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*Saving our pets in disasters:*  
**Best Friends Animal Society holds “real-life” rapid response  
animal rescue volunteer training**

Kanab, UT (06/11/2007) — A horse pasture in southern Utah will be the scene of a mock natural disaster this week. The area will be filled with people who will live in tents and practice first aid on toy dogs and cats and set up field housing for “homeless pets.” From Wednesday, June 13, to Saturday, June 16, these people will be training to part of the core team Best Friends Animal Society deploys when a real disaster ravages a community.

“With predictions of a highly active hurricane season, expanding drought and accompanying wildfires, and the general global trend toward more severe weather, we have to be prepared for devastation that may displace people and their pets. Everyone should leave this training with not only the skills and mindset to help in future disasters, but with a sense of camaraderie,” said Rich Crook, Best Friends rapid response manager.

All of the volunteers will come to the training with the core FEMA certification required to be an animal rescue responder at a natural disaster. Participants will learn intake procedures, how to handle animals who have been traumatized and/or injured, how to keep from being injured themselves when caring for distressed animals, and animal CPR. In all, there will be 15 courses.

In addition, on Saturday morning there will be a real-time search and rescue exercise to give everyone an opportunity to practice working as a team.

The base camp for this June disaster response exercise will be located in the rugged canyon terrain of Best Friends Animal Sanctuary near Kanab, Utah. It will be modeled on an actual rescue camp and participants will be self-sustaining.

Best Friends, which rescued about 6,000 pets left behind after Hurricane Katrina, has a rapid response team that has helped animals in distress in various scenarios. The volunteers who attend this June training will become a part of that team.

To learn more, please visit the Best Friends Rapid Response Community on the Best Friends Network at: <http://network.bestfriends.org/rapidresponse/news/>

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**About Best Friends Animal Society**

Located on 33,000 acres in Kanab, Utah, Best Friends Animal Society operates the country’s largest sanctuary for homeless pets and is home, on any given day, to about 1,500 dogs, cats, horses, rabbits, birds and other animals. Best Friends works globally with animal shelters and rescue groups to bring about a time when there will be no more homeless pets. Best Friends advances initiatives nationwide that promote community approaches to make the world a better place through kindness to animals, including adoption, spay/neuter, and humane education programs.

*“Kindness to animals builds a better world for all of us.*