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Joint Press Release

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WOODS HUMANE SOCIETY AND NORTH COUNTY HUMANE SOCIETY ANNOUNCE PLANS TO MERGE

(SAN LUIS OBISPO, CA) – Imagine a community where every dog and cat has a loving home. Imagine a community where families are able to experience the joy of animal companionship and have the resources needed to take great care of their pets. That’s our vision and we are now one step closer to making it a reality.

Woods Humane Society and Action for Animals’ Rights dba North County Humane Society (NCHS) have signed a “Letter of Intent” to merge the organizations, combining resources to improve services for animals in San Luis Obispo County. Both organizations have a rich history of providing vital services for animals for decades, and both are interested in growing those services to better meet the needs of the North County community. On Tuesday, November 29th, NCHS members voted to give their board of directors the authority to negotiate and approve a merger agreement.

Northern San Luis Obispo County is a vibrant area with a community that is passionate about animals. The availability of local resources to assist people with animal issues, however, is lacking. Pressing needs identified include a low cost spay/neuter clinic, an adoption center where people can both relinquish and adopt dogs as well as cats, humane education opportunities for children, and a convenient location for residents to reclaim stray pets. It is our joint vision, to leverage the great programs NCHS already has in place and grow to provide more essential services for the animals.

Following completion of the transaction, the shelter and current operations of NCHS will be operated under the name Woods Humane Society – North County. NCHS employees will become Woods employees and will continue to operate all existing programs at the current NCHS facility. There will be no interruption of

services for the cats or the community. Pending city approval, Woods intends to open a temporary low cost spay/neuter on the 2300 Ramona Road property in Atascadero. Long-term plans include securing a suitable location where the organization can construct a permanent facility to house a low cost spay/neuter clinic, dog and cat adoption center, and humane education center. Following completion of the capital campaign and construction of that facility, all Woods North County operations will move to the new facilities.

“We are incredibly excited to officially join forces with North County Humane Society to help continue their great programs and dramatically increase services for animals in the North County community,” explains Jill Tucker, Woods Executive Director. “Our missions are aligned, our goals are the same, and we know that together, we can accomplish so much more.”

The NCHS Board has concluded that this is an ideal time to take this important step to solidify the future of the organization, provide more services for North County animals, and give NCHS staff the opportunity to continue their careers in a larger organization that offers more benefits and professional development opportunities.

“Our missions are well-aligned, negotiations have been seamless, and we are excited about what we will be able to accomplish more rapidly for North County animals. We have complete confidence this is the right thing to do for both our organization and the community,” said NCHS Board President Martha Pedersen.

As management and legal counsel work out the next steps in the process, staff members from both organizations are working together to map out the logistics of the merge. Following completion of the merger transaction, it is estimated to take up to 6 months to combine operations and ensure a consistent customer experience at both locations. Woods intends to open the doors of the new spay/neuter clinic within that timeframe as well.

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About Woods Humane Society

Founded in 1955, Woods Humane Society has proudly served the homeless animals of San Luis Obispo County for 61 years. Woods Humane Society is a privately funded, non-profit, animal sheltering and welfare organization, based in San Luis Obispo that annually places over 1,500 dogs and cats into loving homes. Visit woodshumane.org to donate or learn more.

About North County Humane Society

Founded in 1977, Action for Animals' Rights, now doing business as North County Humane Society, focused their efforts to address local animal over-population and homelessness with a spay/neuter program. The organization's first cat rescue and adoption center was opened in 1993 and moved to the current location on Ramona Road in Atascadero in 1997. The organization serves nearly 400 felines annually including sanctuary and placement into loving homes.