

On August 8, 2018, Haywood Spay/Neuter (HSN) made a difficult decision. We suspended operations of our TNR (Trap Neuter Return) program which it has operated for ten years. We know some of you may be saddened or even angry about this action but the Board of Directors, in a unanimous vote, indicated it was necessary at this time. The board looked at a number of factors: local cat sanctuary sites being full to capacity, no shelter of our own, volunteers who were dedicated but stretched to and beyond capacity (some needing to step away from their duties) 14% of our budget going to TNR over and above grants received and the recognition that the program was piecemeal, dealing with a cat colony here and another there, but no county-wide plan and approach in place. Thus, the Board felt it would be irresponsible to continue to trap animals without adequate shelter after surgery nor to continue to ask our dedicated and often stressed volunteers to continue an effort that was not making headway in reducing the feral/community cat population. That does not mean, however that we are just walking away. We are not.

So, what is going to happen? First the population of fixed feral/community cats that are currently being fed through the efforts of HSN volunteers, with food paid for through the HSN budget, will be continued into 2019. We will be working in the next six to seven months to find a new home for the feeding program with the hope that the transition for the animal will be seamless. Second, as stated above, the trapping program has been suspended but we will still be doing friendlies which were ½ of our total TNR cats. Third, HSN will focus on its core mission of providing low cost spay and neuter services in Haywood county and will be expanding its wellness programs.

We hope that in the future there will be a new TNR in Haywood County that will reduce the number of feral/community cats and that has all the components to make it successful including a shelter to hold the cats until release and a large staff. Current literature makes it abundantly clear that unless we have a comprehensive approach to the issue, there will not be a decrease in the feral/community cat population in Haywood County. It is time to stop spinning our wheels, working hard but gaining no ground. We need to use the time and efforts of our valuable community volunteers wisely and to expend precious charitable dollars effectively and responsibly.