

Trap-Neuter-Return Task Force Meeting: Volunteers Needed for Program to Save Cats

Fort Myers, Florida, 3/15/10—Lee County Domestic Animal Services (LCDAS) will hold a Task force Meeting for residents interested in participating in a Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) Program for feral and community cats on Saturday, April 17 from 1:00 pm to 2:00 pm. The meeting will be held at the agency's shelter, 5600 Banner Drive, Fort Myers, next to the Lee County Sheriff's Dept. The TNR program is aimed at reducing the number of feral cats currently estimated at 98,000 in Lee County.

Step one in program was the approval by the Lee County Board of County Commissioners last year for a TNR Program to provide sterilization and vaccination of feral (wild) outdoor community cats to reduce overpopulation and euthanasia. Step two was securing additional funding for the project from a grant through the Florida Animal Friend License Plate program. The third step will be to form a Task Force to handle the current demand for the program.

Task Force members would donate a few hours or a few days per week. Responsibilities include assisting residents with setting traps, transporting trapped cats for sterilization appointments, returning sterilized and vaccinated cats to their original trapping site, and providing education. Representatives are needed for Bonita Springs, Fort Myers, Cape Coral, Lehigh Acres, North Fort Myers, and Estero.

Each year in Lee County thousands of feral and community cats in good health face unnecessary euthanasia without a TNR program. The University of Florida School of Veterinary Medicine advocates that TNR is the most humane and effective solution for preventing pet overpopulation and reducing euthanasia. Further studies also support that eradication, as a method to reduce overpopulation has been a failure.

For information about TNR or to make a reservation for the Task Force Meeting contact Lee County Domestic Animal Services at (239) 533-9200 or email dward@leegov.com.