



## Feral Freedom in San Jose

- Government Agency is a primary participant.
- City does intake, s/n, vaccination, chip, tip and recovery during hold period.
- Non-profit rescue group takes cats from shelter and releases cats.
- No releases to environmentally protected areas.
- Non-profit manages educational material, website, and phone line for questions/concerns.
- [www.catcenter.org](http://www.catcenter.org)

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**Holly,**

How do we educate those who believe the cats are "better off dead"?



Question #2



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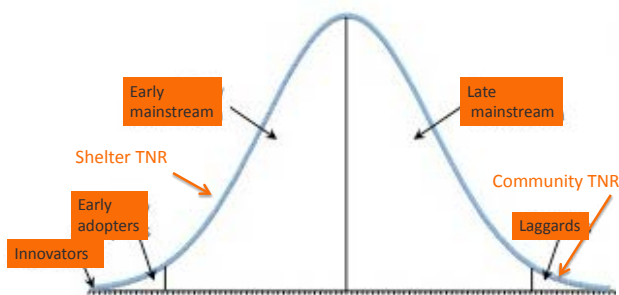
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## Innovators and early adopters



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 Advocating for TNR in your community



**Best Friends  
TNR Action Kit:**

- FAQ sheet
- Information checklist
- Generic PowerPoint

<http://bestfriends.org/Resources/No-Kill-Resources/Cat-initiatives/Helping-Community-Cats/Action-Kit--Advocating-for-TNR-in-Your-Community/>

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 San Antonio Program Video



<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z2Km0IqwZ NQ>

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Jon,

What cost differences are there between programs like this and "catch and kill"?



Question #3

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### Cost of Large-Scale Lethal Control



**# Cats**  
406,000

**FY12-13 Animal Care Budget**  
\$6.5 million

**2012 Cat Intake**  
8,375

**Budget Spent on Cats**  
\$1.95 million

**Cost per Cat**  
\$233

**Cost to Pick up ¼ of San Jose's Cats**  
**\$23.7 million**

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**Dr. Levy,**

Will this program make people just decide to do nothing about cats?



Question #4

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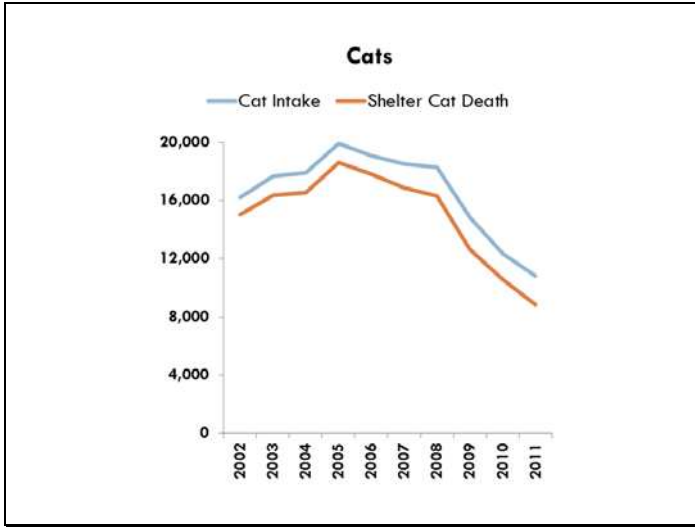
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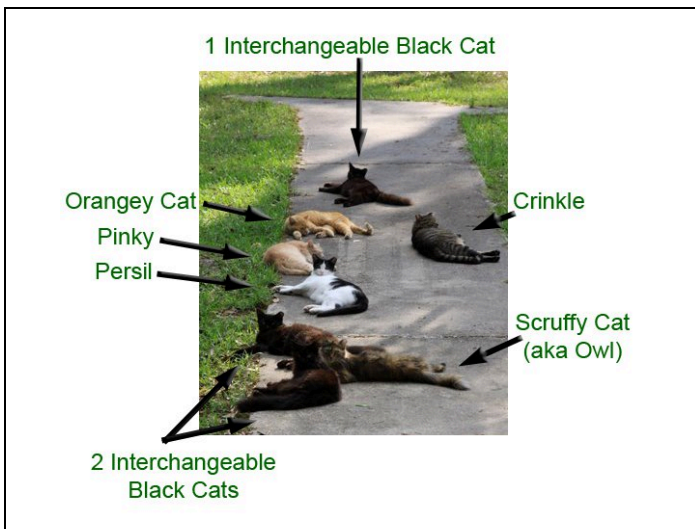
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**Rich,**  
Will people start using inhumane private means to eradicate nuisance cats?

MADDIE'S INSTITUTE

Question #5

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**“When 70% of the cats coming into shelters are dying, it’s causing great harm. And it doesn’t have to continue. At this point in our history, the most ethical, moral and cost-effective solution is to stop bringing community cats into our shelters.”**

**- Richard Avanzino**



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**Dr. Levy,**

How can we get government bodies on board with this concept?



Question #6

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### Jacksonville municipal code

“The City of Jacksonville recognizes the need for innovation in addressing the issues presented by feral, free-roaming and other community cats. To that end it recognizes that there are community care givers of cats, and acknowledges that properly managed community cats may be part of the solution to the continuing euthanasia of cats . . .”

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### Community cats

- *Community Cat* means any free-roaming cat that may be cared for by one or more residents of the immediate area who is/are known or unknown; a community cat may or may not be feral.
- Community cats shall be distinguished from other cats by being sterilized and ear tipped; qualified community cats are exempt from licensing, stray and at-large provisions of this ordinance and may be exempt from other provisions directed toward owned animals.

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### Community cat management program

- Required
  - Sterilization
  - Vaccination against rabies
  - Ear tipping
- *If* a person is providing care, cats must be fed daily and cats must not be allowed to suffer
- Caregiver certification program *may* be implemented by the city

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### Other progressive code updates

- Adding options for moving pets out of shelters sooner
  - Litters of puppies and kittens less than 6 months old without a nursing mother have no required hold period
  - No hold period for feral animals
- “Due to the low reclaim rate and high euthanasia rate for cats, all cats that do not have positive, traceable identification . . . may be sterilized immediately upon intake and placed in the adoption area as soon as 2 days after impound” (but still have 6-day required hold)

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**Jon,**  
Do we know what happens in neighboring shelters when this program is adopted?



Question #7

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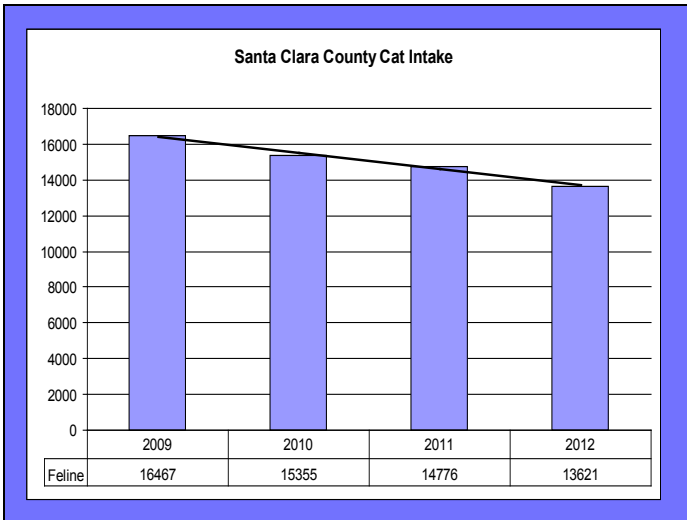
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**Dr. Hurley,**  
Do complaints to government agencies go up after this program is implemented?



Question #8

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## Scheduled or limited intake if:

- ✓ Today, you don't have the resources to provide spay/neuter/return
- ✓ Today, the outcome if admitted will be euthanasia of that cat or another
- ✓ The cat is not suffering, at immediate risk, or causing danger in the community



THE SACRAMENTO BEE 

**Sutter County animal shelter to stop accepting healthy stray cats**

By Bill Lindelof  
June 19, 2012

<http://www.appeal-democrat.com/articles/cats-117165-shelter-hurley.html>

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## Catching on

### Pasco Says 'No' to Feral Cats

The county's animal shelter no longer accepts feral cats and strays.  
By Sherri Lonon | Email the author | April 9, 2013

New Port Richey residents who are tired of hearing the mewing of feral cats in their neighborhoods at night can no longer round them up for a drop off at Pasco County Animal Services.  
As part of its Save 90% program, the county has decided to change the way it handles intakes. That program charges the county with saving 90 percent of the animals brought into its Land O' Lakes shelter.

Feral cats and strays, however, can make that goal difficult to obtain. That's why the county has put the brakes on its old policy of accepting cats carte blanche.

<http://newportrichey.patch.com/groups/politics-and-elections/p/pasco-says-no-to-feral-cats-c5c617b7>

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## Redrawing the map



### Spay Pasco Provides an Alternative

While Pasco won't take in feral or stray cats, Gregory said residents still have options. One of them comes through the county-supported Spay Pasco program. That is a trap, neuter and release program, or TNR program for short.

Through Spay Pasco residents can trap feral cats in their neighborhoods and take them in for sterilization surgery. Following surgery, residents can pick the cats back up and return them to the wild. The cost for the surgery is \$10 per cat and traps are available through Spay Pasco if a \$50 deposit is provided.

Spay Pasco operates using a network of local veterinarians to perform the surgery. Participating vet offices are found in locations throughout the county.

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**Catching on**

**The felines among us**  
Chico Animal Shelter's new policy aims to curb euthanasia

<http://www.newsreview.com/chico/felines-among-us/content?oid=8827912>

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**Sharing responsibility**

❧

“Except for a few people that we have been unable to have a reasonable conversation with, once we explain to people why our policies, they usually since we had a gentle knows we don't accept get traps to a

A jerk with a map can act just like a saint

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**Letting the community step up**

❧

“Several groups are involved, including a new group which was formed to specifically do TNR. The great thing is all the animal welfare groups are giving the same message to the public, so that helps a great deal. We have gotten a lot of support from the media and the public, and it vastly outweighs the people who are against it. So far so good!”

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## Providing a map for staff



[http://www.sheltermedicine.com/sample\\_cat\\_flowchart](http://www.sheltermedicine.com/sample_cat_flowchart)

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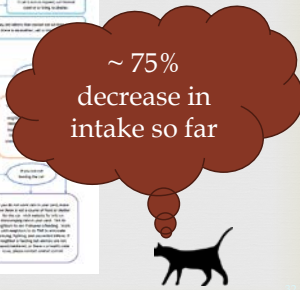
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## Providing a map for staff



[http://www.sheltermedicine.com/sample\\_cat\\_flowchart](http://www.sheltermedicine.com/sample_cat_flowchart)

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## Getting easier!



“While I can't quantify complaints, I think the public is aware of our new policies for the most part and we are getting fewer calls overall about picking up stray cats, trapping cats, and to turn in kittens. We are certainly getting fewer walk-ins with kittens or strays. Staff has commented that it is actually getting easier to talk to the public about not accepting cats :-)”

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**As of last week:**

**The Bakersfield Californian**  
Part of the Bakersfield.com Network

NEWS HOME LOCAL OBITS SPORTS ARE LIFESTYLE OPINION PHOTOS BUSINESS GUIDE BUY & SELL HOMES JC

Breaking News Ask TRC Business Blogs Columnists Politics Video First Look Social Media Special Sections Weather

Sponsored by  
Three Way Automobile

Saturday, Jun 22 2013 06:00 PM

**LOIS HENRY: Don't freak out over new feral cat policy**

Despite fears that the new policy could cause an explosion in the feral cat population, the shelter handles such a miniscule number compared to the overall population that experts agree it won't make the situation any worse.

But turning away those cats and freeing up money, employee time and shelter space could be hugely beneficial, according to others in the animal welfare biz who've already traveled this path.

Woodard is just at the beginning stages of this new policy so she hasn't figured out every twist and turn.

Her goal is to be able to give residents bringing in feral cats other options.

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**Say yes while saying no**

How can I help YOU solve this problem?

- ☞ Resources for finding/keeping/ rehoming
  - ☞ Spay/neuter/vax
  - ☞ Lost and found and rehoming resources
- ☞ Resources for co-existence
  - ☞ Spay/neuter/vax
  - ☞ Non-lethal deterrents
  - ☞ Responsible care
- ☞ Scheduled intake for "adoptable" cats, scheduled surgery for healthy un-adoptable

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**Holly,**

Do people start relocating or dumping cats on their own if they can't bring them to the shelter?

Question #9

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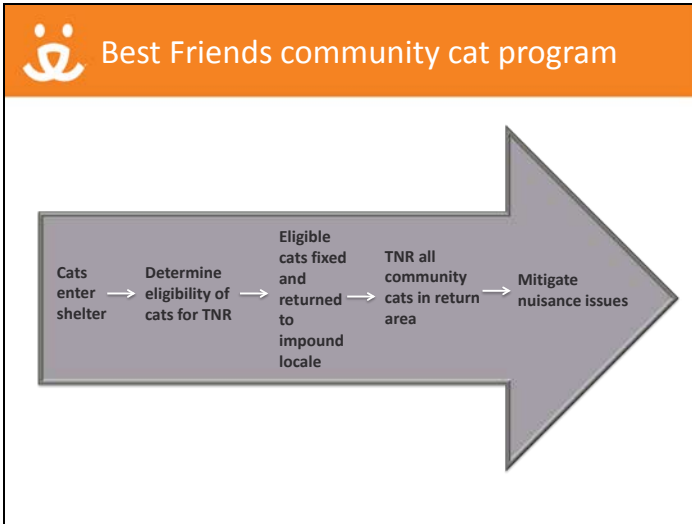
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**Cat deterrents**

Deterrents minimize conflicts with property owners

- Non-lethal
- Effective
- Easily accessible
- Deterrent video:



<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5nnOibg6nYc>

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**In plain sight**



The image shows a white van with a red stripe along the top. On the side of the van, there is a large sign that reads 'Are You Seeing Stray Cats? Call: (505) 440-3441'. Below this, it says 'Albuquerque Community Cat Program' and 'felines.bestfriends.org'. There are also logos for 'Save Lives! Spay and Neuter' and 'Millions of Charities'.

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**Dr. Hurley,**

What is the role, if any,  
for managed colonies in  
this new paradigm?



Question #10

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## Do community cats need to be part of managed colonies?

Less than 1% of >100,000 cats at TNR clinics euthanized for humane reasons

Body condition score 5/9 on shelter intake

Annual survival of semi-owned cats up to 90% (un-owned ~50%)

**San Francisco Chronicle**  
NORTHERN CALIFORNIA'S LARGEST NEWSPAPER

**Feral cats deserve care, not abandonment**



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## How are *most* community cats cared for?



Summary of six scientific surveys of cat feeding: average number of cats fed 2.6 to 4; overall average 3.2  
Up to 1 in 4 households feeds cats they don't own

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## How are *most* community cats cared for?



SNR helps these "volunteers" do a good the right thing!

Summary of six scientific surveys of cat feeding; average number of cats fed 2.6 to 4; overall average 3.2  
Up to 1 in 4 households feeds cats they don't own

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**Rich,**  
Does this paradigm change mean retiring the concept of the "open admission" shelter?



Question #11

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### Shelters are euthanizing an estimated 1.8 million cats per year

"It is our responsibility as animal welfare advocates to end the euthanasia of healthy and treatable animals immediately."  
-Rich Avanzino



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**Dr. Levy,**  
How should the issues of FIV and FeLV be handled in community cats?



Question #12

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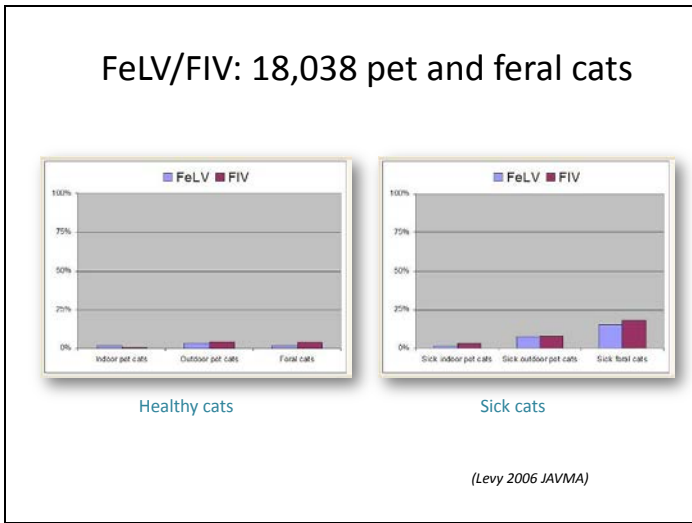
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**Dr. Levy,**  
How can we provide humane treatment to sick or injured ferals who can't be released immediately?



Question #13

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**Holly,**  
Do S/N/R cats need to be returned to where they were trapped/taken?



Question #14

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Advocating for TNR in your community



**Best Friends TNR Action Kit:**

- FAQ sheet
- Information checklist
- Generic PowerPoint

<http://bestfriends.org/Resources/No-Kill-Resources/Cat-initiatives/Helping-Community-Cats/Action-Kit--Advocating-for-TNR-in-Your-Community/>

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**Dr. Levy,**  
What is the minimum recommended age/weight for releasing kittens?



Question #15

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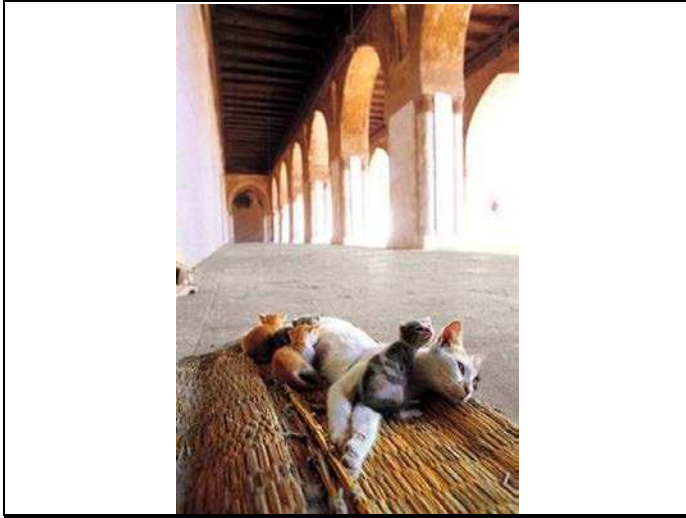
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**Dr. Hurley,**  
What is the real health risk,  
and how do we educate  
the public about it?



Question #16

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public health  
**Harmful Parasites In Cat Poop Are Widespread**  
by ANNA HANDECH  
July 09, 2013 5:07 PM



Every day about 1 million cats in the U.S. are actively pooping out as many as 50 million oocysts apiece.

The bulk of oocysts are getting dropped in the very places where humans are most active. "Feral cats tend to be where the people are, and it makes sense," Lisnik says. "They want to be around us, and we're their source of food."

Playground and

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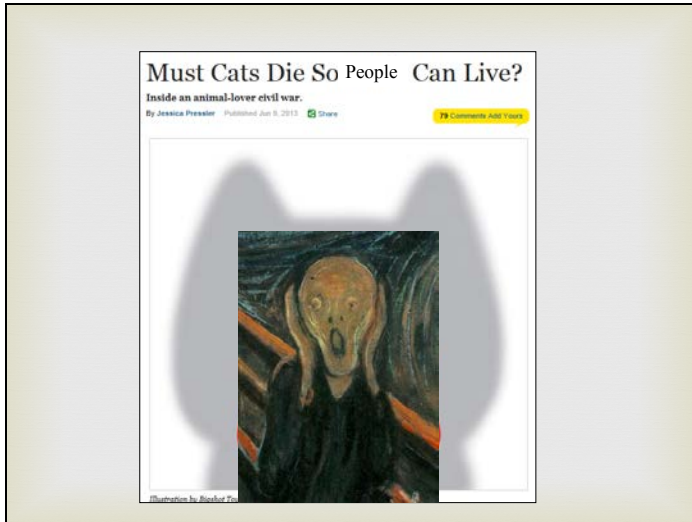
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## Not making the headlines...

Torrey also says that while there has been a drastic increase in the number of feral cats, there has been a decrease in the number of recorded cases of *T. gondii* infection. The public, he says, is more aware of the dangers of eating improperly stored meat, a source of infections.



He also has advice for green thumbs. "Studies have shown that you can have almost 100 oocysts under your fingernails after gardening. So always wash your hands after gardening, and wash vegetables before eating them," he says.

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## Reality check

- ☞ Some diseases more common in ferals than pets and vice versa
- ☞ Cats rarely sole or even primary risk factor for disease
  - ☞ E.g. toxoplasmosis, rabies, roundworms
- ☞ Eradicating cats is not an option
- ☞ Educate staff to educate public on simple and effective non-lethal methods to protect public health
  - ☞ Wear gloves when gardening, wash hands after playing in dirt, thoroughly wash veggies, avoid undercooked meat, cover sand boxes, treat pets for parasites preventatively, and...

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## SN(V)R protects human as well as cat health

- Targets cats by definition at the interface between people and "the wild"
- Rabies vaccinated, non-breeding cats will hold a niche in areas where cats are being fed
- Fewer kittens and fewer unvaccinated cats decreases public health risk
- Educated feeders can practice proper feeding and litter hygiene to further reduce risk



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**Holly,**  
Can existing colonies be relocated and if so, what leads to success?



Question #17

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### Euthanasia and live release results: Albuquerque and San Antonio cats

**Euthanasia %**

City	Yr 1	Baseline
ALB	16%	31%
SA	30%	62%

Significant decreases in euthanasia as a percentage of all outcomes

**Live Release Rate**

City	Yr 1	Baseline
ALB	76%	66%
SA	63%	35%

Significant increases in live release rates (without blanks)

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**Dr. Levy,**  
Are barn cat programs a good option for community cats who need to be relocated?



Question #18

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**Rich,**  
Does this program threaten animal control jobs?



Question #20

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## U.S. Deaths Are Down

**Shelter deaths have plummeted since 1970**

	Shelter Pet Deaths	Save Rate	Deaths per Thousand People
<b>1970</b>	23 Million	12%	112
<b>1996</b>	6 Million	42%	23
<b>2010</b>	3.4 Million	55%	11
<b>2015</b> Projected	700,000	90%	2




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**Jon,**

The 50% - 75% conundrum: What are the facts?



Question #21

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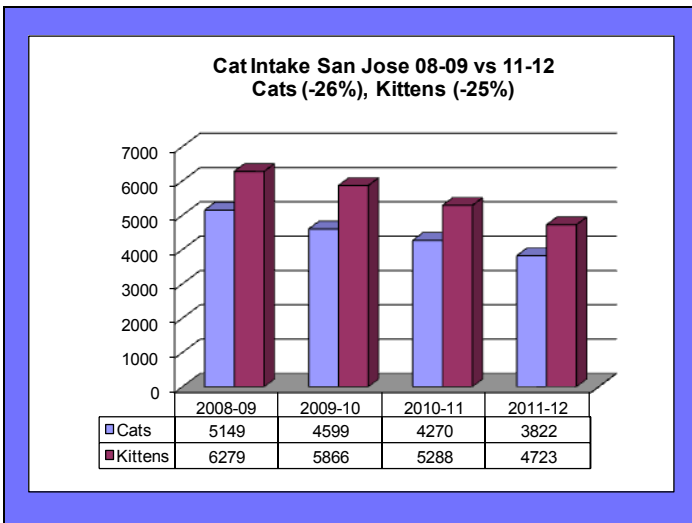
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### Other Lethal Control...

- Almost 1 million killed since 2000 (USDA wildlife services)
- In response, coyote numbers are growing and their territory is expanding.
- Birth rates shown to increase.



<http://www.sacbee.com/2012/04/30/4452212/wildlife-services-deadly-force.html#storylink=cpy>

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**Dr. Hurley,**  
How can we protect community cats and other wildlife they may prey upon?



Question #22

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### Must Cats Die So Birds Can Live?

Inside an animal-lover civil war.  
By Jessica Pressler Published Jun 9, 2013 [Show](#) [78 Comments Add Yours](#)




Illustration by Beahar Zoussche

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## Two part question



1. Is eradication of cats necessary for the protection of wildlife?
2. If eradication is necessary, is shelter euthanasia an effective way to accomplish this?

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## Is eradication of cats necessary for the protection of wildlife?



- ☞ *Predation* by cats is certain
  - ☞ ~ 6 x as many rodents/rabbits as birds
- ☞ *Population impact* of predation is unknown on a macro level, variable on a micro-level
  - ☞ May replace but not cause mortality of weak, sick and injured
  - ☞ May eliminate some species with detriment to others
  - ☞ Distracts from successful solutions




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**License to kill: reforming federal wildlife control to restore biodiversity and ecosystem function**

Bradley J. Bergstrom<sup>1</sup>, Lily C. Arias<sup>2</sup>, Ana D. Davidson<sup>3</sup>, Adam W. Ferguson<sup>4</sup>, Lynda A. Randa<sup>5</sup>, & Steven R. Sheffield<sup>6,7,8</sup>

"A meta-analysis of predator-removal experiments in 113 systems found prey populations subsequently declined in 54 of them (Sih et al. 1985)."

"For example, pronghorn fawn survival in areas with wolves was four-times higher than in areas without wolves, because wolves suppressed coyotes and consequently fawn depredation (Berger et al. 2008)."

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## That cuddly kitty may be saving some lives



"Following eradication of cats *Felis catus* in 2001, rabbit *Oryctolagus cuniculus* numbers increased substantially although a control action was in place (*Myxoma* virus), resulting in island-wide ecosystem effects."

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## Answer to part one



- ☞ Eradication of cats is beneficial in some microenvironments, harmful in others, and likely neutral in many
- ☞ Specific research and follow up is required for a given location to predict and monitor the impact of feline eradication

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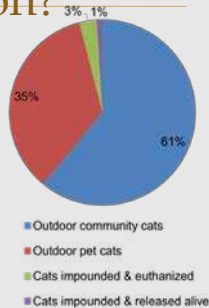
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## Is shelter euthanasia an effective tool for feline eradication?

- ☞ At least 50% removal required for eradication
- ☞ Estimated 30-80 million un-owned cats in the U.S.
- ☞ Estimated feline euthanasia ~ 2 million and heading downward
- ☞ Increase of 8-20x required for eradication
- ☞ Removal short of eradication is not useful



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# Reality check: what does it take to eradicate cats?

## Review of feral cat eradications on islands

K. J. Campbell<sup>1</sup>, G. Harper<sup>2</sup>, D. Algar<sup>3</sup>, C. C. Hanson<sup>4</sup>, B. S. Kett<sup>5</sup>, and S. Robinson<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Island Conservation, 100 Shaffer Road, Santa Cruz, California 95060, USA. [karl.campbell@islandconservation.org](mailto:karl.campbell@islandconservation.org). <sup>2</sup> School of Geography, Planning and Environmental Management, The University of Queensland, 4072, Australia. <sup>3</sup> Department of Conservation, Botolph Nature Recovery Project, PO Box 55, St Armand 7055, New Zealand. <sup>4</sup> Department of Environment and Conservation, Wildlife Research Centre, PO Box 51, Winneroo, Western Australia 6946, Australia. <sup>5</sup> Wildlife Management Branch, Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment, 134 Macquarie Street, Hobart, Tasmania 7001, Australia.

Cat eradications have been attempted on islands in all the world's oceans. We found 87 successful campaigns on 83 islands... Of the 87 successful campaigns, eradication methods are known for 66 (76%). On average, each campaign employed 2.7 eradication methods including leg-hold traps (68%), hunting (59%), primary poisoning (31%), cage traps (29%), and dogs (24%). All successful campaigns for which methods are known on islands >2500 ha (n = 9) utilised primary poisoning with toxic baits, with the exception of Santa Catalina (3890 ha) and San Nicolas (5896 ha).

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# The real question

## CAN Cats Die So Birds Can Live?

Inside an animal-lover civil war.

By Jessica Plender | Published April 10, 2013



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# The real answer: NO

- ☞ Euthanasia in shelters is not sufficiently targeted, cost effective nor extensive enough to eradicate cats
- ☞ Effective methods to eradicate cats would not be tolerated by our society as a whole
- ☞ Discontinuing euthanasia as a perceived panacea for wildlife at risk will allow for development of effective solutions

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# Theory



☞ "As long as private livestock producers can externalize the costs of predator losses via government-subsidized predator control, they will have little incentive for responsible animal husbandry techniques, i.e., reduce stocking levels, clear carcasses and after-births quickly, confine herds at night or during calving/lambing, install fencing and fladry, or adopt numerous other non-lethal preventive methods to avoid depredation (Shivik et al. 2003)."

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# Practice



THE SACRAMENTO BEE 

## Suggestions in changing Wildlife Services range from new practices to outright bans

By Tom Knudson  
May 6, 2012

"We've pretty much learned how to control coyotes on our own," said Jensen, whose losses to coyotes have declined 60 percent to 70 percent – from about 50 lambs a year when a federal trapper worked there to 15 to 20 today. "Anything that can help you 24 hours a day, like electric fencing, is a good thing."

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## How can we balance the lives of free-living cats and those of the wildlife they prey on?



- ☞ Plant species that provide birds with food, cover and nesting
- ☞ Create a brush pile in your yard
- ☞ Provide a source of water
- ☞ Feed birds responsibly
- ☞ Reduce pesticide and fertilizer use
- ☞ Prevent window strikes
- ☞ Help conserve habitat
- ☞ And...



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 Interested in learning more?

Holly Sizemore  
[hollys@bestfriends.org](mailto:hollys@bestfriends.org)  
435-644-2001 ext. 4877



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**Jon,**  
How can we effectively counter all the anti-cat PR making headlines lately?



Question #24

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Does this explain why TNR works better than lethal control?

- A lot of it comes down to nutrition and competition. When you have fewer animals (coyotes) on the landscape, you have more food available per individual. There is a ton of food on the landscape. Why not have a bigger litter?"* said Stewart, the Nevada ecologist.
- <http://www.sacbee.com/2012/04/30/4452212/wildlife-services-deadly-force.html#storylink=cpy>

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### Goals Of TNR

- Non-lethal population reduction
- Healthier and safer cats
- Lower adverse impacts
- Reduced public complaints



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### What about neighbors who do not want cats back?

#### Education at time of impound

- Deterrents (cat stop)
- Benefits of cats in neighborhood
- Relocation LOCAL
- Officer options, case by case



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**Rich,**

Institutional change is hard; what works when it comes to getting government agencies and animal groups on board?



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**The American people support  
our lifesaving efforts:**

71% of people polled say animal shelters  
should only be allowed to euthanize animals  
when they are too sick to be treated or too  
aggressive to be adopted.



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**Evaluation Survey**

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/J7P6NRT>

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