

Targeted TNR & Getting the Most Bang for Your Buck



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PODCAST



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Operations Coordinator, MSPCA
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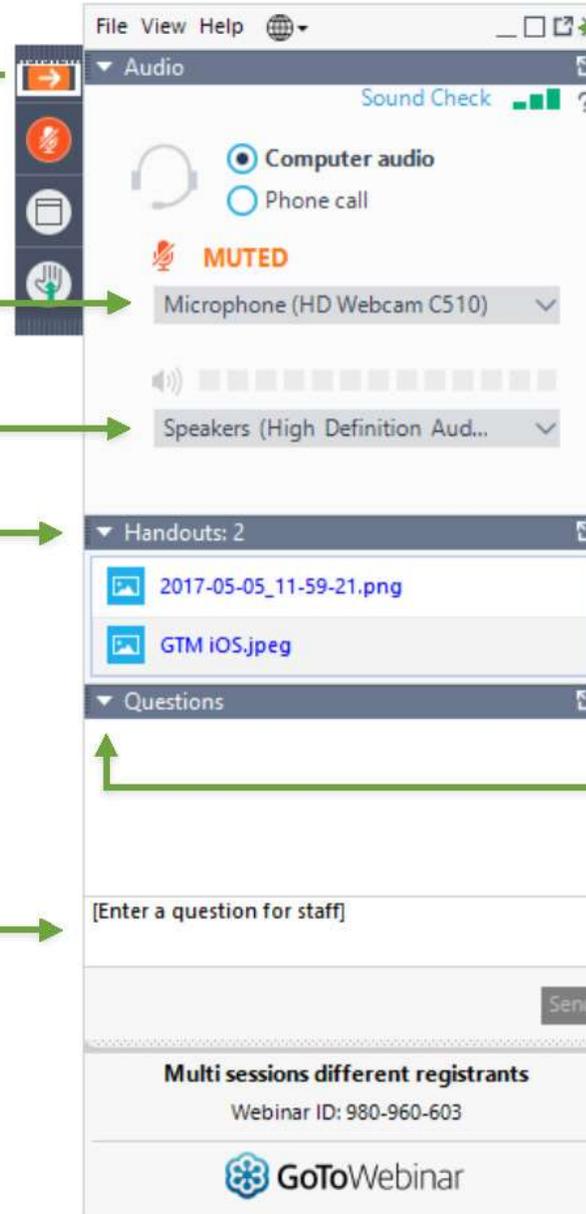
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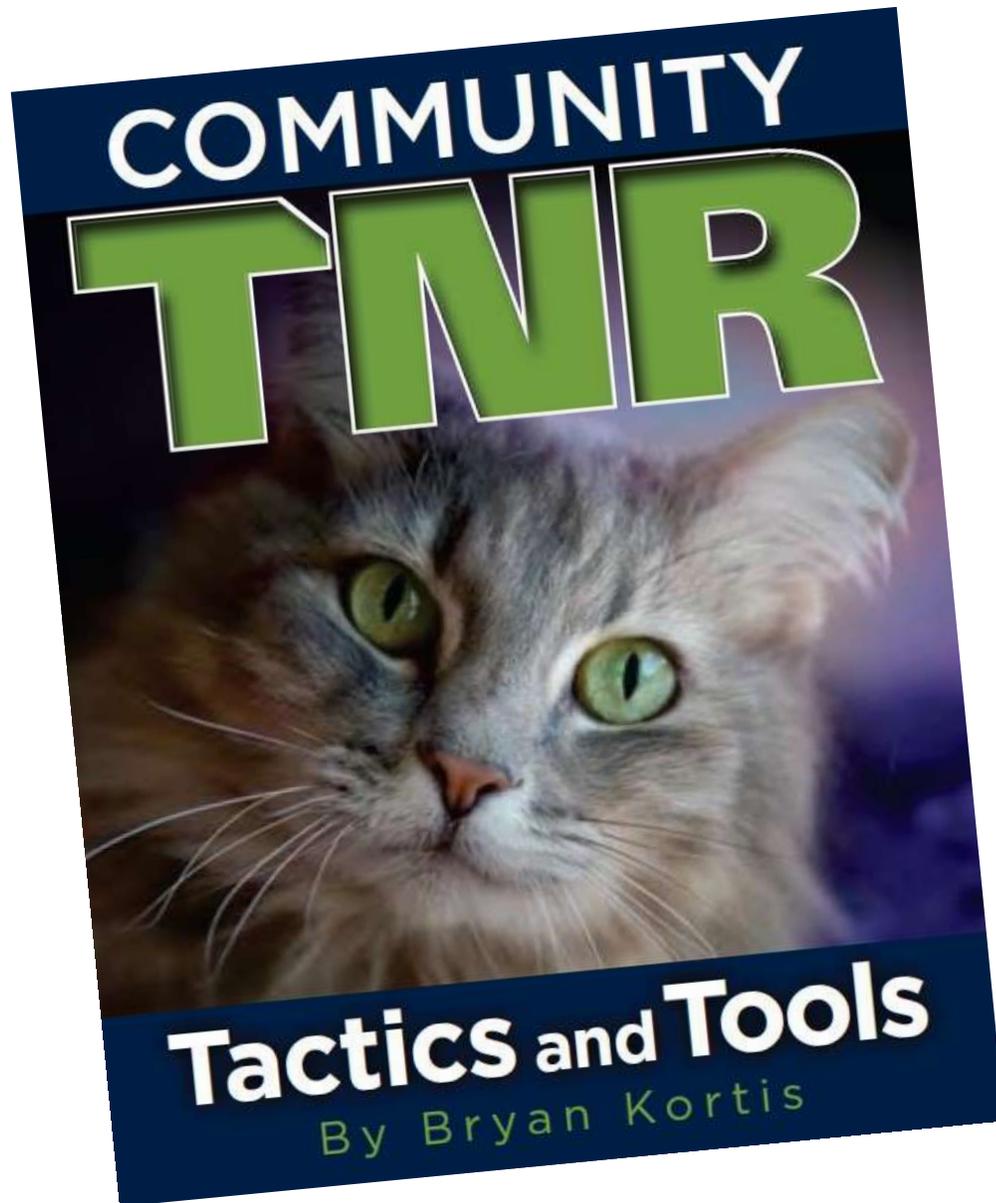
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Community TNR: Tactics and Tools

- published by PetSmart Charities
- download handout or purchase a print copy at www.amazon.com





The problem:

- Too many cats,
- Too few surgeries, trappers, traps, transporters, funds...

The solution: targeting

Concentrate limited resources in a geographic area of high need in order to maximize impact.



Elements of targeting

- Limited resources
- Concentration
- Specific area
- High need
- Maximize impact
 - fewer cats
 - lower intake
 - fewer complaints



Homicides 2003-2009

3,402

Average homicides per year: 540

All homicides

Month and time of day

Race/ethnicity of victim

Race/ethnicity of perpetrator

Sex of victim

Sex of perpetrator

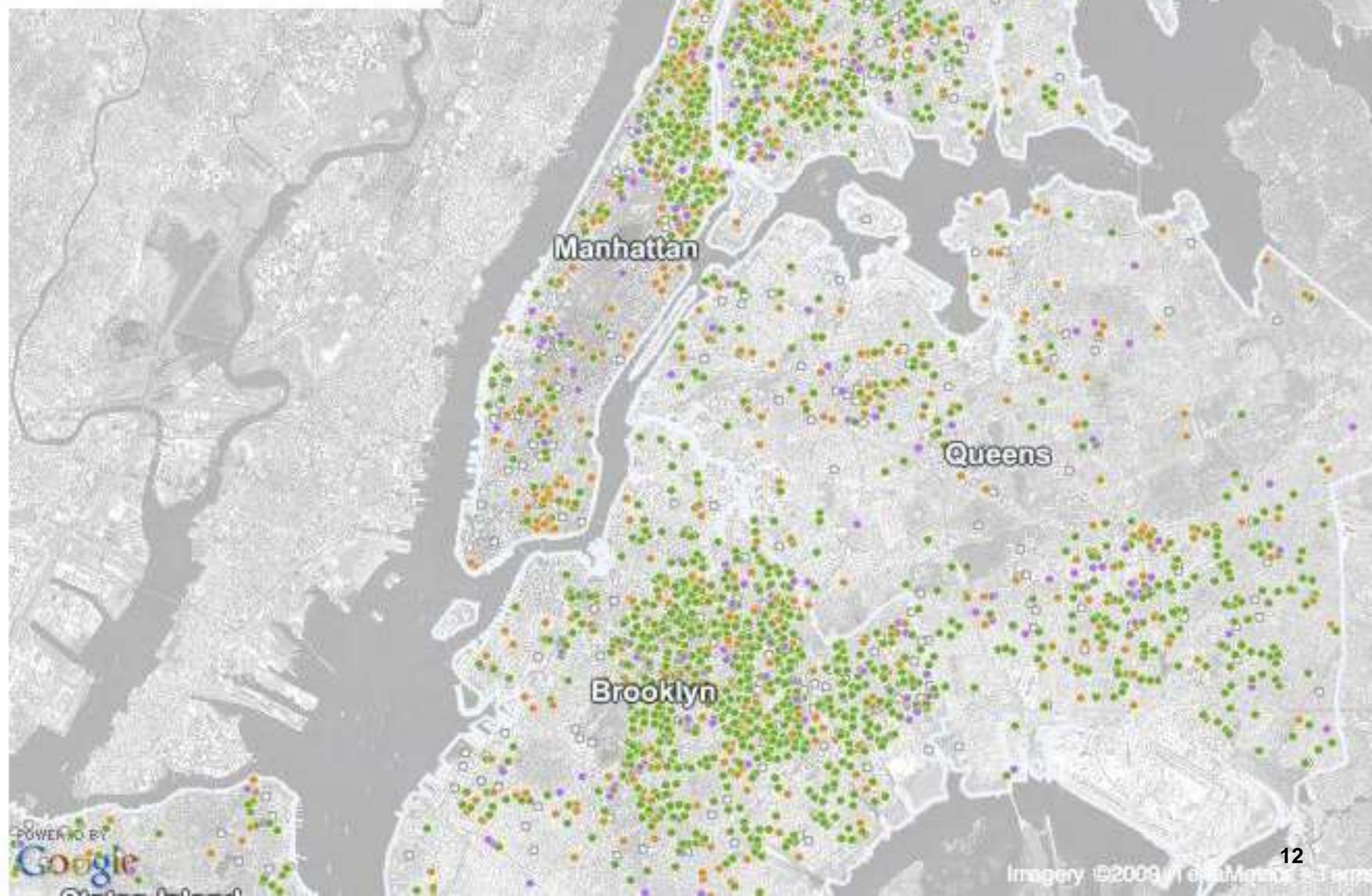
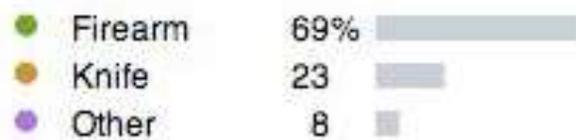
Age of victim

Age of perpetrator

Weapon used

Borough

WEAPON

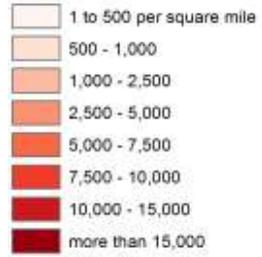


Map does not show 11 locations that the police have not released.

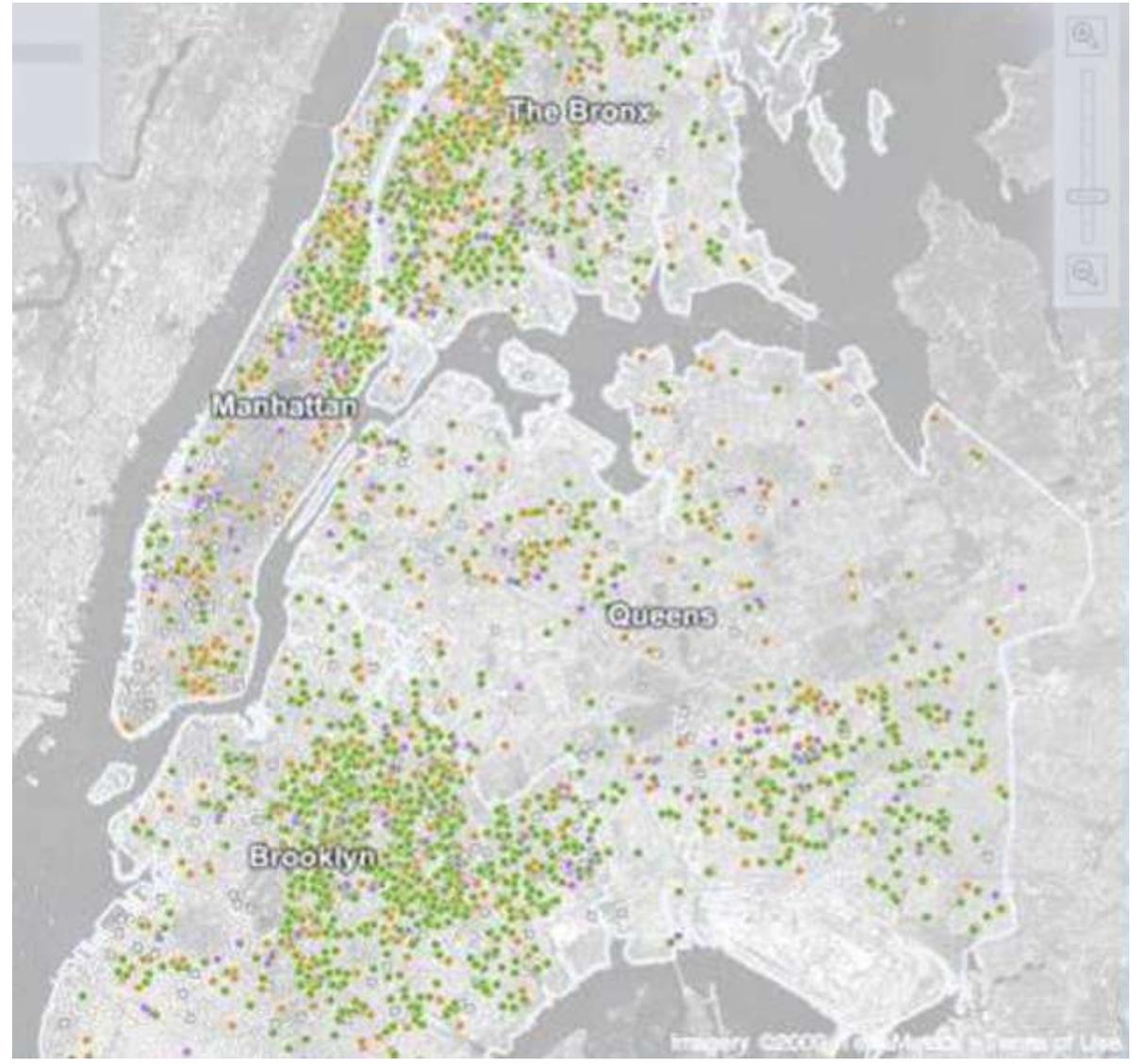
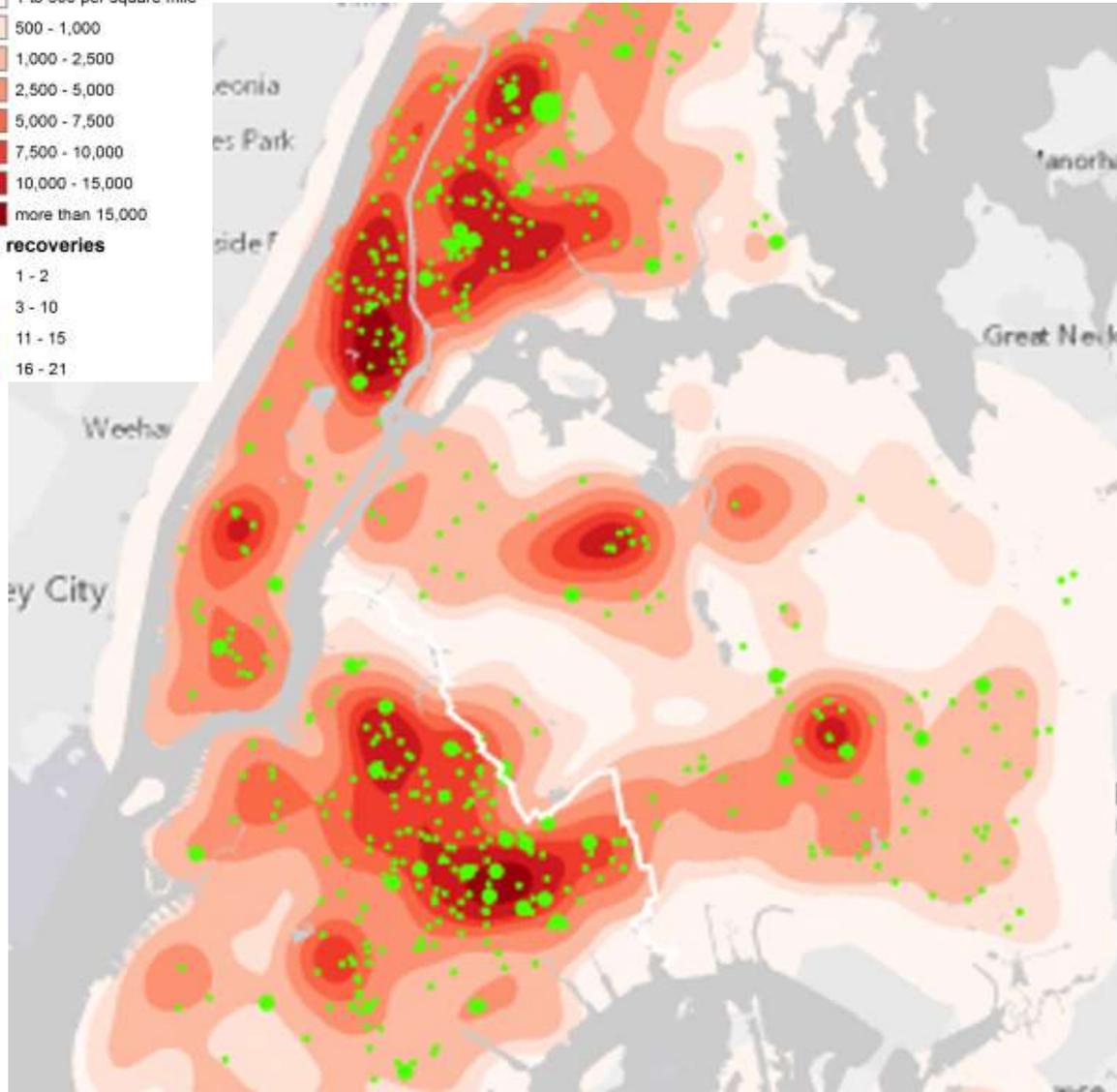
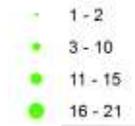
POWERED BY
Google

Imagery ©2009

**Stop and frisks in 2011
per square mile**



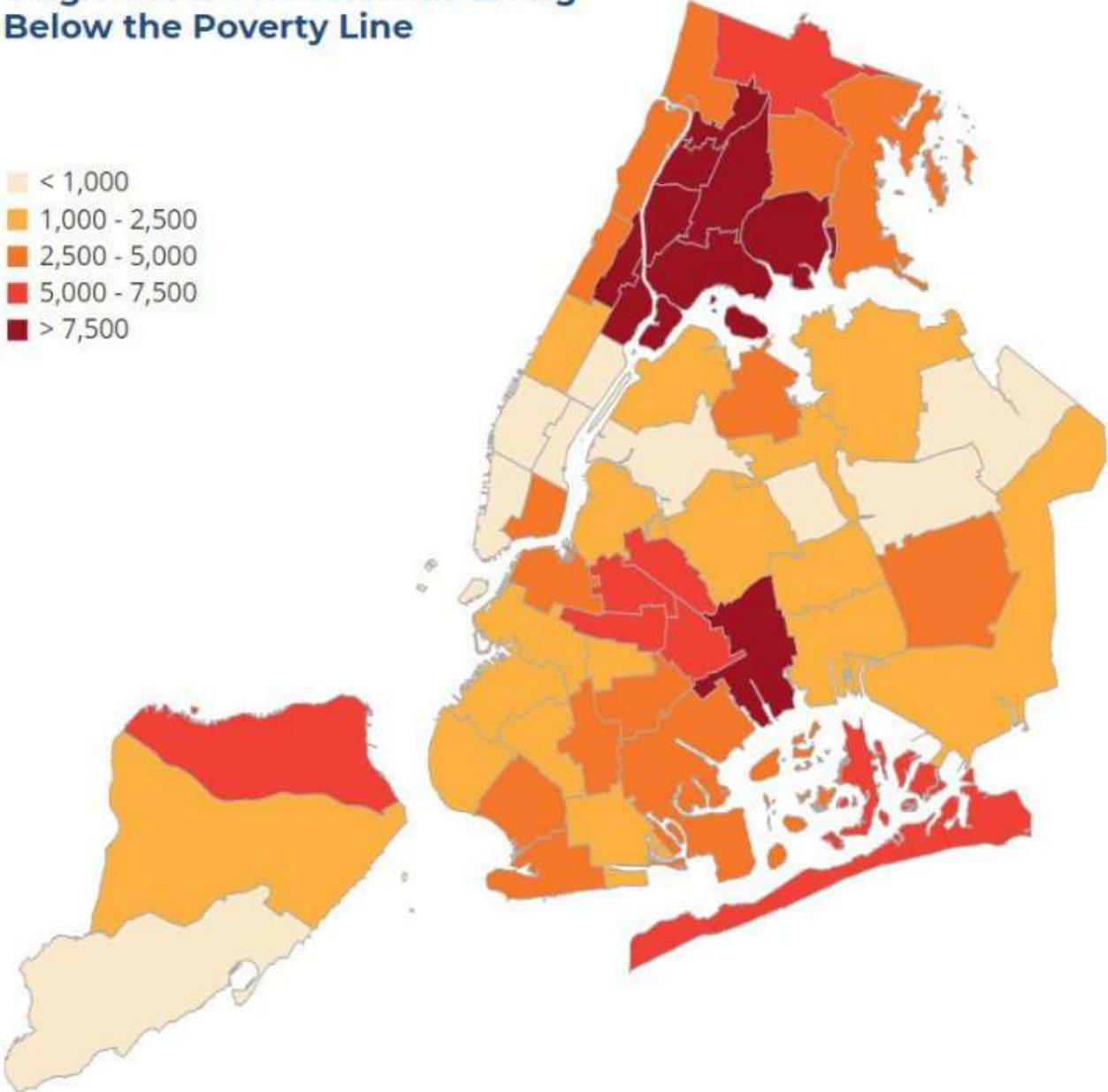
Gun recoveries



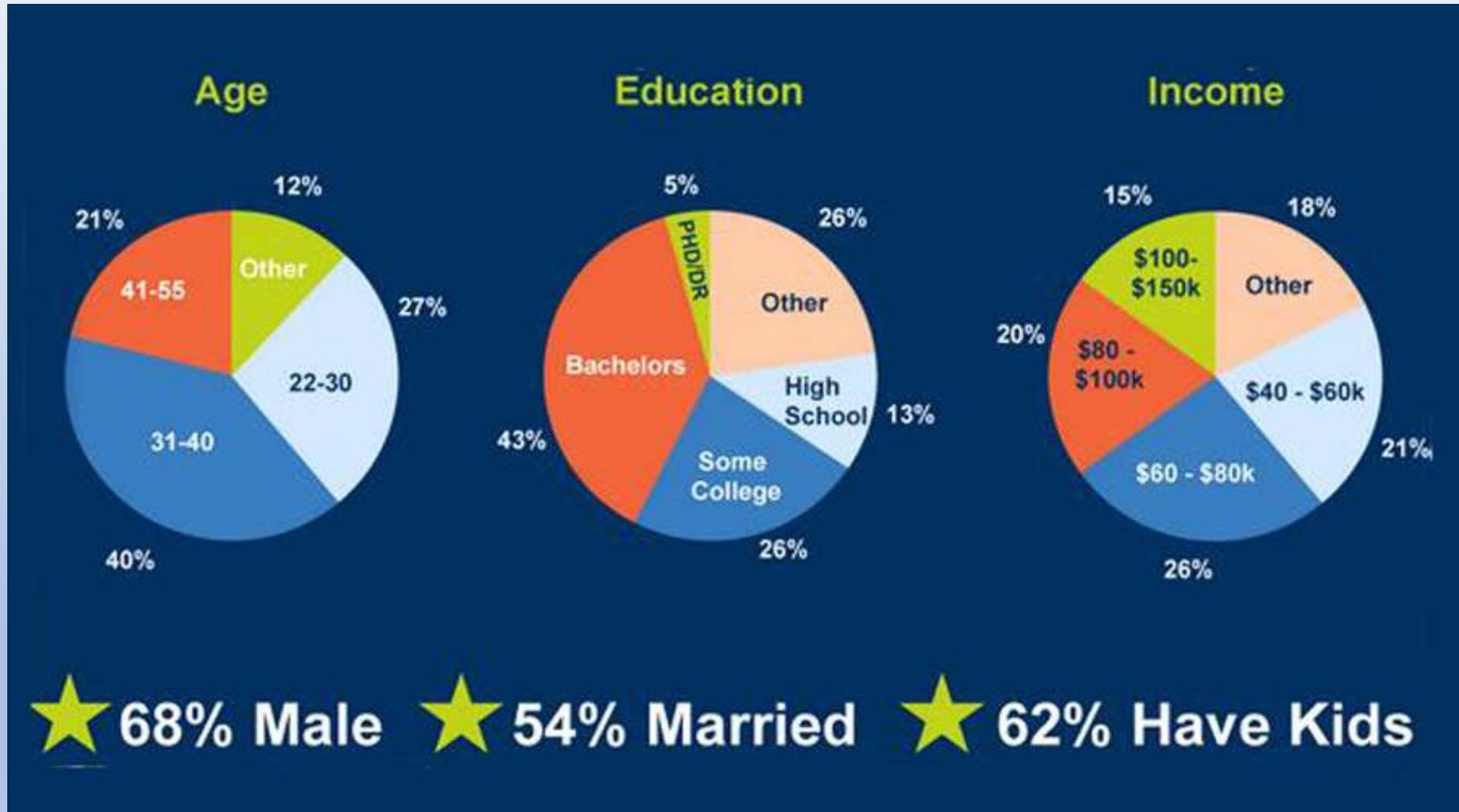
New York City 2015 - 2018

Single Parent Households Living Below the Poverty Line

- < 1,000
- 1,000 - 2,500
- 2,500 - 5,000
- 5,000 - 7,500
- > 7,500



Demographic targeting (podcast)



Targeted TNR is geographic, not demographic

YES



Downtown district



NO

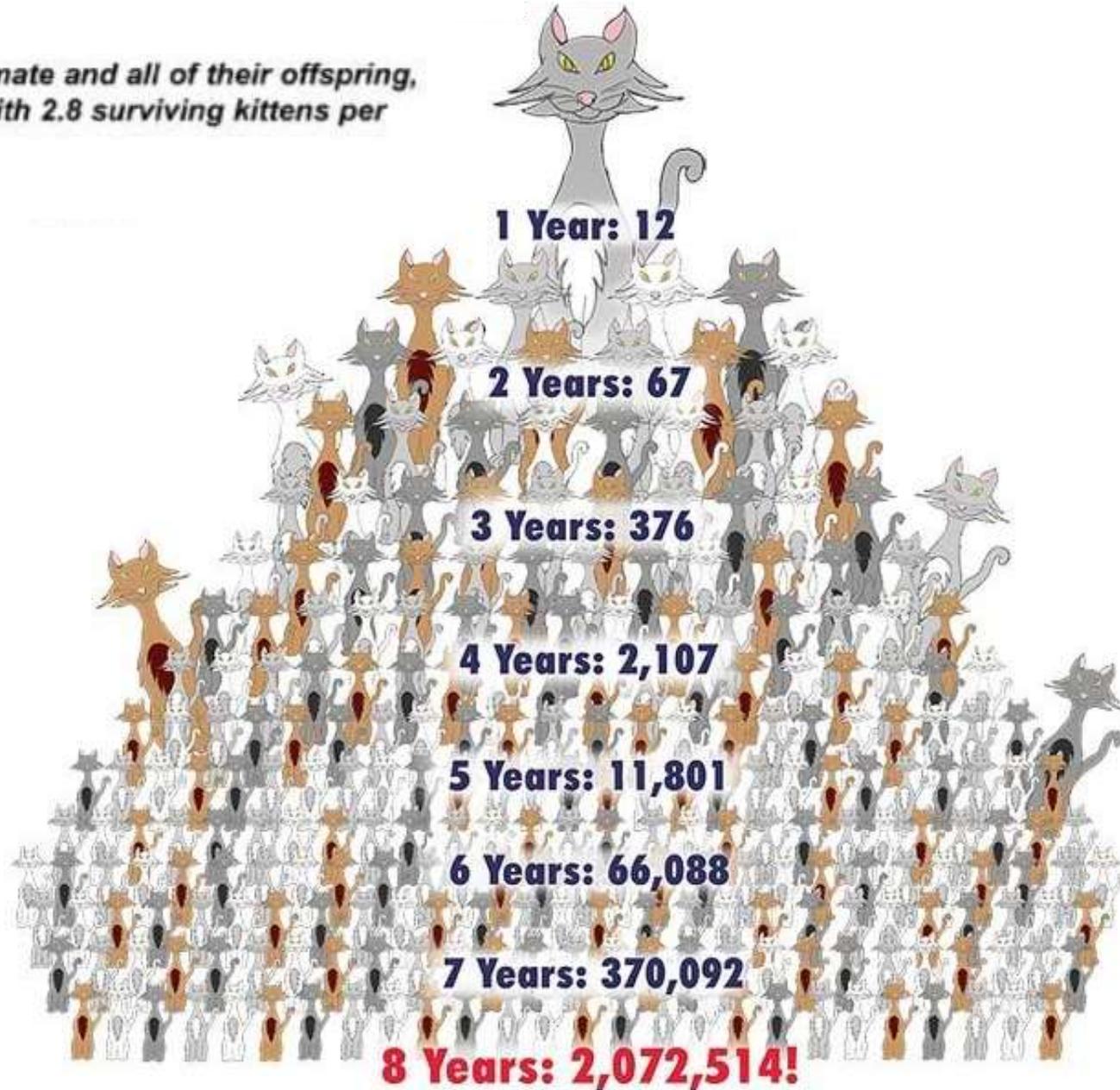
Elderly caretakers







An unspayed female cat, her mate and all of their offspring, producing 2 litters per year, with 2.8 surviving kittens per litter can total:

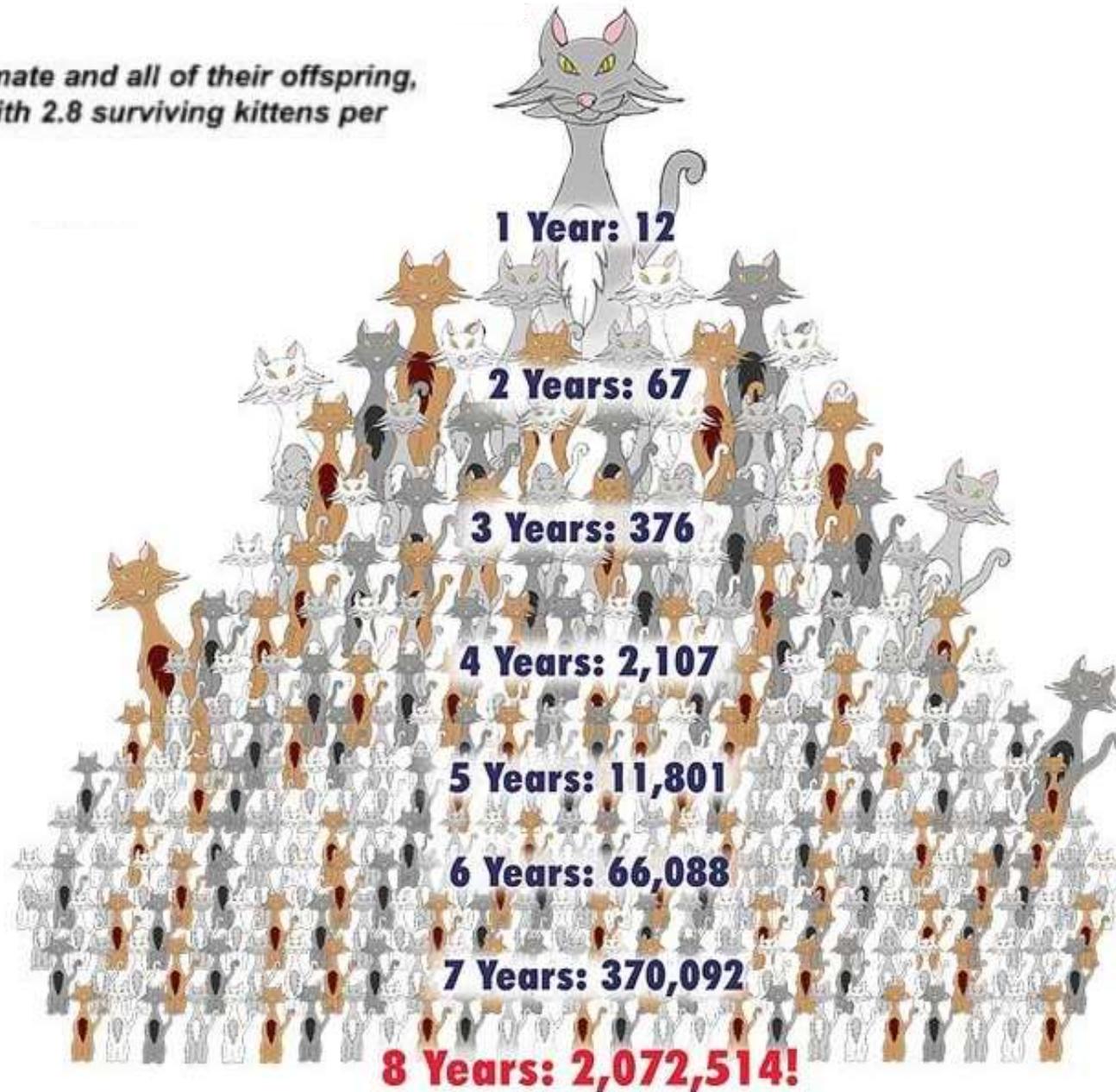




An unspayed female cat, her mate and all of their offspring, producing 2 litters per year, with 2.8 surviving kittens per litter can total:

Carrying capacity limited by:

- Food
- Shelter
- Kitten mortality
- Territory
- Social tolerance level



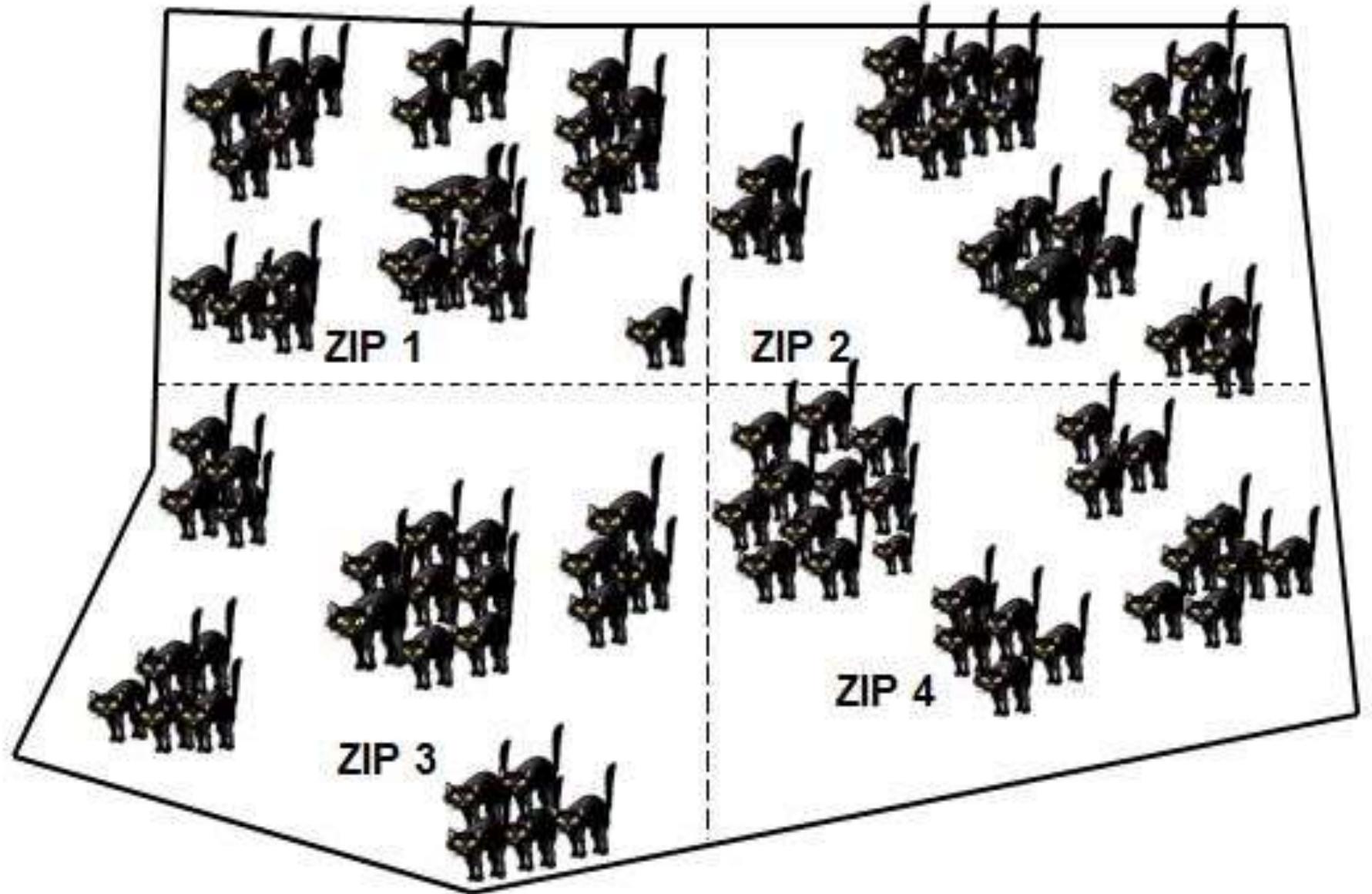




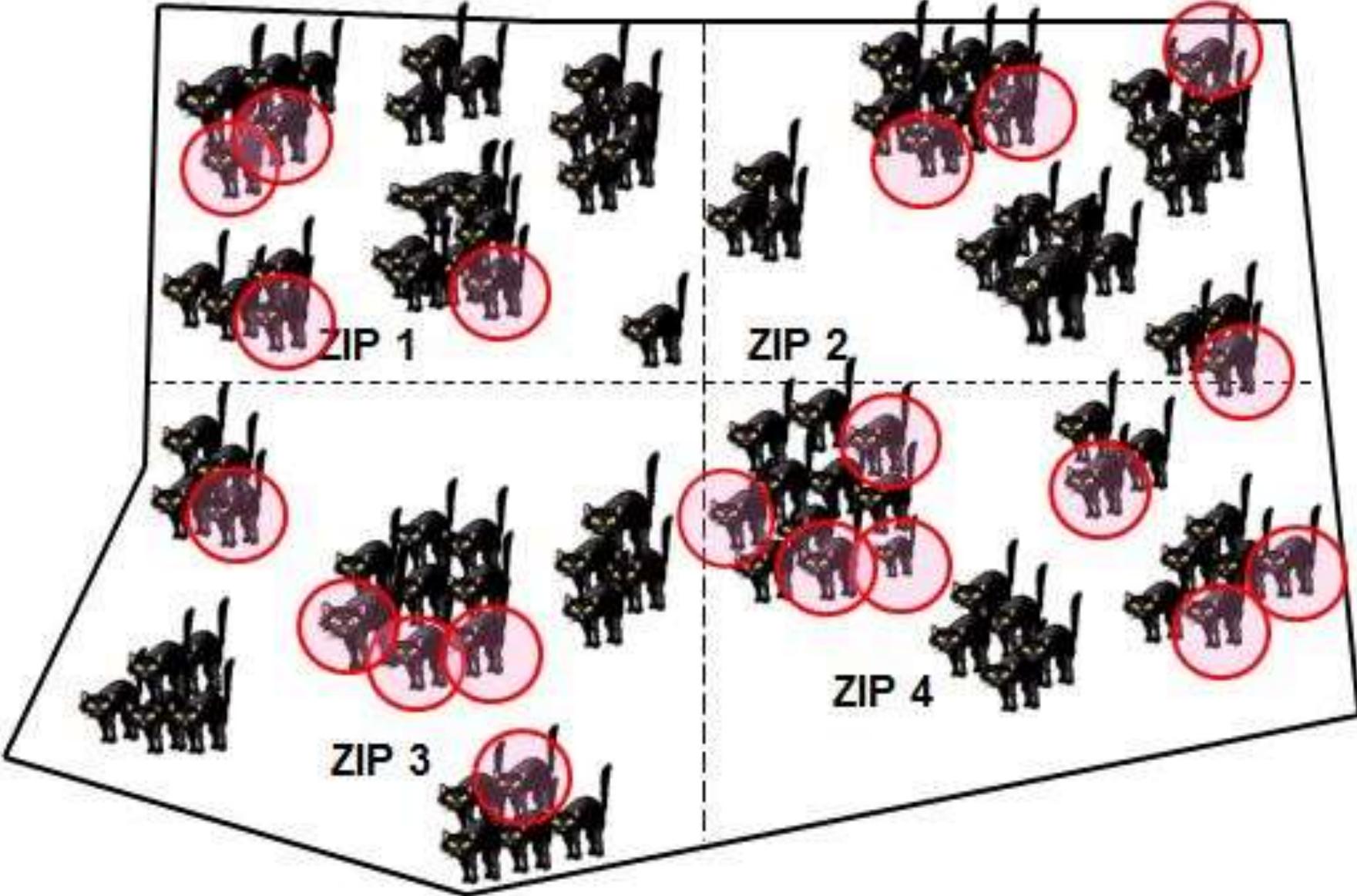


Feralville

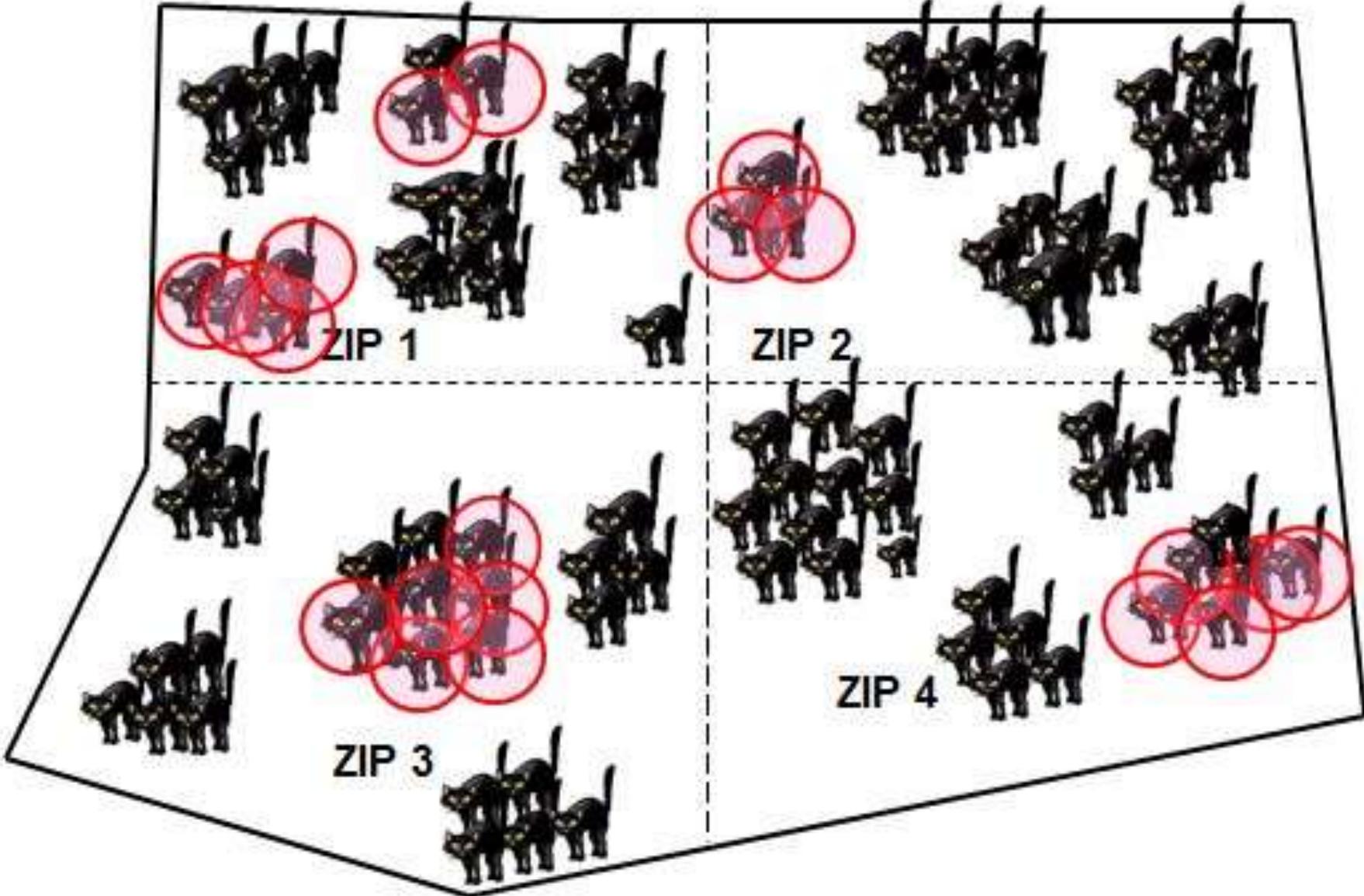
- 100 cats
- 20 surgeries



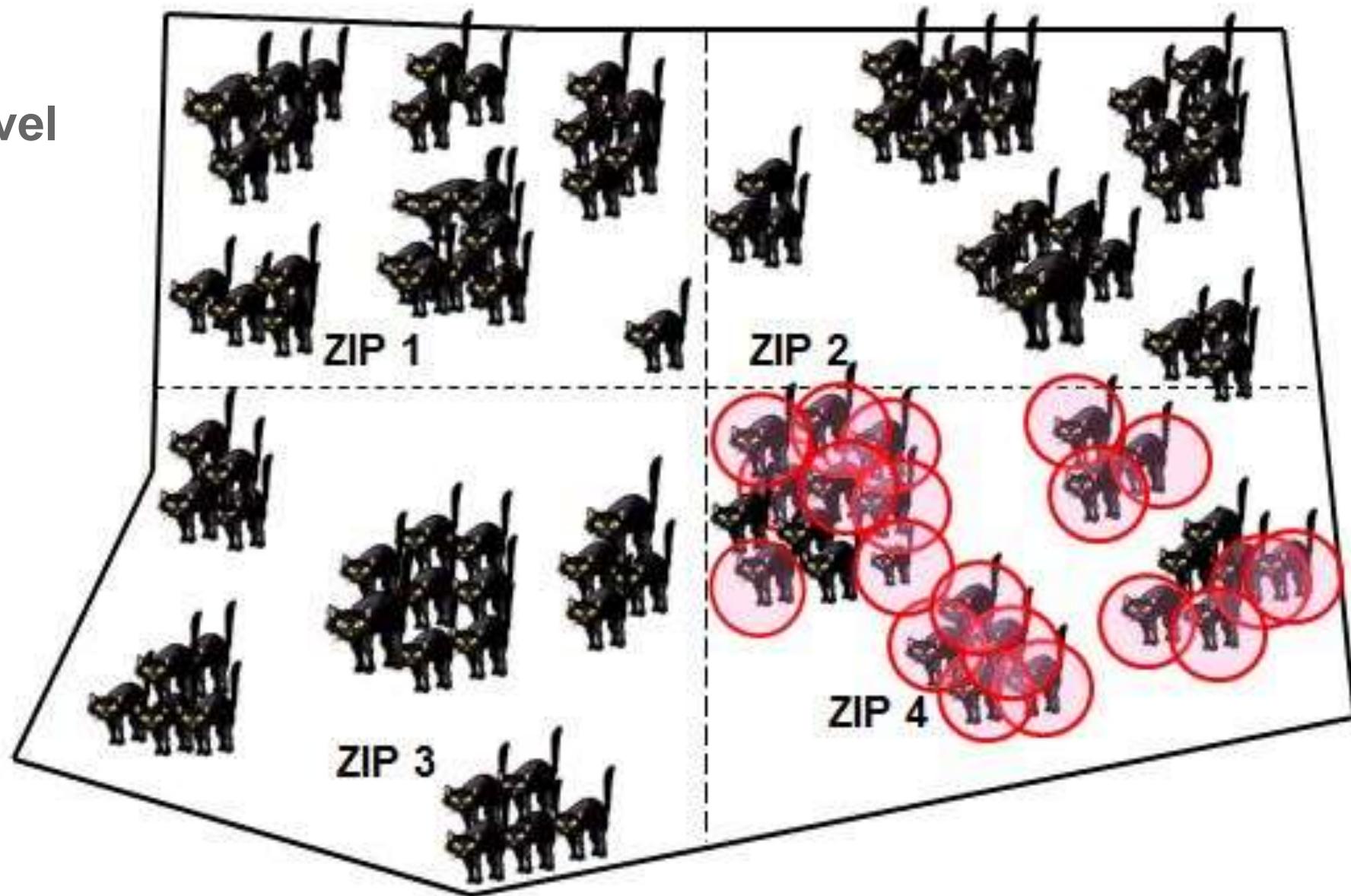
No targeting



Colony-level targeting



Community-level targeting



Vacuum effect



Problem?







Vacuum is filled

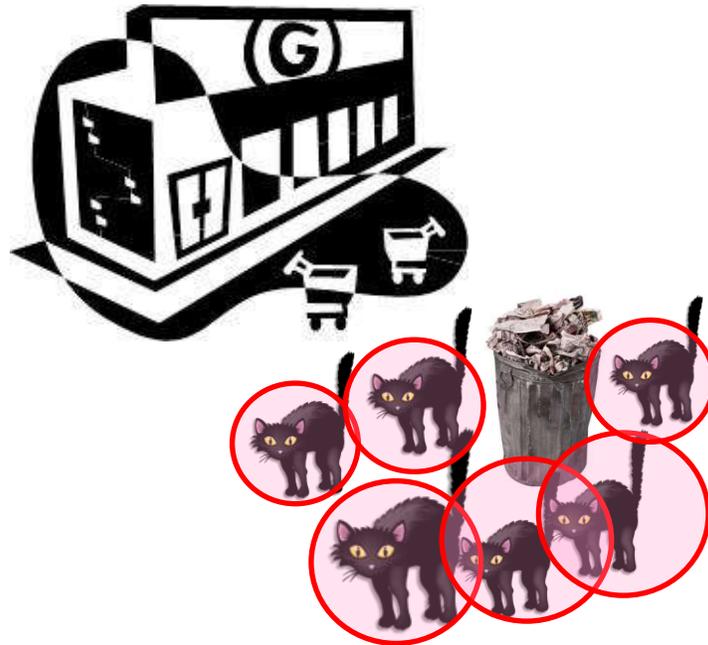


TNR instead

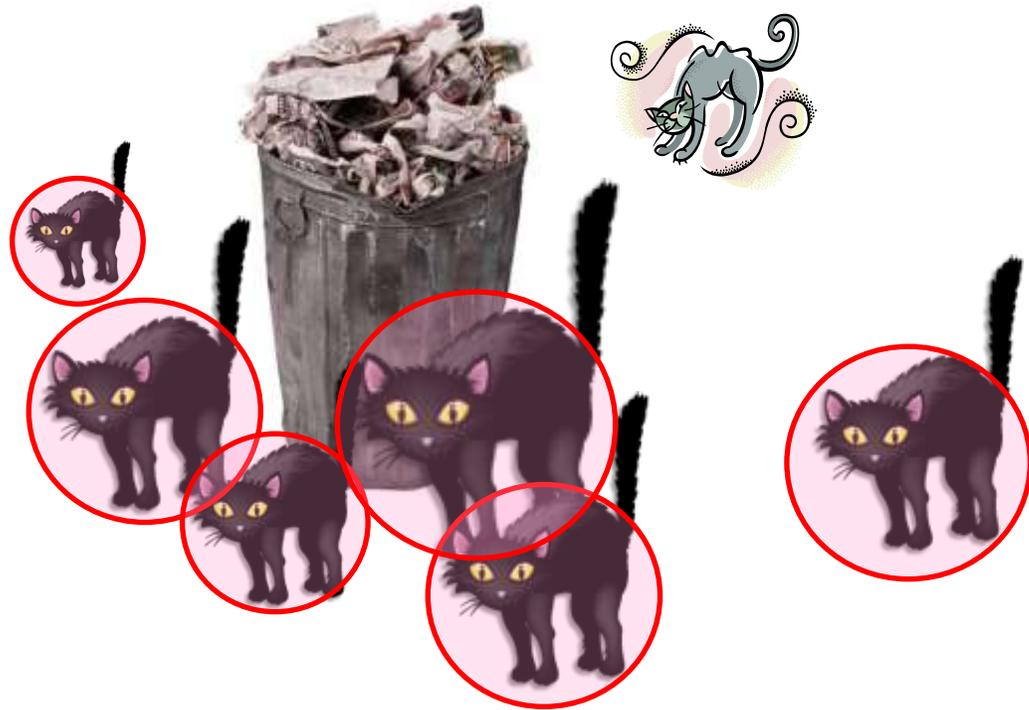


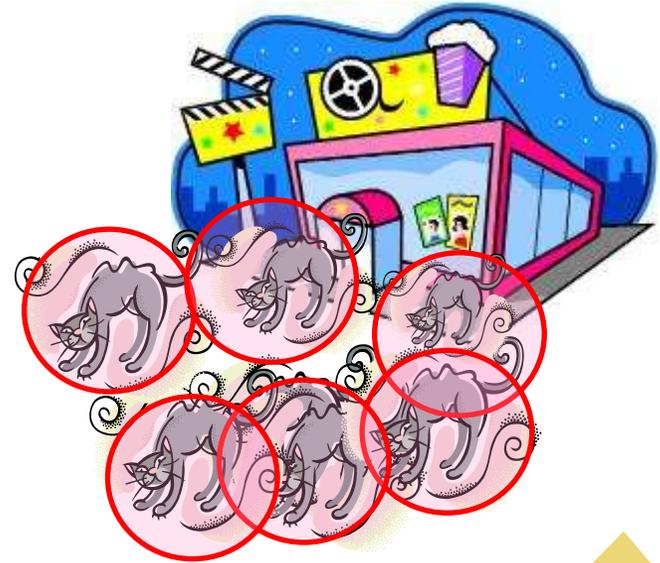
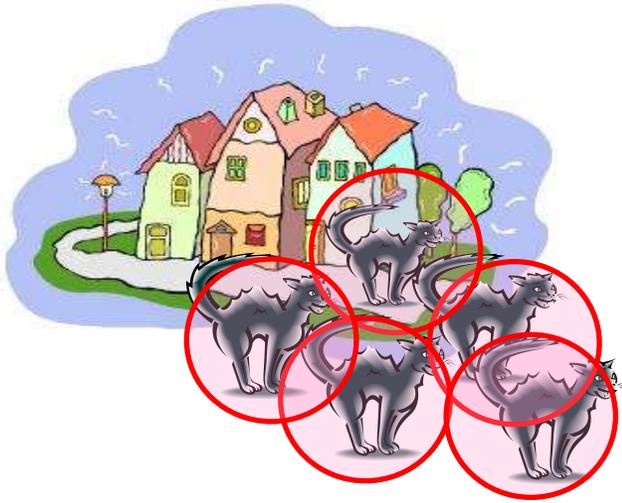
Few years later





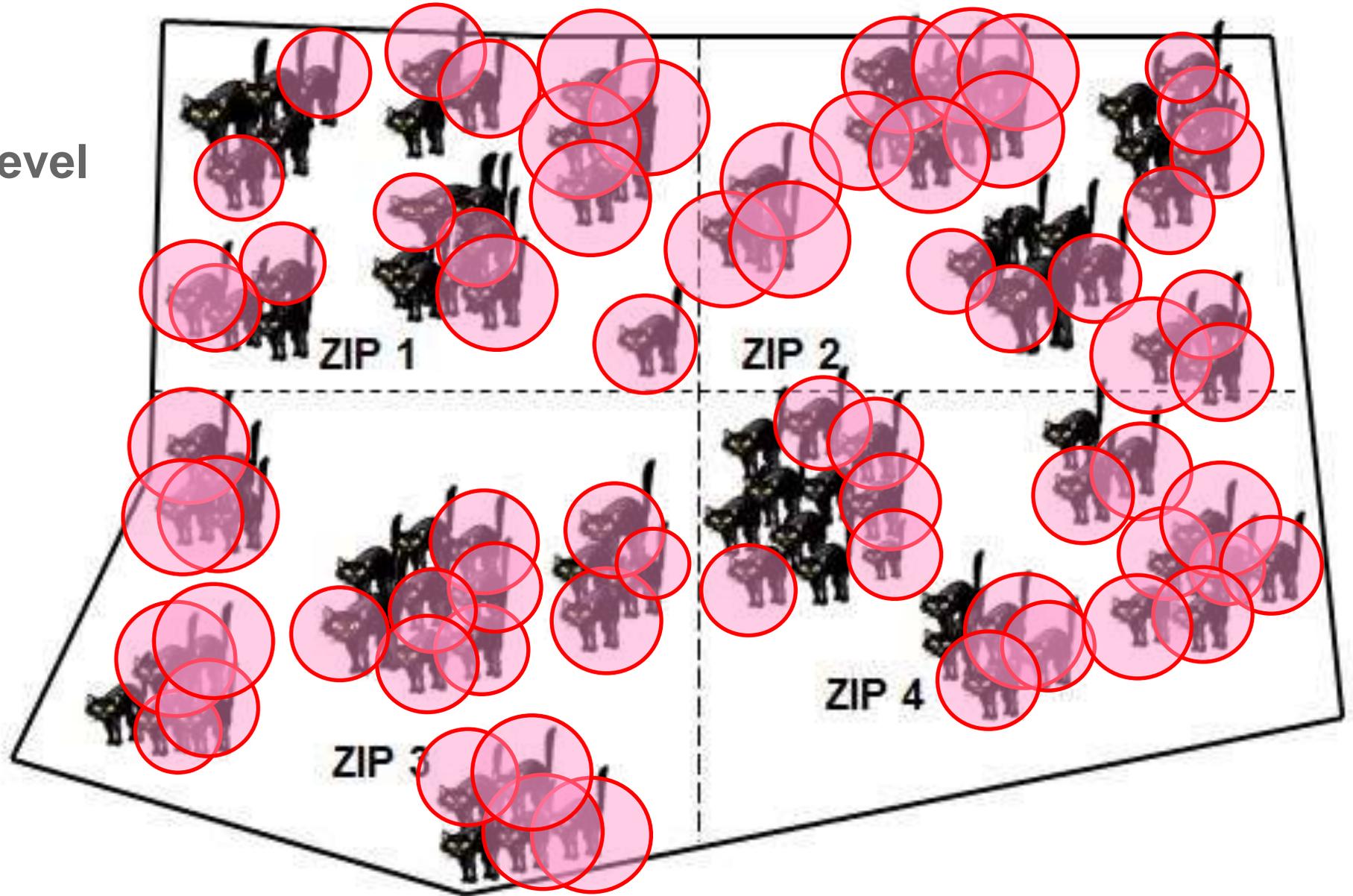
Some gains reversed





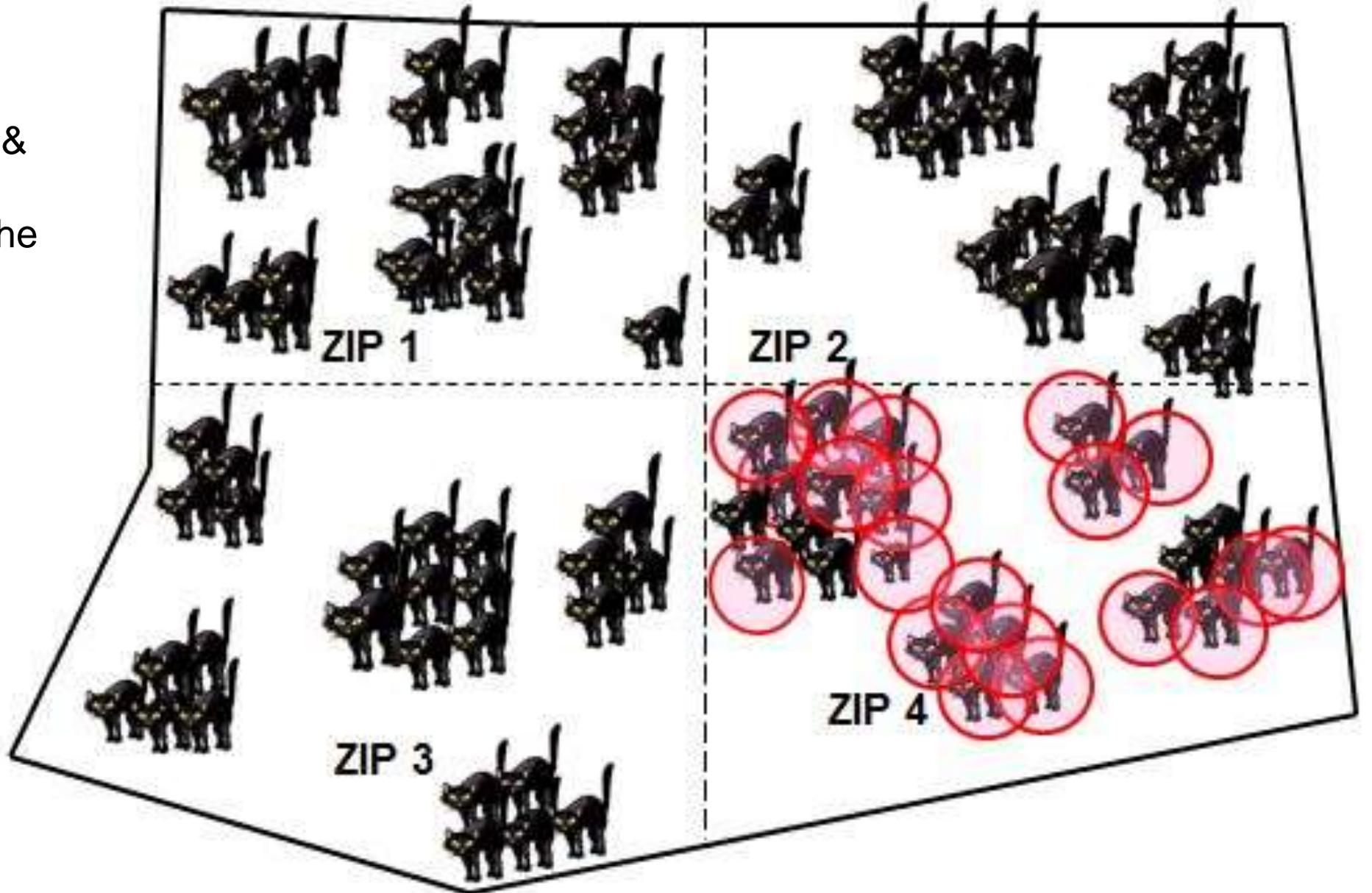


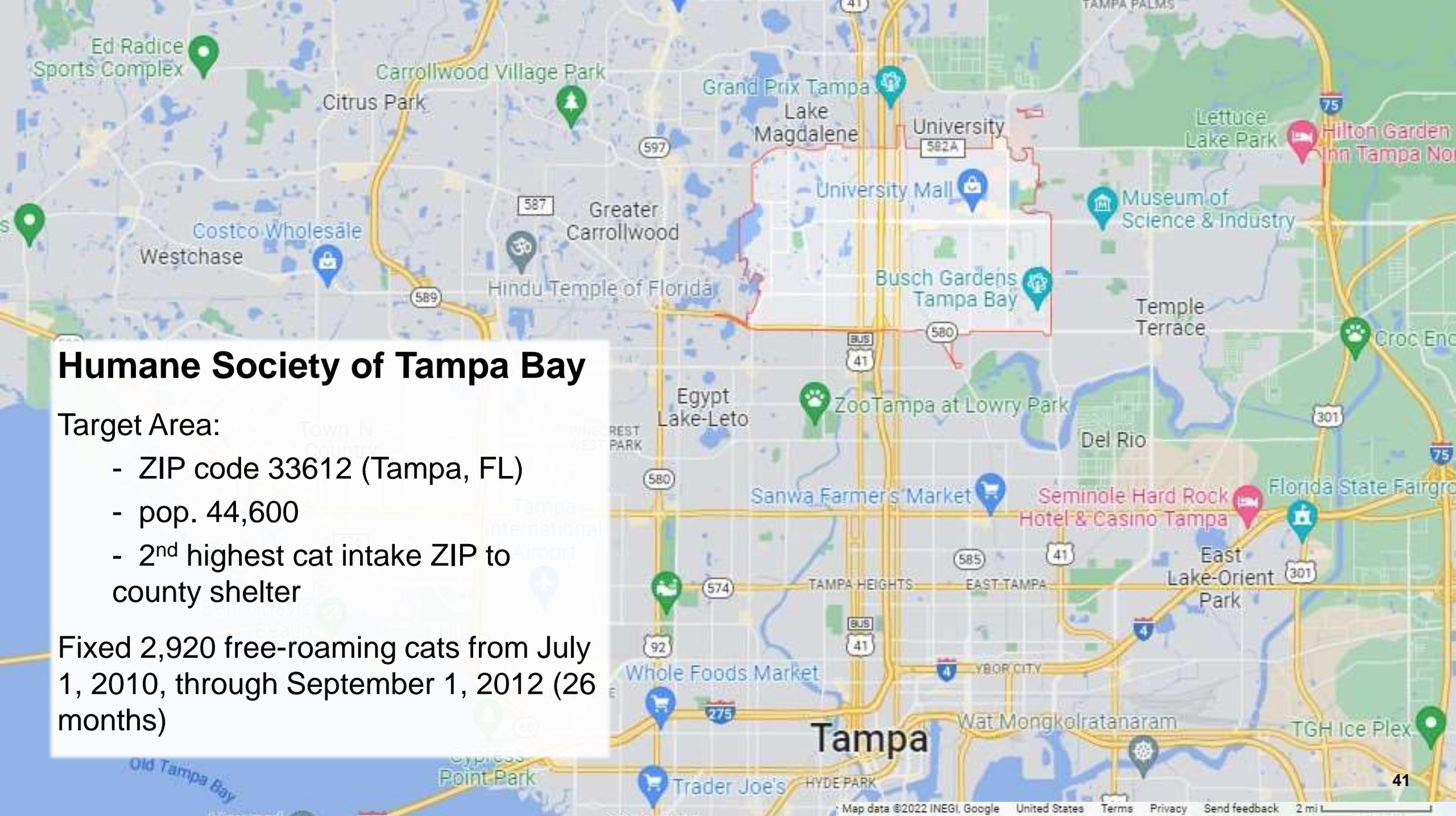
**Mistake:
extrapolating
to community level**



In reality:

The more colonies & sections with high sterilization rates, the more potential population decline





Humane Society of Tampa Bay

Target Area:

- ZIP code 33612 (Tampa, FL)
- pop. 44,600
- 2nd highest cat intake ZIP to county shelter

Fixed 2,920 free-roaming cats from July 1, 2010, through September 1, 2012 (26 months)

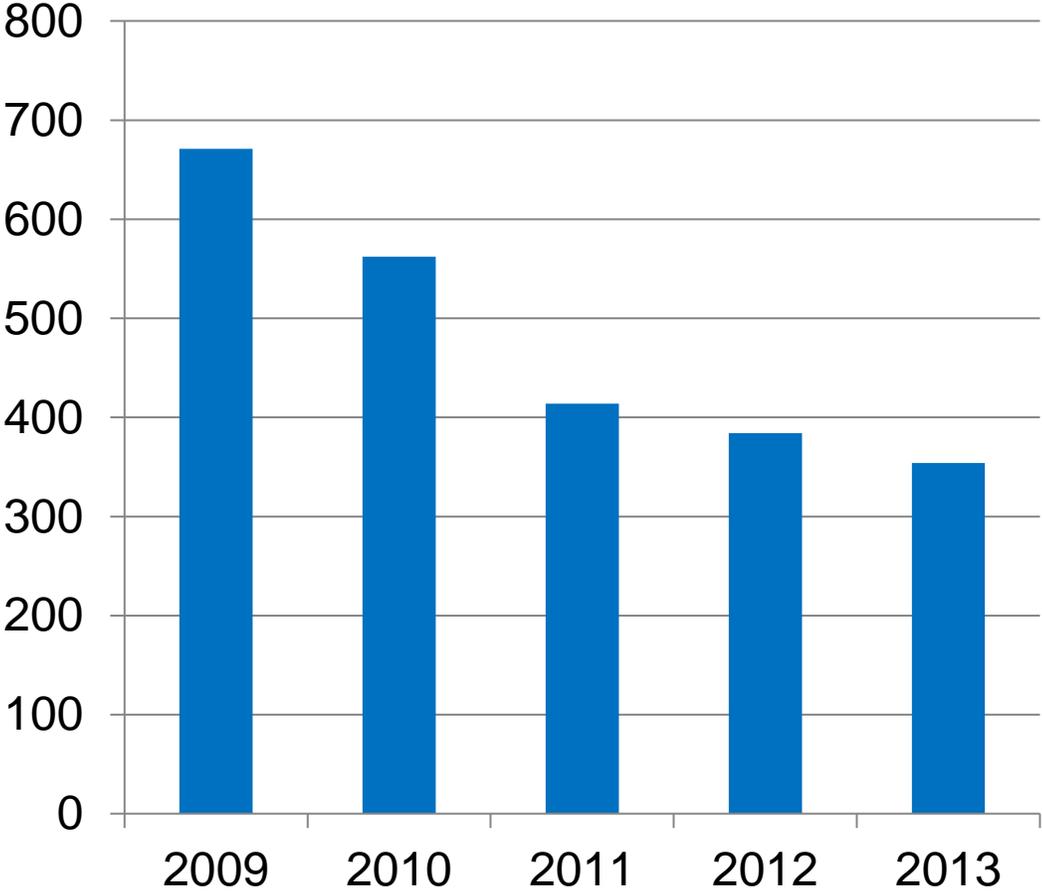
Tampa

Methods

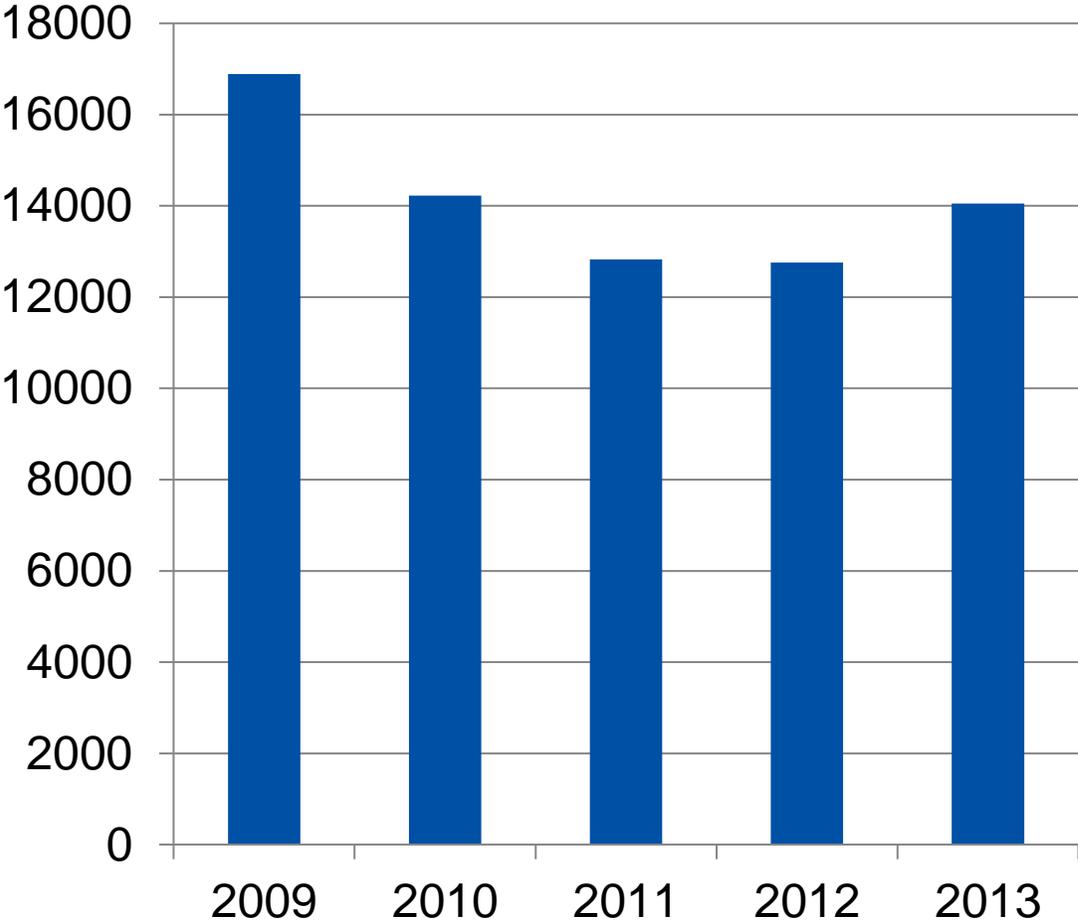
- Full-time paid trapper supported by volunteers
- Block-by-block approach, moving west to east
- Wrapped vehicle
- Yard signs



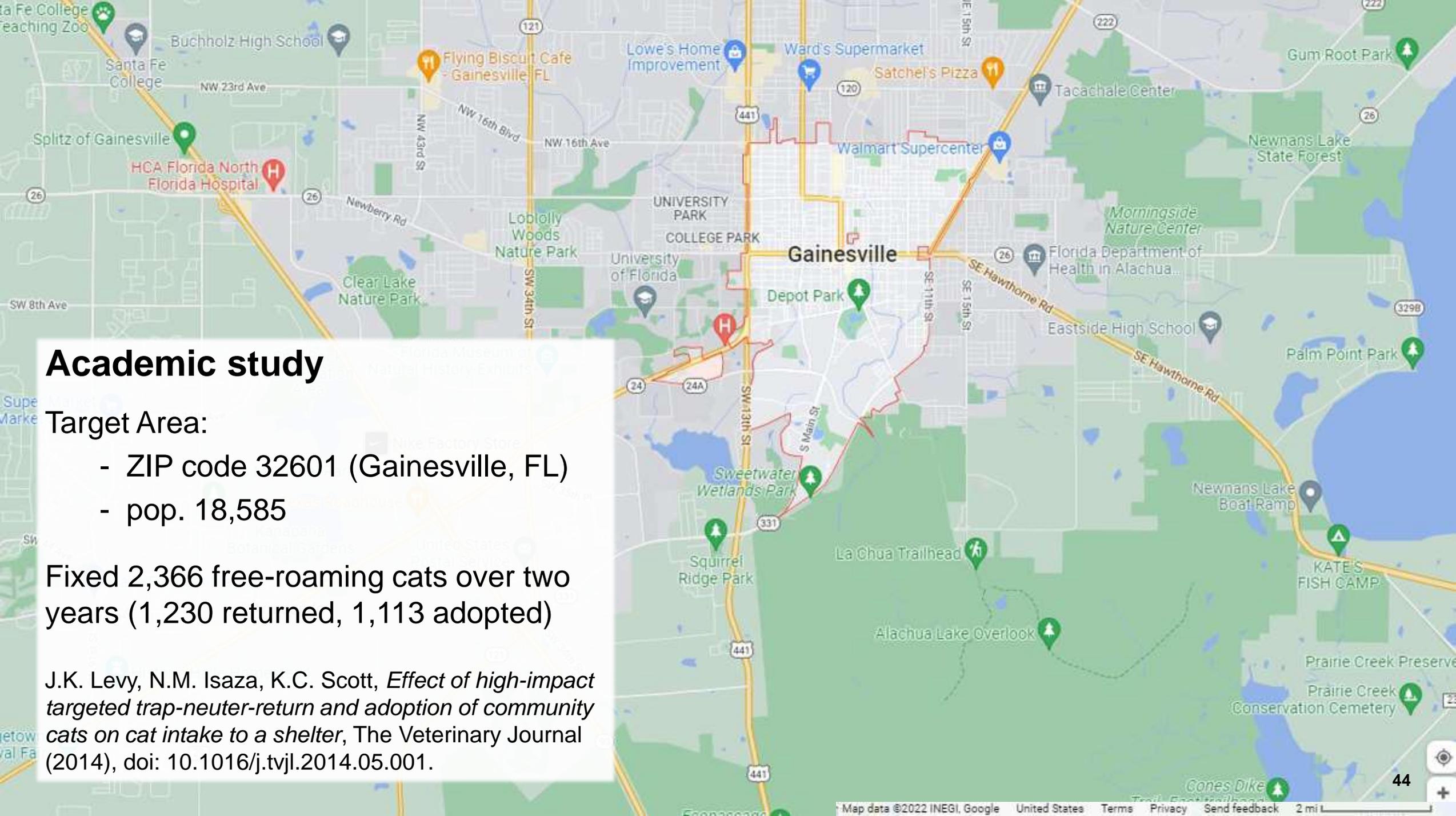
Cat intake - Hillsborough County Animal Services



ZIP 33612: -47%



Outside ZIP 33612: -17%



Academic study

Target Area:

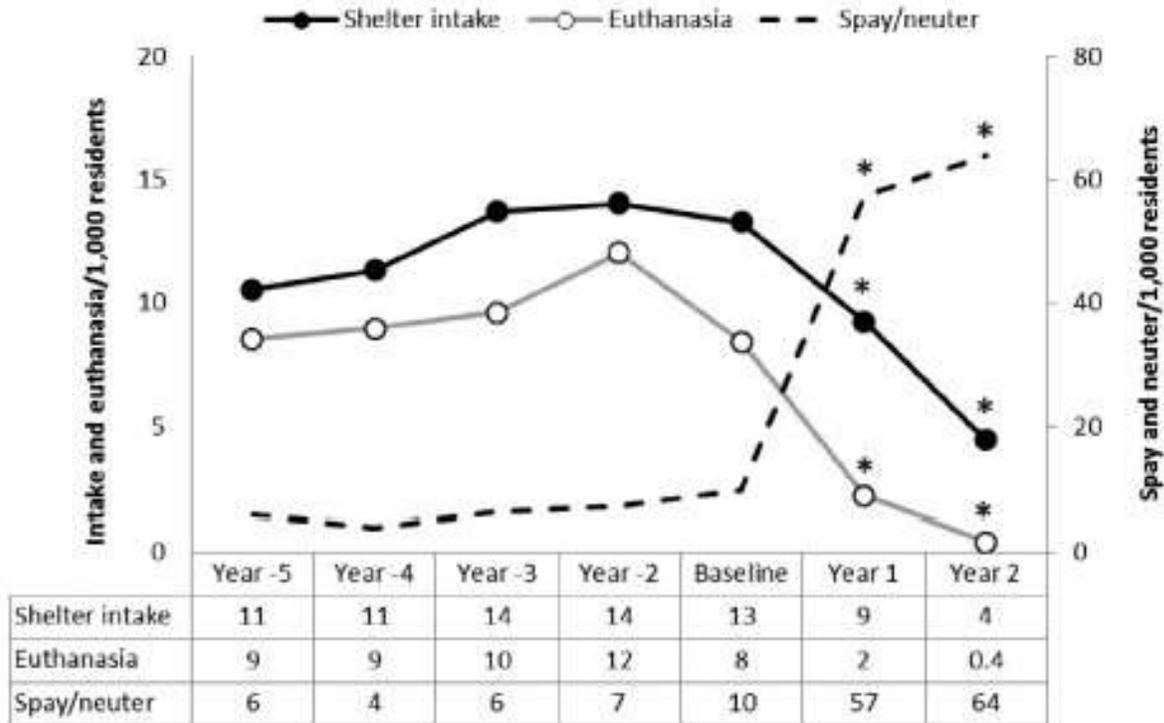
- ZIP code 32601 (Gainesville, FL)
- pop. 18,585

Fixed 2,366 free-roaming cats over two years (1,230 returned, 1,113 adopted)

J.K. Levy, N.M. Isaza, K.C. Scott, *Effect of high-impact targeted trap-neuter-return and adoption of community cats on cat intake to a shelter*, The Veterinary Journal (2014), doi: 10.1016/j.tvjl.2014.05.001.

Cat intake/euthanasia - Alachua County Animal Services

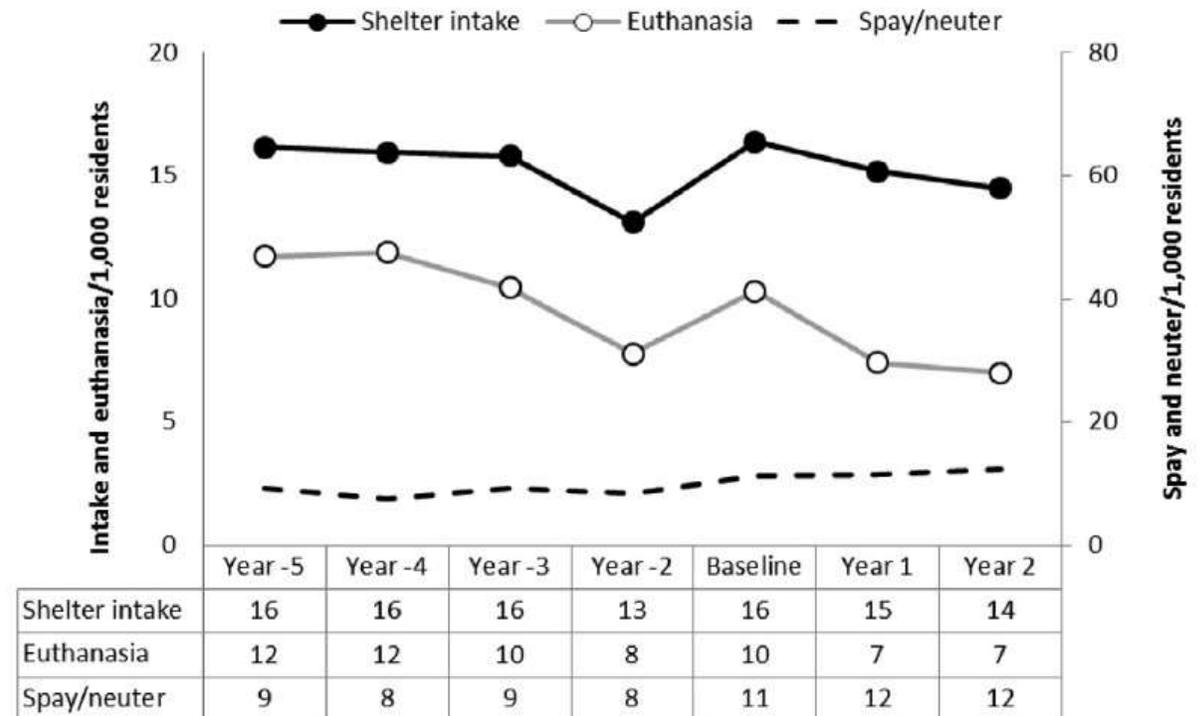
Target Area



Intake from ZIP 32601: -66%

Euthanasia from ZIP 32601: -95%

Non-Target Area



Intake outside ZIP 32601: -12%

Euthanasia from outside ZIP 32601: -30%

Newburyport, MA

- Estimated 300 cats living on the riverfront in 1992
- All cats eventually TNR'd or adopted
- Last cat passed away in 2009

D. Spehar, P. Wolf, *An Examination of an Iconic Trap-Neuter-Return Program: The Newburyport, Massachusetts Case Study*, *Animals* (2017), 7, 81; doi:10.3390/ani7110081

A tabby cat with brown and black stripes is sitting on a beach. The background is a blurred view of a coastal town with buildings and trees under a clear sky. The cat is looking slightly to the left of the camera.

Tel Aviv academic study

- City of Rishon-LeZion (part of Tel Aviv metro area)
- pop. 240,666 residing in 9.65 square miles (25 sq. km)
- 12 year study: 2007 thru 2018

I. Gunther, et al., *Reduction of free-roaming cat population requires high-intensity neutering 3 in spatial contiguity to mitigate compensatory effects* (2021), <https://doi.org/10.1101/2021.12.02.470990> doi: bioRxiv preprint

First phase: Pre-intervention period

No TNR

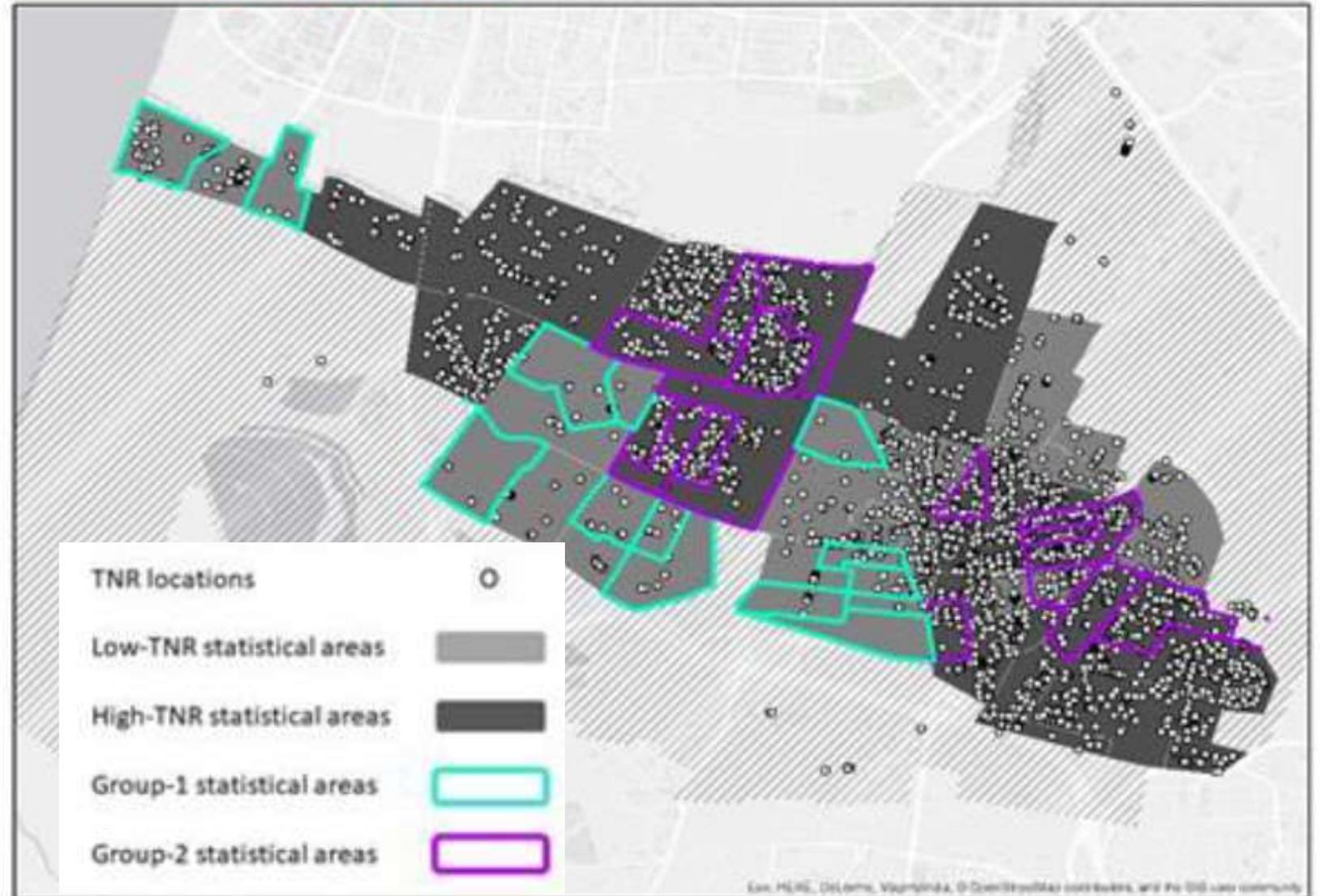
- 2007 - 2009
- Data collection only



Targeting half the city

- End of 2009 - 2014
(10,925 s/n's)
- High intensity TNR in 50%
(black), low intensity TNR
in 50% (gray) – target
areas randomly selected
- Sterilization rates:
 - High = 71%
 - Low = 33%
 - Overall = 51%
- Population change:
 - Overall growth of 26.5%
 - Stable in highest intensity
areas (purple)

Second phase: Mixed treatment period



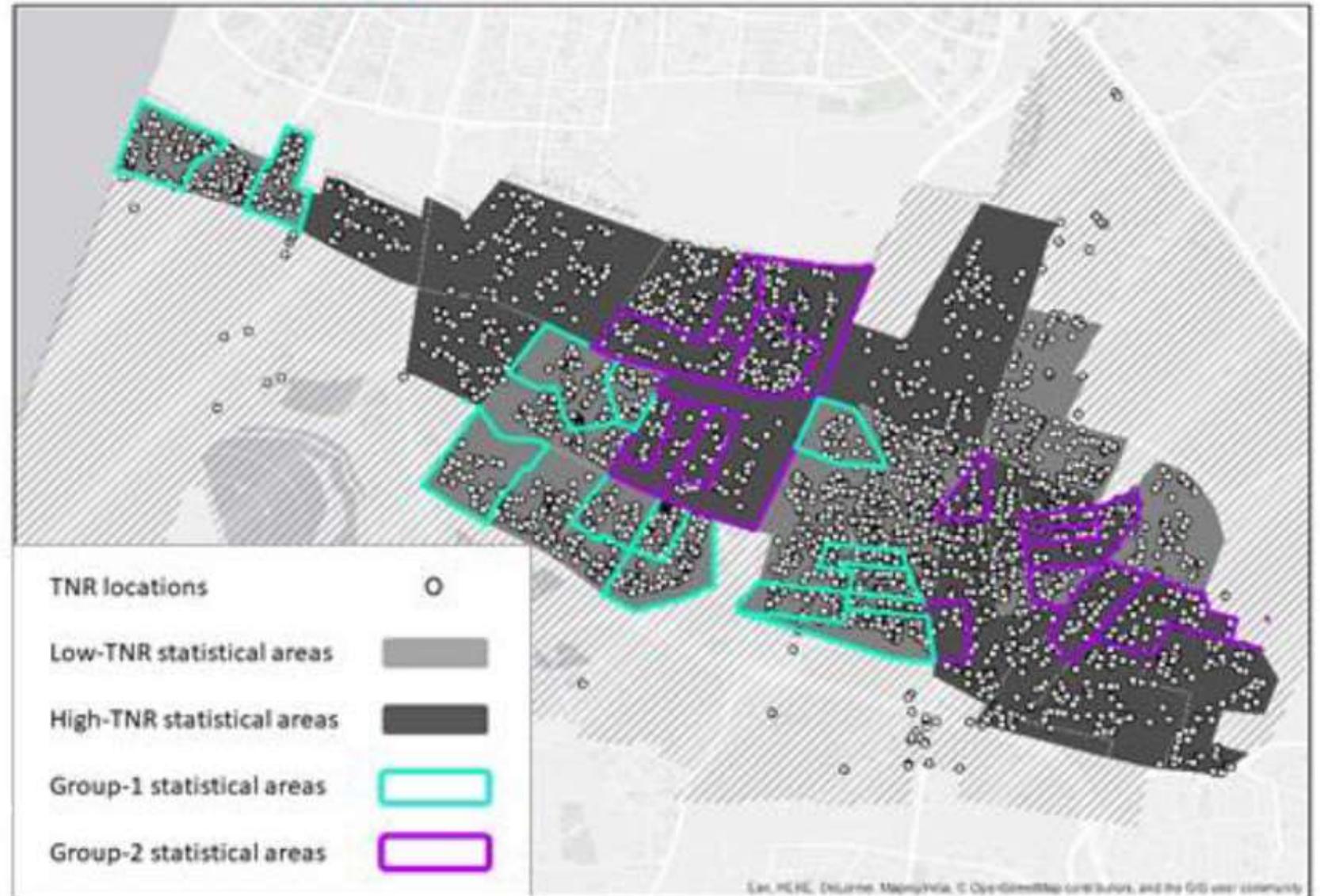
Third phase: Full treatment period

Targeting entire city

- End of 2014 through end of 2018 (11,219 s/n's)
- High intensity TNR throughout
- Sterilization rate = 72%
- Population change:
 - Cats down 23%
 - Kittens stable

Conclusion:

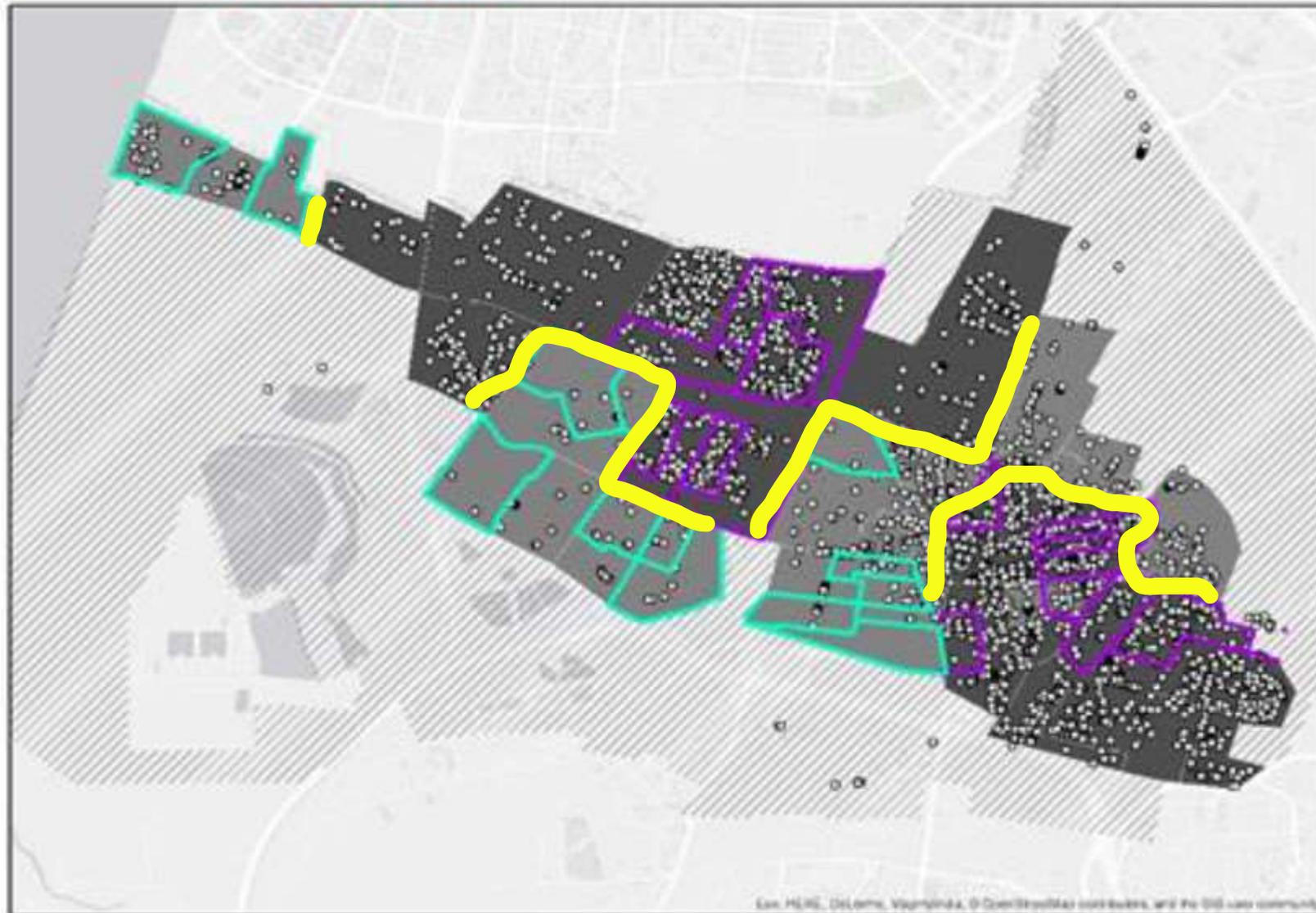
Spatial contiguity required when targeting to prevent immigration and reversal of population decline



Second phase: Mixed treatment period

Why didn't phase 2 work?

- Lengthy borders
- Immigration from low sterilization areas
- Reduced impact of surgeries in low sterilization areas



Second phase: Mixed treatment period

A better approach

- Minimal borders
- Reduced immigration
- All surgeries concentrated in target half of city (all or none instead of high or low)

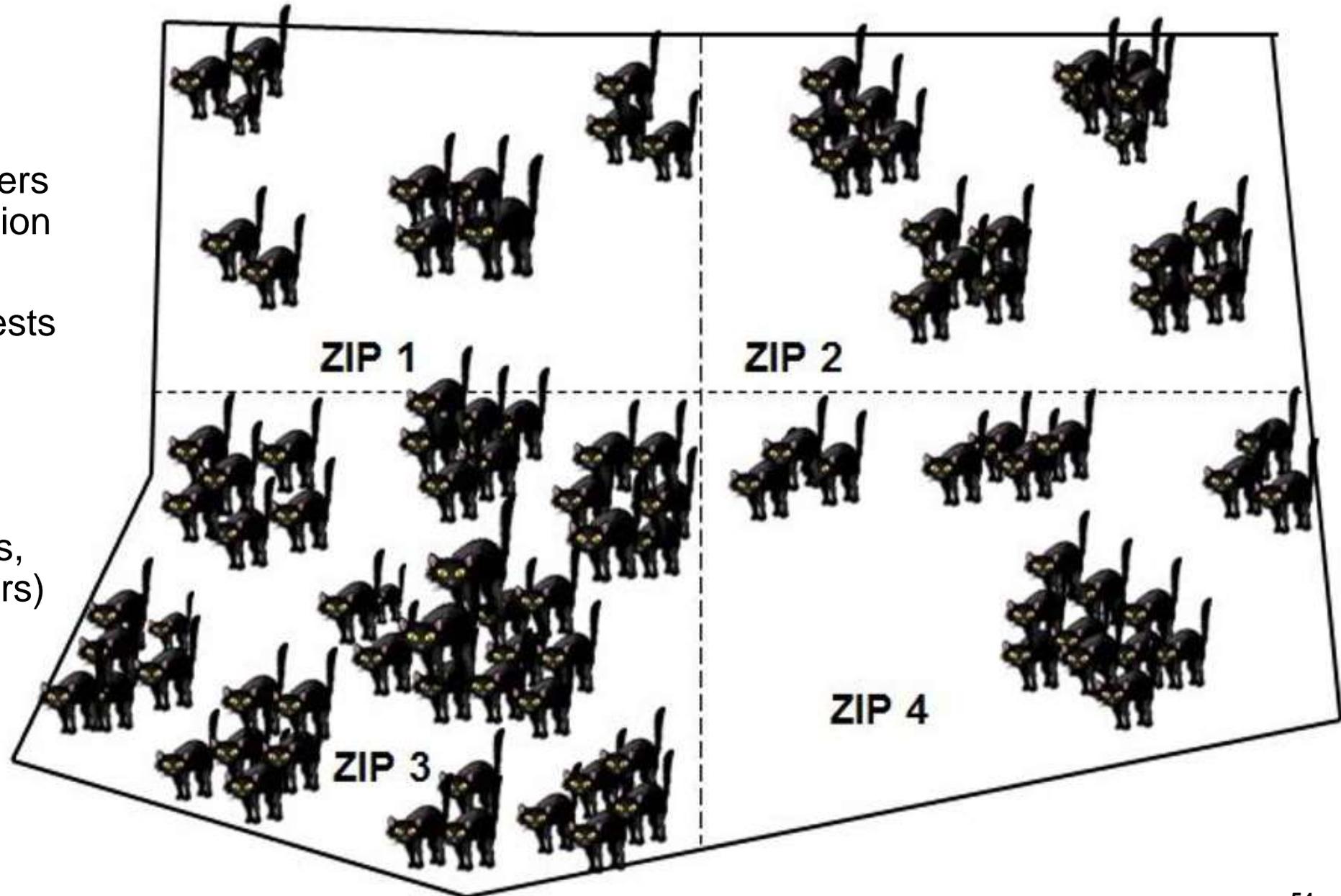


CAT TRIVIA!

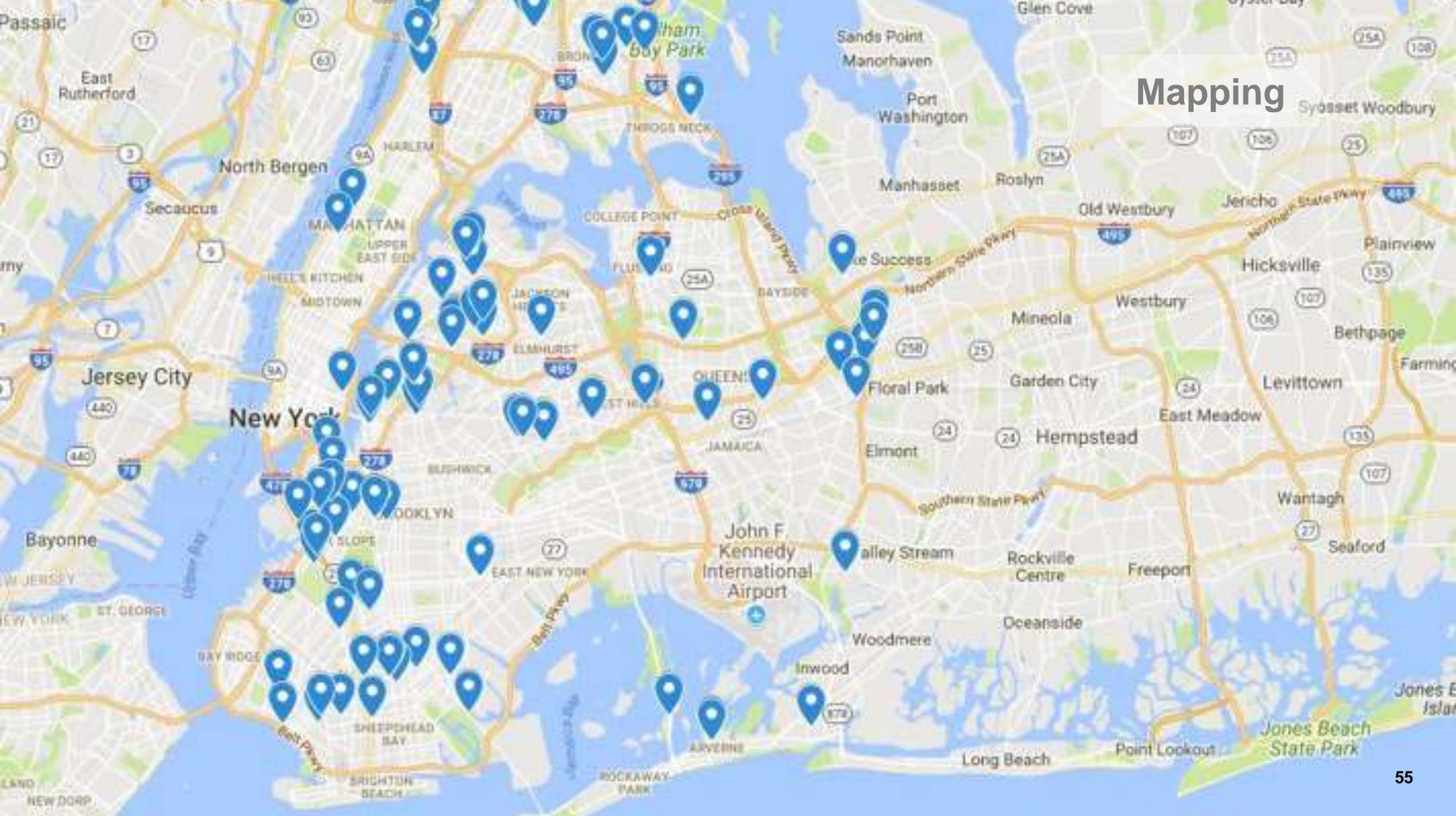


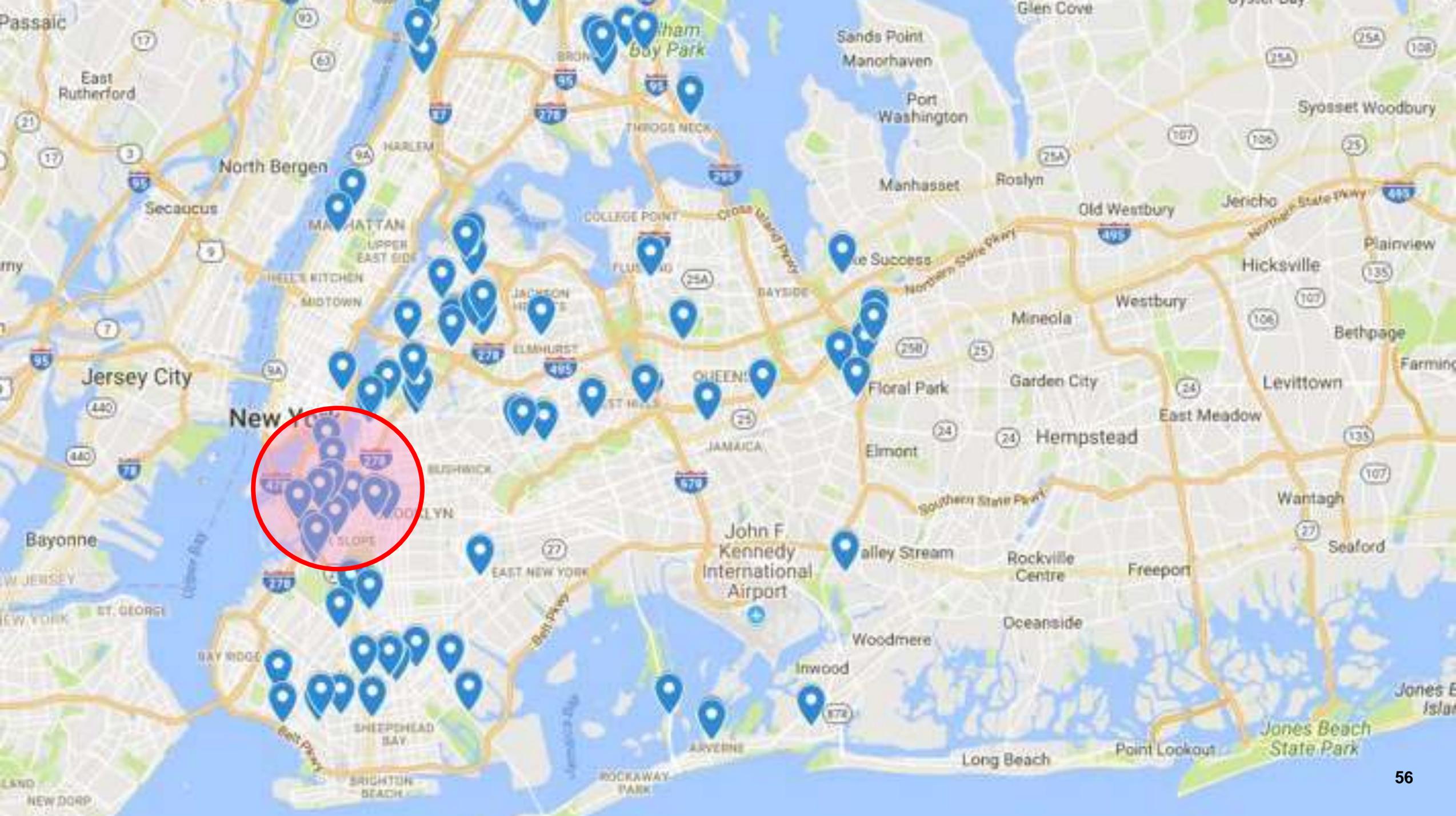
Identifying a high need target area

- Intake into local shelters broken down by location of origin
- Complaint calls/requests for assistance by location.
- Tribal knowledge (experience of local animal welfare groups, animal control, shelters)



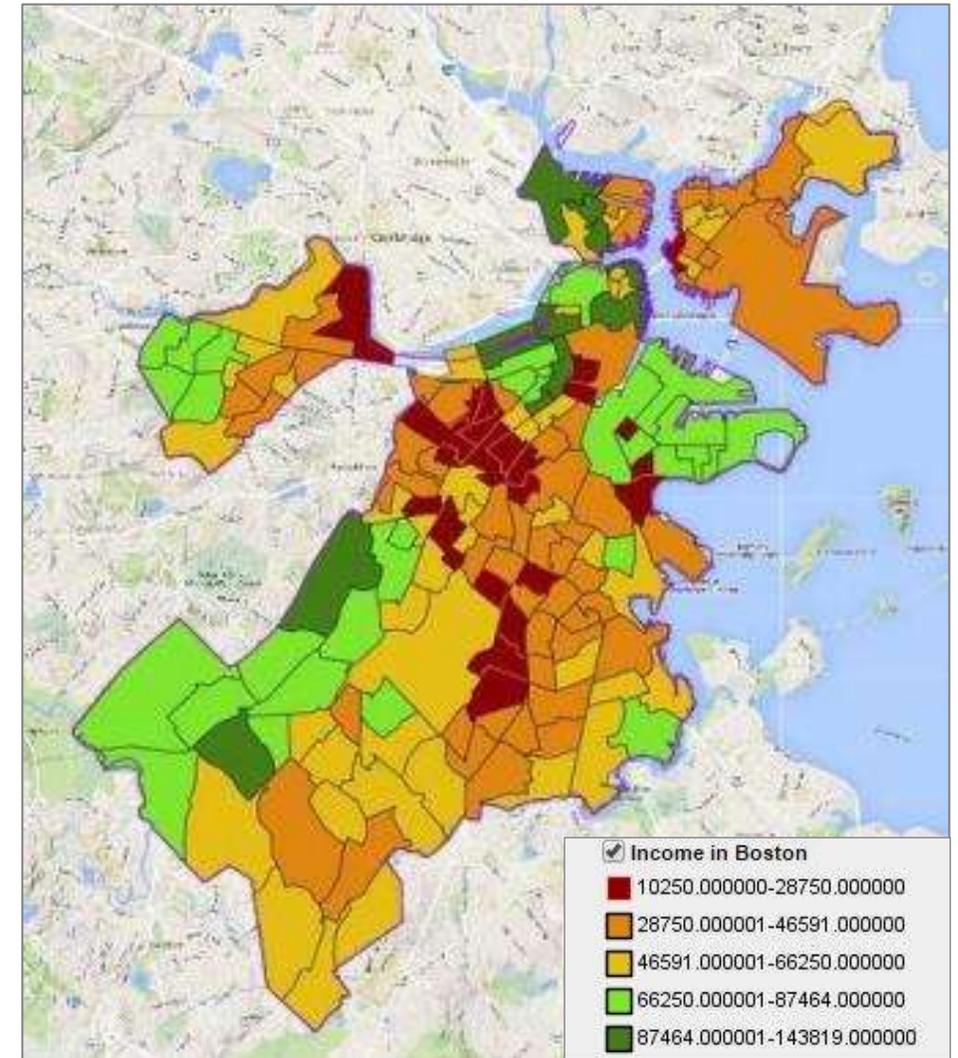
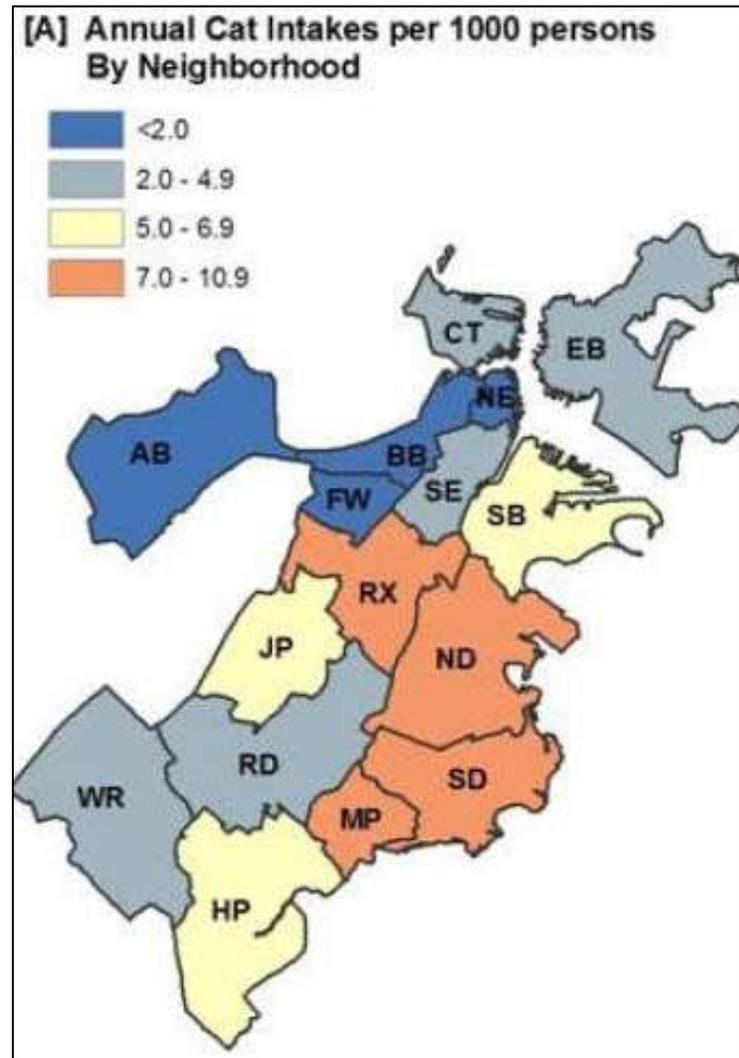
Mapping





Poverty & cat populations (Boston, MA)

Correlation found between cat intake and premature human mortality



Patronek, G., *Mapping and measuring disparities in welfare for cats across neighborhoods in a large US city* (2010) *American Journal of Veterinary Research* 71(2):161-8.



How many cats in the target area?

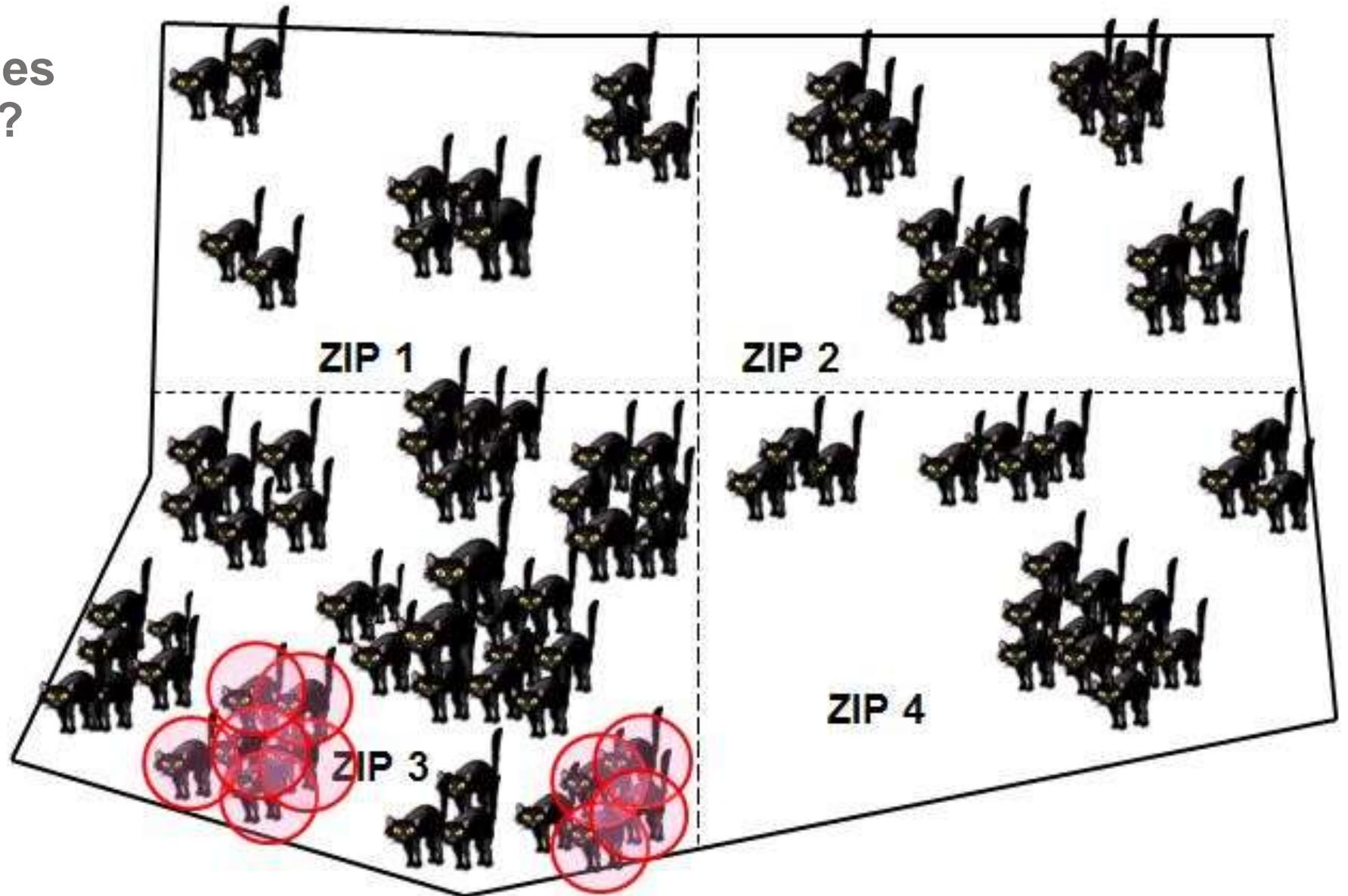
- 1) Divide human population by 15
- 2) More cats if:
 - rural
 - warm climate
 - no prior TNR
- 3) Fewer cats if:
 - urban
 - cold climate
 - lots of prior TNR

How many surgeries?

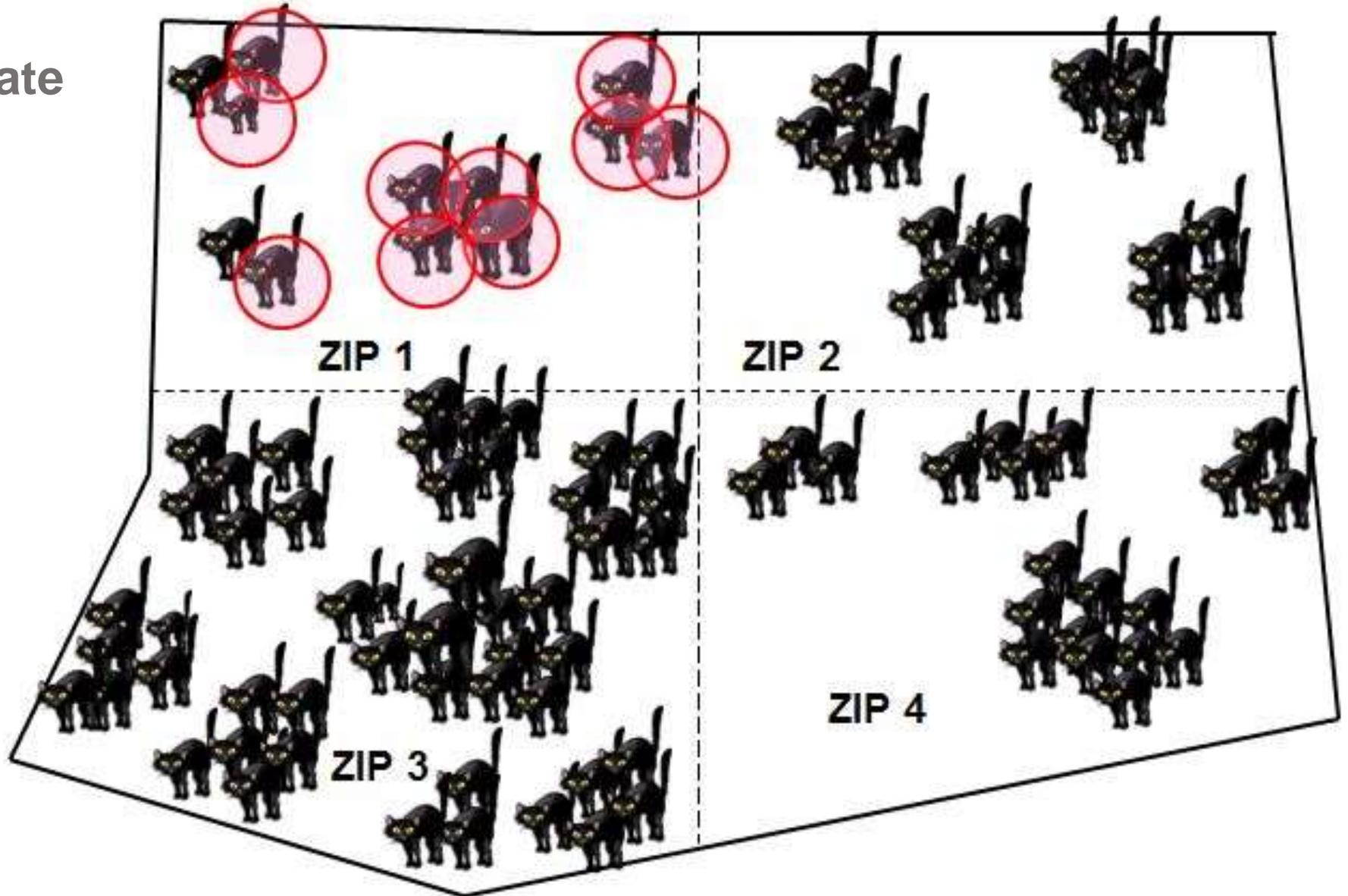
- For high impact, need to alter a “substantial percentage” of the cats
- Aim for 50% or above of estimated population
- Proceed a colony at a time, as close to 100% as possible at each



Too few surgeries
for high impact?

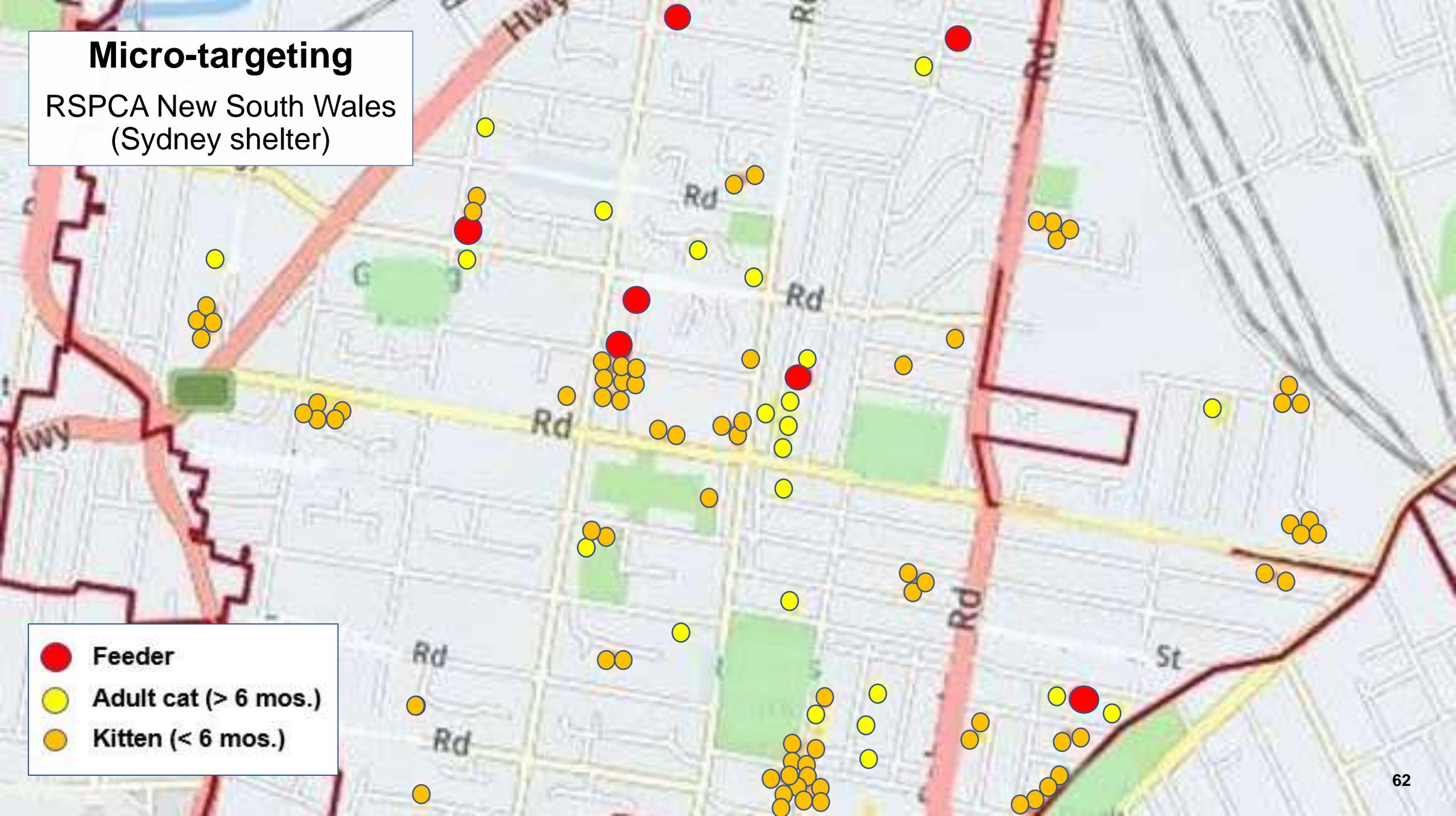


Select appropriate size target area



Micro-targeting

RSPCA New South Wales
(Sydney shelter)



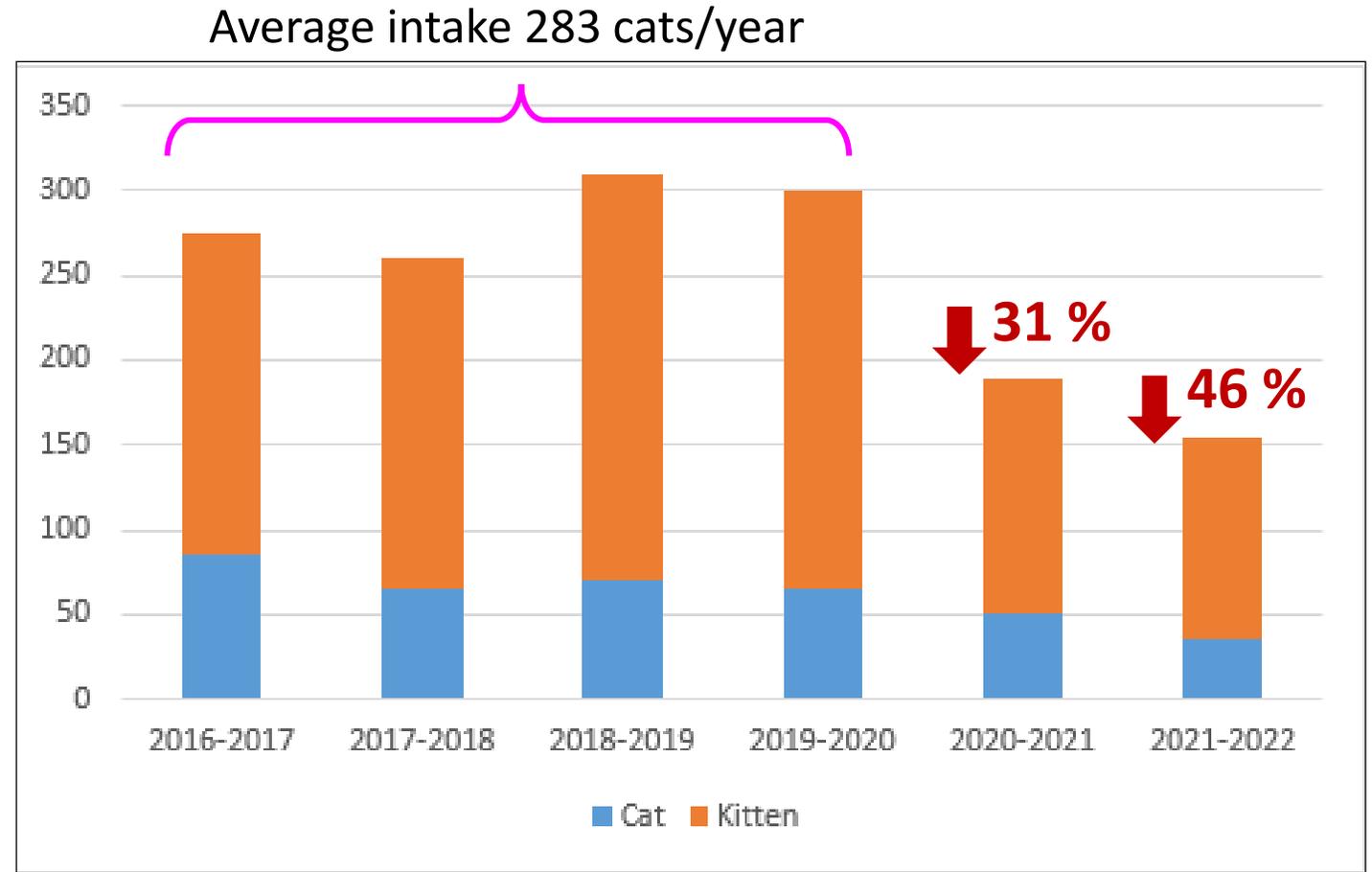
- Feeder
- Adult cat (> 6 mos.)
- Kitten (< 6 mos.)

Greenacre:

- Altered 8 cats/1000 pop. in 2 years
- Intake down after 12 months by 31%, after 24 months by 46%
- Intake flat elsewhere

Compare:

- Gainesville – 127 cats/1000 over 2 years, intake down 66%
- Tampa – 60.5 cats/1000 over 2 ¼ years, intake down 47%





General media

- TV, radio, press
- Website, social media

Targeted media

- Billboards, yard signs
- Door hangers, post flyers
- Postcard mailings, utility bills

Boots on the ground

- Door knocking, walk-and-talk, tabling
- Community meetings, block parties, vaccine or wellness clinics
- Food, shelter giveaways

Know your community

- Income level
- Ethnicity
- Language
- Culture (esp. re: cats, spay/neuter)
- Business or residential
- Local leaders/influencers



Gather intel about the cats

- Who's feeding?
- When and where?
- How many cats?
- Colony history (how and when did the colony start? Prior trapping? Trust issues?)
- What is the general attitude towards the cats? (hostile, protective, mixed?)





Who does the trapping & field work?

NO:

- only residents and caretakers in the target area

YES:

- staff, experienced volunteers and/or partner TNR groups
- support from local residents and caretakers

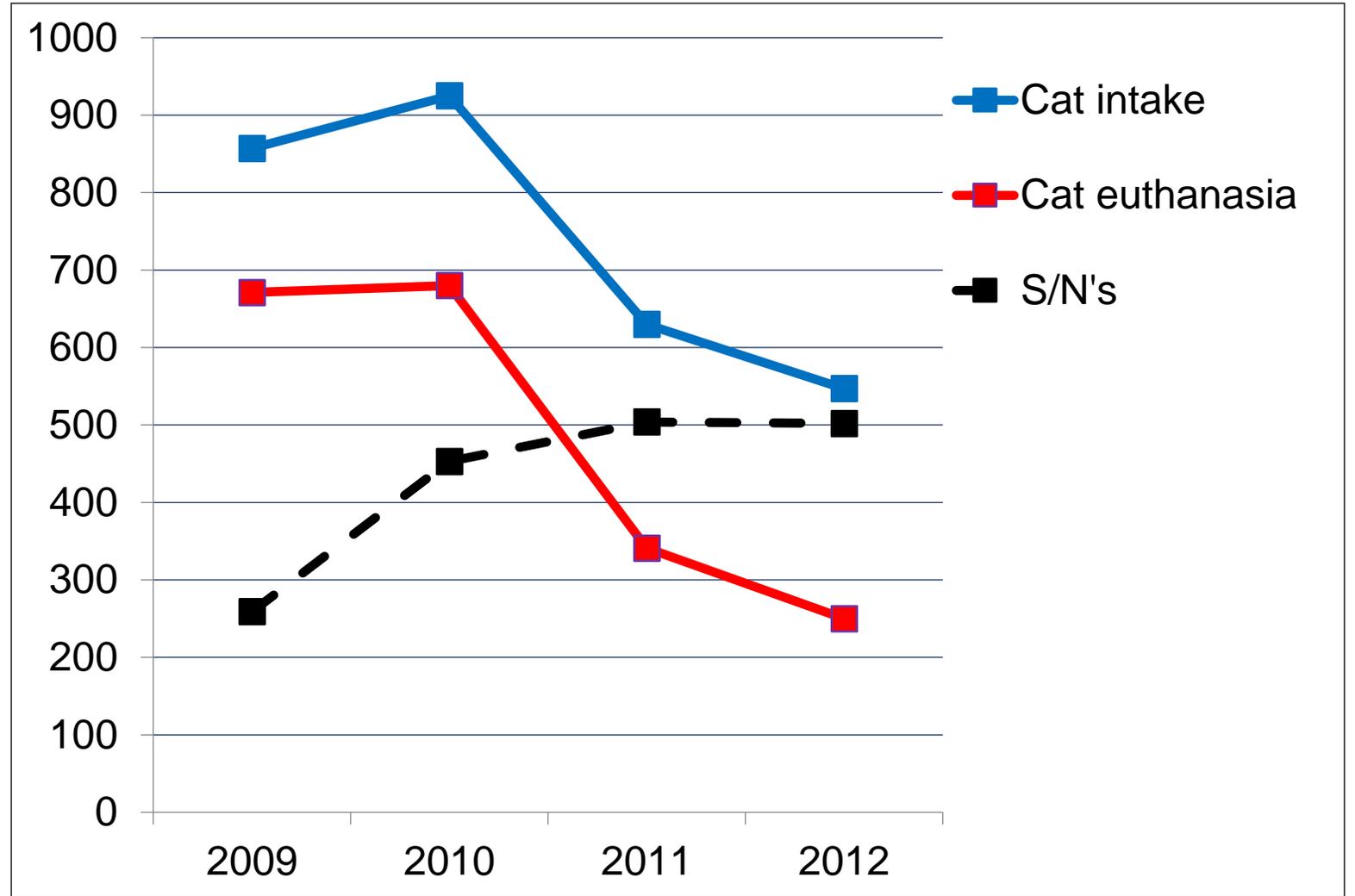
Tracking impact

Direct outcomes:

- Census (absolute vs. directional)

Indirect outcomes:

- Intake (cat, kitten, stray)
- Euthanasia
- Complaint calls and/or requests for assistance
- Online kitten postings



Cortez County, CO

Why track?

- Are you achieving your goals?
- Do you need to adapt?
- What to do if you run out of cats?





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Registration at:

communitycatspodcast.com/nov11

www.communitycatspodcast.com/community-cat-care-training-education/

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