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Relief agencies help fire victims keep pets nearby

Katherine Poythress

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EAST COUNTY — People with pets seeking shelter from the Shockey fire burning in and around Boulevard are getting help from the Red Cross and San Diego Humane Society so they don't have to be separated from their animals.

Pets aren't allowed on Red Cross shelter sites because of the liability, including potential danger to refugees with allergies.

But at the Mountain Empire High School disaster relief shelter, the Red Cross is offering help in the gymnasium and outside but nearby a white trailer belonging to the Humane Society has been set up.

"The whole idea is to have it parallel so people and their pets can stay in adjacent facilities," Red Cross shelter supervisor Tim Everingham said Monday.

Some of the 11 people who stayed at the gymnasium Sunday night brought pets; others didn't.

Camarin Lindley, the Humane Society's site supervisor, said five dogs, three cats and a bearded dragon were at the trailer Monday.

Their owners are handling all of their care and feeding, but the Humane Society provides a place for them to stay.

Lindley and her crew could handle up to 50 dogs and 50 cats at the high school location. Large livestock are typically kept near the command center during disasters, she said.