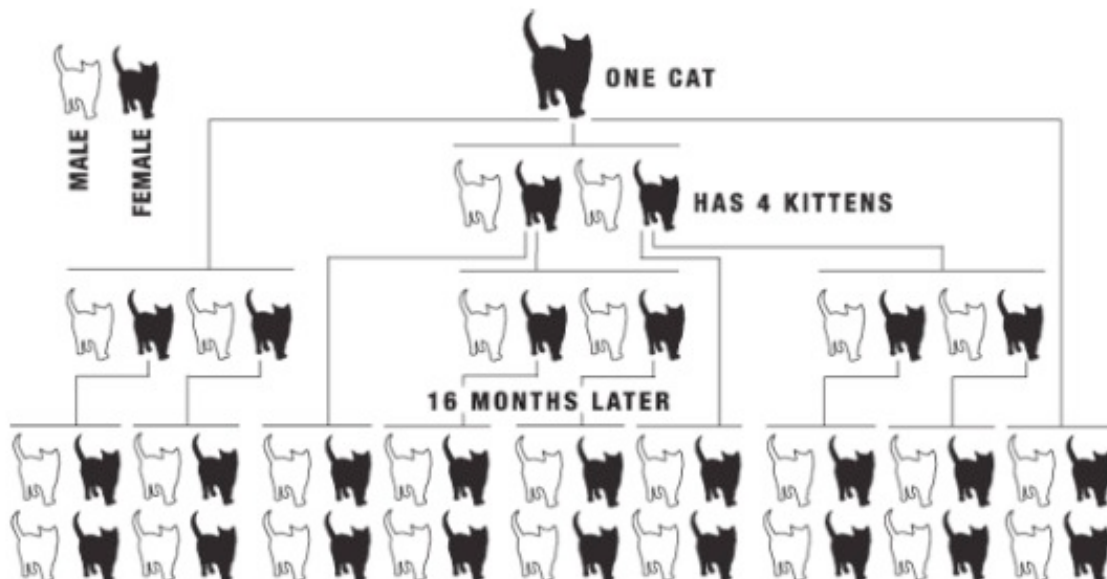


Vermont Commons Stray Cat Management Trap/Neuter/Return Program

Situation: The City of Houston has a reported 1 million free roaming dogs and cats, and Vermont Commons is no exception. There are a large number of feral and stray cats living in the Vermont Commons neighborhood. Litters of kittens are being born to these cats, adding to the number of free roaming cats. The illustration below probably underestimates how prolific the cats are here in Houston's warm climate, but you get the idea...



Solution: The residents of Vermont Commons are working together to manage the free roaming cats in our neighborhood through an active trap/neuter/return (TNR) program. With TNR, free roaming cats are trapped by volunteers; spayed and neutered; and ultimately released back to their neighborhood.

TNR has been proven to be the most effective approach to free roaming cat population control. By spaying/neutering as many of our neighborhood cats as possible, we are humanely reducing the growth of our cat population, which is better for the neighborhood and for the cats that live here.

How the Program Works and How You Can Help: Please be on the lookout for free roaming unaltered cats around your house or a neighbor's house. You can identify a cat/kitten that has already been spayed/neutered by looking at its ears. A spayed/neutered cat will most likely have the tip of its left ear clipped off. If they don't have a clipped ear, they need to be spayed/neutered as quickly as possible.

Please contact one of the volunteers listed below for assistance. We can help trap or advise you on how to trap and provide the needed equipment.

Once trapped, the cats will be transferred to a safe place to spend the night. The next morning the cats will be taken to SNAP, a nearby low cost non-profit animal clinic, to be spayed/neutered, vaccinated against rabies, de-wormed and treated for fleas. Each cat's left ear will be clipped, as a sign they have been spayed/neutered. The cost for these services is covered by a fund established through neighborhood donations.

Following sterilization, the cats will be picked up from SNAP and taken to a safe place for 24 or 48 hour recovery, prior to being released back into their territory.

What We Need to Know: In order to make the TNR process as effective as possible, it's helpful to have the following information:

- How many cats or kittens you think are around your house
- Are you or anyone else feeding them and is there a set feeding schedule
- Are the cats or kittens tame? (Tame cats likely will let you pet them once they are comfortable around you; feral cats will not.)

If you can pick up a kitten, this is a good indication that it is tame. Kittens' best chance for adoption is through a rescue group rather than a shelter. The shelters in Houston are likely to euthanize the kittens immediately.

Other Ways You Can Help: If you are a cat owner, consider keeping your cats inside. It is the absolute safest place. Between other cats, traffic, fleas and mosquitos, the outdoor life is a tough and dangerous one.

If you allow your cat outside, please make sure the cat has a collar, tags and is micro-chipped. That ensures that your cat won't accidentally be picked up as part of the TNR program and can help in the event your cat is lost. And please make sure any cat allowed outside has been spayed/neutered.

Become a foster for a Vermont Commons tame cat or kitten. We have been successful in finding homes for tame stray cats and kittens born to feral mothers,

but we need fosters who can provide an indoor home while permanent homes are sought.

Volunteer to help with the TNR program. The more volunteers we have, the more effective we can be. In addition to helping with trapping, there is always a need for people to help with transport to SNAP or provide a garage, screened porch or spare bathroom for the post surgery recovery.

And....

We Need Monetary Support: Donations are needed to pay the approximate \$80 per cat for sterilization, rabies vaccination and other treatment. Rescue Bank, a 501c3 non-profit, has set up an account at SNAP for Vermont Commons. As a result, **tax-deductible donations** can be made to Rescue Bank and ear marked for spay/neuter of Vermont Commons' feral cats.

If you'd like to make a tax deductible donation, to help pay for getting Vermont Commons' neighborhood cats spayed/neutered, please send your check made out to Rescue Bank (with Vermont Commons on the note line at the bottom) to:

Elizabeth Asher, Executive Director
Rescue Bank
11050 Pebble Rock Drive
Houston, TX 77077

Contact Information: If you need assistance getting neighborhood cats fixed, we can help and it's FREE!

Carolyn Levy houstoncatlover@gmail.com

Jane Crowder Schmitt jlc2728@gmail.com

Lisa Rainey blrainey2@sbcglobal.net

For More Information about TNR:

www.neighborhoodcats.org

www.alleycat.org