

HFC Committee

From: Sarah Haynes <sayhayhome@aol.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 21, 2020 7:53 AM
To: HFC Committee
Subject: Testimony AGAINST Feral Feeding Ban
Attachments: feral feed ban.docx

Please add to the testimony list/links.

Thank you.

To whom it may concern, regarding the feral feeding ban:

To start, please know I consider myself an "equal opportunity animal lover" (I don't favor any species, I also provide water and natural foods for the native birds on my 9 acre sanctuary).

The facts speak loudly- TNR is the only proven method to reduce cat population. Feeding bans have never worked. If the feeding ban passes, you will lose the support of the TNR volunteers across the island. Instead of publicly trapping these cats and getting them fixed, they will have to sneak around in fear, and thus many cats will no longer be fixed.

The population will grow, animals will suffer, and homeless cats will then be forced to catch birds to stay alive.

I work with a handful of colonies on Maui and I have yet to see a single dead bird. I am not saying that this *never* happens, but these well-cared for and mostly scared cats hide out during the day when birds are out, and seek food in the cover of darkness. Of course you will see a few cats out during the day - these are mostly pets that have been dumped and are growing comfortable with the area. Please know- a large portion of these cats are Dumped Pets. I carry a chip scanner and many go back to people who have moved off the island.

I wont even into the PR Maui will suffer, and the terrible effect on tourism.

Instead of criminalizing the hard work of so many volunteers who are addressing the problem by spending countless hours trapping and fixing these cats (which helps both groups), how about supporting them?

SOLUTIONS:

1. Can we enforce dumping pets? (If we can't enforce *that* which is already illegal and inhumane, how are you going to enforce feeding?)
2. How about a law that all pets must be spayed and neutered, so we aren't cleaning up everyone else's mess? Animal population is a problem for all pet species.
3. How about more money towards spay & neuter for Maui Humane? In the Bay Area all vets do S&N for \$50 on 1 day a week, as part of a community program to increase manpower & reduce population further. It worked!
4. How about working with the TNR people to help them reduce population further? Ideas - Funding for trapping. Educational signage letting tourists know that a colony is managed & fed at night. The hotels have had great success with this, and had no success with trap and kill, nor banning feeding. That's why so many changed their ways.
5. How about donating land for one or more feral cat sanctuaries, *used specifically to relocate cats where bird breeding is active?*
6. How about funding for a predator fence around priority areas, much like the one at Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park? They have had huge success with this.

Please consider the many progressive ideas presented by the countless organizations, businesses, and locals who are against this ban.

Thanks for listening,

Sarah Haynes
Maui Resident