

PETA STATEMENT ON TNR

<https://www.peta.org/features/does-tnr-really-save-cats/>

The average life expectancy of an outdoor cat is just 1 to 5 years, compared to 12 to 20 years for a cat kept indoors. So when people turn cats loose, they aren't doing them any favors. Some worry that animals sent to shelters may be euthanized, but the very definition of *euthanasia* is "good death." [On the streets](#), cats' deaths are inevitably *bad*, filled with pain and suffering. They die slowly of untreated illness, injury, infection, dehydration, or exposure. They get hit by cars, attacked by predators (including cruel humans), poisoned, or shot or meet other terrible fates.

Moreover, not all TNR'd cats are feral—many are quite tame. Not only are such cats adoptable, they may also be someone's lost companion. Refraining from taking these animals to shelters means that they lose their best chance of being reclaimed by their guardians—who may be frantically searching for them—or finding another safe, loving indoor home. In addition to the risks associated with turning cats loose to fend for themselves, there also the [dangers that the cats themselves pose to native wildlife](#), whose welfare must be taken into account by anyone who professes to be an "animal lover." Cats are the leading cause of human-related bird deaths, [killing as many as 3.7 billion birds in the U.S. every year](#). Even "ferals" (who are genetically identical to "house cats") are domesticated animals—they're native to nowhere and therefore invasive everywhere. In fact, cats are considered [the most deadly invasive species in the world](#), responsible or partly responsible for the extinction of more than 60 species.

Moreover, not all TNR'd cats are feral—many are quite tame. Not only are such cats adoptable, they may also be someone's lost companion. Refraining from taking these animals to shelters means that they lose their best chance of being reclaimed by their guardians—who may be frantically searching for them—or finding another safe, loving indoor home. In addition to the risks associated with turning cats loose to fend for themselves, there also the [dangers that the cats themselves pose to native wildlife](#), whose welfare must be taken into account by anyone who professes to be an "animal lover." Cats are the leading cause of human-related bird deaths, [killing as many as 3.7 billion birds in the U.S. every year](#). Even "ferals" (who are genetically identical to "house cats") are domesticated animals—they're native to nowhere and therefore invasive everywhere. In fact, cats are considered [the most deadly invasive species in the world](#), responsible or partly responsible for the extinction of more than 60 species.

The bottom line is that TNR makes *humans*—not cats and certainly not wildlife—feel better. Veterinarian and syndicated animal-advice columnist Dr. Michael W. Fox doesn't mince words when he says that it's "unconscionable" to abandon cats who are considered "unadoptable" and calls TNR a "blight" on the animal-sheltering community. "It is time to reevaluate the 'no-kill' policies that incentivize these terrible outcomes for cats and wildlife, and it is time to work for responsible solutions," he says.

Instead of abandoning cats, we must address feline homelessness at its roots by requiring that all cats be [spayed or neutered](#), vaccinated, licensed, microchipped, and [kept indoors](#). If your local shelter is considering adopting a policy of refusing to admit cats or abandoning them outdoors in order to avoid including them on their annual intake and outcome statistics, remind shelter officials that their top priority should be animal welfare and safety—not deceptive, feel-good statistics.