



COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR'S OFFICE

PIMA COUNTY GOVERNMENTAL CENTER
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C.H. HUCKELBERRY
County Administrator

October 2, 2014

The Honorable Steve Kozachik
Tucson City Councilmember
Ward 6 Council Office
3202 E. First Street
Tucson, Arizona 85716

Re: Your September 29, 2014 Newsletter Regarding Pima Animal Care Center; the Trap, Neuter and Release Program; and Spay/Neuter

Dear Councilmember Kozachik:

I appreciate your perspective on this subject. I hope you can also appreciate mine.

As you know, Pima County and the City of Tucson have had an ongoing conversation for several years regarding animal care issues. I know for certain the County has and must continue to change our perspective on animal care. As recently as a few years ago, only one in four animals taken into the facility was adopted. Through a significant policy change that shifted away from euthanasia, on average, four out of five animals are now adopted into the community. We will never be a complete no-kill shelter, but we can get as many animals as possible adopted by caring individuals and families.

The Best Friends Animal Society grant to the County for a Trap, Neuter and Release program will hopefully be embraced by the City of Tucson. Pima County amended its Code to allow for such a program, and I hope the City will do so as well. This grant will allow us to deal with feral or free-roaming cats in the most humane manner possible, regardless of where the cat is found, and the program will not require any additional funding from the City. I have enclosed maps of the locations at which feral cats were captured or turned over to the Pima Animal Care Center over the last five years.

The Honorable Steve Kozachik

Re: **Your September 29, 2014 Newsletter Regarding Pima Animal Care Center; the Trap, Neuter and Release Program; and Spay/Neuter**

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Also as we have discussed for the last two years, we need a long-term solution to the pet overpopulation problem. That long-term solution lies in a viable and funded spay/neuter program. Pima County dedicated the incremental cost of our last license fee increase to this program and asked the City of Tucson to do the same. Unfortunately, the City declined. Adequate funding for spay and neuter is essential if we are ever to manage the problem of pet overpopulation and unnecessary euthanasia.

Finally, I hope you will recognize there is a connection between shifting policy from euthanasia to adoption and the resulting increase in costs. In my view, these costs are well worth the effort. Adopting more animals means more kennel space, longer stays and increased medical costs. It is about these costs that we would like to continue our dialog with the City to reach an acceptable agreement. The City's September 23, 2014 response to our June 2, 2014 letter forms a basis for these discussions.

It is unfortunate that you interpreted my memorandum to staff as a threat to the City; it was not intended to be so. The purpose of my memorandum was to provide the broadest series of policy options in response to a difficult and complex problem.

I look forward to a reasonable and successful agreement regarding these difficult and complex issues.

Sincerely,



C.H. Huckelberry
County Administrator

CHH/mjk

Enclosures

c: The Honorable Chair and Members, Pima County Board of Supervisors
Jan Leshner, Deputy County Administrator for Medical and Health Services



Important Phone Numbers

Tucson Police Department
911 or nonemergency
791-4444

Water Issues
791-4133
Emergency: 791-4133

Street Maintenance
791-3154

Graffiti Removal
792-2489

Abandoned Shopping Carts
791-3171

Neighborhood Resources
837-5013

SunTran/SunLink
792-9222

Environmental Services
791-3171

Park Wise
791-5071

Planning and Development Services
791-5550

Pima County Animal Control
243-5900

Pima County Vector Control
Cockroach: 443-6501
Mosquito: 740-2760

Continued: A Message From Steve

and thank them for hanging in there and making a difference in changing the whole discussion on this topic.

No local media picked up the importance of the announcement. I guess it's tough for them to make collecting data an eye-grabbing news story. But for those of us who are working in the public policy arena, it's meaningful to know that Arizona will join 31 other States in collecting and sending information to the CDC on gun incidents that occur in our state. Here's a recap of how the ASU folks handled release of the information:

The ASU Center for Violence Prevention and Community Safety will begin gathering and analyzing data on murders and suicides in Arizona for the National Violent Death Reporting System. The data will help state and local officials better understand when and how violent deaths occur by linking information from law enforcement, medical examiners, vital statistics, and crime laboratories. The collected data will help public health practitioners and violence prevention professionals develop prevention and intervention strategies to reduce violent deaths in Arizona.

A few months ago, we upgraded the trauma kits our police officers carry in their vehicles. Having that new equipment has saved lives. You don't hear about it, but it's happening out on the streets. The same will be true of the public health policy that will come from the NVDRS data. There's a lot of good going on that isn't considered 'above the fold' newsworthy. I thought you should know.

Best Friends 'Trap/Neuter/Return' Program



In August, the County signed onto a program to address the feral cat population in Tucson. The TNR program is funded by an approximate \$1M grant from Best Friends Animal Society. What they do is trap free-roaming cats, spay/neuter them, provide treatment if needed and then release them back to their outdoor homes. It's necessary to both curb the number of feral cats we have wandering around and to reduce the number of cats being euthanized out at the Pima Animal Care Center.

Because the program will necessarily increase the cost for the County spay/neuter effort, there's a financial impact on the PACC folks. We fund PACC. If their costs were going to increase – legitimately – and they anticipated passing some of those costs onto the City and surrounding jurisdictions, the correct thing to do would have been for them to contact

us to make sure we had the funding in place to cover the expected cost increase. That didn't happen. They approved the program after we had set our FY'15 budget and then announced a nearly quarter of a million dollar charge to us. I'd call that bad form.

But the program is a long-term cost saver, so it's worth trying to work out a solution.

Until a contact shared with me a series of exchanges between our staff and the Best Friends folks, I wasn't aware that the program was in jeopardy. In fact, last Friday I learned that if we didn't respond to them by the end of that workday, they were ready to pull their million bucks and give it to another jurisdiction. When I learned of that, I called their representative in New York and committed to meet with her this week. I also invited City and County people so we can all talk about how to save the program.

Several of us are praying for a good outcome.

Earlier in the week I had a similar experience where another contact shared an email exchange with me that the City and County were having on the charges we pay to PACC. That's the one that prompted the County Administrator to issue his 'pay or else' memo. Here's the full text of that:



MEMORANDUM

Date: September 23, 2014

To: Jan Leshar
Deputy County Administrator
for Medical and Health Services

From: C.H. Huckelberry
County Administrator

Dr. Francisco Garcia, Director
Health Department

Re: Pima Animal Care Center Cost to Municipalities

As you know, based on Board of Supervisors and staff leadership, the County has invested a significant amount of new resources in the Pima Animal Care Center (PACC) to make it a more humane facility, reversing the euthanasia rate within two to three years. This is a result of the investments the Board has been willing to make. I firmly believe our investments have been well made and that our policy of non-euthanasia is the best and most humane response to this issue.

Recently, some jurisdictions have voiced concerns over their share of these increased costs. These increased costs are primarily driven by the County's decision to pursue a non-euthanasia policy for the care of animals. Our decision will remain unchanged and we will continue to incur these costs over and above what has previously been spent by the County on animal care functions.



Important Phone Numbers

Senator John
McCain (R)
520-670-6334

Senator Jeff
Flake (R)
520-575-8633

Congressman
Ron Barber (D)
(2nd District)
520-881-3588

Congressman
Raul Grijalva (D)
(3rd District)
520-622-6788

Governor Janice
Brewer (R)
602-542-4331
Tucson office:
628-6580

Mayor Jonathan
Rothschild
791-4201

ZoomTucson Map
[http://
maps.tucsonaz.gov/
/zoomTucson/](http://maps.tucsonaz.gov/zoomTucson/)

Municipalities should be given the opportunity to choose a less costly option; therefore, please develop a euthanasia option for municipalities. Such a policy would mean that animals taken or received from a certain municipal jurisdiction would be euthanized at the earliest possible time pursuant to the existing County policy and state law regarding such. This would allow certain costs to be reduced for municipalities for the provision of animal care services. While this is not a policy I would recommend for the County, it should be an option available to municipalities. When you have the basic outline of such a policy, please ask the Animal Care Advisory Committee to review it before we ask the Board of Supervisors for direction.

Choosing a euthanasia policy would allow the municipality to avoid the spay/neuter fees embedded in our operating costs. In addition, kennel space requirements would be reduced, as would medical care expenses, thereby reducing their costs. If the municipality chooses this option, I would ask they train one or more of their staff in euthanasia practices, as I do not desire to place on our staff the increased emotional burden of carrying out additional euthanasia.

Finally, municipalities do have the option to operate their own independent animal care facilities. We would certainly assist any jurisdiction that would want to be responsible for its own animal care services.

CHH/anc

c: The Honorable Chair and Members, Pima County Board of Supervisors

Just as I suggested in the TNR case above, the correct approach would have been a conversation before costs were incurred to allow the jurisdictions to weigh in on how, or if, they could participate in funding. The City's share was over \$800K, and the bill arrived months after we had finalized our budget.

We have a contract with the County for operations at PACC. It's not for capital or administrative costs. Those sorts of costs were included in the bill we were sent. While some of them may have perhaps been legitimate topics to bring to the table for sharing the costs, that conversation happens before the costs are committed, not after.

In fairness, there's a regional advisory committee that talks about these sorts of issues. The City has been asleep at the wheel in making sure we had a representative present at those meetings. I've also indicated to staff that they need to get that slot filled and fill it with somebody who's accountable for participating. But that's an advisory committee, not a governing body that can commit funds to any of the jurisdictions involved.

I have requested a study session for the 2nd meeting in October so the M&C can hear from staff on this issue, and talk about our role in paying for regional animal care. As I noted last year when trying to get a larger City contribution to spay/neuter, it makes long-term fiscal sense, and it makes immediate sense from the standpoint of fewer dogs and cats being killed out at the shelter. Here are a few ending thoughts:

Yet again, I learned about nearly \$2M in issues through contacts in the media and elsewhere, not from City staff. That's unacceptable.

The County committed to significant financial obligations, assuming support from other jurisdictions without having engaged any of them prior to signing on the dotted line.

The spay/neuter TNR program and the work being done out at the Pima Animal Care facility is important regional work. It saves lives, and money. We need to be partners.

There's a group called Tucson Residents for Responsible Government. They often indicate a frustration in how communications are handled between governments and the citizens. From what you've just read, I suspect it'll come as no surprise that I share their pain.

The whole issue was unnecessary, and exhausting.



Getting Arizona Involved in Neighborhoods

And speaking of TRRG, and neighborhood engagement more generally, on Wednesday, October 8th several neighborhood groups will be participating again in what was originally called National Night Out. That outdoor event was held in August, a time that many felt wouldn't get it the pop it deserved. As a result, now we're doing it in October.

Tucson Police are going to be stopping by the individual neighborhood meetings to make contact and show support. The intent is to promote crime prevention, build relationships, and really send a message to criminals who might think this community is an easy mark when it comes to neighbors watching out for one another. We have several very connected neighborhood listservs that get active when they see suspicious activity occurring.

Palo Verde neighborhood will hold their GAIN gathering on the 8th at 6pm at 3235 E. Seneca. Feldman's will also start at 6pm @ 1249 N. 3rd. If you're in other neighborhoods and would like to find out where/when they're doing their GAIN meetings, feel free to contact us and we'll help you track down that information. Or you can always contact your neighborhood association leadership and get that information.

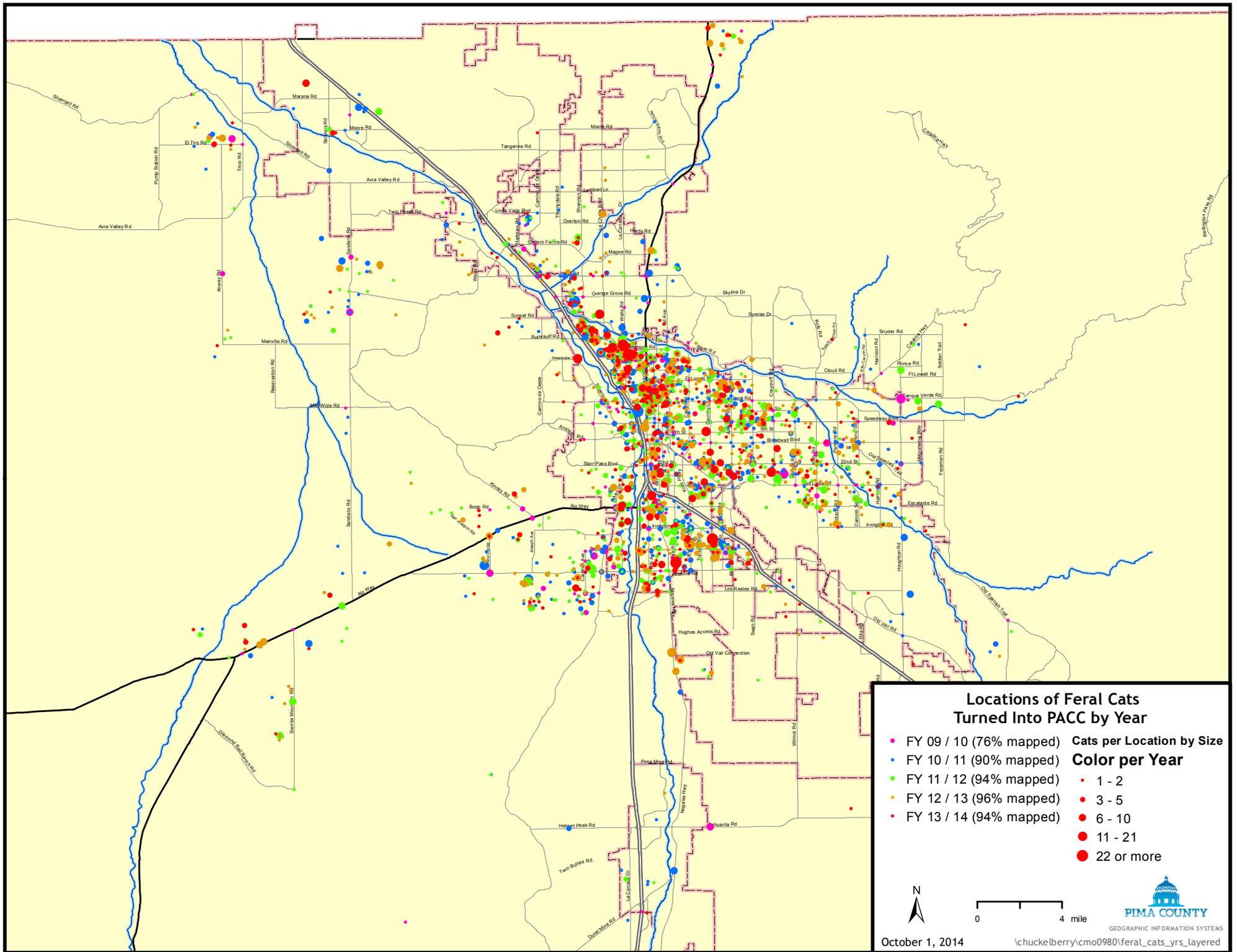
Operation Snowbird



Last week the Air Force released the draft of its environmental assessment related to what they broadly call the "Total Force Training Mission for Visiting Units." More generally, it's what we know as Operation Snowbird (OSB). The report was issued in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and was intended to demonstrate what, if any, significant impacts the expansion of Snowbird has had on the surrounding community. If you'd like to see the

whole report, you can by going to <http://www.dm.af.mil/library/tftea.asp>. The draft report minus the supporting documents is 142 pages long, so I'll just give a few brief thoughts and let you do your own review. We're in a 30 day comment period, so if you want to provide your input to the DOD, you need to have it in by about October 20th.

OSB began in 1975. It was intended to be a winter month operation in which Air National Guard units from northern tier bases (cold weather) would come here and train. Since that



**Locations of Feral Cats
Turned Into PACC by Year**

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● FY 09 / 10 (76% mapped) ● FY 10 / 11 (90% mapped) ● FY 11 / 12 (94% mapped) ● FY 12 / 13 (96% mapped) ● FY 13 / 14 (94% mapped) | <p>Cats per Location by Size</p> <p>Color per Year</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 1 - 2 ● 3 - 5 ● 6 - 10 ● 11 - 21 ● 22 or more |
|---|--|

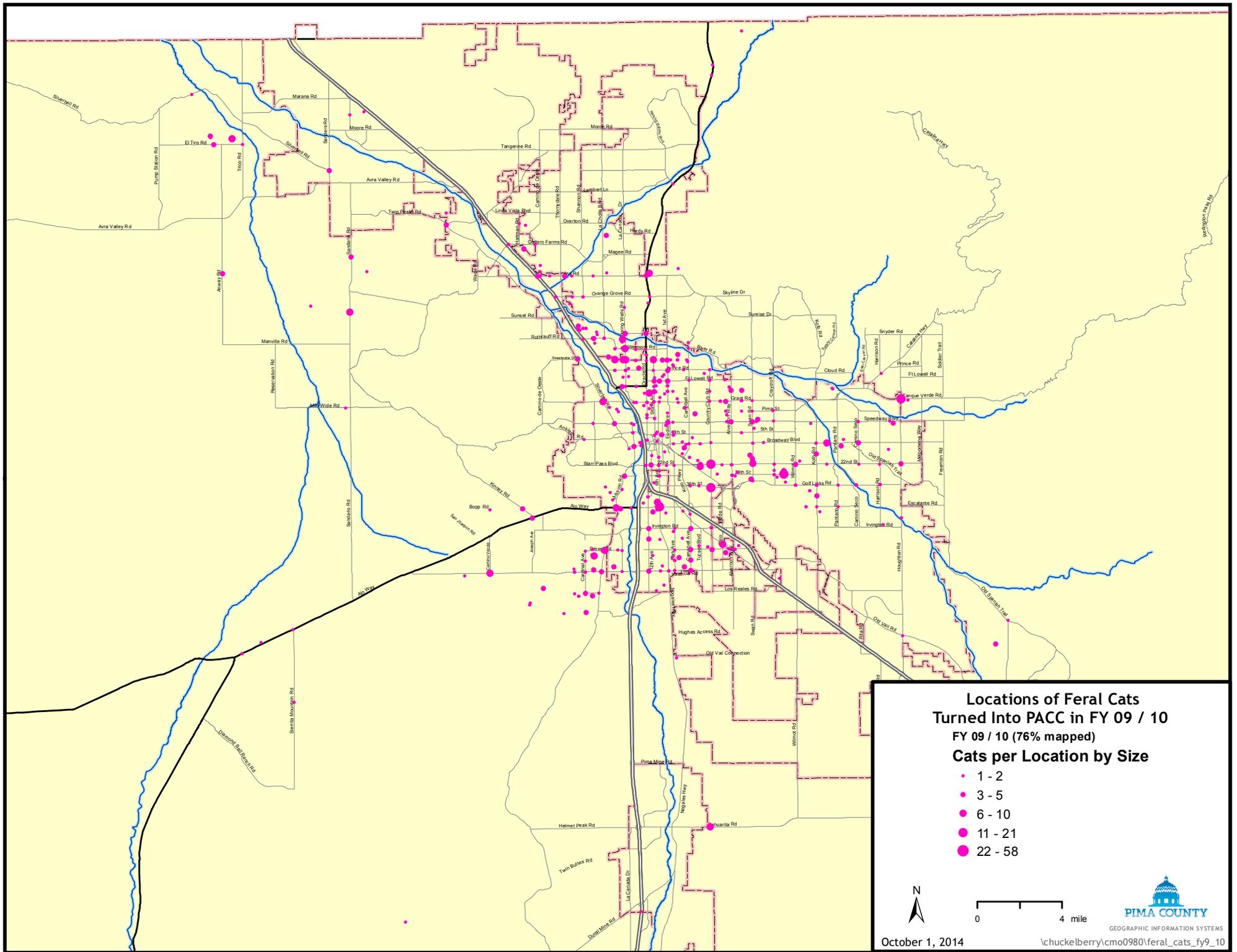


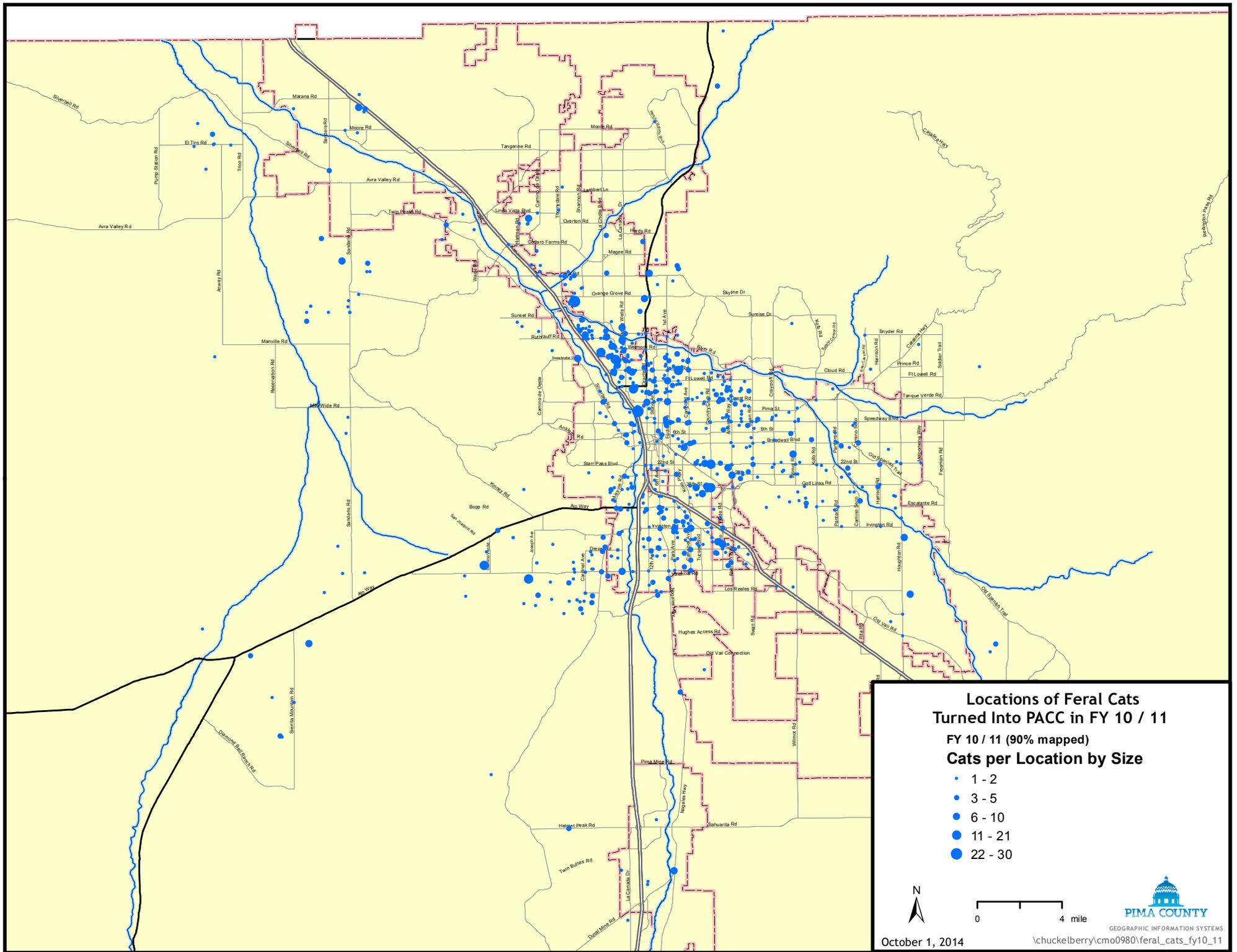
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October 1, 2014

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**Locations of Feral Cats
Turned Into PACC in FY 10 / 11**

FY 10 / 11 (90% mapped)

Cats per Location by Size

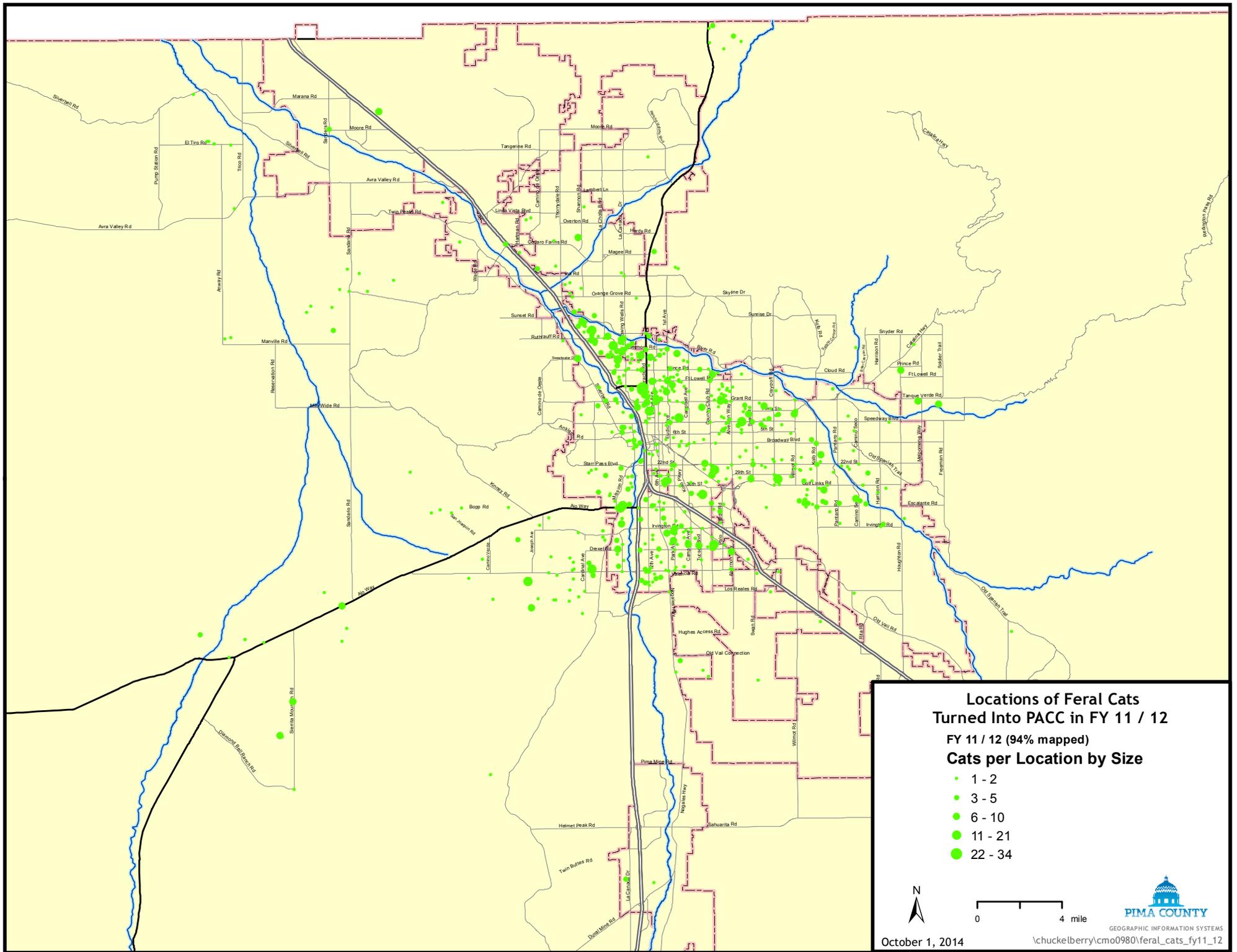
- 1 - 2
- 3 - 5
- 6 - 10
- 11 - 21
- 22 - 30



GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEMS

October 1, 2014

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**Locations of Feral Cats
Turned Into PACC in FY 11 / 12**

FY 11 / 12 (94% mapped)

Cats per Location by Size

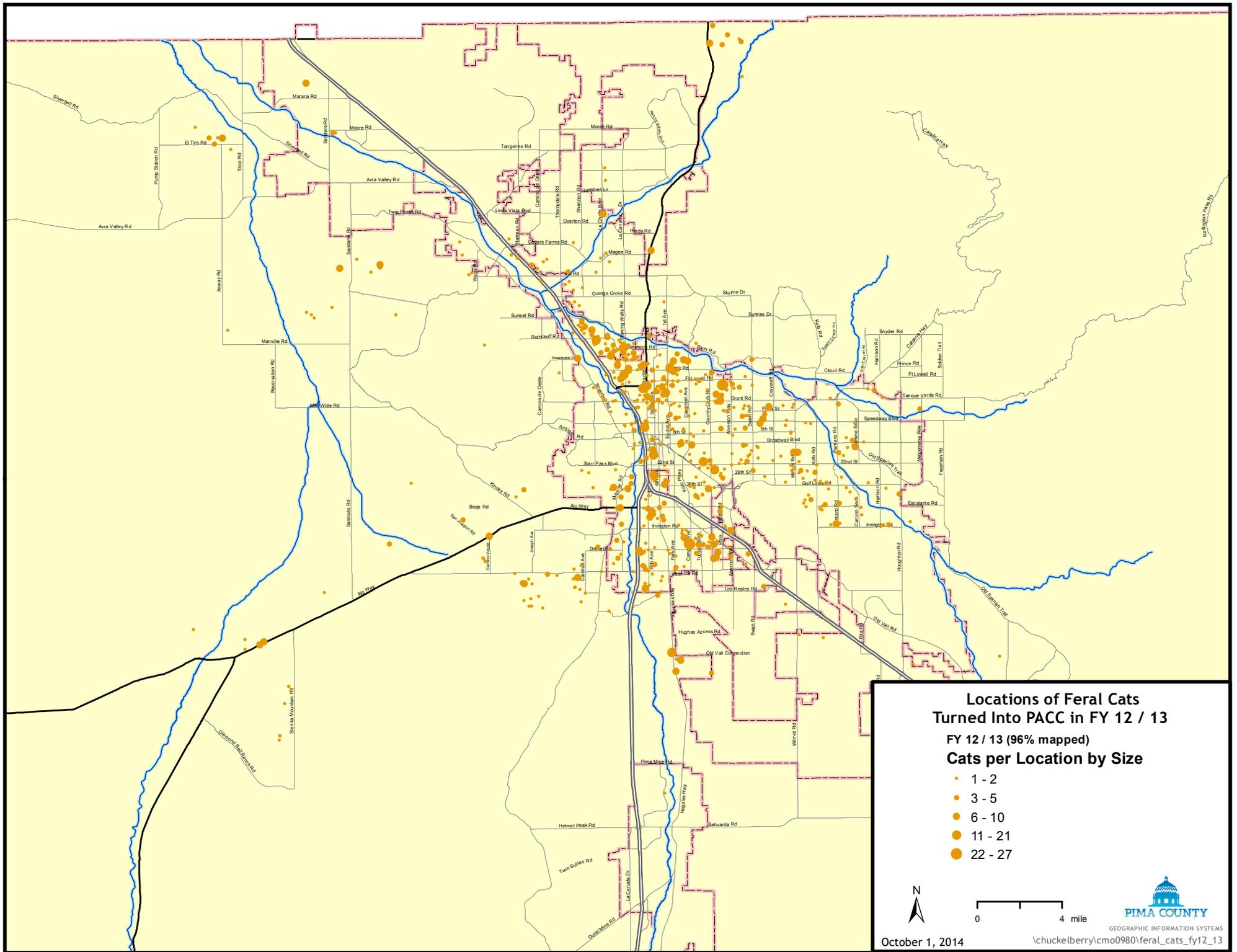
- 1 - 2
- 3 - 5
- 6 - 10
- 11 - 21
- 22 - 34



GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEMS

October 1, 2014

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**Locations of Feral Cats
Turned Into PACC in FY 12 / 13**

FY 12 / 13 (96% mapped)

Cats per Location by Size

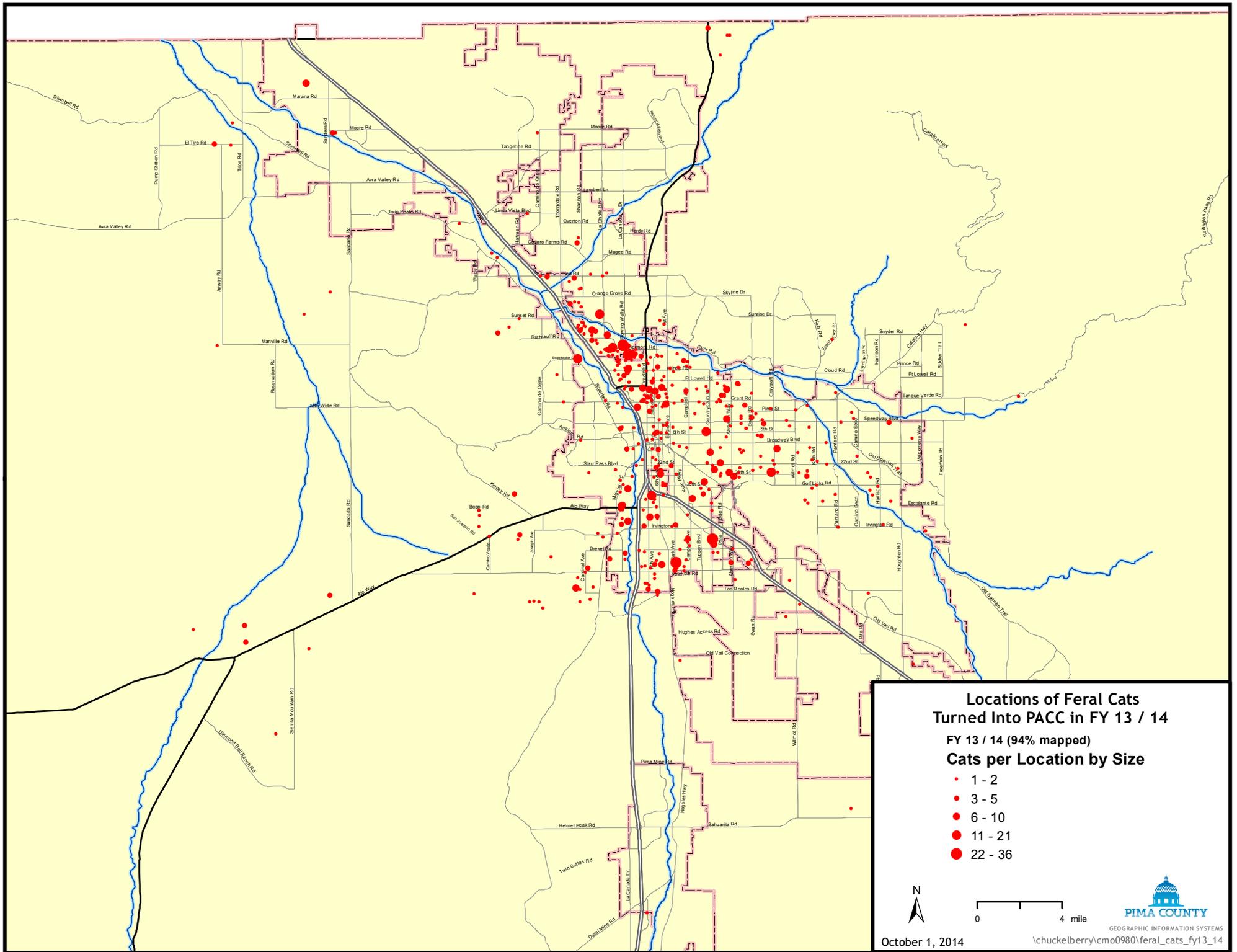
- 1 - 2
- 3 - 5
- 6 - 10
- 11 - 21
- 22 - 27



GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEMS

October 1, 2014

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**Locations of Feral Cats
Turned Into PACC in FY 13 / 14**

FY 13 / 14 (94% mapped)

Cats per Location by Size

- 1 - 2
- 3 - 5
- 6 - 10
- 11 - 21
- 22 - 36



GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEMS

October 1, 2014

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