

Identifying Ohio's Community Cat Resources

**State of the State Preliminary Report
2022**

A Joint Project of:



Table of Contents

- Pages 4-5, Background
- Pages 6-9, Methods
- Pages 10-19, Results
- Pages 20-22, Project Strengths/Limitations
- Page 23, References
- Page 24, Appendices

Background

There is a long-held perception that many areas of Ohio lack the necessary resources to humanely manage community cats at the local level. After conducting a survey about the perceptions and attitudes of Ohio residents regarding free-roaming cats, a researcher at The Ohio State University reached the same conclusion (Lord 2008). A study conducted several years later consisting of interviews with community cat stakeholders in Ohio corroborated these findings (Spehar 2015). The ability to credibly assess the situation by referencing a comprehensive list of the state's community cat resources has not been possible because such a list did not exist.

Background

Ohio Animal Advocates and the Together Initiative for Ohio's Community Cats set out to address both issues through the creation of the most comprehensive directory of Ohio community cat resources assembled to date. The data collected to create the directory would also be sorted and analyzed in order to determine where Ohio's community cat resources are located.

The following report contains a preliminary listing of Ohio's community cat resources: spay-neuter services and trap-neuter-return (TNR) services, by county, and the preliminary findings of the aforementioned data analysis. A discussion of these findings will follow in the final state of the state report.

Methods

We began by reviewing existing resource and/or membership lists of OAA, Together Initiative, Ohio Animal Welfare Federation, Ohio Dog Warden Association, Best Friends Animal Society (Ohio-specific list), and Advocates for Animals (Ohio-specific list) and identifying organizations on those lists that provide spay-neuter services for community cats or offer trap-neuter-return (TNR) services. For the purposes of this project, we defined these types of resources as follows:

Spay-Neuter Services: An organization that performs sterilization surgeries or one that provides a direct connection to such services (oftentimes by hosting spay-neuter events).

TNR Services: An entity that traps community cats and/or transports them to/from spay-neuter surgery or one that loans traps or otherwise directly assists with TNR.

Methods

In addition to identifying community cat resources on existing lists and consolidating that information on to a master spreadsheet, we reached out by email to over 325 stakeholder animal welfare organizations across the state in an effort to identify additional community cat resources.

We contacted each of these animal welfare organizations up to four times in an effort to find out 1) if that particular organization provides community cat resources (spay-neuter services or TNR services) or 2) if any other organization in the same county or a neighboring county provides such services.

Methods

- Overall, we experienced a 15% response rate to our inquiries. New information was added to the spreadsheet.
- We were able to identify dozens of additional community cat resources due to the input we received.
- In all, we identified 174 community cat resources in the state of Ohio.
 - 104 that provide spay-neuter services.
 - 70 that offer TNR services.
 - Several provide both types of services.

Methods

- Community cat resources were sorted by county and entered on to an Excel spreadsheet.
- Resources were separated into two categories: “spay-neuter services” and “TNR services.”
- The population of each county was divided by the total number of community cat resources identified in that county to determine a ratio of the number of residents per resource.
- Counties were grouped by tier based upon the above ratio and color coded on a map of the state with blue representing Tier 1 (the fewest residents per resource), Red-Tier 2, Green-Tier 3, Gray-Tier 4 (the most residents per resource) , and Yellow-Tier 5 (no resources).
- Community cat resource deserts were noted (Tier 5).

Creation of the directory

Results

Ohio Community Cat Resource Directory

Ohio Community Cat Resources by County							
County	Organization	Spay-Neuter Services	Notes	TNR Resources	Notes	Email Address/Website Contact	Phone
Adams	Humane Society of Adams County	Y				info@adamscountyanimals.org	937-544-8585
Allen	A Lotta Love Pet Rescue	Y	via Humane Ohio			sandy2wayne3@yahoo.com	(419) 229-5612
Allen	Ohio SPCA & Humane Society	Y				ohiospca@gmail.com	740-420-2984
Ashland	Ashland County Humane Society	Y	via the Rascal Unit			info@ashlandhumane.org	419-281-4722
Ashtabula	Ashtabula Animal Protective League	Y	via the Rascal Unit			adoptions@acapl.org mglauser@acapl.org - executive director	440-224-1222
Ashtabula	Animal Welfare Center of Ashtabula County	Y	via PetFix, Humble Creatures			awc@awcashtabula.org	(440) 231-0053
Ashtabula	Ashtabula Community Cats			Y		https://www.facebook.com/CCCAshtabula/	-
Athens	Athens County Humane Society	Y	via the Rascal Unit	Y		info@athenshumane.org	740-592-6047

See Appendix A

Results

Statewide Findings

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- An average of two community cat resources were identified per county.
- There is an average of 65,000 residents per community cat resource.
- A 60/40 ratio (104/70) exists between spay-neuter and TNR resource types.

Results

- Average population of Ohio's 88 counties: **134,207**.
- Average population of 68 counties where at least one community cat resource was identified: **157,186**.
- Average population of 40 counties where multiple community cat resources were identified: **228,894**.
- Average population of 20 counties where no community cat resources were identified (resource deserts): **50,020**.

Results

Ohio Counties Tiered by the Number of residents per Community Cat Resource

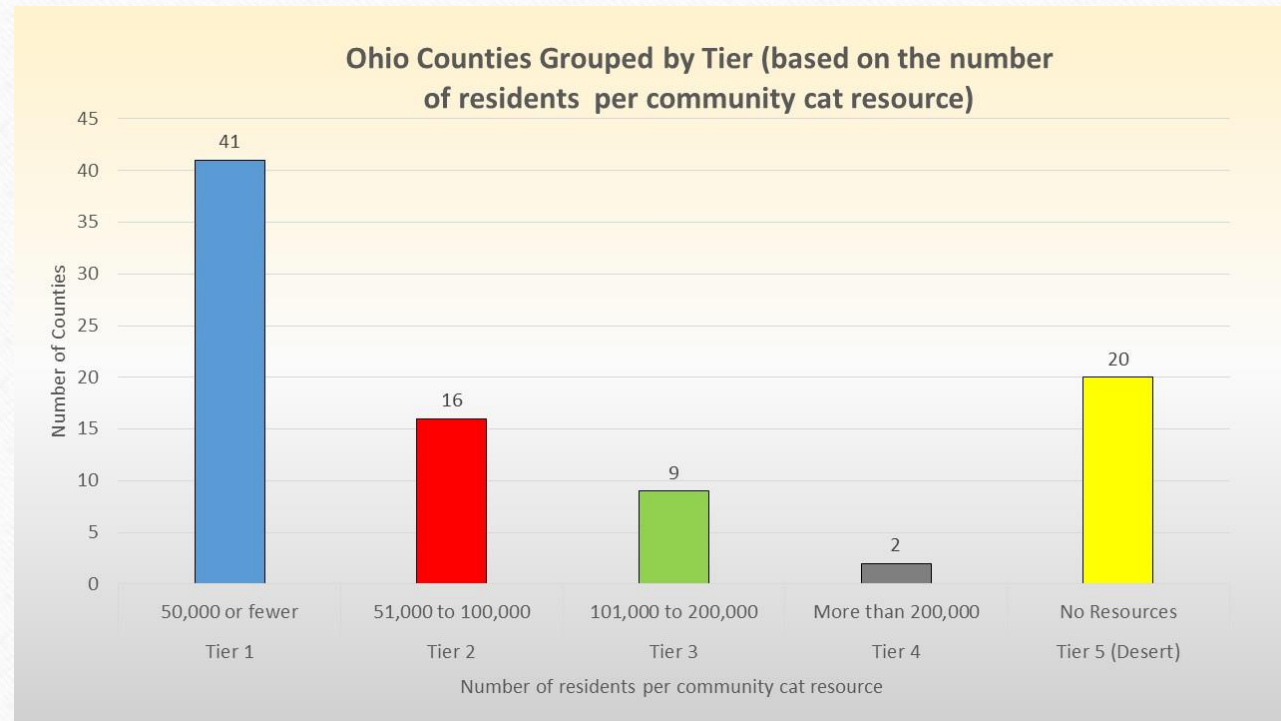
Tier	Ohio County (population)	Spay-Neuter Services	TNR Resources	Total Community Cat Resources	Number of residents per resource	Tier	Ohio County (population)	Spay-Neuter Services	TNR Resources	Total Community Cat Resources	Number of residents per resource
1	Morgan (15K)	1	1	2	7,254	2	Huron (58K)	1	0	1	58,266
	Defiance (38K)	3	1	4	9,522		Pickaway (58K)	1	0	1	58,457
	Morrow (35K)	2	1	3	11,776		Sandusky (59K)	1	0	1	58,518
	Williams (37K)	2	1	3	11,911		Seneca (59K)	1	0	1	58,988
	Champaign (39K)	2	1	3	12,273		Franklin (60K)	1	0	1	59,911
	Clinton (42K)	2	1	3	12,600		Delaware (180K)	2	1	3	59,915
	Harrison (15K)	1	0	1	15,000		Franklin (198K)	2	1	3	65,991
	Knox (62K)	2	2	4	15,500		Madison (532K)	5	3	8	66,461
	Coshocton (37K)	2	0	2	18,300		Clark (134K)	1	1	2	67,042
	Erie (74K)	3	1	4	18,567		Hancock (76K)	0	1	1	75,783
	Paulding (19K)	1	0	1	18,672		Tuscarawas (92K)	0	1	1	91,987
	Fulton (42K)	2	0	2	21,063		Geauga (94K)	1	0	1	93,649
	Highland (43K)	1	1	2	21,581		Butler (383K)	3	1	4	95,784
	Brown (43K)	1	1	2	21,716		Cuyahoga (1.2M)	4	7	11	112,279
	Wyandot (22K)	1	0	1	21,772		Mahoning (229K)	1	1	2	114,342
Belmont (67K)	2	1	3	22,335	Wayne (116K)	1	0	1	115,710		

See Appendix B

Results

20 counties were identified as community cat resource deserts (yellow).

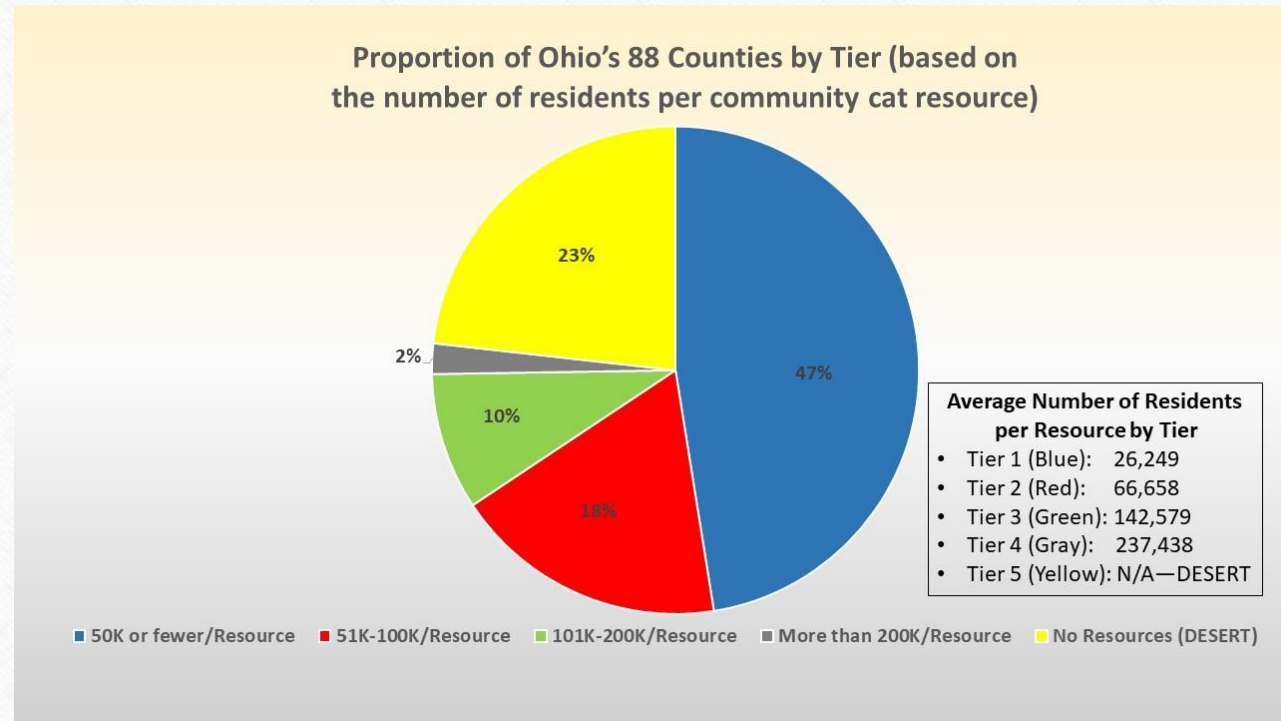
41 counties were found to have 50,000 or fewer residents per community cat resource (blue).



Results

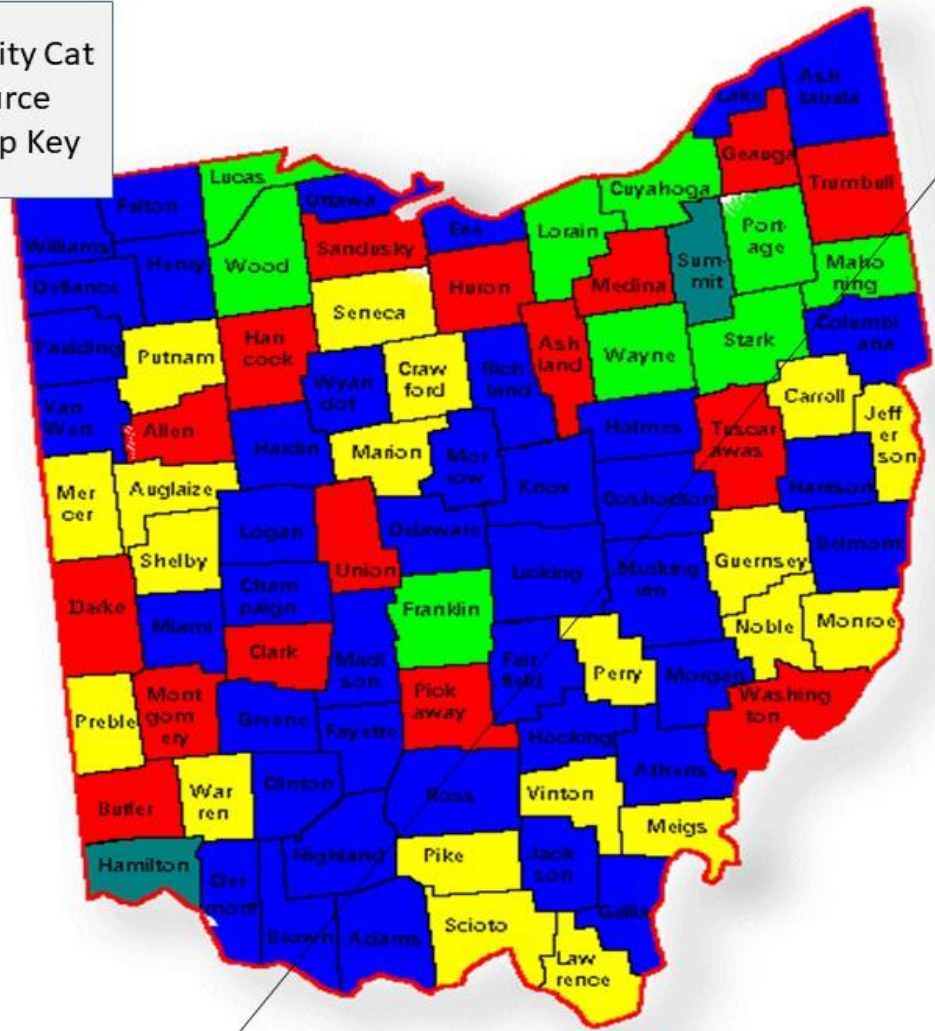
Nearly half of Ohio's counties average just over 26,000 residents per community cat resource.

Almost one quarter of Ohio's counties were found to have no resources and are categorized as resource deserts.



Resident Population per Community Cat Resource by Ohio County

- Tier 1: 50,000 or fewer/resource
 - Tier 2: 51,000 to 100,000/resource
 - Tier 3: 101,000 to 200,000/resource
 - Tier 4: More than 200,000/resource
 - Tier 5: No resources (DESERT)
- Community Cat Resource Tier Map Key

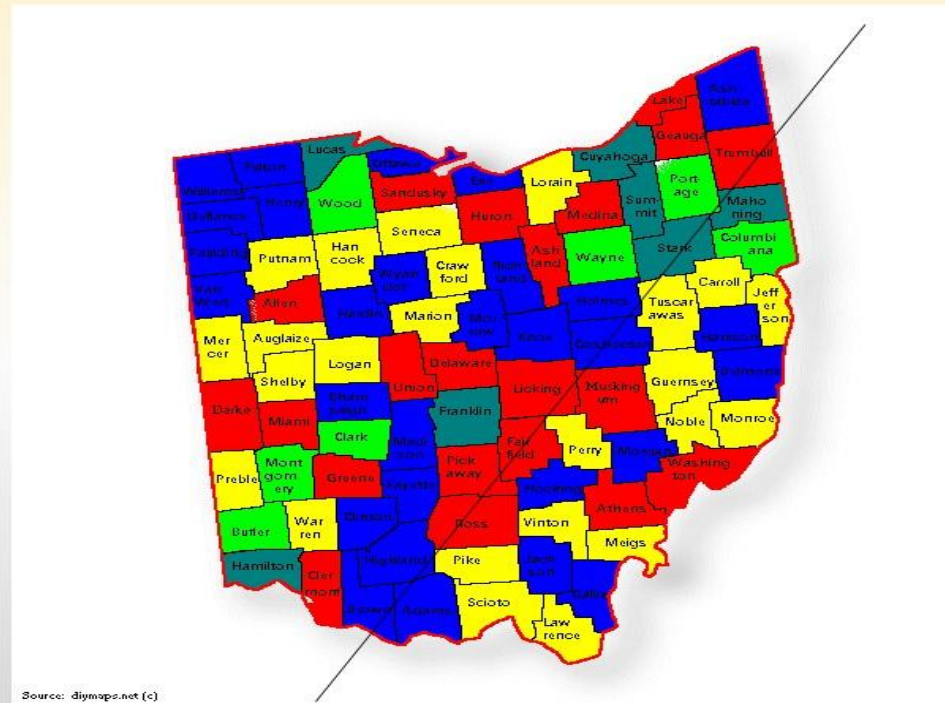


Eleven of the counties identified as community cat resource deserts are in the southeastern portion of the state, known as Appalachian Ohio.

Spay-Neuter Resources Only

- Fewer counties in Tier 1 (41 to 29)
- More counties in Tiers 2-4 (27 to 35)
- More counties in Tier 5 Deserts (20 to 24)
- Of note, the counties containing the five largest cities in the state all in Tier 4

Tier 1: 50,000 or fewer/resource	●
Tier 2: 51,000 to 100,000/resource	●
Tier 3: 101,000 to 200,000/resource	●
Tier 4: More than 200,000/resource	●
Tier 5: No resources (DESERT)	●

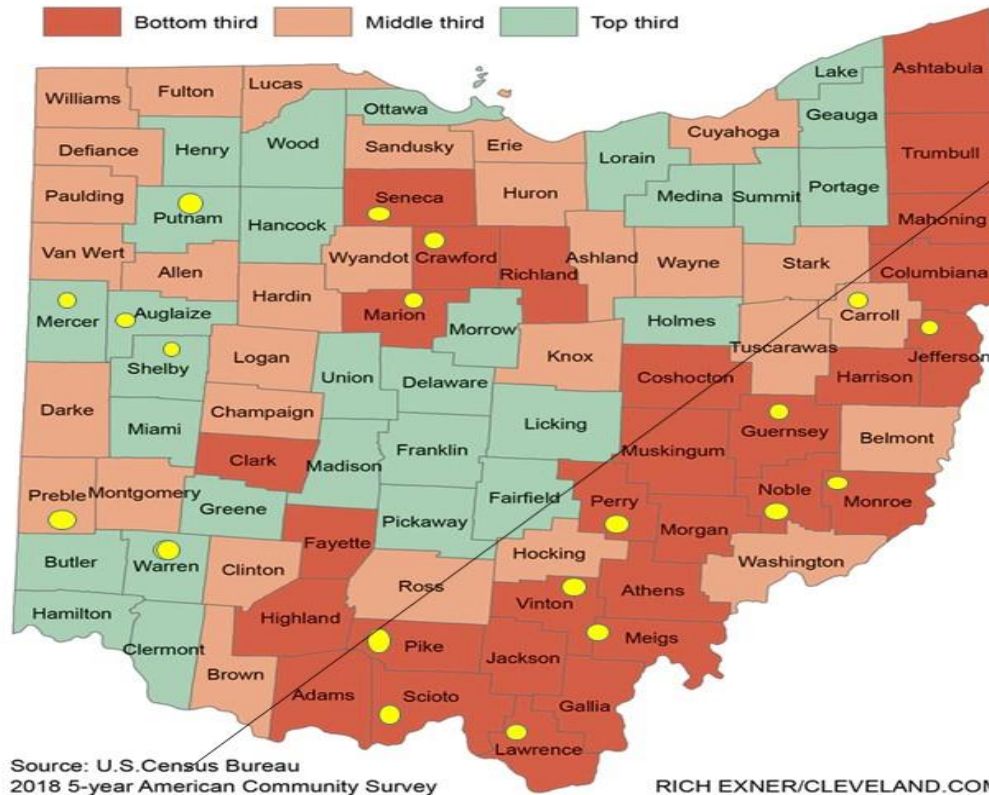


When counties were examined by the number of residents per spay-neuter resources only, an additional four resource deserts were identified and an additional eight counties moved into Tiers 2, 3, and 4 (with a range of between 51,000 and more than 200,000 residents per community cat resource).

Results

- Median household income of 68 counties where at least one community cat resource was identified: **\$52,524.**
- Median household income of 40 counties where multiple community cat resources were identified: **\$52,230.**
- Median household income of 20 counties where no community cat resources were identified (resource deserts): **\$46,551.**

Ohio counties by median family income



Ohio Median Family Income

Top Third: \$75,107
Middle Third: \$63,771
Bottom Third: \$56,786

Resource Deserts by County Median Family Income Rank

Top Third 5 (25%)
Middle Third 2 (10%)
Bottom Third 13 (65%)
(*10 are Appalachian Counties)

Rich Exner, cleveland.com Every Ohio City and County Ranked for Median Family Household Income: Census Estimates Available online:
<https://www.cleveland.com/datacentral/2020/01/every-ohio-city-and-county-ranked-for-median-family-household-income-census-estimates.html> (accessed on 1 November 2022).

Nearly two-thirds of the counties identified as community cat resource deserts were also in the bottom third for median family income (unlike household income, family income excludes single person households— and was the only map available). Ten of those 13 counties are located in Ohio Appalachia.

Project Strengths/Limitations

As with any project of this kind, it is important to keep in mind what can and cannot be inferred from the results.

On the plus side, we were able to assemble what is likely the most comprehensive list of Ohio's community cat resources compiled to date. And, we were able to identify, by county, how those resources are distributed across Ohio. We were also able to identify counties where no known community cat resources exist (deserts) and report the number of people residing in each county per community cat resource. We used this ratio to break the counties into tiered groups with the counties having the fewest number of residents per resource in Tier 1 and the counties having the most residents per resource in Tier 4.

Project Strengths/Limitations

Counties with no community cat resources were assigned to Tier 5. These groupings are intended to allow for simple comparisons among counties based upon the available data.

There are several limitations to this project as well. First, we examined Ohio's community cat resources by county—this was done for practical reasons and it is unknown whether this best reflects the actual service areas of such resources. Second, we were able to only tally the number of community cat resources in each county. We were not able to account for the capacity, accessibility, or reliability of a particular resource, so all were counted the same even though in reality each is

Project Strengths/Limitations

unique in terms of these characteristics. The results of our data analysis allow for only comparisons among counties in this context. Evaluation of the specific circumstances in any given county was not attempted as doing so would have been beyond the scope of this project.

We hope to identify additional community cat resources after publication of this preliminary report. We look forward to incorporating any new information reported to us into the final report tentatively scheduled to be released by the end of 2022. We also intend to offer a discussion of the results at that time, including possible resource desert mitigation efforts.

References

Exner, R. (2020) Cleveland.com, Every Ohio City and County Ranked for Median Family, Household Income: Census Estimates Available online:
<https://www.cleveland.com/datacentral/2020/01/every-ohio-city-and-county-ranked-for-median-family-household-income-census-estimates.html> (accessed on 1 November 2022).

Lord, L. K. (2008). Attitudes toward and perceptions of free-roaming cats among individuals living in Ohio. *Journal of the American Veterinary Medical Association*, 232(8), 1159-1167.

Spehar, D. D. (2015) Unowned Cat Management in the State of Ohio: Elements of Best Practice in Public-Private Collaborative Efforts, Master's Thesis.

Appendices

- Appendix A: Ohio Community Cat Directory (separate PDF)
- Appendix B: Ohio Counties Grouped by Tiers Based on the Number of Residents per Community Cat Resource (separate PDF)