

Florida Town to Review Its Feral Cat Program

Palm Beachs Town Council will review law governing the number of cats a single household may own..

Three years after Palm Beach, Fla. launched a feral cat management program credited with bringing the felines under control, residents complaints have pressed the Town Council to order a review. On Tuesday, May 9, the Council unanimously voted to order a report on the effectiveness of the towns feral cat trap/neuter/release program. The matter will be on the agenda for the council's June 13 meeting. Also at its Tuesday meeting, the Council asked that a report be drafted on a possible amendment to a town law stating residents could own no more than five cats. Currently, the law allows residents to have 10 adult cats. Residents have complained that neighbors feed the animals, who they say roam on their properties, create a nuisance, damage property and leave droppings. The towns feral cat program, Palm Beach Cats, employs a trap, neuter and release method to manage the animals. The feral cats have been at the center of an emotional debate between cat lovers, who do not want to see the animals starve or be euthanized, and residents who say they trespass and present a health hazard. The once-thriving cat population is far less visible, and the number of complaints is far fewer than before Palm Beach Cats 2003 inception, town officials have said. Palm Beach Cats says it has trapped, neutered or spayed and released hundreds of cats in the last three years. Posted: May 12, 2006, 5:00 a.m. EST