Transfer Rate

1.3% 37.6%

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2017 Animal Sheltering Statistics

SHELTER ANIMALS COUNT
the national database

White Paper
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Introduction of the 2017 Animal Sheltering Statistics from the Shelter Animals Count Database

Shelter Animals Count (SAC) is a collaborative, independent organization formed by a diverse group of stakeholders to create and share the national database of sheltered animal statistics, providing facts, and enabling insights that will improve animal welfare throughout the country. The SAC database follows the Basic Data Matrix specified by the National Federation of Humane Societies. The following paper provides a look at the 2017 data from Shelter Animals Count. The data was limited to organizations that completed a full year of reporting in 2017. The goal of this paper is to give an overview of the current state of the national sheltered animal database developed by SAC and demonstrate progress toward a truly national database that can be used to help understand the state of companion animals in this country.

It is worth pointing out both the strengths and weaknesses of the dataset. Since there is no national requirement for reporting, all the data is self-reported and contains natural under and over sampling biases in both the geographic and organization type dimensions. In other words, some areas had a greater level of reporting than others. To analyze the data, we utilized techniques that would minimize the potential bias effects of the partial dataset. The key methodologies were to aggregate at an appropriate level, which was predominately state, and to utilize ratios to normalize scale. Comparing absolute numbers is difficult because of the incomplete dataset at this point. As the dataset grows it will allow for more detailed analysis than we can do today.

Definitions:

The following definitions and abbreviations will be used throughout this paper:

SAC: Shelter Animals Count

OIE: owner intended euthanasia

RBO: relinquished by owner

RTO: return to owner

RTO rate: total RTOs divided by the total of stray intakes

RTF: return to field

Location: unique address for services (organizations may have more than one location)

Adjusted intake: total intake minus transfers in

Adjusted outcome: total outcome minus transfers out

Live outcomes: sum of adoptions, RTOs, RTFs, and transfers

Live outcome rate: live outcomes divided by all outcomes

Euthanasia rate: total euthanasia excluding owner intended euthanasia divided by total outcomes minus owner intended euthanasia

Demographics of Reporting Organizations:

Types of Organizations:

- The top two organization types account for 74% of all locations. These included 1,102 (50%) Rescues w/o Gov. Contract and 530 (24%) Shelters w/o Gov. Contract
- Shelters w/ Gov. Contract and Government Animal Services represent 25% of all locations with 283 and 274 locations, respectively.
- 17 Rescues w/ Gov. Contract reported a full year of data in 2017 representing 1% of all locations.

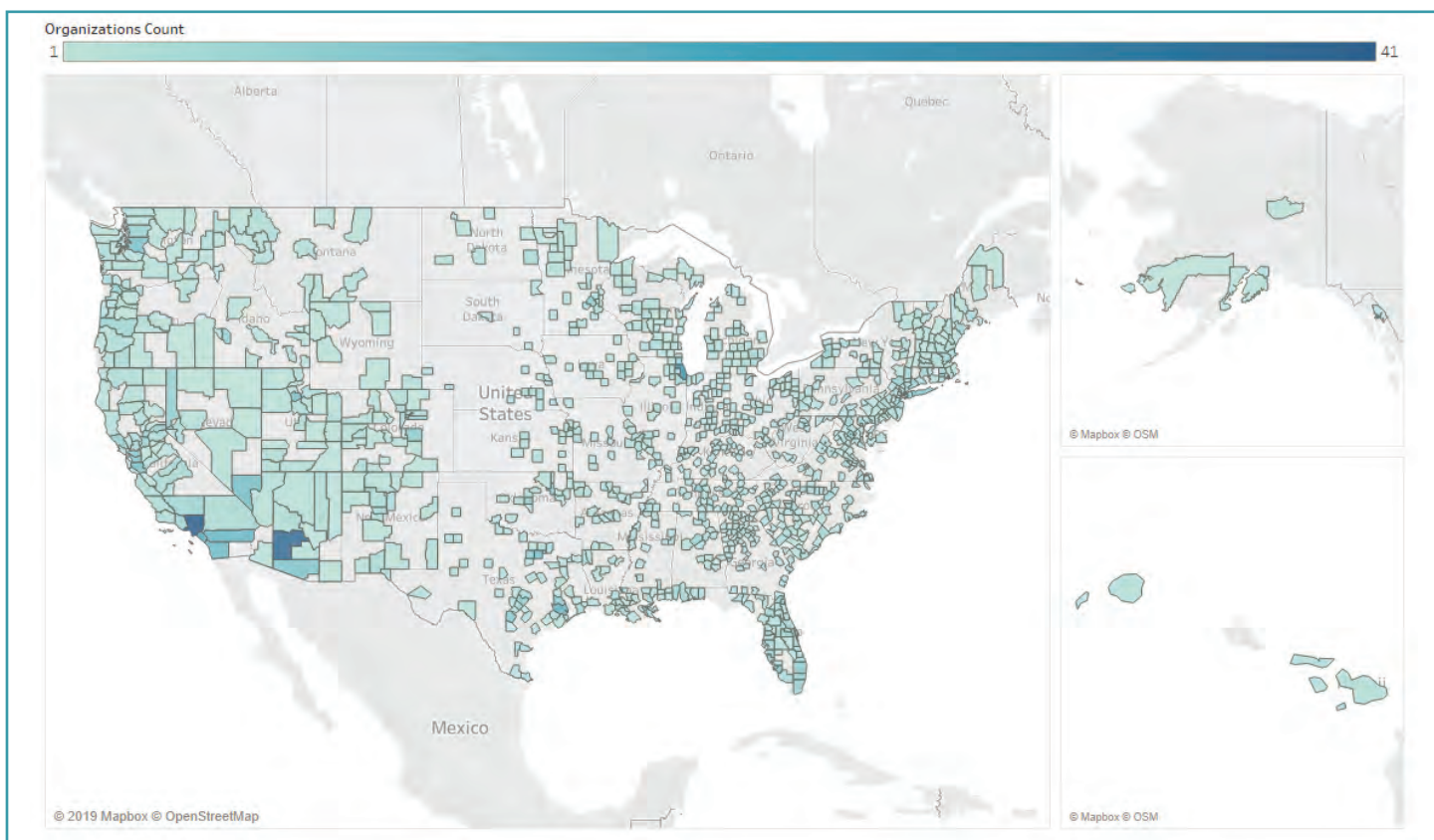Figure 1: Distribution of Organizations by Type

Distribution of Organization Type in 2017 SAC Dataset

- Government Animal Services
- Shelter with Gov. Contract
- Rescue with Gov. Contract
- Shelter without Gov. Contract
- Rescue without Gov. Contract

Geographic Distribution:

• 2,206 locations reported a full year of data in 2017

• Washington, DC is included as state 51 for the purposes of this paper

• There is sparse reporting for counties in the Midwest and the South

• Los Angeles County and Maricopa County were the two counties with the most organizations reporting a full year of data for 2017 with 41 and 37 organizations, respectively

Table 1: Summary of Geographic Coverage by Organizational Type

Organization Type	Locations	States	County	Cities	Zip Codes
Rescue w/o Gov. Contract	1,102	51	473	843	1,044
Shelter w/o Gov. Contract	530	49	339	463	523
Shelter w/ Gov. Contract	283	49	240	275	282
Government Animal Services	274	39	223	260	272
Rescue w/ Gov. Contract	17	12	16	17	17
Total	2,206	51	800	1,517	2,032

Figure 2: Reporting Organizations by County for 2017

Number of Animals Reported by State

Reporting Organizations

- Government Animal Services
- Shelter with Gov. Contract
- Rescue with Gov. Contract
- Shelter without Gov. Contract
- Rescue without Gov. Contract

States (left to right): CA, TX, FL, AZ, NC, WA, NY, CO, TN, CH, GA, IN, LA, SC, WI, KY, AL, NV, PA, MD
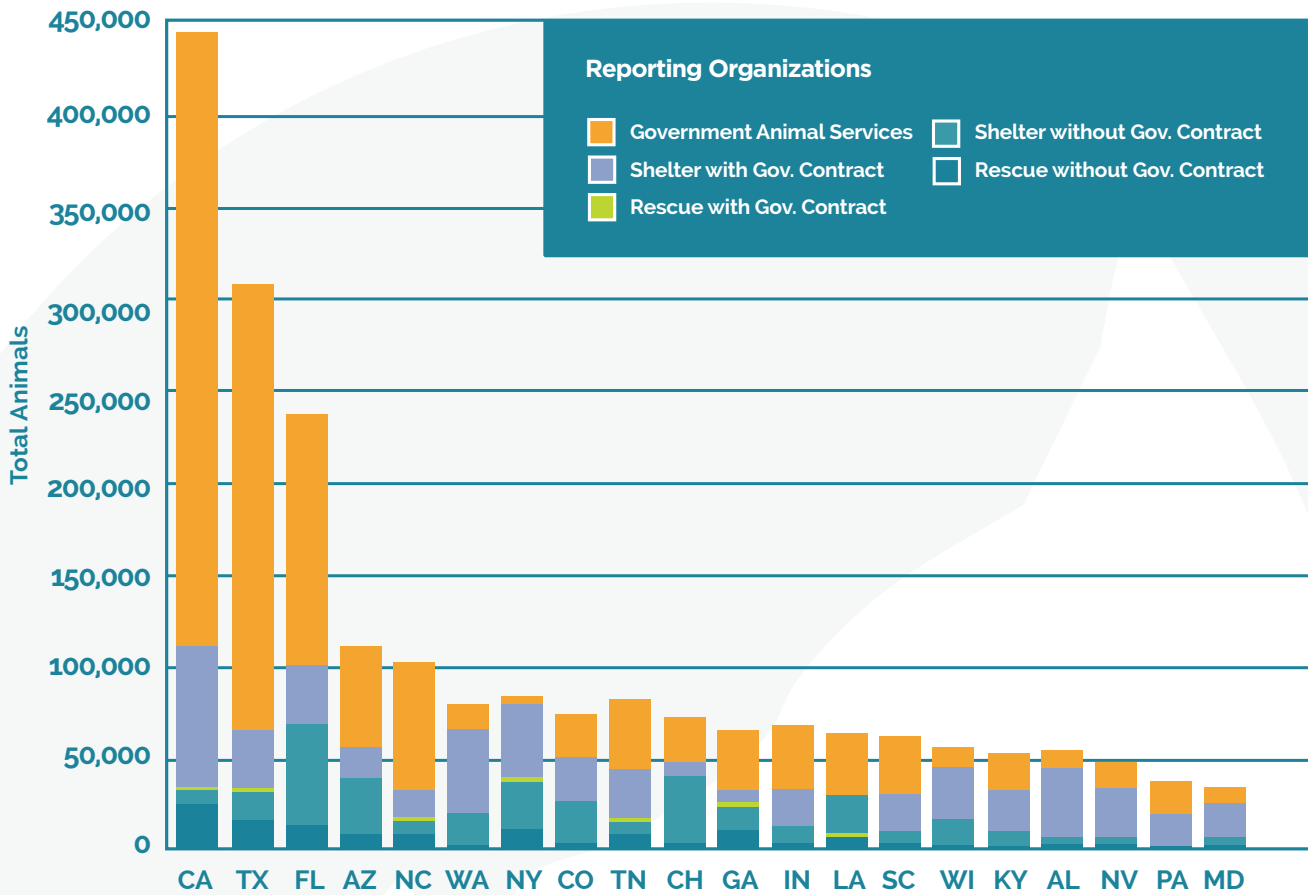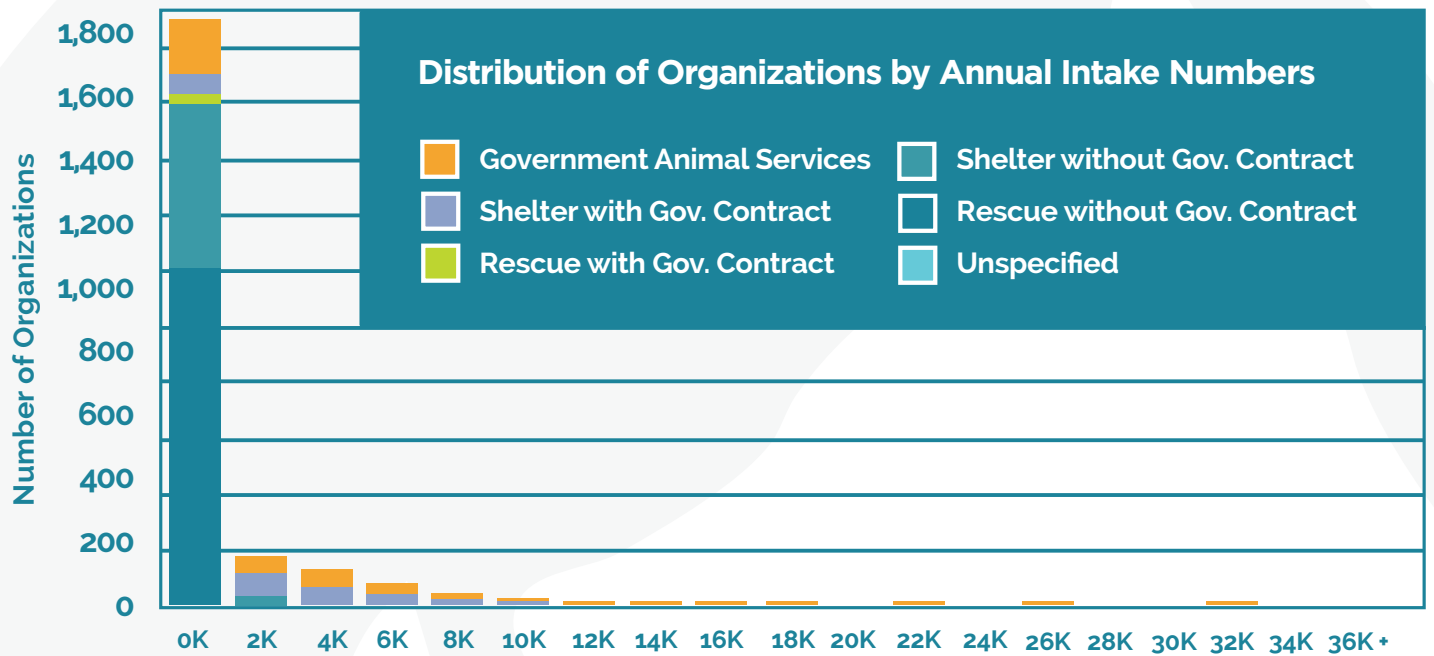
Y-axis: Total Animals (0 to 450,000)

Figure 3: States with Highest Number of Animals Reported

- California reported the most number of intakes accounting for 16.4% of all intakes
- Government and Animal Services accounted for 47.8% of all animal intakes – the highest number of all the organization types

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Organizational Size:

- A large majority of organizations (85.6%) reported less than 2,000 intakes per year
- 100% of Rescues w/o Gov. Contract reported less than 2,000 intakes per year
- 89.8% of Shelters w/ Gov. Contracts reported less than 6,000 intakes per year

Figure 4: Distribution of Organizations by Annual Intake Numbers

Distribution of Organizations by Annual Intake Numbers

Legend:
- Government Animal Services
- Shelter with Gov. Contract
- Rescue with Gov. Contract
- Shelter without Gov. Contract
- Rescue without Gov. Contract
- Unspecified

Intakes:

- Government Animal Services are on average the largest intake facilities with 56% more average intakes than the second largest facilities (Shelters w/ Gov. Contract)
- The most common source of intakes are Strays with 1.7M intakes or 51.7% of all intake sources

Table 2: Summary Statistics by Organization Type

Organization Type	Avg. Intakes	Median Intakes	Min. Intakes	Max. Intakes
Government Animal Services	4,777	2,289	27	59,797
Shelter w/ Gov. Contract	3,059	1,776	61	31,412
Shelter w/o Gov. Contract	1,324	669	1	21,466
Rescue w/o Gov. Contract	441	178	15	1,931
Rescue w/ Gov. Contract	296	141	0	863
Total	1,455	383	0	59,797

Table 3: Summary of 2017 Intake Data

Organization Type	Stray	Relinquished	Transfer In	OIE	Other	Total
Government Animal Services	925,056	247,366	22,036	31,165	83,162	1,308,785
Shelter w/ Gov. Contract	457,783	213,835	114,608	25,646	53,691	865,563
Shelter w/o Gov. Contract	180,085	233,787	230,417	20,519	37,029	701,837
Rescue w/o Gov. Contract	94,581	60,298	147,649	1,151	22,028	325,707
Rescue w/ Gov. Contract	2,458	2,318	2,627	1	90	7,494
Total	1,659,963	757,604	517,337	78,482	196,000	3,209,386

Species and Age Distribution:

- Number of intakes excludes transfers in
- Cat intakes account for 46.8% of all intakes while Dog intakes account for 53.2%
- The largest difference between dog and cat intakes occurs in Government Animal Services with 36.9% more dog than cat intakes
- The second largest difference occurs in Rescues w/o Gov. Contract with 27.0% more dog than cat intakes
- Conversely, Shelters w/o Gov. Contract reported 17.0% more cat than dog intakes

Figure 5: Adjusted Intake by Species and Organization Type

Adjusted Intake by Species and Organization Type
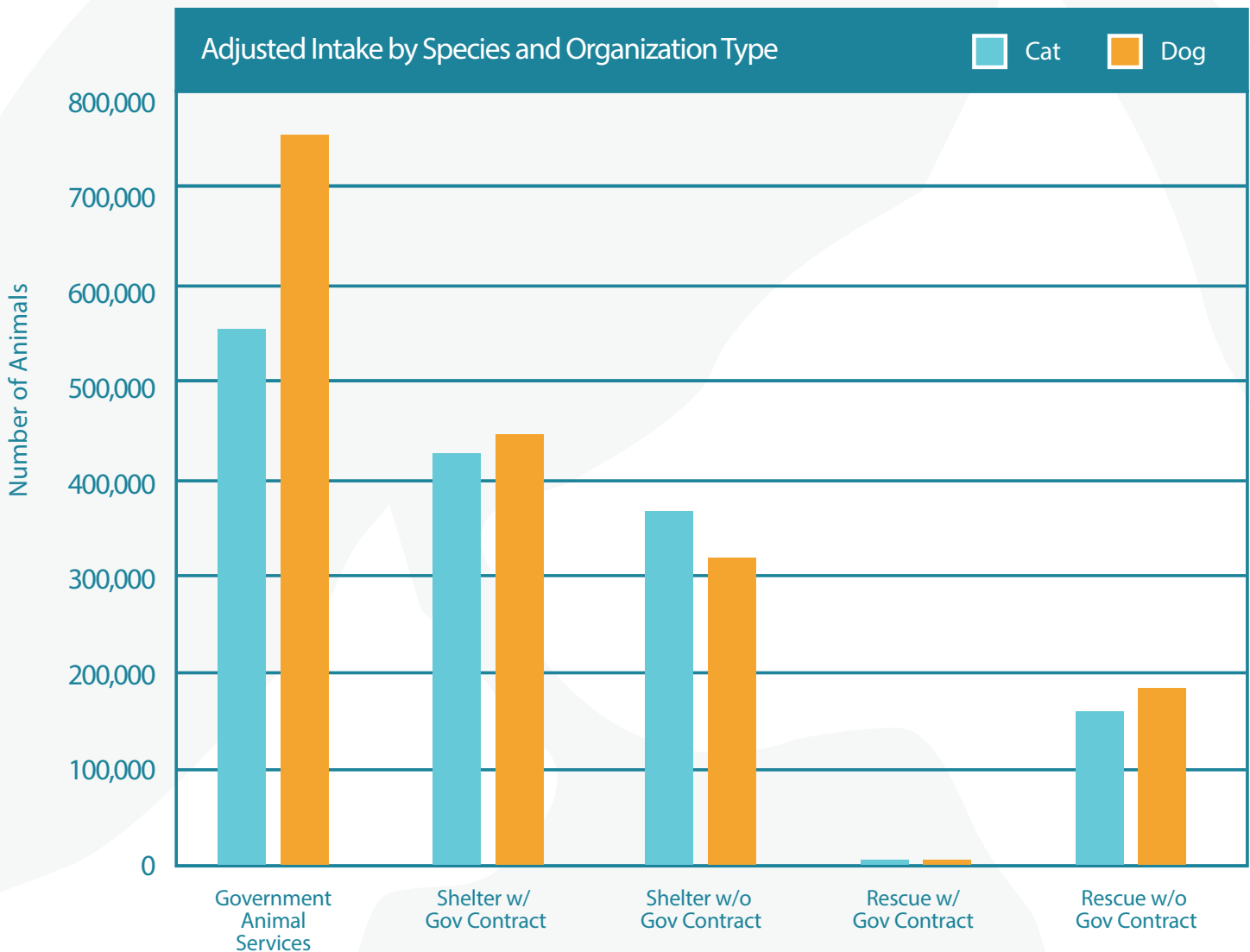
Community Need Indicator:

· The number of juvenile animals entering the system serves as a proxy for community need by suggesting a
   higher fertility rate in the local animal population
· The juvenile ratio is calculated by dividing puppy/kitten intakes by total dog/cat intakes
· The ability for facilities to absorb homeless animals is assumed to be compromised when juvenile ratio is high
· Rescues w/Gov. Contracts reported the highest Juvenile Ratio at 47.2%

Table 4: Summary of 2017 Intake Data

Organization Type	Adj. Cat Intake	Adj. Kitten Intake	Kitten Ratio	Adj. Dog Intake	Adj. Puppy Intake	Puppy Ratio	Juvenile Ratio
Government Animal Services	543,071	222,973	41.1%	743,678	94,560	12.7%	24.7%
Shelter w/ Gov. Contract	385,402	147,230	38.2%	365,553	52,745	14.4%	26.6%
Shelter w/o Gov. Contract	288,380	129,356	44.9%	183,040	38,747	21.2%	35.7%
Rescue w/o Gov. Contract	94,686	48,461	51.2%	83,372	31,297	37.5%	44.8%
Rescue w/ Gov. Contract	2,653	1,549	58.4%	2,214	749	33.8%	47.2%
Total	**1,314,192**	**549,569**	**41.8%**	**1,377,857**	**218,098**	**15.8%**	**28.5%**

Transfers were excluded from all juvenile ratio calculations to avoid any bias due to oversampling from organizations that take in juveniles from outside their community.
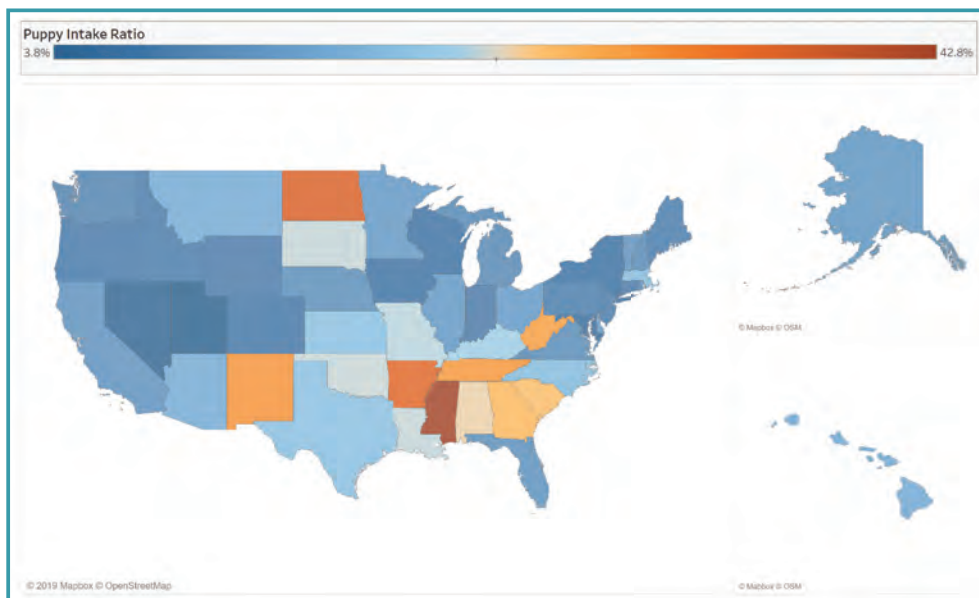

Figure 6:
Map of Average
Puppy Intake Ratio
by State

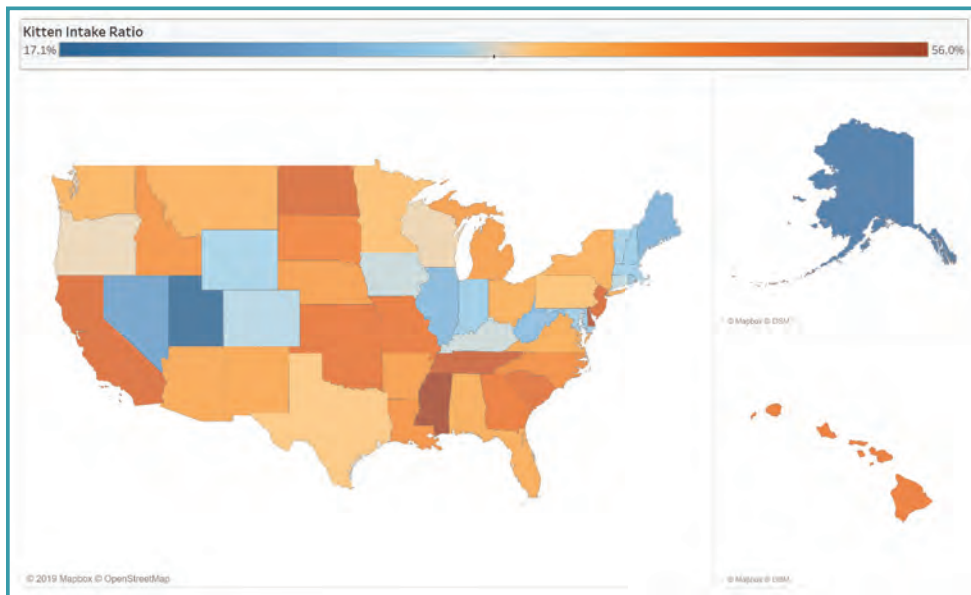(Hotter colors represent
higher intake rates)

Figure 7:
Map of Average
Kitten Intake Ratio
**by State**

(Hotter colors represent
higher intake rates)

Juvenile Ratios:

- The southern US, New Mexico, and North Dakota had the highest puppy ratios suggesting areas of high community need

- Kitten ratios were substantially higher than puppy ratios across the US

- The state of UT showed the lowest puppy and kitten ratios, but their kitten ratio (17.1%) was 4.5 times greater than their puppy ratio (3.8%)

Seasonality:

- There is much higher seasonal variability in Cat intakes than Dog Intakes
- Dog Intakes showed a difference of 20% between the highest and lowest intake months
- Cat Intakes showed a difference of 138% between the highest and lowest intake months
- Intakes exclude transfers in

Figure 8: Adjusted Intake by Month for Cats and Dogs

Adjusted Intake by Month for Cats and Dogs
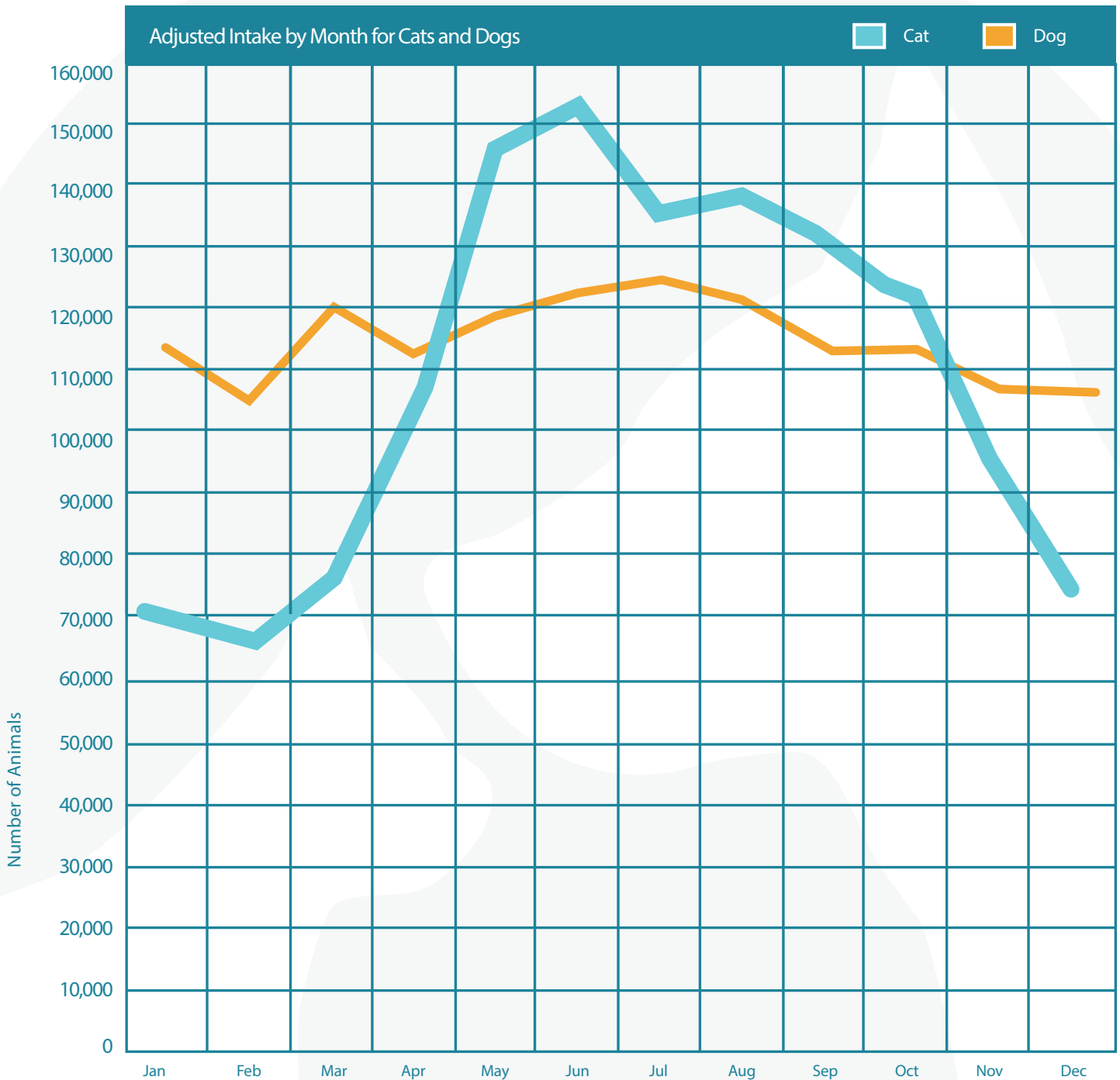
Transfers In:

- California, Texas, and Florida showed high numbers of dogs transferred in
- California, Texas, Florida, and Washington showed high numbers of cats transferred in
- It is important to remember that many of these transfers could be intra-state
- Shelters w/o Gov. Contract had the largest proportion of animals transferred in at 45%
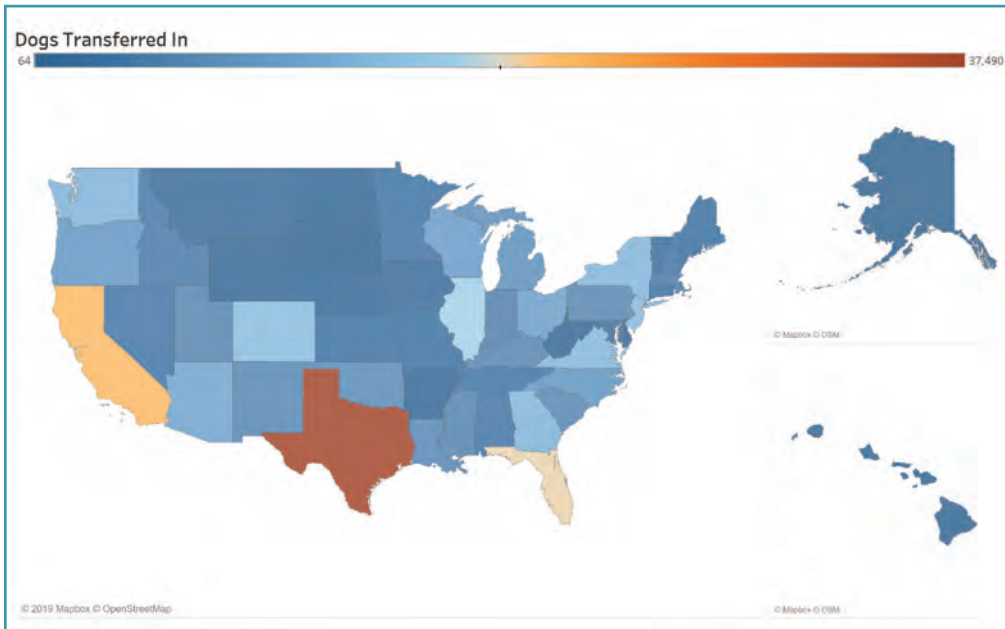- Transfers In represent 16% of all intakes

Figure 9:
Dogs Transferred in by State

(Hotter colors represent higher transfer in rates)
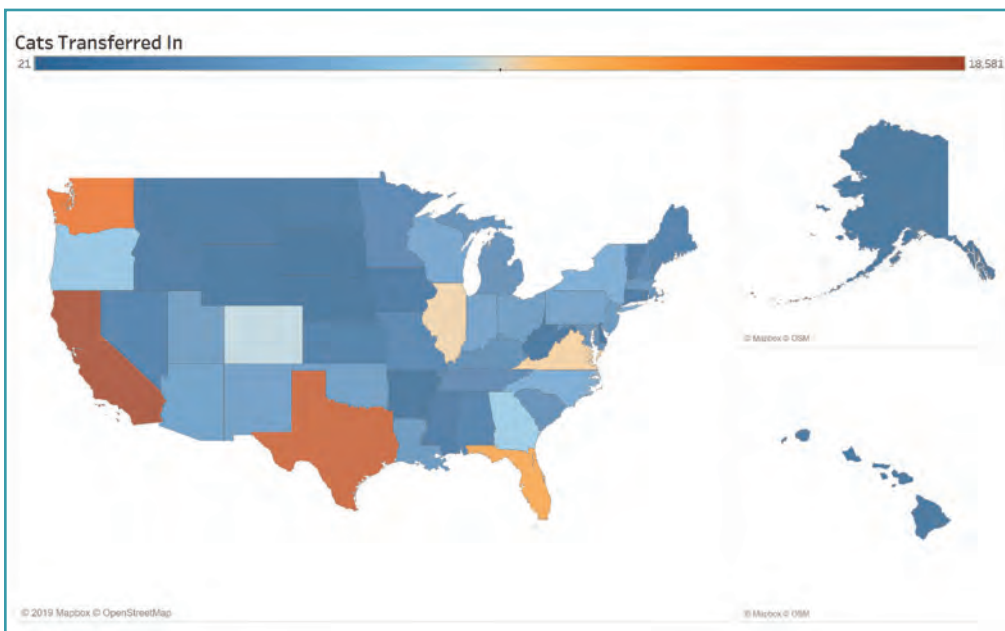

Figure 10:
Cats Transferred in by State

(Hotter colors represent higher transfer in rates)

Relinquishments:

- Relinquishments were the second most common form of intake at 24%
- The relinquishment Rate is calculated by dividing relinquishments by total intake for each species
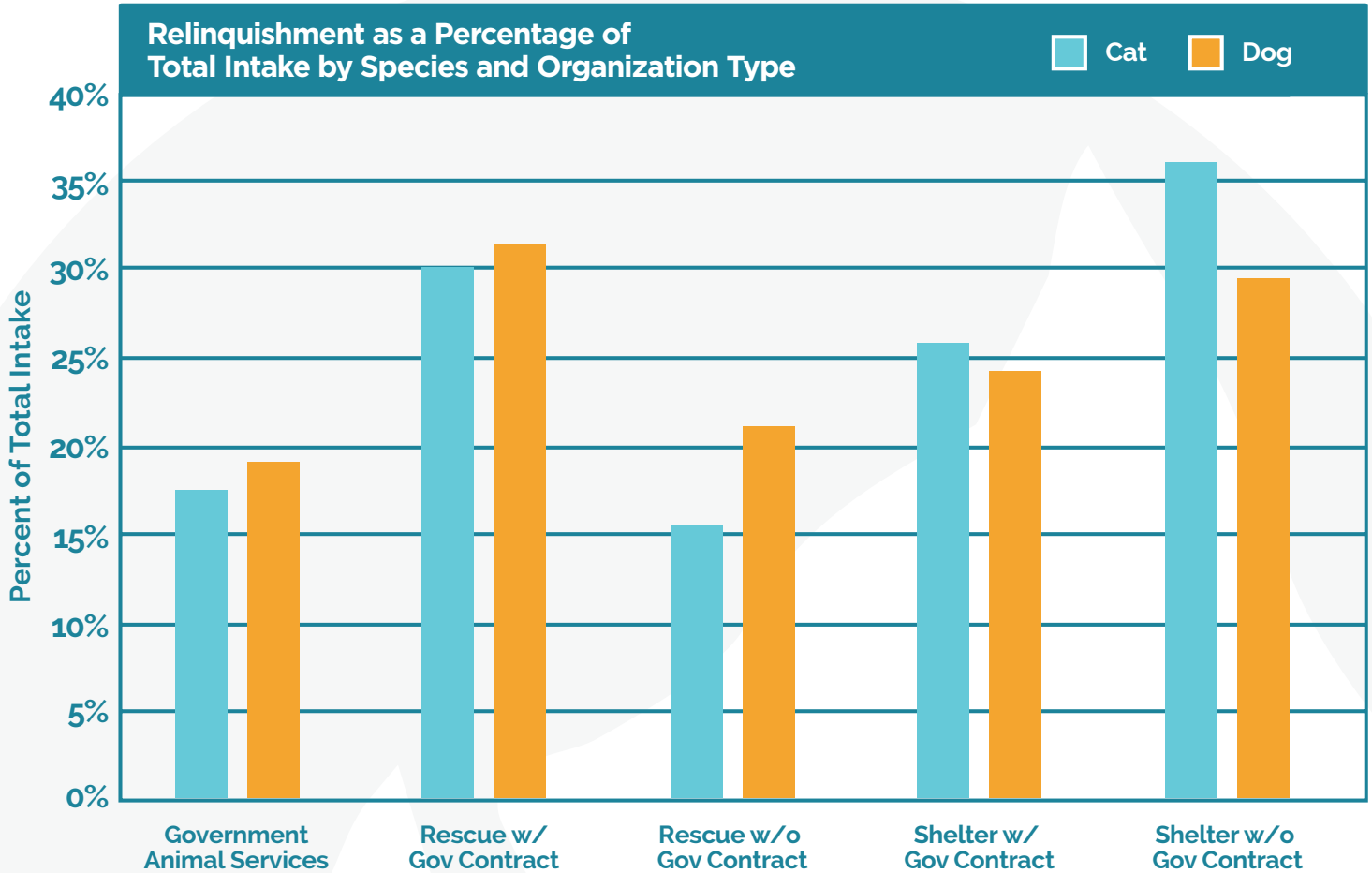

Relinquishment as a Percentage of Total Intake by Species and Organization Type

Legend: Cat, Dog

Y-axis: Percent of Total Intake (0% to 40%)

X-axis categories: Government Animal Services, Rescue w/ Gov Contract, Rescue w/o Gov Contract, Shelter w/ Gov Contract, Shelter w/o Gov Contract

Figure 11: Relinquishments as a Percent of Total Intake by Species and Organization Type

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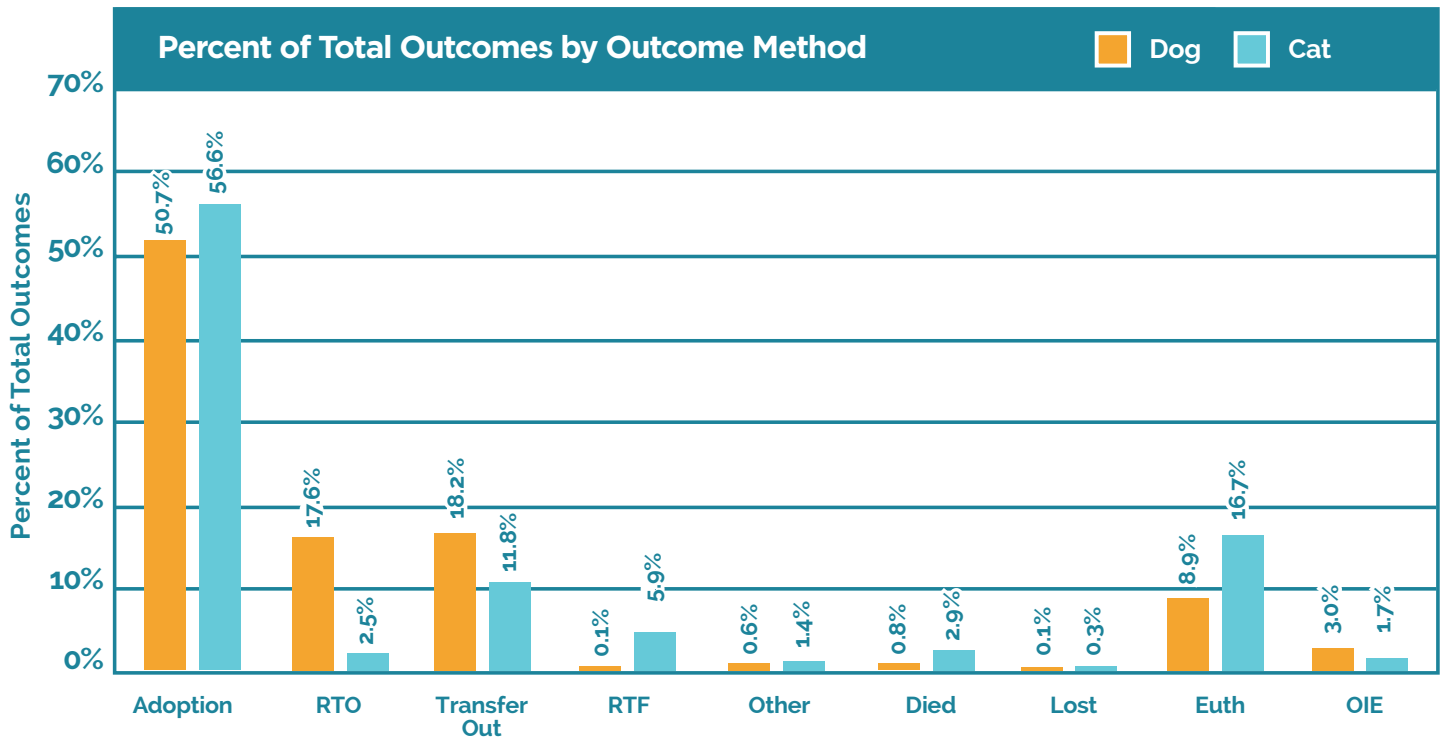
Outcomes by Species and Organization Type

Figure 12: Percent of Total Outcomes by Outcome Method

• Adoption was the most common outcome at 50.7% for dogs and 56.6% for cats
• Euthanasia was a more common outcome for cats at 16.7% than dogs at 8.9%
• RTO was more common for dogs at 17.6% than cats at 2.6%

Organization Type	Adoptions	RTO	Transfer Out	RTF	Other	Died	Lost	Euth	OIE	Total
Government Animal Services	471,010	200,044	276,927	49,445	16,900	19,283	3,162	224,905	31,388	1,293,064
Shelter w/ Gov. Contract	432,598	105,561	120,330	17,913	8,344	16,697	2,020	130,828	24,893	859,184
Shelter w/o Gov. Contract	545,329	28,127	41,929	8,411	3,126	12,177	770	39,801	20,091	699,761
Rescue w/o Gov. Contract	246,328	3,926	42,852	13,408	2,994	8,862	283	3,345	155	322,153
Rescue w/ Gov. Contract	5,391	182	1,133	177	2	333	4	53	1	7,276
Total	1,700,656	337,840	483,171	89,354	31,366	57,352	6,239	398,932	76,528	3,181,438

Table 5: Summary of Outcomes by Organization Type

Live Outcomes
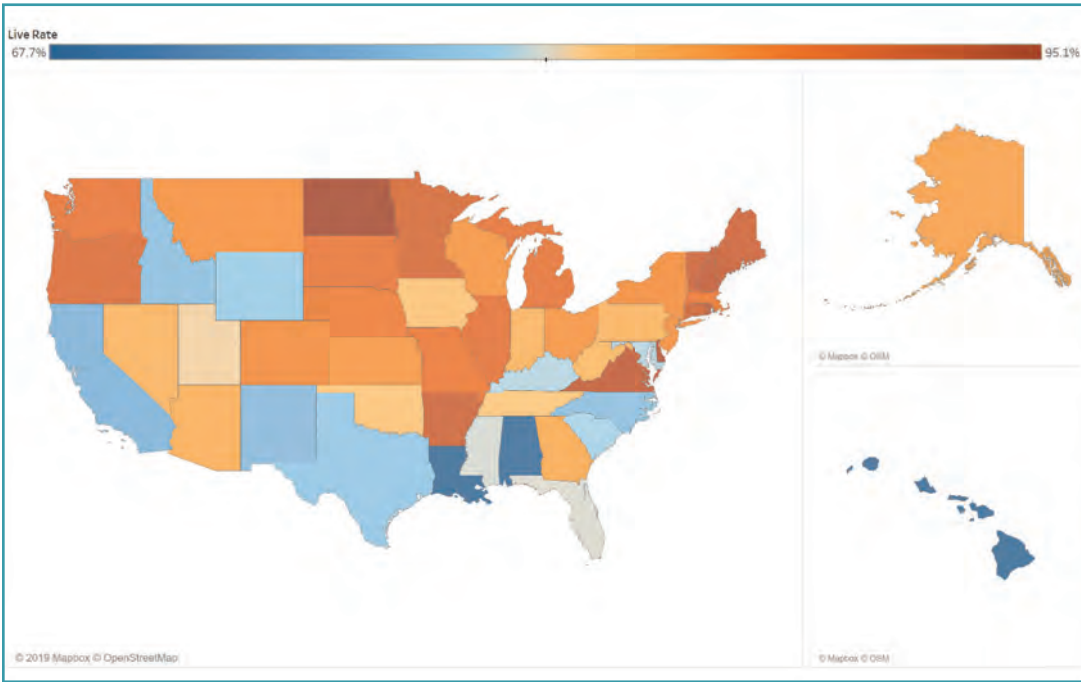
Figure 13:
Live Outcome Rates
by State
(Hotter colors represent
higher live outcomes)

- Live outcomes are considered adoptions, RTO, transfer out, or RTF
- Live outcome rate was calculated by dividing live outcomes by total outcomes
- Rescues w/o Gov. Contract had the highest live outcomes at 95.1%
- Government Animal Services had the lowest live outcomes at 77.1%
- North Dakota had the highest live outcomes at 95.1%
- Hawaii had the lowest live outcomes at 62.4%

Table 6: Summary of Live Outcomes and Rates by Organization Type

| Organization Type	Dog	Dog Live Outcomes	Cat	Cat Live Outcomes	Total Live Outcomes	Total Live Outcome Rate
Government Animal Services	625,849	83.6%	371,577	68.2%	997,426	77.1%
Shelter w/ Gov. Contract	367,764	83.7%	308,638	73.5%	676,402	78.7%
Shelter w/o Gov. Contract	296,640	91.4%	327,156	87.2%	623,796	89.1%
Rescue w/o Gov. Contract	173,138	96.6%	133,376	93.3%	306,514	95.1%
Rescue w/ Gov. Contract	3,440	98.3%	3,443	91.2%	6,883	94.6%
Total	1,466,831	86.6%	1,144,190	77.0%	2,611,021	82.1%

Total Adoptions

Figure 14: Total Annual Adoptions by County
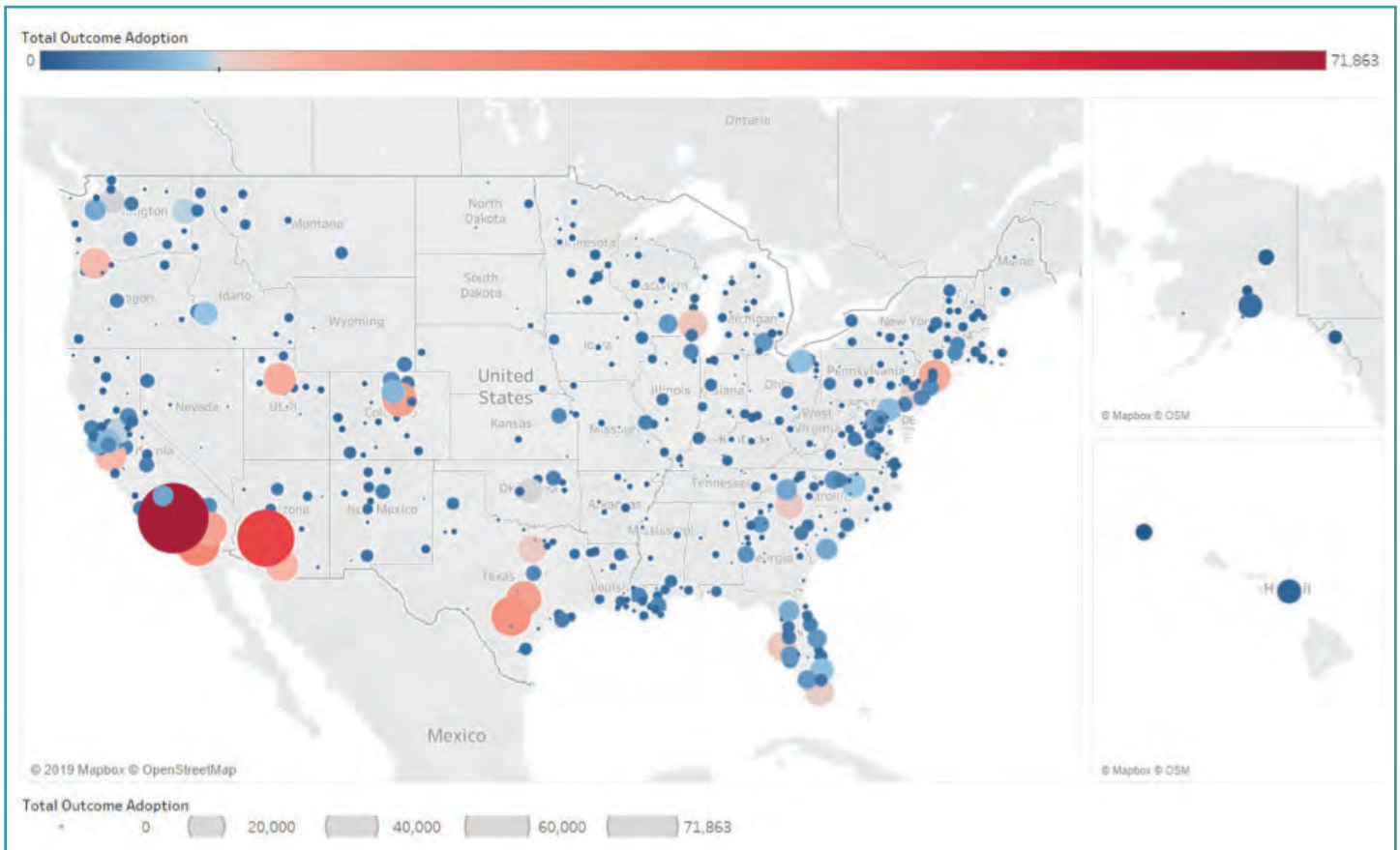
- LA County and Maricopa County had the highest number of adoptions at 71,863 and 47,413, respectively

- The number of adoptions by county is highly skewed with 50% of counties reporting less than 684 adoptions annually

Transfers Out:
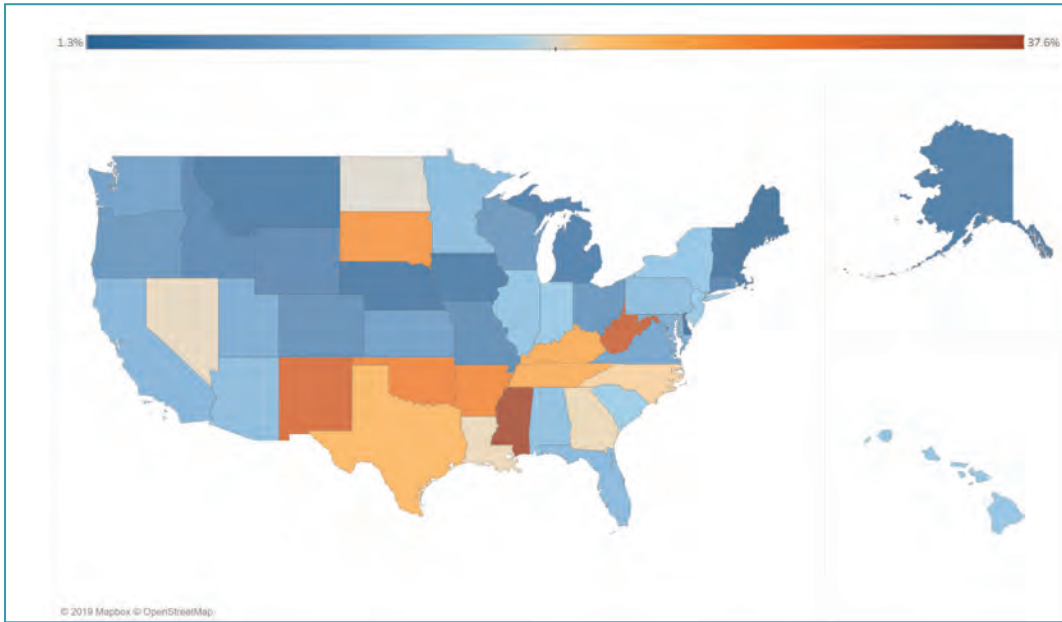
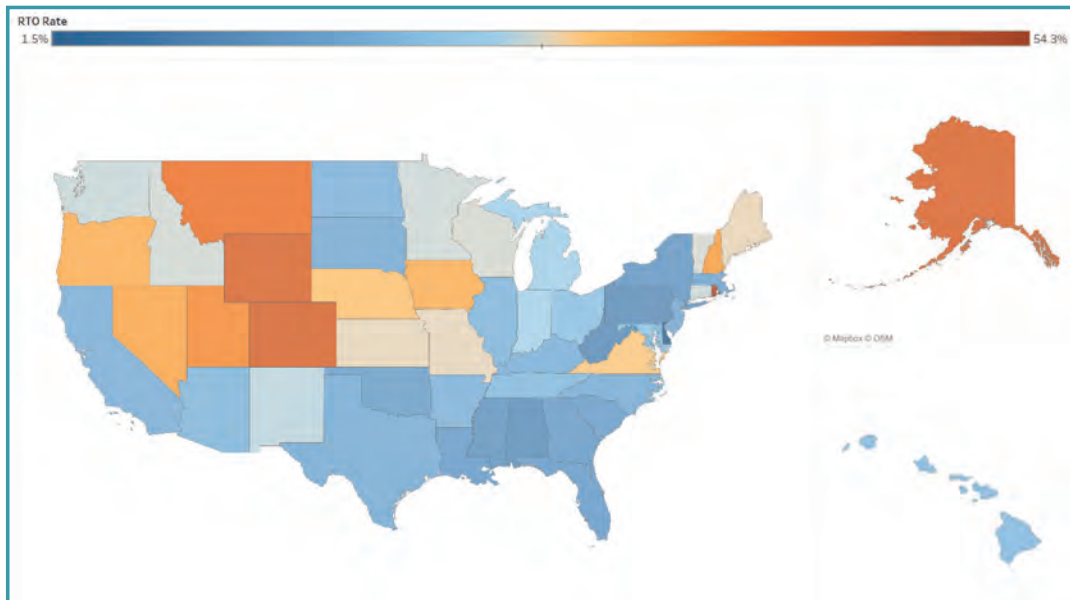**Figure 15: Transfer Rates by State**

(Hotter colors represent higher transfer out rates)

- The Transfer Rate was calculated by dividing transfers out by total intakes
- Dogs represent 63.7% of all transfers
- Cats represent 36.3% of all transfers
- Government Animal Services had the highest transfer rate at 21.2%
- High rates of transfer signify the importance of transfers as a mechanism to maximize live outcomes
- New Mexico, West Virginia, and Mississippi had the top 3 transfer out rates at 32.3%, 33.9%, and 37.6%, respectively

Table 7: Transfer Out Rates by Organization Type

Organization Type	Transfer Rate Dog	Transfer Rate Cat	Total Transfer Rate
Government Animal Services	22.6%	19.2%	21.2%
Rescue w/ Gov. Contract	13.1%	17.0%	15.1%
Rescue w/o Gov. Contract	17.0%	8.2%	13.2%
Shelter w/ Gov. Contract	17.4%	10.3%	13.9%
Shelter w/o Gov. Contract	8.8%	3.5%	6.0%
Total	**18.0%**	**11.7%**	**15.1%**

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Return to Owner:

Figure 16:
RTO Rates by State
(Hotter colors represent higher RTO rates)

- Return to Owner rates were calculated by dividing RTO by total number of stray intakes
- RTO for dogs was 36.4%
- RTO for cats was 4.7%
- Rhode Island had the highest RTO Rate at 54.3%
- Delaware had the lowest RTO Rate at 1.5%

Table 8: RTO Rates by Organization and Species

| Organization Type	RTO Dog	RTO Rate Dog	RTO Cat	RTO Rate Cat	Total RTO	Total RTO Rate
Government Animal Services	183,128	35.4%	16,916	4.2%	200,044	21.6%
Rescue w/ Gov. Contract	115	11.0%	67	4.7%	182	7.4%
Rescue w/o Gov. Contract	2,235	6.7%	13,388	5.5%	105,561	23.1%
Shelter w/ Gov. Contract	92,173	42.9%	13,388	5.5%	105,561	23.1%
Shelter w/o Gov. Contract	20,998	38.3%	7,129	5.7%	28,127	15.6%
Total	**298,649**	**36.4%**	**39,191**	**4.7%**	**337,840**	**20.4%**

Return to Field:
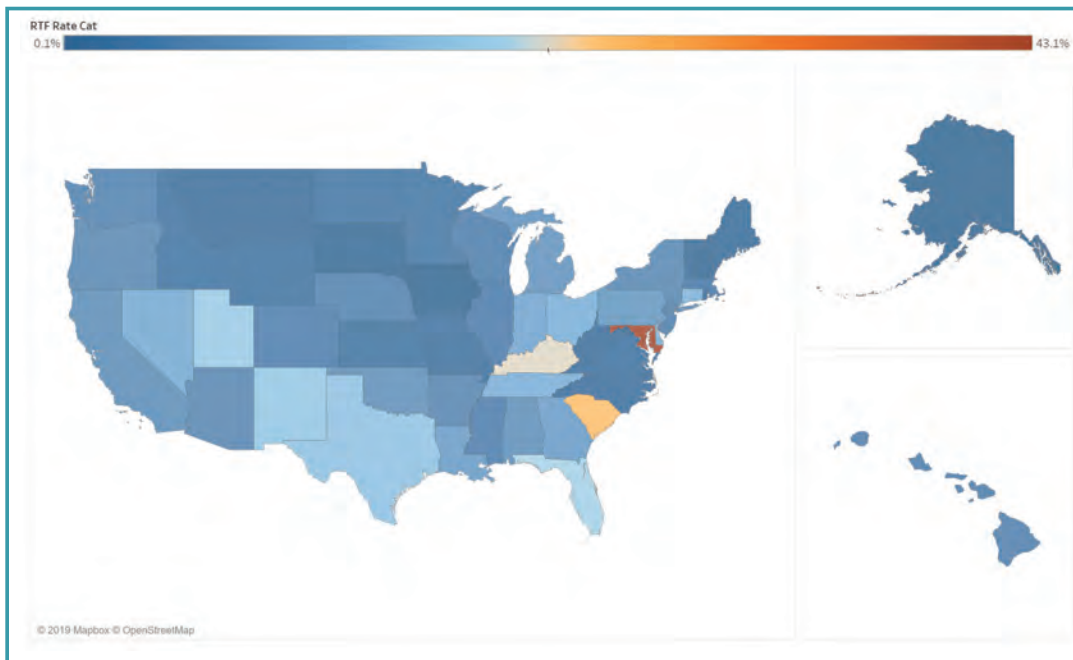
Figure 17:
Feline RTF Rates
by State

(Hotter colors represent
higher RTF rates)

- Cat RTF accounted for 98.4% of all RTF outcomes
- Large number of RTF outcomes for cats is an indication of growth in RTF programs around the country
- In 2017, Maryland had the highest RTF ratio at 43.1%
- National RTF Rate for 2017 is 10.5%
- Rescues w/o Gov. Contracts had the highest RTF rates at 21.9%

Table 9: Feline RTF Outcomes and Rates by Organization Type

Organization Type	Feline RTF Outcomes	Feline RTF Rate
Government Animal Services	48,760	12.0%
Rescue w/ Gov. Contract	177	12.5%
Rescue w/o Gov. Contract	13.359	21.9%
Shelter w/ Gov. Contract	17,761	7.3%
Shelter w/o Gov. Contract	7,905	6.3%
Total	87,962	10.5%

Euthanasia Rate:
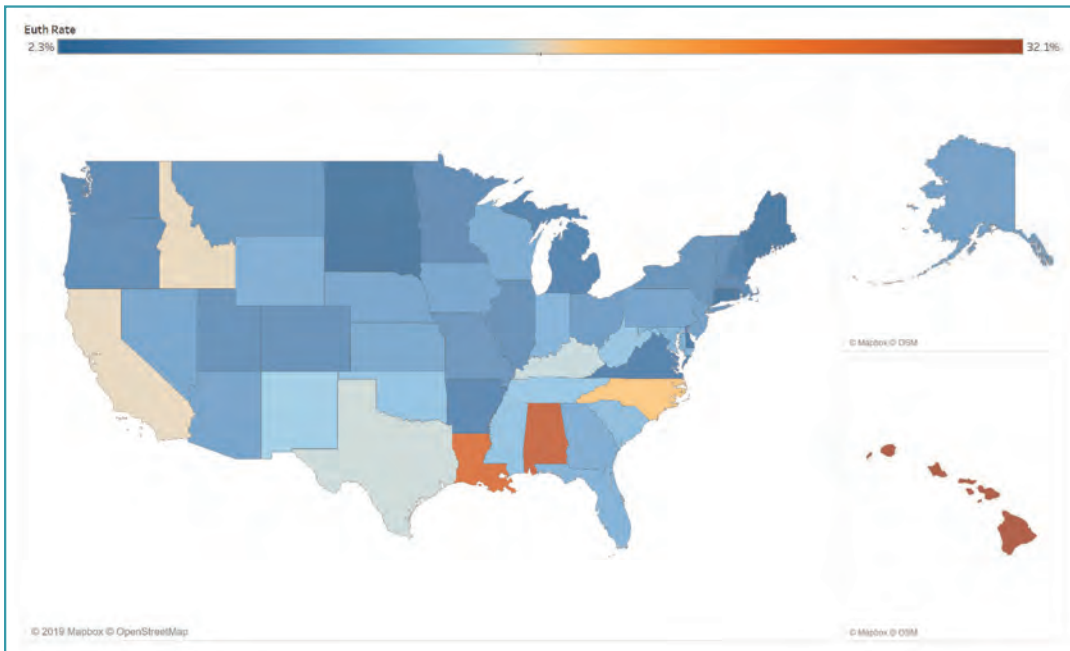
- The Euthanasia Rate was calculated by dividing the number of animals euthanized by the total outcomes
- Hawaii, Alabama, and Louisiana had the top three euthanasia rates at 32.1%, 29.4%, and 27.3%, respectively
- Government Animal Services and Shelters w/ Gov. Contracts had the highest euthanasia rates at 25.5% and 19.9%, respectively

Table 10: Euthanasia Rates by Species and Age

Organization Type	Canine				Feline			
	Puppy	Unknown	Adult	Total	Kitten	Unknown	Adult	Total
Government Animal Services	5.4%	19.1%	11.7%	12.1%	22.6%	35.1%	24.6%	25.5%
Rescue w/ Gov. Contract	0.3%	0.0%	0.6%	0.5%	0.4%	0.0%	1.5%	0.9%
Rescue w/o Gov. Contract	0.3%	1.2%	1.2%	0.8%	1.0%	0.5%	1.7%	1.3%
Shelter w/ Gov. Contract	8.9%	21.2%	10.1%	11.6%	13.8%	43.9%	16.3%	19.9%
Shelter w/o Gov. Contract	1.1%	7.2%	4.4%	3.7%	5.3%	19.1%	7.9%	7.7%
Organization Type	4.0%	17.9%	8.9%	9.1%	13.2%	33.8%	15.5%	17.0%

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Summary:

The 2017 Shelter Animals Count dataset highlights the importance and significance of continuing to build the national animal sheltering database. The current dataset has both an organization type and geographic bias which is evidenced from the distribution of size and number of organizations.

A key point to make about the dataset and its use is that it has limitations in analysis as it is not comprehensive of all animal sheltering organizations. Its primary value comes from seeing the macro and geographic trends in things like juvenile intake ratio and transfer volumes.

There are important trends that can be seen throughout the country ranging from species differences to geographic differences. As the database continues to grow, we anticipate be able to do much more detailed analysis and assessments to key community trends across the country.

Appendix:

Shelter Animals Count: https://www.shelteranimalscount.org

Basic Data Matrix: https://www.shelteranimalscount.org/data/basic-data-matrix

Explore the Data: https://www.shelteranimalscount.org/data/explore-the-data

Request the Data: https://www.shelteranimalscount.org/data/request-the-data

Frequently Asked Questions: https://www.shelteranimalscount.org/who-we-are/about

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