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For Immediate Release

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## **Need a Home and Have Four Legs? Move to Portland!**

### **Portland animal shelters save an unprecedented 93.1% of homeless cats and dogs in 2014**

Beyond brunch spots, breweries and bookstores, Portland has likely just achieved another #1 ranking—this one celebrated with a lot of wagging tails and purrs. In 2014, 93.1% of all cats and dogs entering the Portland metro area’s six largest animal shelters were saved. The region, with a human population of over 2.2 million, is possibly the safest place for homeless dogs and cats in America for a metro area of its size.

This astounding number is nearly double the national average, according to the Humane Society of the United States. Even more amazing, it reflects an 87% drop in euthanasia rates reported by participating area shelters since 2006. More key statistics are on the accompanying one page statistics summary. That’s a major turnaround in less than 10 years. How did Portland do it?

“It takes a village,” notes Stacey Graham, President of The Humane Society for SW Washington, “and the people of the Portland/Vancouver area have truly stepped up to help animal shelters save as many homeless cats and dogs as possible.”

At the heart of this community effort is an incredibly effective, but little-known coalition—the Animal Shelter Alliance of Portland (ASAP)—which brings key animal organizations to the table to collaborate on life-saving initiatives for homeless metro pets. Meeting regularly since 2006, ASAP has been working diligently toward achieving its goal of saving as many cats and dogs as possible.

Specifically, ASAP has focused on decreasing shelter intake, providing medical and behavioral services to shelter pets, increasing transfers of pets between shelters, and encouraging adoptions.

One of ASAP’s most successful programs has been “Spay & Save,” a low-cost spay/neuter program that serves cat owners in need of financial assistance, as well as people who feed stray or feral cats. The program has altered more than 52,000 cats in five years since its launch in February 2010, and according to Karen Green, Executive Director of the Cat Adoption Team, has decreased the number of cats entering Portland Metro area shelters from the public by 38% since 2010.

A 93.1% live release rate is an incredible achievement, one which ASAP is committed to sustaining and building upon. With this in mind, the coalition is exploring innovative ways to save more lives, including programs to find homes for difficult-to-adopt animals, many of whom have manageable medical and behavior issues.

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Founded in 2006, the Animal Shelter Alliance of Portland (ASAP) is a working coalition composed of the following Portland/Vancouver-area animal shelters and organizations: Alliance for Contraception in Cats and Dogs; Cat Adoption Team; Clackamas County Dog Services; Feral Cat Coalition; Humane Society for SW Washington; Multnomah County Animal Services; Oregon Humane Society; Portland Veterinary Medical Association; SW Washington Veterinary Association; and Washington County Animal Services.

**ASAP** envisions a community that values, protects and cares for animals and provides a safety net for homeless and at-risk cats and dogs. Working together, we develop and sustain metro-wide programs and services that reduce the number of homeless cats and dogs, and save the lives of all shelter pets that can be humanely and responsibly rehomed. For further information, see the attached statistics sheet and please visit [www.asapmetro.org](http://www.asapmetro.org)