

HFC Committee

From: Jay Penniman <jayfp@hawaii.edu>
Sent: Wednesday, May 20, 2020 1:30 PM
To: HFC Committee
Subject: Testimony for HFC Committee
Attachments: 2020_05_20_HFCC_Testimony_Feral_Animal_Control.doc

Aloha,
Please find testimony attached.
Mahalo,
Jay

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20 May. 2020

To: Riki Hokama, Chair
Healthy Families and Communities Committee
Maui County Council

From: Jay F. Penniman, Manager
Maui Nui Seabird Recovery Project

Aloha Chair Hokama, Chair Lee, and Members of the Committee,

I am Jay Penniman, Manager of the Maui Nui Seabird Recovery Project. Thank you for addressing the issue of feral animals on the islands of Maui Nui. The proliferation of these animals is a serious issue creating human health concerns, animal health concerns, and native wildlife destruction.

I believe that we must address the issue of ownership of cats by requiring that they be managed as pets, the same as dogs. Animals need to be registered, micro-chipped, spayed or neutered and kept under the owner's direct control at all times.

There is no excuse for the maintenance of feral animals on county, state, federal or unpermitted private properties. There are already ordinances and laws on the books that prohibit these activities and the maintenance of animals on these properties. These laws need to be enforced. The feeding ban that was proposed a few weeks ago was good in that it would cover the feeding of chickens and deer as well as cats. The response of the feral animal feeding community that animals will starve if not fed ignores the fact that the current feeding is already illegal. I believe that animals that are being fed illegally should be translocated to fenced sanctuaries where they would be accessible to veterinary care and supervision by those who care about them. Please help facilitate the creation and maintenance of these facilities until they can become self-supporting, as the Lāna'i Cat Sanctuary has done.

It is really disheartening to have those who are abusing public property by maintaining populations of feral animals there cite studies that have been shown to be not rigorous science and deny the validity of peer reviewed legitimate science. Trap Neuter and Return policy, as Maui Humane Society is practicing, has been clearly shown, in peer reviewed scientific studies, to fail to reduce feral animal populations on the landscape.

Please regulate cats as pets, just as dogs are currently. Please enforce current law prohibiting feeding of feral animals on public property. Please facilitate the humane treatment of feral cats by providing the land and opportunity for those who desire to care for them, in a legal, environmentally sustainable manner.