



Mike Foltz of Humane Society Silicon Valley talks about a kitten's adoptability in *Cats Without a Home*.

Cats Without a Home

Short documentary offers a glimpse at the lives of feral cats

If feral cats are a controversial issue in your community, or if you're working to get these critters a better life and more support from local citizens, you may find a recent documentary produced by Humane Society Silicon Valley helpful in making your case. While *Cats Without a Home* focuses on feral cats in a specific area of the country, the issues it raises are not unique to California. The 30-minute film can help build community support for feral cat trap-neuter-return programs while also showing the relationship of spay/neuter and adoption rates to a community's euthanasia figures.

Through interviews with animal control officers, feral cat caretakers, and others involved in the feral cat issues of Santa Clara, California, the film provides a unique look at colony management. An animal control officer who visits a home to remove strays explains that he and his fellow officers spend more than half their time and resources tracking down cats. A colony manager is shown setting up traps for cats and taking them in for surgery. The film does a great job making connections between problem human behaviors—such as feeding neigh-

borhood strays without ensuring their sterilization—and the resulting cat overpopulation issue. It also shows some of the sweet kittens at the shelter and encourages people to adopt.

Humane Society Silicon Valley decided to make the film after learning that there are 125,000 homeless cats in the county and that 30,000 cats are euthanized in the Bay Area every year, says Laura Fulda, director of marketing and communications. "We knew we needed the public's help with this communitywide problem, but the public and media have focused on pit bulls biting small children," says Fulda. "We thought if we made a film, we could raise public awareness about homeless cats and inspire people to care."

Several community showings of the film were well-attended and fostered lively discussion, Fulda says. The documentary is also being aired on two local television stations.

To order a copy of the DVD, call Fulda at 408-727-3383, or send a \$15 check (made out to Humane Society Silicon Valley) to: Laura Fulda, Humane Society Silicon Valley, 2530 Lafayette Street, Santa Clara, CA 95050. —Carrie Allan