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April 26, 2018

Cathie Ritchie, Clerk  
City of Kawartha Lakes  
26 Francis Street  
Lindsay, Ontario K9V 5R8

sent by email

Dear Madame Clerk:

I read in the Standard newspaper about the delegation that presented a petition to Council to introduce a “trap, neuter and release” (TNR) program for feral cats in the City of Kawartha Lakes.

I wish to advise you that I am strongly opposed to such an initiative. Feral and free-ranging cats are a devastating influence on native wildlife, both here and around the world. Single-handedly they are the greatest cause of avian mortality, outweighing almost all other factors combined. Recent studies show that, in Canada, cats-at-large (i.e. free-ranging house cats and feral cats) annually kill 5% of Canadian birds — that’s 269 million birds killed every year in Canada by cats. In the US, the numbers are even more shocking. Recent studies show that between 1.3 - 4 billion birds and 6.3 - 22.3 billion mammals are killed annually by cats. Around the world, the impacts are so great that the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) now lists domestic cats as one of the world’s worst non-native invasive species.

I had the opportunity recently to review much of the data presented to the scientific community in newly released studies and wrote an article that was published summarizing these impacts. I’ve attached a copy of that article for your reference and within it provided the sources of the data.

TNR programs have been proven historically to be generally ineffective and in fact often generate outcomes exactly opposite of what is desired. Studies show that feral cat numbers actually increase after a TNR program is introduced in many cases. Costs escalate and the problem is magnified not abated. Often more, not fewer, cats are

released once the program is running as people think the cats will simply be cared for so why bother going to an animal shelter with them?

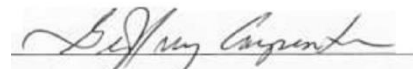
The City of Kawartha Lakes is a green community that is proud of its flora and fauna and actively brands itself as an outdoors and wildlife haven. How then can it consider endorsing this devastating program that assuredly will needlessly kill millions of birds and other animals?

Cats-at-large and feral cats are not part of a natural community and never have been. They are as alien as Phragmites, Dog-strangling Vine and Emerald Ash Borer and more devastating by far. There is no place for them anywhere in a natural environment and they should be eradicated not fostered. I realize this is an emotional issue but how can forfeiting the lives of millions of native species to cats be justified under any circumstances?

I hope that staff will consider this information and do some careful research into the problems and impacts of feral cats before recommending any amendment to local bylaws. Would you please be kind enough to receive this letter as correspondence to Council and forward it to staff for their consideration.

If you have any questions please let me know. Thank-you for considering my comments.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Geoff Carpentier", written in black ink on a light-colored background.

Geoff Carpentier  
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