

## Randolph, Iowa, Feral Cats Get Fixed

**The town's feral cats were successfully trapped and neutered through the efforts of several animal welfare groups.**

*By Stacy N. Hackett*

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A trap-neuter-return program replaced the town's \$5 bounty on stray cats. The small town of Randolph, Iowa, made news last month when Mayor Vance Trively announced a plan that placed a \$5 bounty on stray cats. Animal welfare organizations stepped in to help the town develop an alternate plan to deal with Randolph's feral cat population. Last week, Best Friends Animal Society, Feline Friendz and the Raccoon Valley Animal Sanctuary and Rescue put the new trap-neuter-return program into place.

The new strategy, approved by Trively and the town council in March, calls for animal welfare workers and volunteers to "set traps, place housing and feeding stations for feral or stray cats and establish managed feral cat colonies as appropriate on public property in the town of Randolph." The town's population of feral cats is estimated to be about 80 animals.

In early April, the first stage of the plan went into effect. "Every one of our target number of 30 cats for the day were successfully trapped and taken to the spay/neuter clinic at Hearts United for Animals in Omaha, Nebraska," said Shelly Kotter, feral cat program manager for Best Friends Animal Society. The community came out to help, with the mayor and some local residents pitching in, Kotter said.

After the cats recover from surgery, friendly animals will be taken to animal shelters in other towns for adoption and foster care. Several cats from the downtown area will be relocated to a safe location outside of town.