

Outdoor Cats and Wildlife: Exploring the Bidirectional Risks and the Value of Conservation

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The outdoor cat issue challenges conservationists and animal welfare advocates to explore management options that focus on risk-mitigating behaviour changes in the community. Understanding peoples' perceptions of the risks that outdoor cats incur and impose on our ecosystems is an important step to long-term management success. Despite the bidirectional risks, cat owners continue to allow their cats to roam freely outdoors and there is a need to better understand why. To address this issue I will be collecting baseline data from Kamloops residents on their perceptions of the bidirectional risks of outdoor cats and wildlife interactions. This information will be collected through surveys of Kamloops residents and interviews with key stakeholders. The information provided by this survey will aid conservation management and community-specific initiatives to promote a balanced perspective on cat and wildlife welfare. The information collected can also lead to placing an economic value on conservation initiatives to reduce risks.