



## Humane Trapping Instructions

**Preparation for Trapping:** If possible, get the cats used to being fed at the same place and time of day. You might try leaving the trap unset (use 2 twist ties to hold trap door open) and covered with a large towel and begin feeding cats inside the trap. Start putting the food in front of the trap and work your way back each day during routine feeding so that the animal will get used to seeing and smelling the trap in the area.

Remember to remove twist ties before the actual trapping night! **Don't feed the cats the day/night before you are going to trap** so the cats will be very hungry...thereby increasing the chances of him finding your bait irresistible, and walking in the trap! Be sure to notify others who may feed the cats not to leave food out either.

Plan to trap so that you don't have to keep the cat too long before surgery. Trapping early in the morning is best as once trapped you will take the cat directly to the clinic.

Prepare the vehicle you will use to transport the cats. You will need to use newspapers or towels or some other absorbent material with a plastic tarp underneath to protect your vehicle if the cats urinate/defecate during transport. Plan your day of trapping carefully. Remember that if you trap an animal and release it for some reason, it is unlikely that you will be able to catch it again...they learn very quickly.

**Setting the Traps:** Plan to set traps just before or at the cats' normal feeding time. Don't trap in the rain or the heat of day without adequate protection for the trap. Cats are vulnerable in the traps and could drown during storms or suffer from heatstroke in the sun. Use common sense ☺

Plan placement of traps on a level surface in the area where the cats usually feed or have been seen. Cats are less likely to enter the trap if it wobbles. If trapping in a public area, try to place traps where they will not be noticed by passersby (who may not understand that you are trying to help the cat). Bushes are often places where cats hide and provide good camouflage for the trap.

*Bring trapped cats to:*  
**Animal Outreach Clinic**  
**6101 Enterprise Dr., Ste. B**  
**Diamond Springs, CA 95619**  
**(530)642-2287**

Use smelly food to bait the trap. We find that canned cat food or canned Mackerel (available in the canned fish section of the grocery stores) is very effective and relatively inexpensive. It is best not to put any bowls inside the trap to hold food since the animal can easily hurt itself on it in a panic while inside the trap. Spoon a small amount of canned food onto a small scrap of paper towel/paper plate and place the trap on top of the food at the far back in the trap while still not accessible from outside the trap. Press the trap down onto the food so that it squishes up through the wire then add a spoonful of food on top (from inside the trap). Then place a couple of tidbits of food at the entry to the trap and just inside.

After baiting the trap, open the trap door by pushing the top of the door in and pulling the bottom of the door upward. There is a small hook attached to the right side of the trap top. It hooks onto a tiny metal cylinder on

the right side of the door. The hook holds the door in an open position which also raises the trip plate. When the cat steps on the plate it will cause the hook to release the door and close the trap. After setting the trap, cover it with a large towel. Fold back the material at the front end of the trap to expose the opening while still covering the top, sides and back of the trap. The cover will help to camouflage the trap and serve to calm the cat after it is caught.

**Waiting for Success:** Never leave traps unattended in an unprotected area, but don't hang around within sight of the cat (or you will scare it off). The trapped animal is vulnerable. Passersby may release the cat or steal the trap! Wait quietly in an area where you can still see the traps without disturbing the cats. Check traps every 20-30 minutes. You can often hear the traps trip and see the cloth cover droop down slightly over the opening from a distance. As soon as the intended cat is trapped completely cover the trap and remove the trap from the area if other cats are not in sight. You may consider putting another trap in the same spot if it seems to be a "hot" one. Be sure to dispose of the food left on the ground when you pick up the trap.

When you get the captured cat to a quiet area away from the other traps lift the cover and check for signs that you have the correct animal and not a pet or previously neutered feral. (TNR tips off top of ear of every animal altered so we can avoid trapping the cats multiple times). If you note that you have captured a lactating female check the area for kittens and remember that this female must be released 10-12 hours after surgery so she can care for and nurse her kittens. Cover the cat back up as soon as possible. Uncovered, the animal may panic and hurt itself thrashing around in the trap. Of course, there is always the chance that you will catch some other wild animal attracted to the food. Simply release.

**Releasing the Cats:** If a cat does not seem to be recovering well from surgery, consider having it checked out by a vet before releasing. When cats are ready for release, return to the area in which they were captured and release them there. **Do not relocate the animal!** It will be disoriented and most likely die. In all likelihood, area cats will drive it away. If the veterinarian has indicated a serious medical problem with the cat which you will not be able to treat, you, with the advice of the vet, must make the decision on whether it is safe to release the animal or kinder to euthanize it. Untreated abscesses and respiratory infections, and a number of other conditions, can mean suffering and a slow death. Make sure the spot you pick for release does not encourage the cat to run into danger (like a busy street) to get away from you. Keep the trap covered until you are ready to release. When ready, simply hold the trap with the door facing **away** from you and open the door. The cat will probably bolt immediately out of the trap. If it is confused, just tilt the trap so the back is slightly up and tap on the back of the trap to encourage it to leave. Never put your hand in the trap! If the animal still will not leave, prop the door open with a stick and leave it for a while. A trapped skunk or possum, which is nocturnal, may decide to sleep in the trap all day and not leave the trap until dark. After releasing the cats, hose off traps and disinfect them with bleach. Never store traps in the "set" position (door open); animals may wander into even unbaited traps and starve to death.



**Mailing address: 777 Pleasant Valley Rd.  
Diamond Springs, CA 95619  
Phone: 530-642-2738**

**ElDoradoCounty**  
HUMANE SOCIETY

*Special thanks to THE FERAL CAT COALITION, San Diego, CA 92126*