

Can technology increase landholder participation in landscape-scale feral cat control programs?

(Yes it can!)





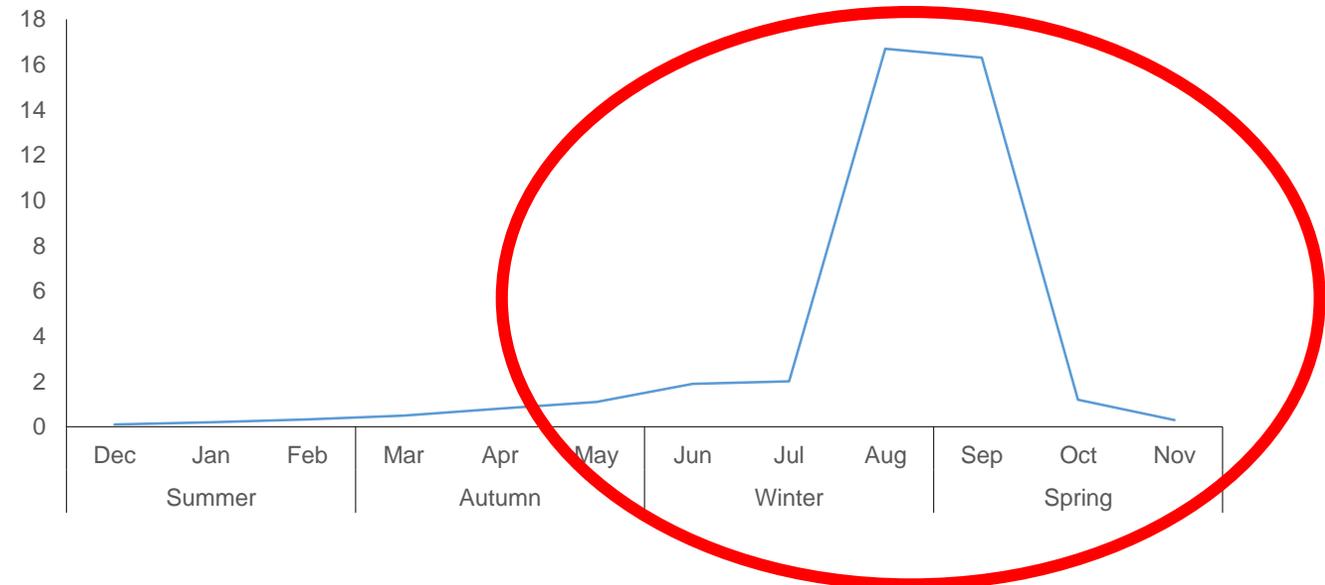
Post 2019-20 bushfire feral cat control



+1650 feral cats removed



Cage trap CPUE



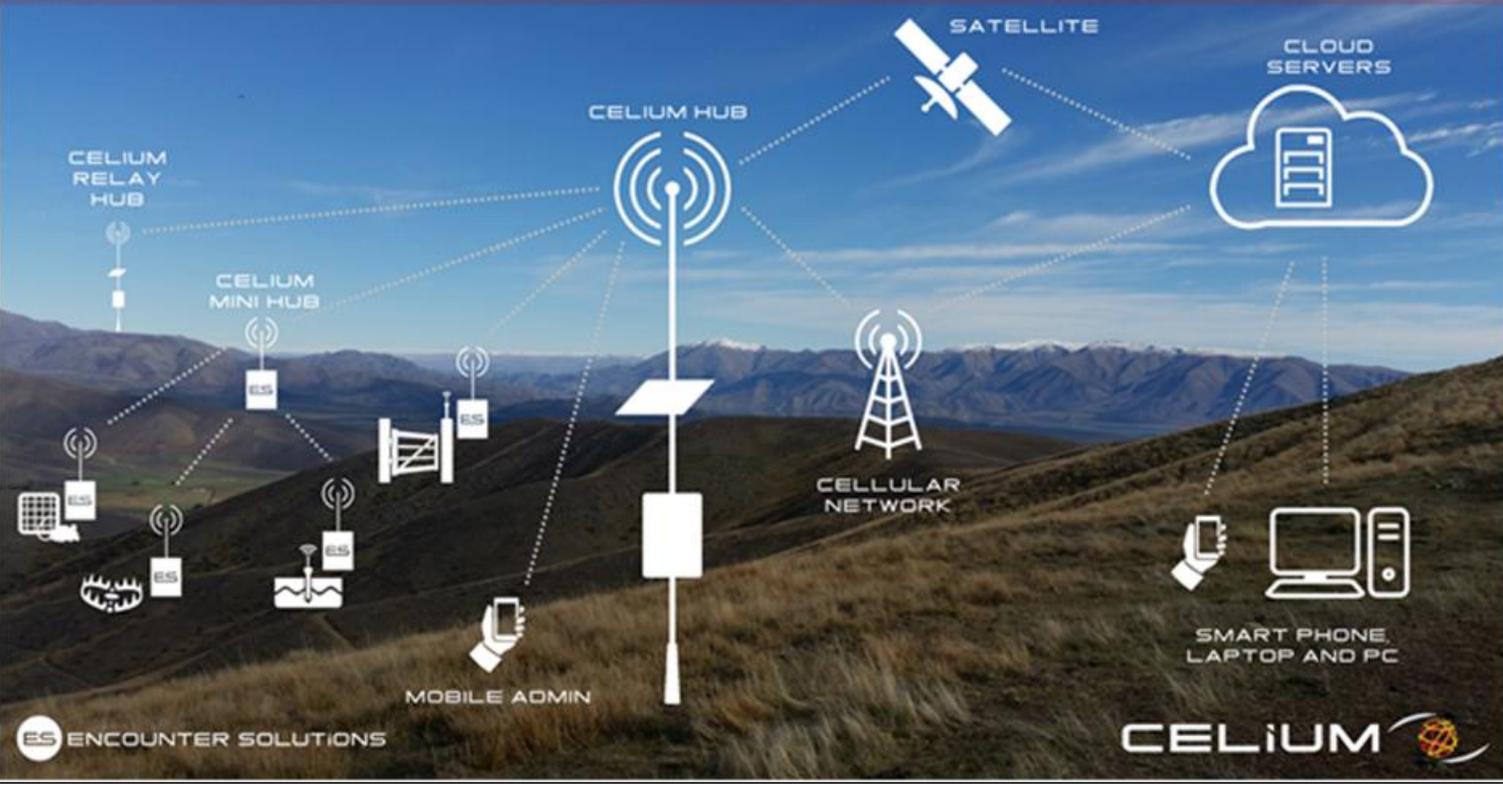
New technology to improve efficiency

- Intense trapping effective but difficult to deliver over large scale



CELIUM

CELIUM OVERVIEW



ES ENCOUNTER SOLUTIONS

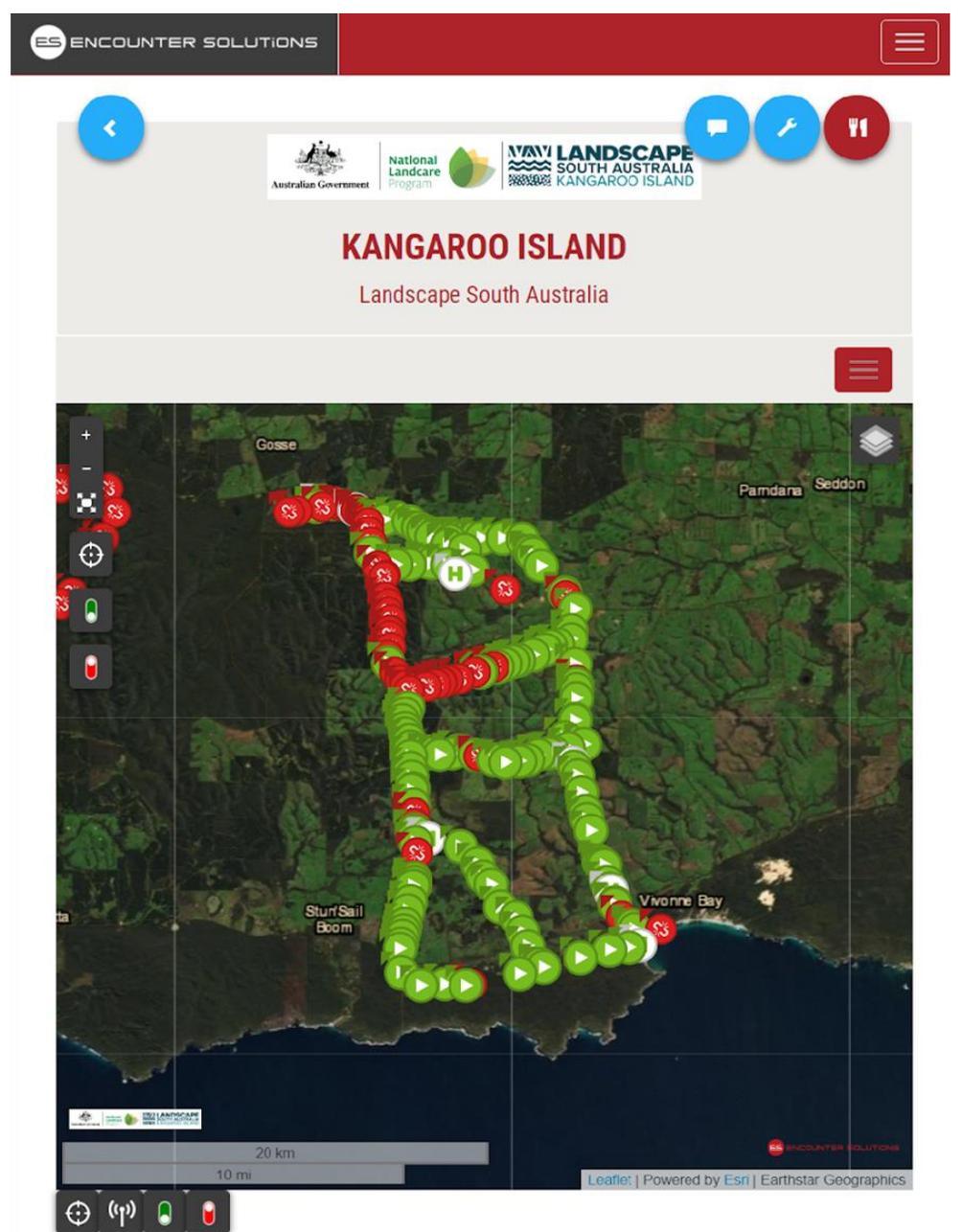
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Initial trial

Results:

- 70% reduction in time taken to check traps each day!!
- 200% reduction in number of staff
- Vehicle use reduced from three to one and kilometres travelled daily declined by 43%



Note all date times are displayed in UTC. Add 9.5 hours for local time.

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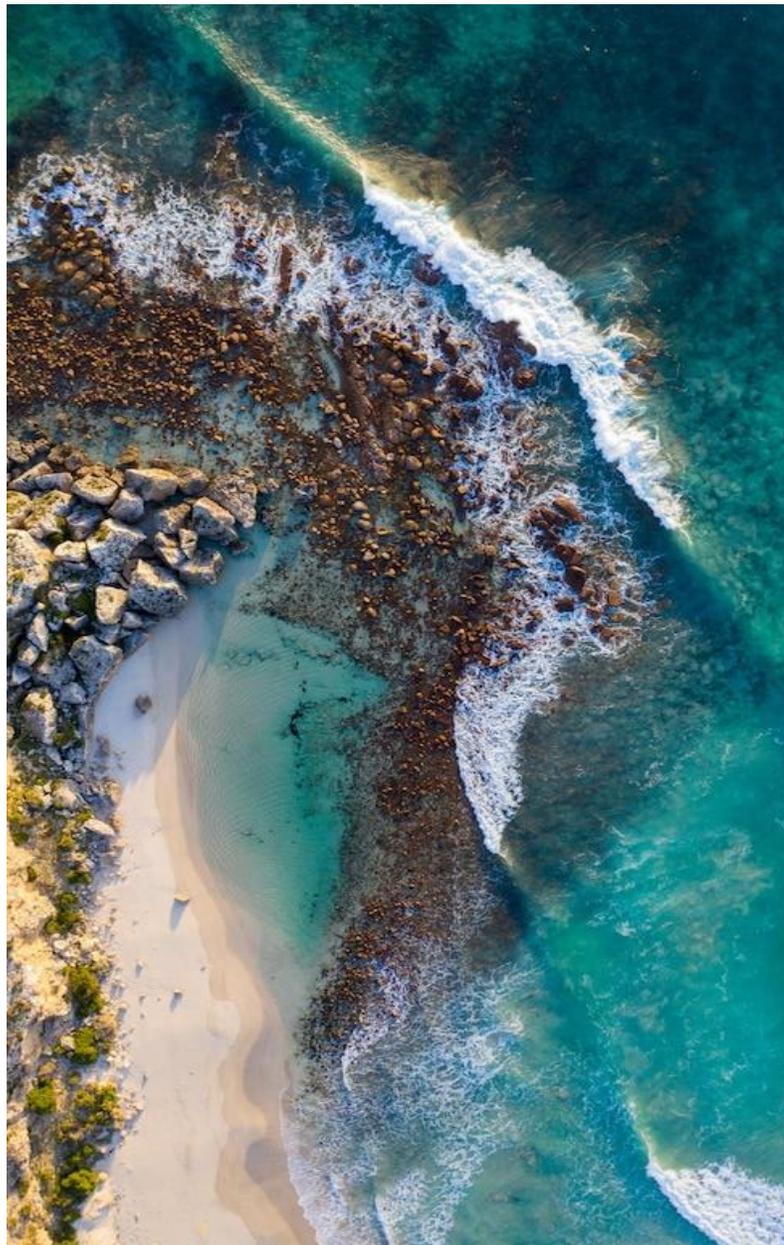
Benefits

- Improved animal welfare outcomes
- Improved health and safety
- Improved pest control
- Cost effective
- Remote area capability
- Scalability
- Portability



What's next?

Working with landholders



- Stokes Bay community: Bushfire affected, close knit, eager to embrace new technologies
- Noticed increase in feral cat sightings post-fire

Stokes Bay Community Feral Cat Trapping Blitz

- Community focused + led feral cat management initiative
- Many landholders interested in being more actively involved with feral cat control – both for benefit for island's biodiversity & primary industry





trap.oz

- Demonstration mobile app
- Allows landholders to easily see their trap status + record catch data

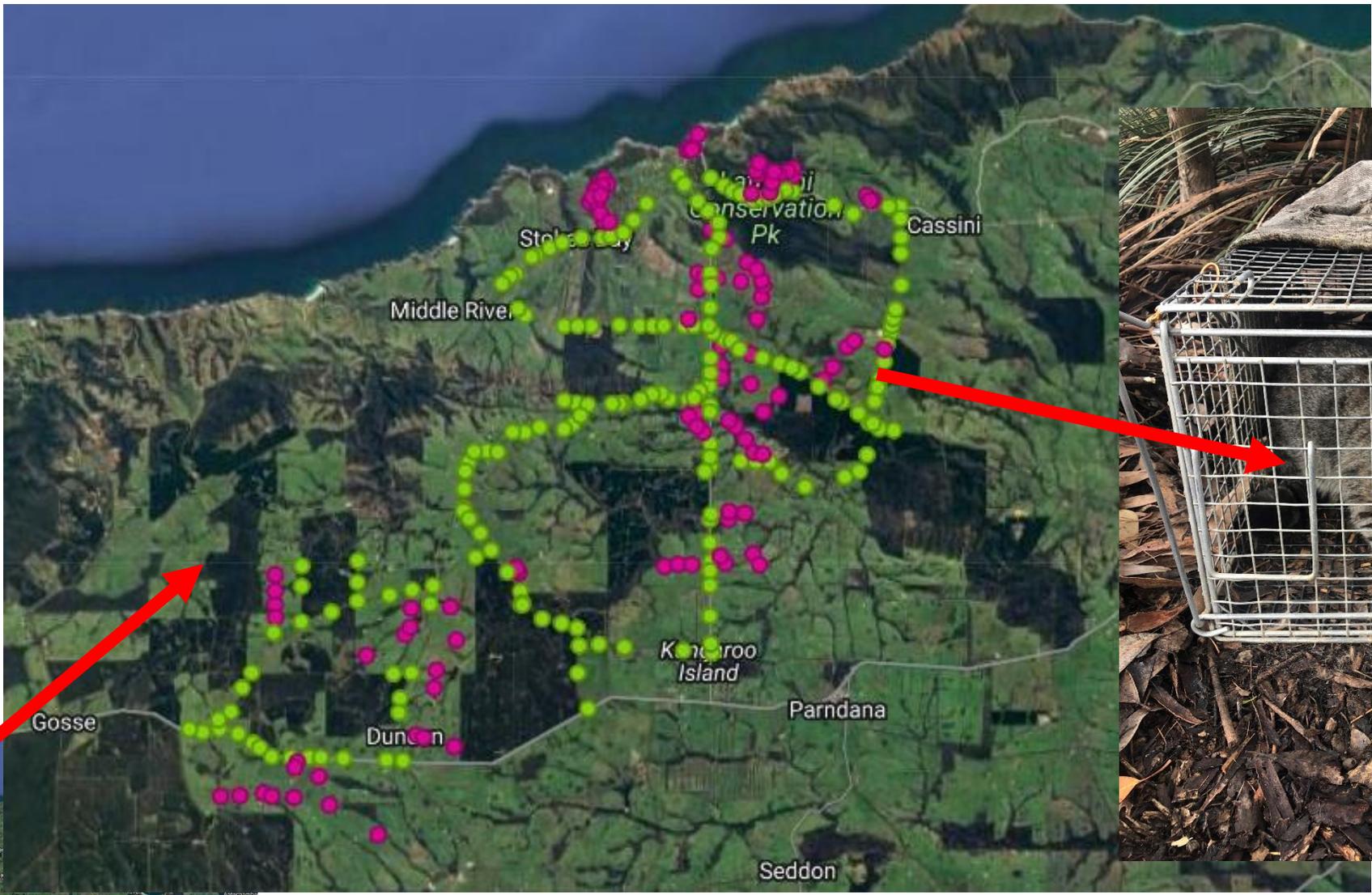


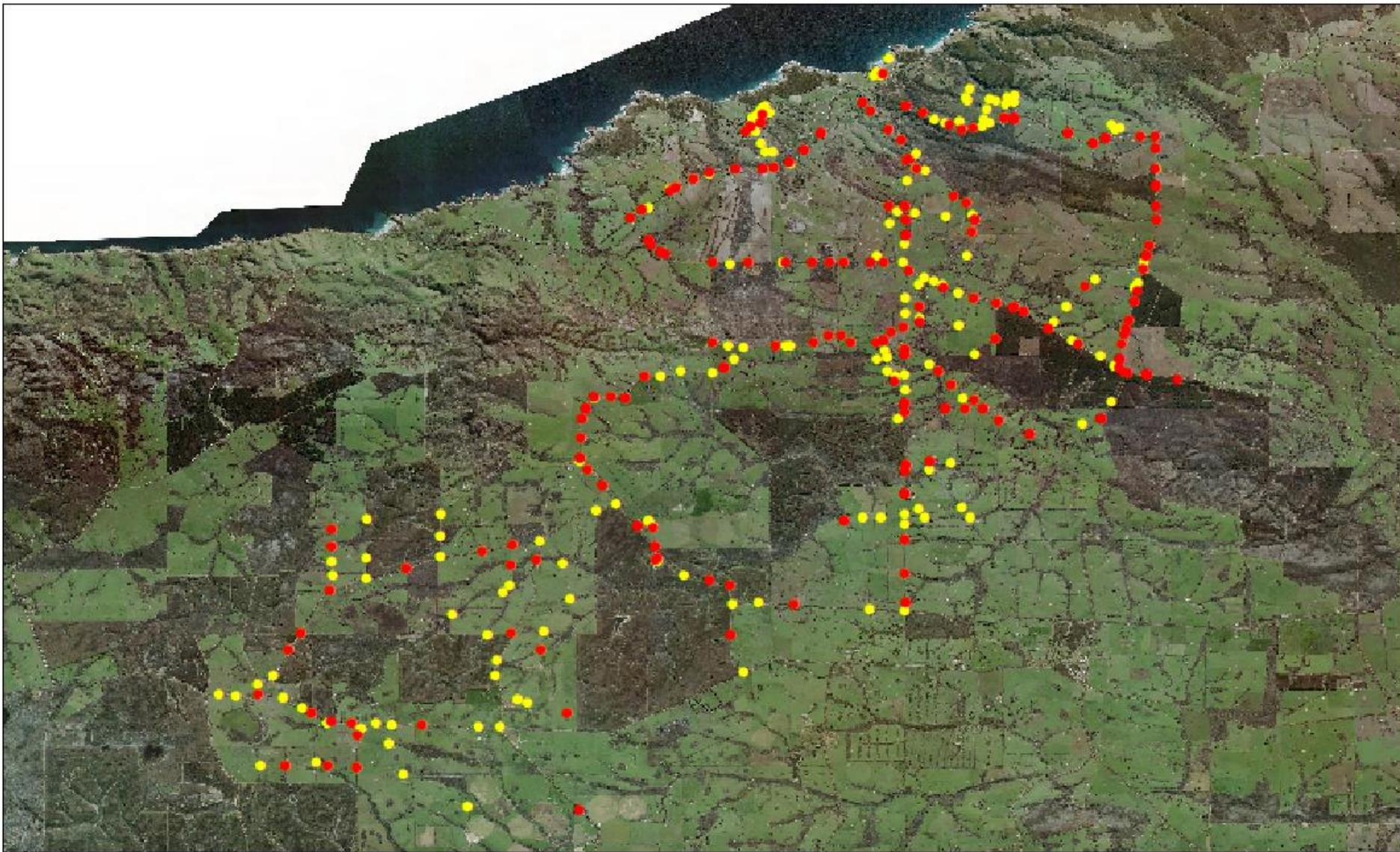
CAT370 No records !
Cage: H (Hook) ▶ 24/04/2023 10:23

Species	⚙️	Cat	▼
Sex		Female	▼
Life Stage		Adult	▼
Strikes		0	
Condition *		OK	▼
Re-lured			<input type="checkbox"/>
Lure notes			
Notes			

Provider: Encounter Solutions Ltd (test)
ID: 4614

SAVE Press & hold CLOSE





259 feral cats
removed in
13,209 trap
nights

Legend

- Feral cats captured
- Feral cat trap locations



Benefits



“Feral cats, as an apex predator, have been able to breed up large populations, which greatly impact the cost of sheep production on the Island. Consequently, the impact and prevalence of cat-borne diseases such as Sarcocystosis and Toxoplasmosis occur in much greater rates on the Island than other regions across Australia,”

- Stephanie Wurst, deputy co-chair of AgKI & Stokes Bay blitz participant

Feedback & challenges

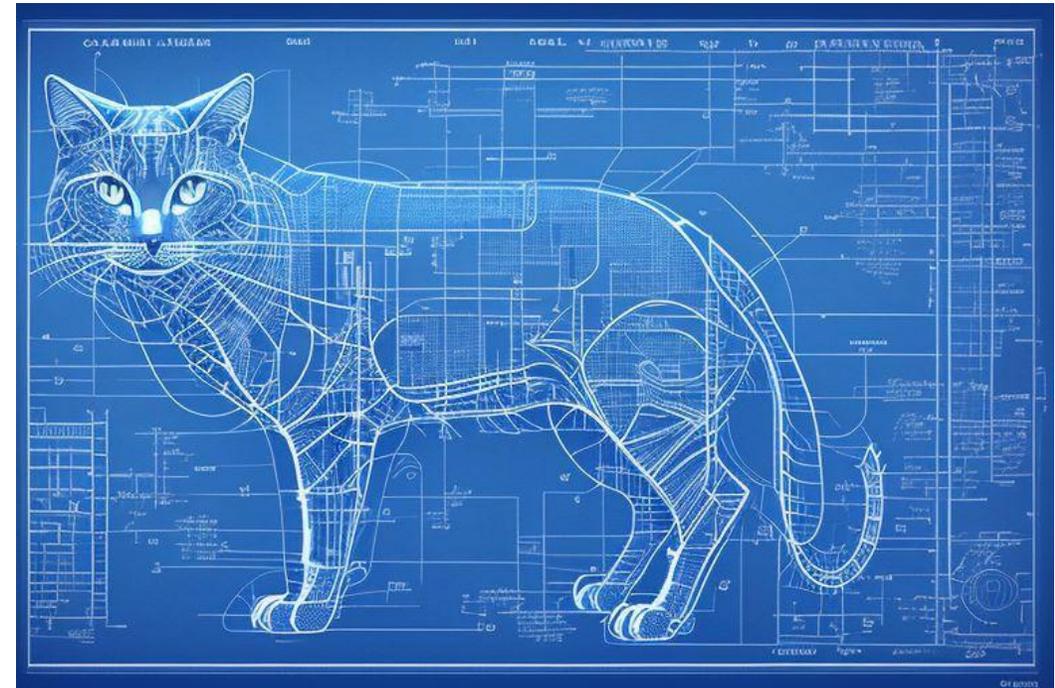
- Overwhelming positive
- Uptake of tech easy for most, difficult for some
- Word of mouth – created own momentum for program



Lessons learned



- Combined approach = comprehensive. Trapping roadside & within private properties provided significant knockdown
- Time of year critical – both cats + landholders
- Blue print for future programs, **bigger** and **better!**



With thanks from the team:

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Joe Donaldson – Field Officer

Tom Evans – Field Officer

Simon & Kate Croft - Encounter
Solutions Ltd.

