

# Supervisor Lesko and Councilwoman Bonner Announce Formation of the Feral Cat Task Force

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## ***All-volunteer group will seek private funding to help control overpopulation of feral cats***

**Farmingville, NY** - Supervisor Mark Lesko and Councilwoman Jane Bonner have announced that the Town of Brookhaven will form the Feral Cat Task Force to help control the overpopulation of feral cats throughout the Town. The Task Force will consist of all volunteers, including local veterinarians who will develop proactive solutions such as a Trap-Neuter-Release (TNR) program, similar to those that have proven successful across the country. Brookhaven Animal Shelter Director Dori Scofield will be overseeing the work of the Feral Cat Task Force.

"The feral cat population is growing in the Town of Brookhaven and the Feral Cat Task Force will work on strategies to get it under control," said Supervisor Lesko. "Trap-Neuter-Release is the most humane method, but it will take the dedication and hard work of many volunteers and money from the private sector to make it an effective and long-lasting solution."

Councilwoman Jane Bonner, who serves as Town Council Liaison to the Animal Shelter said, "Dori Scofield has been very proactive in the effort to control the feral cat population, doing a lot of the trapping as a volunteer herself. This is another great example of a public and private sector joint effort."

"TNR is the only moral and pro-active solution to the overpopulation of feral cats on Long Island," said Ms. Scofield. "Man created this situation and it is up to us to solve it humanely." She continued, "This will not be a Town-funded effort, so I will be recruiting volunteers and veterinarians who can provide pro-bono services, and reaching out for private funding to cover the cost."

At the July 19, 2011 Town Board meeting, Supervisor Lesko and the Town Board voted to adopt a resolution to authorize Help the Animals Fund, the Town's independent 501 (c) (3) charitable organization, to accept a \$4,000 grant from the PETCO Foundation to spay and neuter shelter animals and provide services for a Trap-Neuter-Release (TNR) program for feral animals. Trap-Neuter-Release (TNR) is a humane method of trapping feral animals, mainly cats, using humane traps, then neutering them, and releasing them back to the same environment where they were collected. In many cases, the animals are also screened and vaccinated for diseases like rabies. The animals are then marked, usually by tipping the ear, to identify them as spayed or neutered. TNR is considered a more humane form of animal control and has been found to be effective in reducing feral cat populations.

An affiliate of the Town of Brookhaven Animal Shelter and Adoption Center, the Help the Animals Fund's mission is to prevent cruelty to animals and to provide sick, neglected and injured stray animals at the Brookhaven Animal Shelter the much needed and deserved medical care that they would otherwise not receive. This fund is supported 100% by voluntary donations which are tax deductible.

The Animal Shelter is located at 300 Horseblock Road in Brookhaven, NY and is open from 9:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on Monday through Friday, 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on Saturday, and 12:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. on Sunday. For more information about the Feral Cat Task Force, or to volunteer, call the Brookhaven Animal Shelter at (631) 286-4940 or visit [www.brookhaven.org/animalsshelter](http://www.brookhaven.org/animalsshelter).

### **Division of Public Information \* Office of the Supervisor**

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