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Trap–Neuter–Return (TNR) Program

Since 2021, the City of Eagle River has received ongoing reports from residents regarding concerns about feral, also known as community, cats. These concerns include growing cat populations, repeated litters of kittens, and neighborhood impacts. Until recently, the City did not have an effective or humane solution available.

Over the past several months, the City researched best practices for managing feral cat populations and consulted with local and regional animal welfare professionals. With guidance from the Vilas County Humane Society and in partnership with Northwoods Animal Hospital, the City is implementing a Trap–Neuter–Return (TNR) program.

What is TNR?

Trap–Neuter–Return is a widely used, humane method of managing feral cat populations. Cats are humanely trapped, spayed or neutered by a licensed veterinarian, ear-tipped for identification, and returned to their original outdoor colony. This process prevents further reproduction, reduces nuisance behaviors, and stabilizes the population over time.

How the program will work:

- Trapping will occur in identified areas with known feral cat populations.
- Trapping is expected to begin every other week, with adjustments as populations decline.
- Cats will be spayed or neutered at Northwoods Animal Hospital at a reduced cost.
- All cats will be returned to their original location following surgery.
- Yard-style notification signs will be placed in trapping areas in advance.
- Residents in affected areas will be notified prior to trapping activities.

Why this matters:

TNR is proven to reduce the number of feral cats, eliminate the birth of unwanted kittens, and improve overall community conditions. Communities using TNR typically see noticeable results within the first few years.

The City of Eagle River is committed to addressing this issue responsibly, humanely, and in partnership with residents and local organizations.

For questions or additional information, please contact:

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