

Submission
No 326

**INQUIRY INTO MANAGEMENT OF CAT POPULATIONS
IN NEW SOUTH WALES**

Name: Ms Janet Oliver
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Submission to Animal Welfare Committee
Parliament of New South Wales

21 November 2024

Dear Committee members,

Inquiry into the management of cat populations

The NSW Parliament has a moral and ethical responsibility to support humane, science based solutions for cat welfare and native wildlife protection. The members of the NSW Parliament need to accept the fact that human behaviours such as deforestation, clearing land for farms, vehicles on roads and urban sprawl wipe out native wildlife at a far greater rate than cats.

Killing cats to protect wildlife has not worked in the past and will not work now. But reducing cat populations humanely will assist both cats and wildlife. The NSW government must support community cat programs that :

- target desexing of all domestic cats
- focus on trap neuter and release (TNR) in cat colonies
- educate the community about desexing and TNR

TNR has been proven to work in numerous overseas countries. TNR has been found to stabilise cat colonies and cause populations to decline over time. The City of London supports and educates its citizens about TNR and in Turkey TNR is widely employed to support community cats which can be found throughout the country.

The NSW Parliament should support the following initiatives:

1. **Grants to Councils and rescue organisations** - to support large scale desexing programs. A NSW Government commissioned report supports large scale desexing programs.
2. **Educating pet owners about responsible pet ownership**– including about the importance of desexing and how to keep their cats safely indoors or contained within property boundaries, for example by using cat netting
3. **Media campaigns** - to promote responsible pet ownership
4. **School education programs** - teaching children about pet care and the importance of spaying/neutering their pets.

Cats are not the primary risk to wildlife - human behaviour is. Efforts need to be focused on wildlife habitat conservation and restoration.

Cats also need our help by introducing initiatives such as supporting large scale desexing programs and educating pet owners about responsible pet ownership. These initiatives will in turn benefit wildlife.

Yours sincerely,

Janet Oliver