



# OMAUI Cats

PROPOSED SOUTHLAND REGIONAL PEST MANAGEMENT PLAN

# Points to raise

- ▶ 1. Neutered/microchipped/registered domestic cats (responsible pet ownership)
- ▶ 2. Definition of Feral cats and mixed references to control of stray cats and colony cats

# 1. Omaui site led proposal

- ▶ Feral cats – **Pest**
- ▶ Unneutered domestic cats - **Pest agent**
- ▶ Neutered /microchipped/registered domestic cats. **Not a pest** and not covered by proposal
- ▶ Allowed long term on Stewart Island.
- ▶ Omaui is a residential area. The proposal to permanently remove domestic cats needs to be transparent and clearly addressed and justified within the proposal.
- ▶ Has potential to set a precedent for other areas of New Zealand

# Geographical location

► Map 9 Appendix 1



# “benefit of cat ownership”

benefit of cat ownership

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# Benefits of cat ownership

- ▶ Google – 32,000,000 hits
- ▶ Pet owners are healthier than non-pet owners. Lower blood pressure, heart rate, heart disease risk
- ▶ Improved mental health. Reduce stress and anxiety
- ▶ Companionship. You are not alone
- ▶ Pet owners make friends more easily
- ▶ Cats are the owners friend
- ▶ Lifestyle

# 2. Definition of Cats

## Code of Welfare Companion Cats 2018

- ▶ Issued by Ministry for Primary Industries under the Animal Welfare Act 1999
- ▶ Defines feral cats and allows for their control under Biosecurity Act 1993 under a pest management strategy
- ▶ MPI definition of Feral cat includes “Population size fluctuates largely independently of humans, is self sustaining and is **not dependent** on input from the companion cat population”
- ▶ Gives legal obligations for welfare of companion cats, and also requirements for stray cats and cats living in colonies which are controlled under the Animal Welfare Act 1999
- ▶ Feral/colony/stray used together in situations through the proposal
- ▶ Unclear how stray cats and colony cats will be controlled
- ▶ Again does not justify removal of domestic cats owned by responsible owners

# Summary

- ▶ As a Veterinary Surgeon fully support responsible pet ownership and proposals as defined for Stewart Island
- ▶ Management of cats needs to confirm correct definition of cats present under this plan and manage under correct legislation
- ▶ Documented pest management plan proposal does not give justification for the removal of domestic cats from this residential area
- ▶ Health benefits, property values, lifestyle, population diversity
- ▶ There are other options

# Other options?

- ▶ Stewart Island policy
- ▶ Clearly target **“The Pest”**. Feral cats are the significant “ultimate” predator