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## **Extended Animal Control Concerns - Community Cat Management**

### **Guideline Statement**

Animal Control Officers should be empowered to manage all feral, stray and owned cats within the community. Management may include but is not limited to enactment & enforcement of cat related laws, education, public/private partnerships for cat care & control, targeted spay / neuter programs and properly regulated cat caretaker programs.

### **Basis for Guideline**

The basis of the policy is to protect the public and cats living in the wild so as to minimize the potential for a rabies outbreak. A feral cat is defined as a cat that has been born in the wild or forsaken by the original owner for an extended period of time. A stray cat is one that is at large or escaped from an owner. An owned cat has been claimed by a person who provides the essentials including food, water, shelter, and veterinary care.

### **Guideline Recommendation**

In order to protect feral, stray and owned cats, all local or state governments should pass laws requiring the vaccination and license of all cats in their community. The law should also require that all owned cats be identified with a traceable license, microchip, or tattoo so as to identify them from feral cats.

NACA recognizes that in some circumstances, alternative management programs, including Trap Neuter Vaccinate & Release (TNVR) programs may be effective, and recommends that each agency assess the individual need with their community and respond accordingly.

NACA advocates for effective public education related to cats, active spaying & neutering initiatives for cats and responsible ownership for all cats.

Approved: 02/11/08

The foregoing Guideline has been affirmed as duly adopted by the NACA Board of Directors.

***John W. Mays***

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