

CAT CONFERENCE 2022

Global Cat Management

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OUTLINE

- **Global cat demographics**
- **Different populations of domestic cats**
- **Cat Management — Pet Cats & Urban/Suburban Strays**
- **Cat Management — Feral cats in wild lands**
- **Comparing Cats in UK, USA, Australia, NZ**
- **Conclusions**



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Global Cat Population

- Populations for nine countries in Mars EPH first tier of countries plus Australia and new Zealand.

<https://endpethomelessness.com/>

- Estimates of pet cat numbers as well as stray/feral cats.

* Big change in numbers in last decade. Suspect this estimate is too high.

<u>Country</u>	<u>Pet Cats</u>	<u>Stray & Feral Cats</u>
China*	150,000,000	52,000,000
Germany	15,700,000	2,000,000
Greece	600,000	2,000,000
India	1,800,000	9,100,000
Mexico	8,000,000	1,400,000
Russia	22,750,000	3,200,000
South Africa	2,000,000	1,700,000
UK	7,900,000	970,000
USA	60,000,000	41,000,000
Australia	4,000,000	3,750,000
New Zealand	1,400,000	200,000
	274,150,000	117,320,000
World	582,000,000	249,000,000



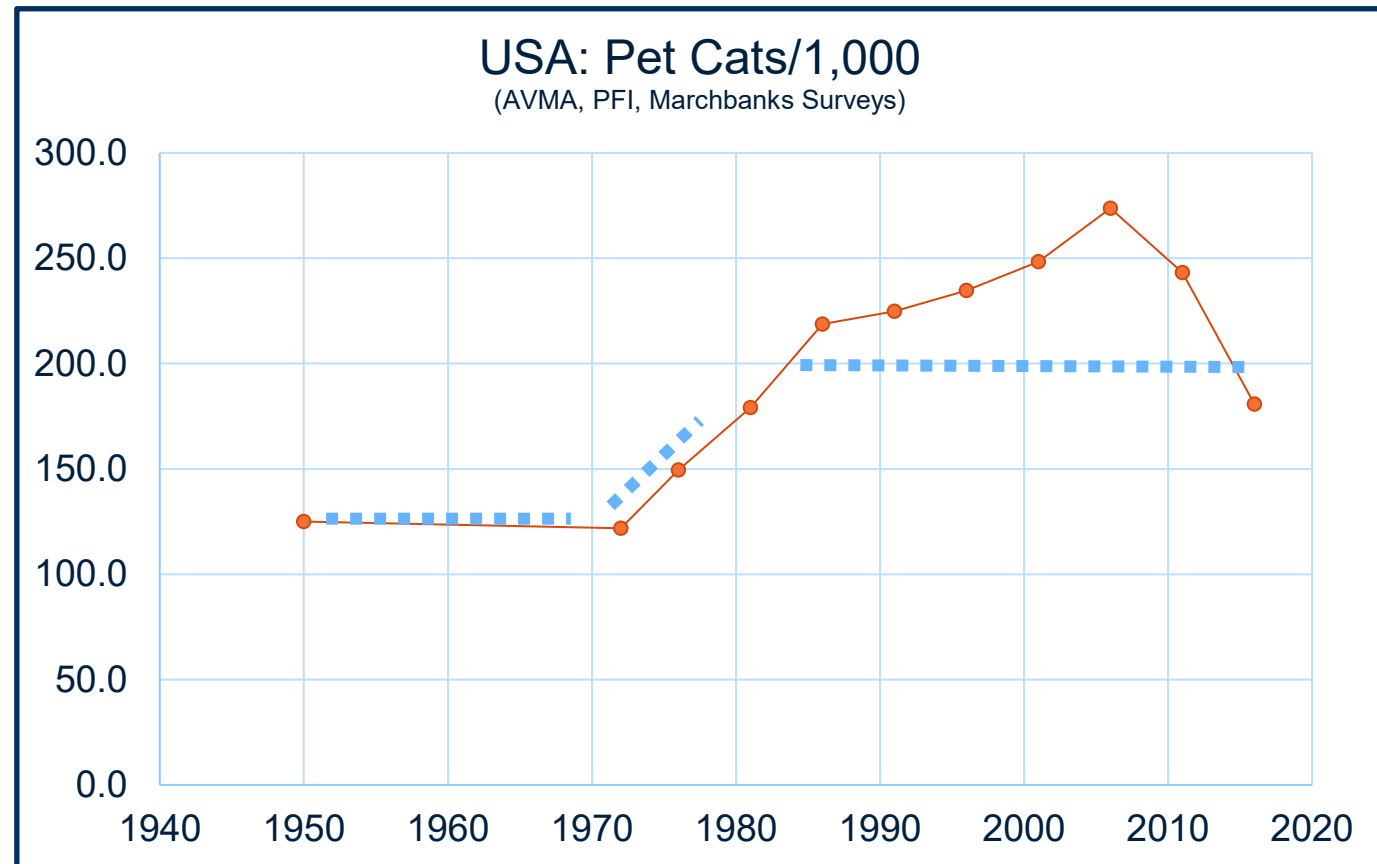
Counting Cats - USA

• USA

Problems with pet cat surveys in US

Suspect pet cat numbers rose between 1970 and 1980 and then leveled off at around 200 cats per 1,000 people.

Early survey respondents had many more cats than late resp.





Counting Cats - USA

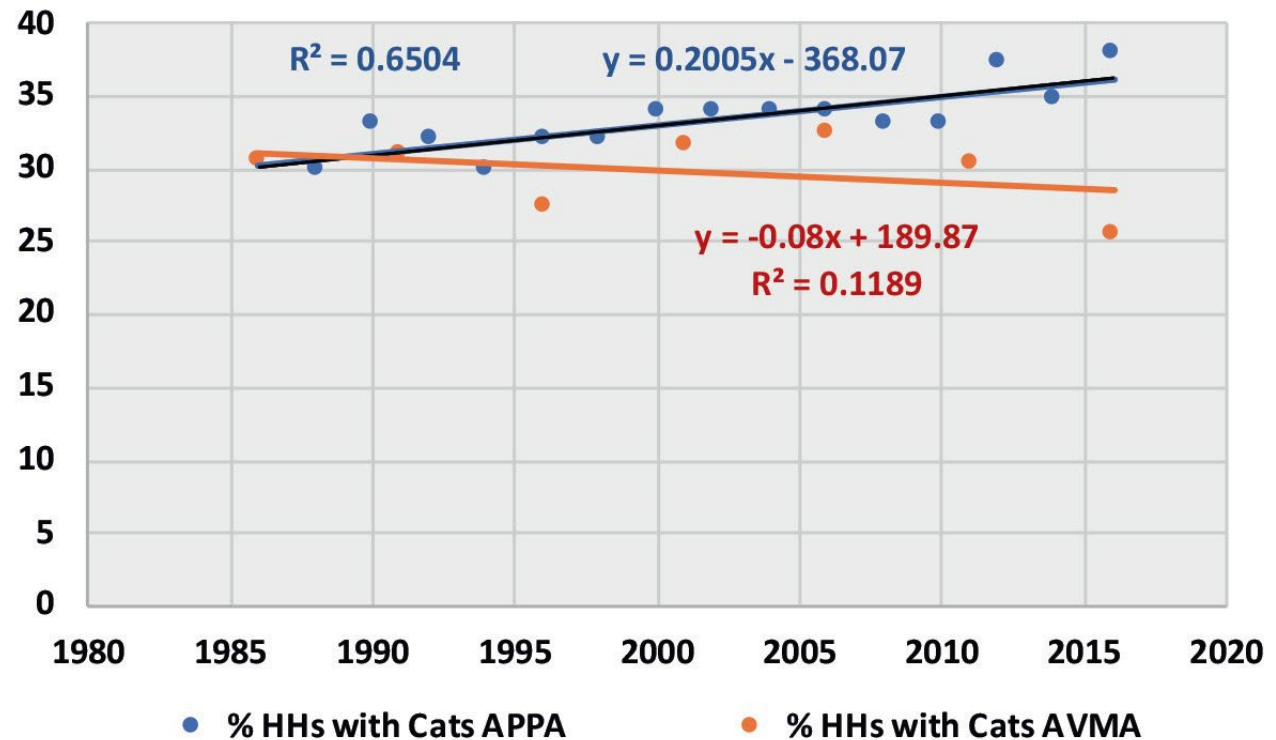
• USA

APPA & AVMA surveys
produce very different
trends

AVMA made major
correction to pet cat
estimates in 2016 survey

Very little discussion re
differences or overall
trends

% US Households Owning Cats





Counting Cats - USA

• Massachusetts

AVMA surveys produce very different pet cat estimates compared to MSPCA RDD survey

Do not know which survey technique – RDD or Household Panel – is more accurate.

Very little discussion re differences or overall trends

	1996	2001	2006	2011	2016
AVMA	1,269,000	1,518,000	1,510,000	1,593,000	1,012,000
MSPCA	817,000	723,000	816,000	738,000	
AVMA as % of MSPCA	64.4%	47.6%	54.0%	46.3%	



Cat Sheltering Trends - USA

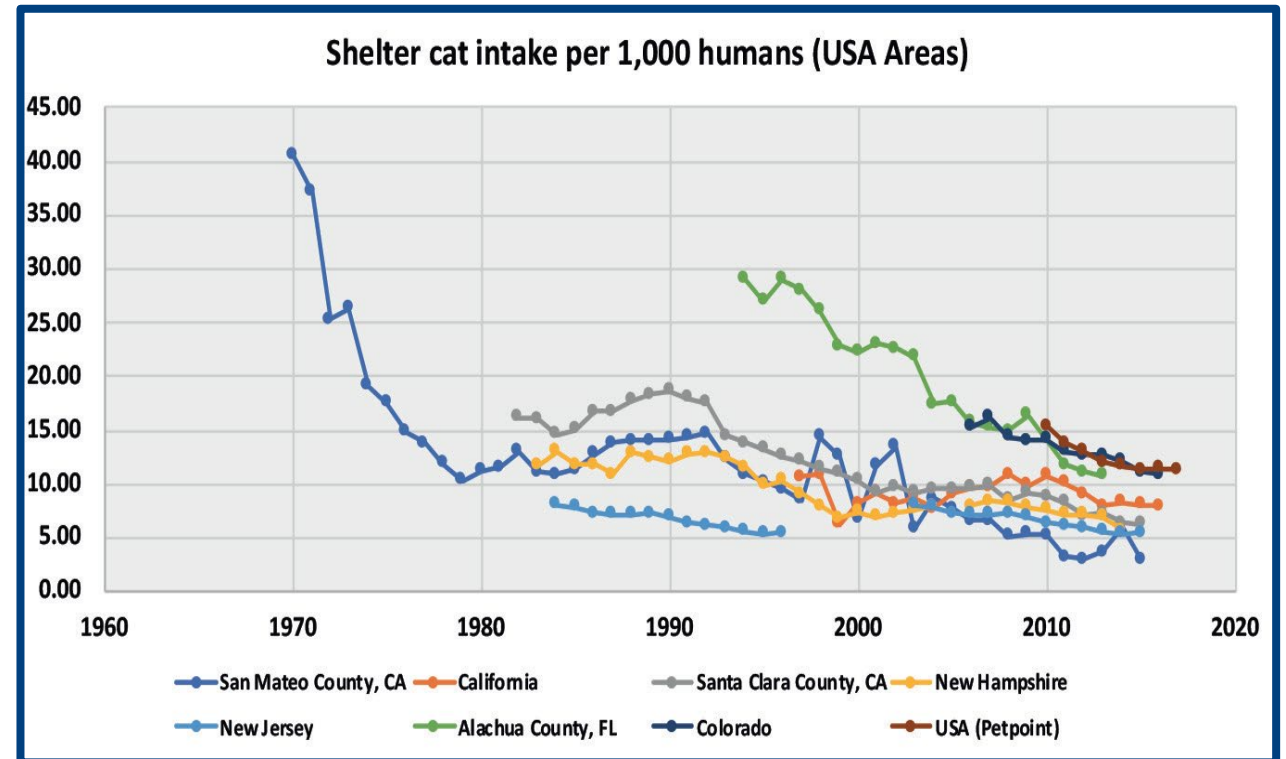
- **Shelter Trends**

Cat shelter intake dropped dramatically from 1970 to 1980

Then levelled off from 1980-1995

Began to decline again after introduction of TNVR

Seeing declining shelter intake in other countries





Counting Cats - Europe

• Europe

Relative cat populations increase from 1981 to 2010 (not France).

From 2010 to 2020 not much change (Finland may be exception).

Relative pet cat populations vary from one country to another.

	1981	2010	2012	2017	2018	2020
Austria	147	207	205	204	230	226
Belgium	100	172	176	177	179	177
Denmark	108	121	120	116	116	116
Finland	90	124	122	174	163	174
France	220	174	180	200	202	231
Greece		55	55	55	56	58
Hungary		226	228	233	205	241
Ireland		68	69	66	67	66
Italy	84	125	125	124	121	131
Netherlands	106	172	160	152	153	181
Poland		145	150	159	169	180
Romania		190	202	220	221	225
Russia		125	125	153	154	156
Spain		72	81	67	67	81
Sweden	95	135	133	141	141	147
Turkey			41	41	44	49
UK	96	126	132	120	113	116



Counting Cats - Other

- Other

Relative Cat populations over time

	1981	2010	2012	2016	2017	2018	2020
Australia	139			161			
Canada	140			201		224	
New Zealand		350		242			
Japan	20		77				
China			39		49		71



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Pet Cats & Stray Cats

- **Pet Cats**

- High numbers in Western & Eastern Europe, North America and Australia/New Zealand.
- Low numbers in Latin America, Africa.
- Asian countries mixed – e.g., India versus China.

- **Stray & Feral Cats**

- Cats around human communities
- Cats in wild lands – e.g., Australia and New Zealand



Management Strategies - Pets

- **Pet Cats**
 - **Cat Welfare**
 - Sterilization
 - Keep indoors
 - **Wildlife welfare**
 - Provide catios – Portland, OR example
 - Colored bibs
 - Feed high protein diet



Management Strategies - Outdoor

- **Stray cats around human habitation** (majority of outdoor cats?)
 - Trap & adopt/euthanize (before RTF)
 - TNVR – must be sustained and focused
- **Feral cats in wild areas** (usually 1 cat/sqkm or less)
 - Leave alone
 - Lethal control
 - New technologies – e.g. CRISPR produce infertility



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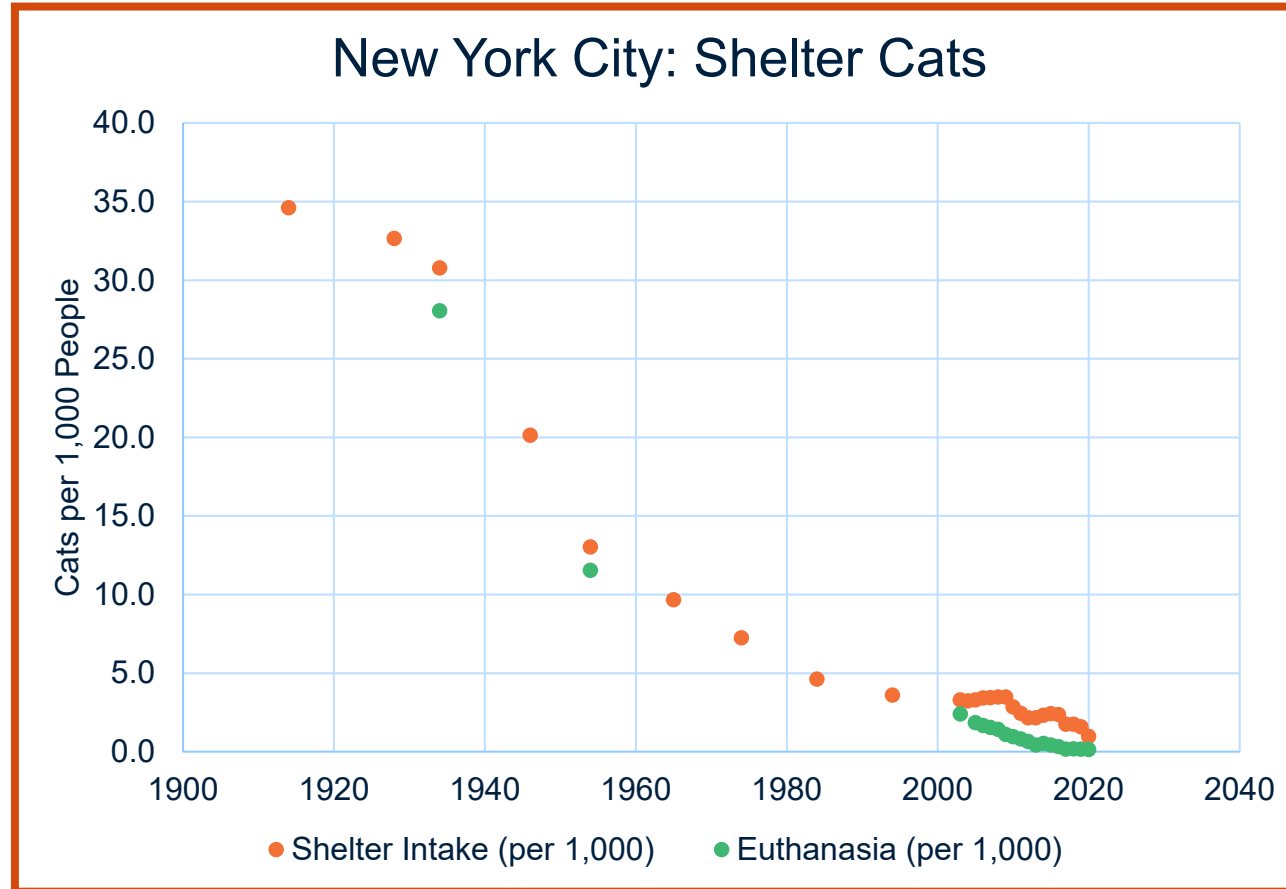
Pet Cat Management

- **New York City (1914-2000)**
- **San Mateo County, CA (1970-2020)**
- **University of Central Florida (iconic TNVR project 1995-2019)**
- **Portland, OR (partnership between cat & wildlife orgs)**
- **United Kingdom (no concern about outdoor cats)**



USA. Cat Sheltering Trends - NYC

- **Very few long-term data sets – one for New York City**
- **Shelter intake indicates possible decline in outdoor cat numbers**

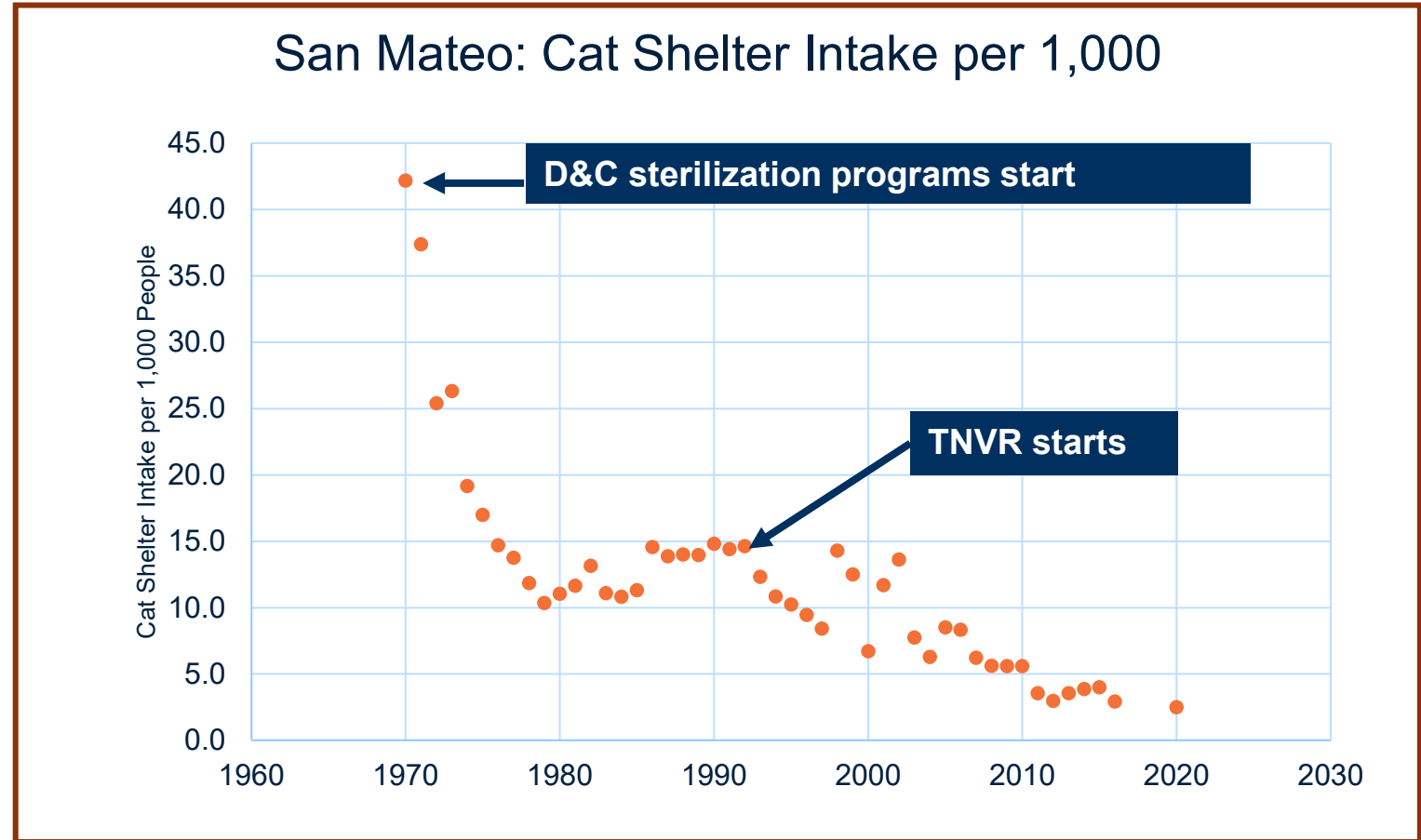




USA. Cat Sheltering Trends

San Mateo County, CA

- 1970-2020 – more detail on shelter trends – possible reflection of outdoor cat numbers & cat management approaches





UCF TNVR Project: 1995-2019

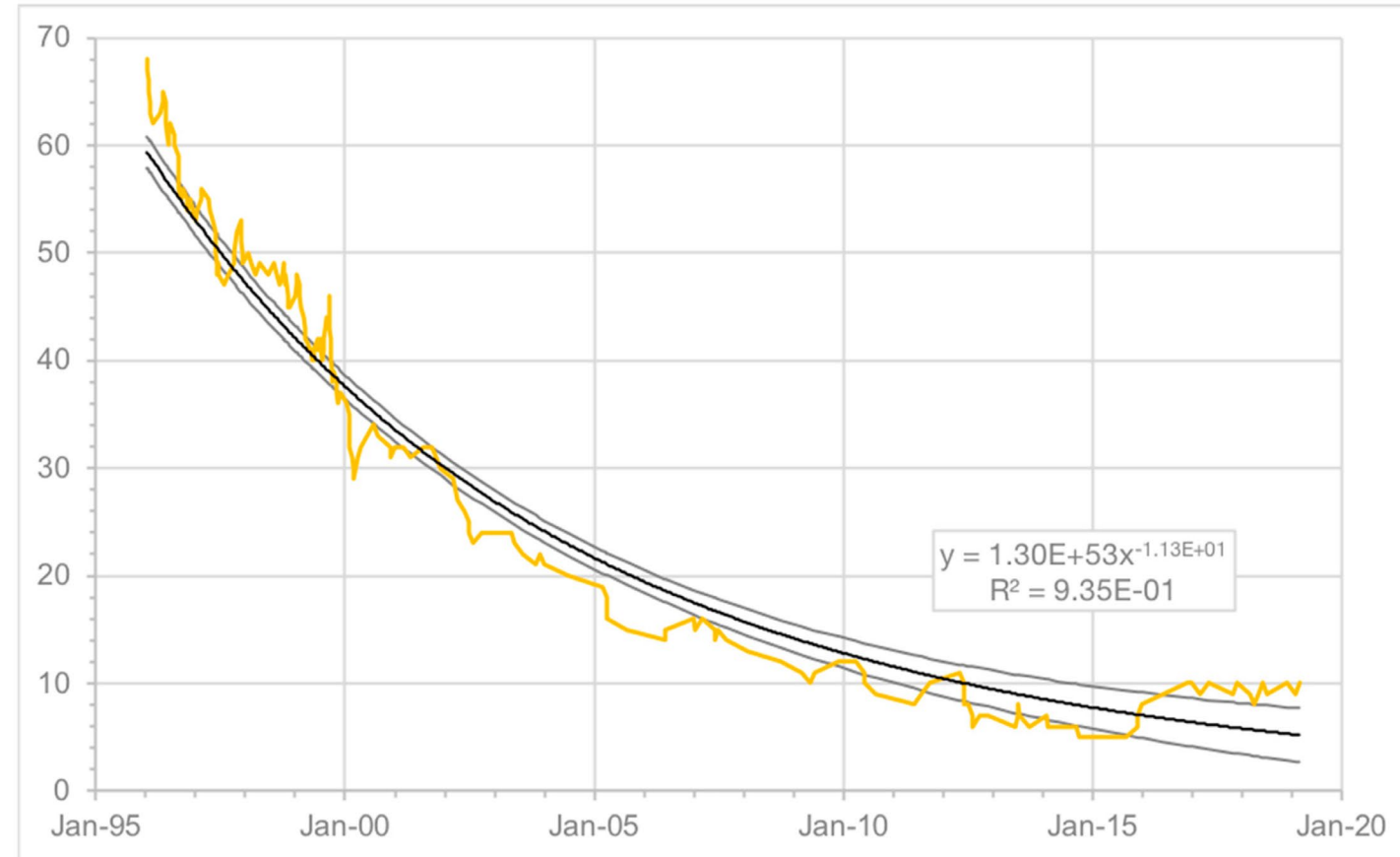
- **University of Central Florida, Orlando**
- **1,415 acres**
- **35,000 students**
- **3,200 employees**
- **155 free-roaming cats**





UCF Project: Outcomes

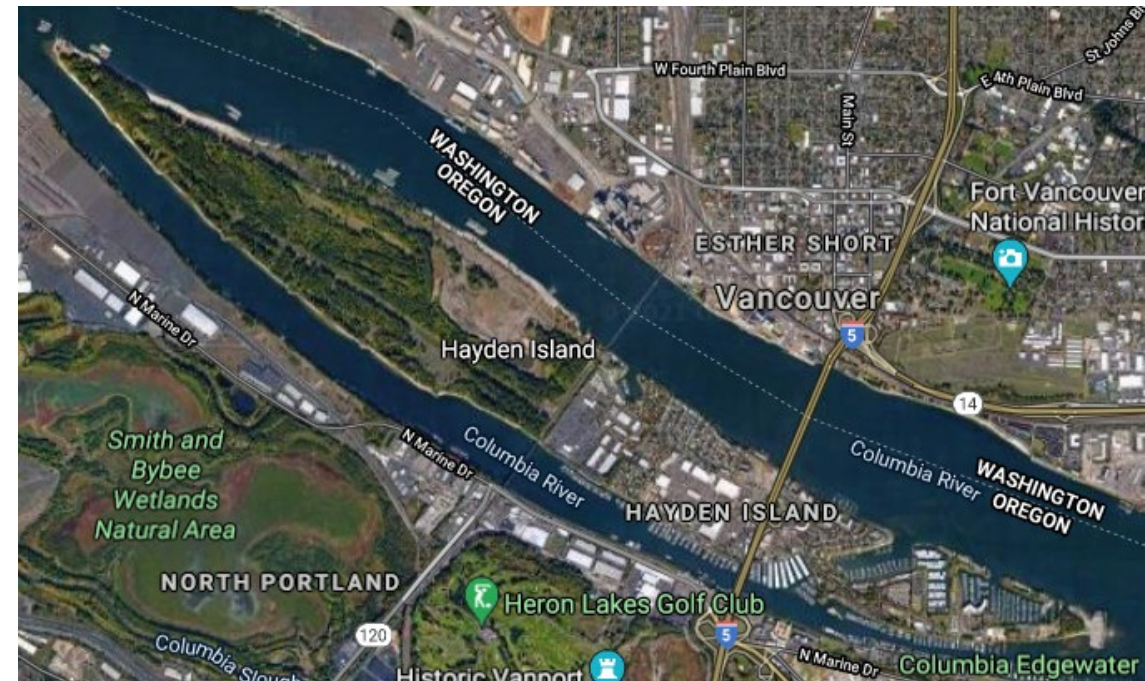
- 68 cats (of original 155) on campus after initial trapping & sterilization.
- From 1996 to March 2019, cats on campus declined to 10.
- From 1995 to 2019, 204 cats trapped in total. 170 sterilized, 95 adopted, 62 disappeared, 23 euthanized, 24 other.





Portland, OR

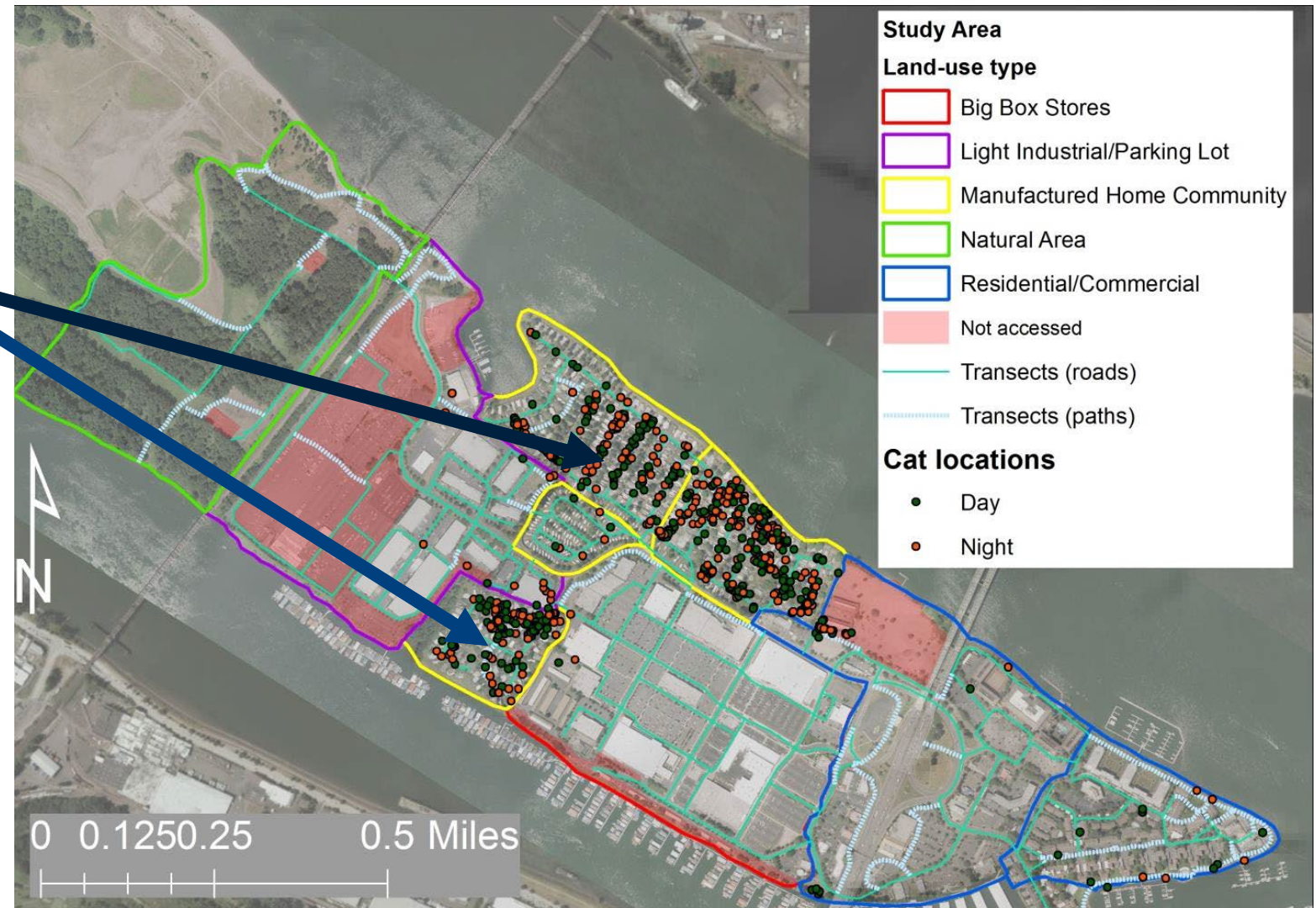
- Cooperative project – Portland Audubon and Feral Cat Coalition of Oregon
- Working together to reduce impact of outdoor cats – FCCCO promoting catio construction and tours
- Hayden Island Project – an island in the Columbia River running through Portland. 4.4 sq km. Half built up and half relatively natural.
- 320-540 outdoor cats – very few in natural area





Hayden Island – Cat Distribution

- Cat location
- Nearly all cats in mobile home communities
- Two-thirds of dietary intake was commercial cat food
- Feeding stations kept cats away from natural area?





United Kingdom & Cat Management

- When *Cat Wars* (Peter Marra & Chris Santella, 2016) appeared, reaction in the UK decidedly lukewarm.
- In fact, the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds specifically contradicted the claims in *Cat Wars* and released the following statement:

“Despite the large numbers of birds killed, there is no scientific evidence that predation by cats in gardens is having any impact on bird populations UK-wide.... It is likely that most of the birds killed by cats would have died anyway from other causes before the next breeding season.”
- TNVR started in Denmark but adopted enthusiastically in the UK in 1970s.



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Cat Management – Feral cats

- **Feral cats in wild lands are a major challenge:**
 - **New Zealand and Australia talk about these populations but have not developed differentiated strategies to address these cat populations**
 - **In NZ and Australia, cat advocates and wildlife biologists tend to talk past each other – cat advocates talking about urban/suburban populations while wildlife biologists focus on cats in wild lands.**



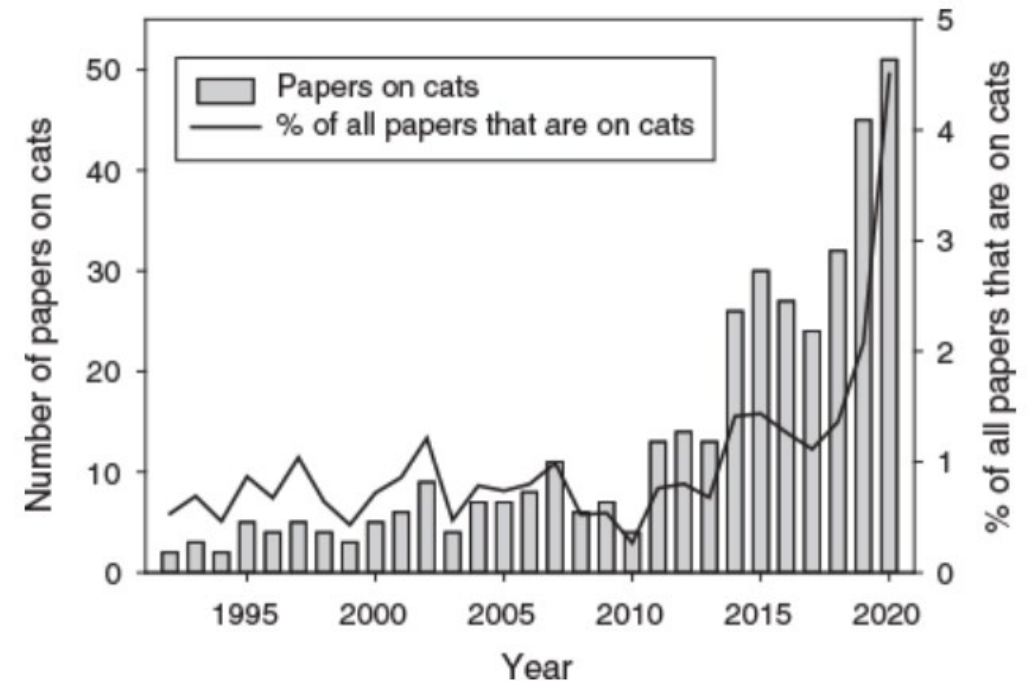
Cats in wild lands

- **Leave alone – not an option in NZ & Australia**
- **Catch and kill or poison in situ – NZ campaign working with animal advocates; Australian authorities developing lethal options (trapping, shooting & poisoning mainly – Eradicat (1080), Curiosity(ParaAminoProprioPhenone), Felixer grooming delivery system)**
- **TNVR – not deployed in wild lands with low cat densities (less than 1 cat per sqKm)**
- **Control proposals in USA, Spain, Portugal, Italy (no-kill), Australia, NZ – social constraints major challenge**



Australia

- Australian campaign against feral cats began in earnest in 2010, 2015 Threatened Species Strategy by Govt.
- First cat count – 1.4 to 5.6 million feral cats in wild lands (not 20 m), 700,000 ferals/strays in urban/suburban areas and 3.8 million pet cats (144/1,000)
- Kill estd 2 billion vertebrates (pet cats kill 390 million).
- Toxoplasmosis
- Estimated 300,000 feral cats killed annually
- Island eradication began in 1960s, latest Dirk Hartog Island at 630 sqKm

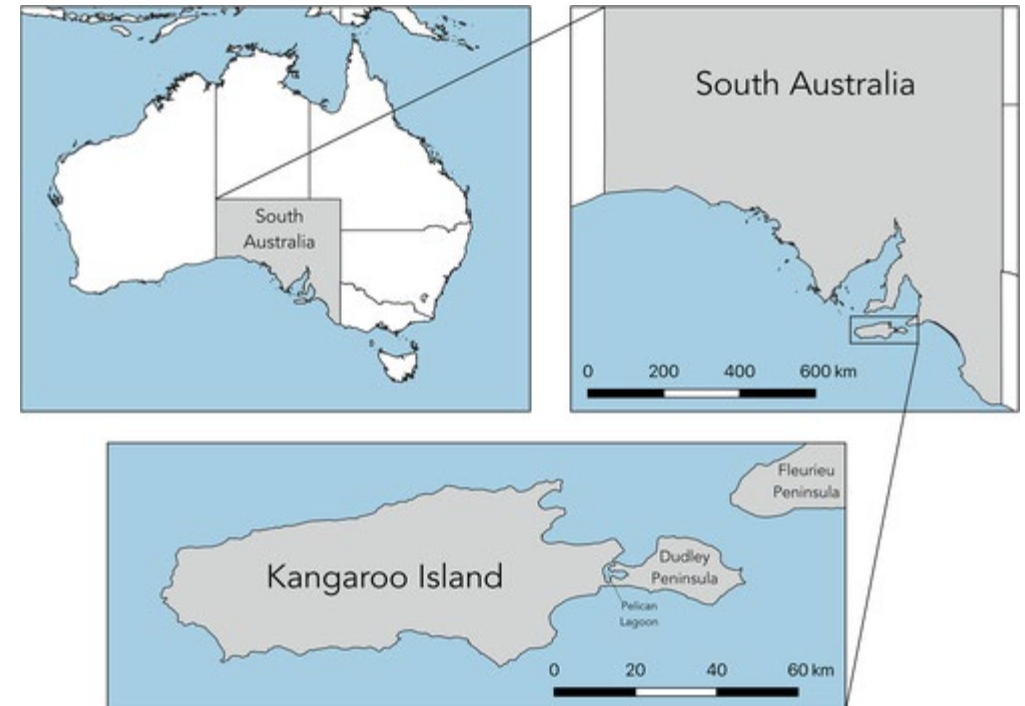




Kangaroo Island, Australia

- **Kangaroo Island**

- 4,400 sqKm, 4,200 people, 244 pet cats, 1 intact, estimated 1,600 feral cats at density of 0.37 cats per sqKm.
- Native vegetation covers 53% & no foxes or rabbits
- Started planning in 2016
- Devastating wildfires in 2019
- 90% of people on island support cat management
- First focus on Dudley Peninsula 375 sqKm





Islands & Cat Eradication

- **At least 80 successful cat eradication campaigns on islands but most uninhabited by humans and small.**
- **Only 20 of 80 were larger than 10 sqkm and only three (Marion, Macquarie & Dirk Hartog) were larger than 100 sqkm.**
- **Kangaroo Island biggest challenge to date.**



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Compare Cat Management

- Different rates of cat ownership
- Pet cat sterilization generally high
- Very different approaches to keeping pet cats indoors
- Microchipping rates differ

	NZ	Australia	UK	USA
% Cat-Ownning HHs	44%	29%	17%	25%
Cats/1,000 (Euromonitor, 2012)	308	102	140	228
Cats/1,000 (other surveys)	242	161	114-168	182
Sterilized	93%	89%	93%	93%
Indoors only	8%	34%	20%	70%
Microchipped	31%	72%	64%	27%



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Conclusions

- **Population estimates problematic – need much better and more reliable estimates**
- **Distinguish between pets, strays and ferals, and how to manage humanely**
- **Threat to wild cat species – e.g., Scottish wild cat and African wild cat**
- **Develop better relations with conservation biologists**