

# **TULARE COUNTY PARKS ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

**MEETING NOTICE  
TULARE COUNTY GOVERNMENT PLAZA  
CONFERENCE ROOM L – PLANNING COMMISSION ROOM  
5953 S. MOONEY BLVD  
VISALIA, CA 93277**

**2:00 PM on December 8, 2015**

## **NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD**

At this time, members of the public may comment on any item not appearing on the agenda. Under state law, matters presented under this item cannot be discussed or acted upon by the Committee at this time. For items appearing on the agenda, the public is invited to make comments at the time the item comes up for Committee consideration. Any person addressing the Committee will be limited to a maximum of three (3) minutes so that all interested parties have an opportunity to speak. At all times, please state your name and address for the record.

## **AGENDA**

- 1. Call to Order**
- 2. Welcome**
- 3. Approval of Minutes**
- 4. Public Comment**
- 5. Visalia Feral Cat Coalition Trap, Neuter, and Release Report**
- 6. Proposed Health Advisory Committee Smoking Ban in County Parks**
- 7. Park Well Status**
- 8. Mooney Grove 20 Year Conceptual Master Plan**
- 9. Parks Manager Update**
- 10. Committee Member Matters & Next Meeting Date**
- 11. Adjournment**

**Contact Person: Tulare County General Services (559) 624-7227**

As a courtesy to those in attendance, please turn off or place in alert mode all cell phones and pagers.

Information concerning items on this Agenda is available for public consideration during normal working hours at the Board of Supervisors office at 2800 W. Burrel Ave., Visalia, CA 93291. The staff will assist in answering questions.

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you need special assistance to participate in this meeting, please contact the Clerk of the Board's Office at (559) 636-5000.



# Tulare County Parks Advisory Committee

## **AGENDA ITEM No. 5**

**Committee  
Members**  
Karol Aure-Flynn  
Mike Chrisman  
Carol Finney  
Aaron Gomes  
Nancy Hawkins  
Neil Pilegard  
Courtney Roche, Jr.

**AGENDA DATE:** December 8, 2015

**SUBJECT:** Visalia Feral Cat Coalition Trap, Neuter, and Release Report

**REQUEST(S):**

That the Parks Advisory Committee:

1. Receive a report from staff regarding the November 10, 2015 Visalia Feral Cat Coalition presentation for a Trap, Neuter, and Release Program at Mooney Grove Park.
2. Provide a recommendation on the Visalia Feral Cat Coalition Proposal.

**SUMMARY:**

Mooney Grove Park has been experiencing the negative impacts of a large population of feral cats for several years. These feral cats tend to live under the bridge and behind the museum. There are many individuals in the community who provide food and other services for these feral cats. Some of the negative impacts of the feral cats has been the presence of fleas in some Parks buildings, liability and risk exposure for the County, and the possibility of the spread of diseases among animals.

The Visalia Feral Cat Coalition (VFCC) is requesting that the County approve a formal Trap, Neuter, and Release (TNR) Program at Mooney Grove Park as a method of managing the feral cat population at the Park. In a TNR program, feral animals are trapped at identified locations, taken to a veterinarian for sterilization and vaccination, and then returned to their original location. Proponents of TNR believe this is a humane way of reducing the population of feral animals, which can, in turn, reduce the negative impacts associated with those animals at a given location.

There are a variety of organizations, colleges, and government jurisdictions that have initiated TNR programs to manage feral cats on their property; for example, College of the Sequoias, Stanford University, Disneyland, City of Los Angeles have each implemented a TNR or TNR-type program. The City of Los Angeles approved a TNR program within the City, but excluded parks due to their environmental sensitivity. Some of these organizations have experienced success and others have experienced further difficulties. Additionally, there is a body of study that also indicates both success and challenges for TNR programs in various settings.

At the November 10, 2015 PAC meeting, representatives of the VFCC made a presentation outlining the benefits they believe a TNR program would bring to Mooney Grove Park in reducing the feral cat population. In essence, the VFCC believes that a fully implemented TNR program at Mooney Grove Park is the most

**SUBJECT:** Visalia Feral Cat Coalition Trap, Neuter, and Release Report

**DATE:** December 8, 2015

cost effective and humane way of reducing the feral cat population at the Park. VFCC proposes to utilize its network of volunteers to perform the TNR work and would assume liability for the project.

Although there are my individuals and organizations who support TNR, there are also individuals and organizations that believe TNR is not an effective method of reducing feral cat populations. In essence, those who do not support TNR believe that a fully implemented TNR program creates more risks and liabilities than it solves and may not reduce feral cat populations as claimed. As indicated above, there are studies, experiences, and other data that support both of these positions. These will be discussed in greater detail by staff.

The purpose of this Agenda Item is to follow-up the November 10 VFCC presentation, discuss details of the program, and present options for moving forward. The Parks Advisory Committee is being asked to provide a recommendation and opinion regarding the use of TNR at Mooney Grove Park. The options below provide a range of implementation modes to address the feral cat population. It is agreed upon by all parties, including the VFCC, that Mooney Grove Park is not the appropriate or permanent home for feral cats. Therefore, the central question to consider for the Committee in relation to this matter is: what is the most appropriate method of reducing the feral cat population at Mooney Grove Park. This Agenda Item is listed as an action item, should the Committee be prepared to provide a recommendation on the matter.

Possible options for reducing feral cat populations at Mooney Grove park are:

- 1. Proceed with VFCC Proposal for TNR Program at Mooney Grove Park.**  
The Committee could recommend the County proceed with the TNR program as proposed by VFCC. This could be initiated on a “pilot program” basis wherein the program is implemented for a specific period of time – possibly six months or one year. After which, it would be determined if the results of the program justify further implementation of the VFCC TNR program.
- 2. Return to Existing County Policy to Address Feral Cat Problem.**  
The Committee could recommend that the County return to its previous practice of trapping the feral cats and taking them to Tulare County Animal Services, or other animal adoption locations. Parks staff has reduced its animal management practices over the past three years as a result of the increased feeding activity at the Park and has not interfered with various feral cat activities by non-County staff at the Park.
- 3. Develop a Hybrid Solution between County Staff and VFCC Volunteers.**  
The Committee could recommend modifications to the VFCC TNR proposal that would allow VFCC volunteers to assist County staff in an adoption program. In this option, the program would be as follows: VFCC oversee the

**SUBJECT:** Visalia Feral Cat Coalition Trap, Neuter, and Release Report

**DATE:** December 8, 2015

trapping and sterilizing of feral cats and VFCC and County staff make all efforts to adopt the cats or find other permanent homes for the cats, rather than returning the cats to Mooney Grove Park.

**FISCAL IMPACT/FINANCING:**

This is a report item only. The fiscal impacts of engaging or not engaging in a TNR program are unknown at this time and would require further study, depending on the nature of the proposed program details.

Attachment(s)

**PROPOSAL  
TRAP, NEUTER AND RETURN  
PROGRAM FOR  
MOONEY GROVE PARK**

A proven method of controlling and decreasing  
the size and expense of feral cat populations.

Presented by:  
Visalia Feral Cat Coalition  
A non-profit, fully insured corporation  
(State ID# C3634049)

## **MOONEY GROVE PARK FERAL CAT PROPOSAL TRAP, NEUTER AND RETURN PROGRAM**

### **PROBLEM:**

It is estimated that there are between 200-300 feral cats at Mooney Grove Park and the adjacent mobile home park. The previous method of trap and removal for euthanasia has been totally ineffective and costly (approximately \$100-\$140 per cat).

### **OBJECTIVE:**

The request is 1 year pilot program at Mooney Grove Park and surrounding areas to evaluate the effects of TNR (trap, neuter, return) on the feral cats now living at the park.

### **COST OF THE PROGRAM:**

The cost to Tulare County is zero and it will require no park employee time. The full expense and man-hours will be supplied by Visalia Feral Cat Coalition.

### **INITIAL PROACTIVE PROPOSAL:**

1. Survey and record all cats at these locations.
2. Capture all cats for surgical sterilization and permanent marking.
3. Sick or injured animals will be humanely euthanized.
4. Young adoptable kittens will be removed and placed in homes.

PLEASE NOTE- All captured animals will receive a Rabies vaccine (guarantee complete protection for three years). Application of long acting flea control, that is effective for 1-6 months. They will receive intestinal parasite medication to help prevent the possible transmission of zoonotic disease.

5. Ongoing maintenance will be accomplished by Visalia Feral Cat Coalition to include: Feeding in non-intrusive locations, further capture of new cats entering the colony, and addressing any of the County of Tulare concerns about these cats.
6. Every 3 months a report will be presented to the Tulare County on the current status of cat population.

### **EXPECTED RESULTS**

**These results are based on other TNR programs accomplished over the last 20 years in the U.S.**

1. The initial reduction should be 5-10% due to euthanasia and kitten removal.
2. After 1-2 years no new kittens should be found, meaning no growth in cat population.
3. Most TNR programs show a decreasing population of 60-70% over 5 years. Some populations have decreased to zero.
4. Equally important the nuisance factor of unhealthy reproductively active cats diminishes greatly.



# Tulare County Parks Advisory Committee

**Committee  
Members**  
Karol Aure-Flynn  
Mike Chrisman  
Carol Finney  
Aaron Gomes  
Nancy Hawkins  
Neil Pilegard  
Courtney Roche, Jr.

## **AGENDA ITEM No. 6**

**AGENDA DATE:** December 8, 2015

**SUBJECT:** Proposed Tulare County Health Advisory Committee Smoking Ban  
in County Parks

**REQUEST(S):**

That the Parks Advisory Committee:

1. Receive a presentation from the Tulare County Health and Human Services Agency regarding the Health Advisory Committee's proposed smoking ban in County Parks.
2. Provide a recommendation on the proposed Smoking Ban.

**SUMMARY:**

The Tulare County Health Advisory Committee is recommending that the County consider a smoking ban within all Tulare County Parks. This initiative was presented to the Board of Supervisors on July 21, 2015. Upon further discussion of this proposal, the Board voted 4-1 to direct Health and Human Services staff to bring back to the Board language that allows for designated smoking areas in public parks. The Board also requested that the Parks Manager work with the Health Advisory Committee to look into this proposal further.

At the November 10, 2015 Parks Advisory Committee meeting, the Parks Manager, Neil Pilegard, presented a summary of the ban and HHSA staff Jose Ruiz-Salas indicated that HHSA would be happy to provide more information in the form of a presentation. The purpose of this Agenda Item is to allow HHSA staff to provide information on this proposal as discussed at the previous Committee meeting. This is an opportunity for the Committee to discuss this matter, ask questions of HHSA staff and Parks staff, and render a recommendation. This is listed as an action in the event the Committee is prepared to provide a recommendation on the proposal.

**FISCAL IMPACT/FINANCING:**

Unknown at this time. An increase to parks regulations and a ban on smoking in the parks could possibly result in the loss of revenue and increase in enforcement costs to the Parks division.

Attachment(s)  
N/A