

Resolution against Feral Cats and Free Ranging Cats

WHEREAS, free-roaming domestic and feral cats (*Felis catus*) are a nonnative invasive predators in all habitats in which they occur, and

WHEREAS, A number of Arkansas municipalities and organizations are supporting, initiating and engaging in trap neuter and release colonies of feral cats, and

WHEREAS, feral and free ranging cats kill over 2.4 billion birds and over 20 billion small mammals, reptiles and amphibian in the U.S. annually, and WHEREAS, cat predation by feral and freeroaming cats is by far the largest human-caused mortality threat to birds, and

WHEREAS, feral cats are disease reservoirs posing a threat to native wildlife, pets and humans, and

WHEREAS, government wildlife agencies are charged with the management, conservation, and preservation of native flora and fauna, and

WHEREAS, few government agencies have regulations, public policies or enforce regulations and public policies that restrict, control or deter free-roaming domestic or feral cats.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that The Arkansas Chapter of the Wildlife Society adopts the Wildlife Policy Statement of our parent organization, The Wildlife Society, entitled "Feral and Free-ranging Domestic Cats". This policy of The Wildlife Society regarding feral and free-ranging domestic cats:

1. Supports and encourages the humane elimination of feral cat populations, including feral cat colonies, through adoption into indoor-only homes of eligible cats and humane euthanasia of unadoptable cats.
2. Supports the passage and enforcement of local and state ordinances prohibiting the feeding of feral cats, especially on public lands, and the release of unwanted pet or feral cats into the wild.
3. Opposes the passage of any local or state ordinances that legalize the maintenance of "managed" (trap/neuter/release) free-ranging cat colonies.
4. Supports educational programs and materials that provide scientific information on feral cats and the negative effects on cats from living outdoors, and call on pet owners to keep cats indoors, in outdoor enclosures, or on a leash.
5. Supports programs to educate and encourage pet owners to neuter or spay their cats, and encourage all pet adoption programs to require potential owners to spay or neuter their pet.
6. Supports the development and dissemination of information on what individual cat owners can do to minimize predation by free-ranging cats, and to minimize potential disease transmission to humans, wildlife, cats, and other domestic animals.
7. Pledges to work with the conservation and animal welfare communities to educate the public about the effects of free-ranging and feral cats on native wildlife, including birds, small mammals, reptiles, amphibians, and endangered species. 4
8. Supports educational efforts to encourage the agricultural community to keep farm-cat numbers at low, manageable levels and use alternative, environmentally safe rodent control methods.

Passed this 4th day of March 2016