

Golden Gate National Recreation Area Announced Notice of Proposed Rulemaking

Public Comment Analysis August 2002

The Social Research Laboratory
Northern Arizona University



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I. Methodology

The National Park Service (NPS) sought public comment regarding pet management regulations in the Golden Gate National Recreation Area (GGNRA) through an Advanced Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (ANPR). The ANPR was published in the Federal Register on January 11, 2002. Public comment was received for 91 days, until April 12, 2002.

The Social Research Laboratory (SRL) at Northern Arizona University was contracted to evaluate public comments in this process. Dr. Frederic I. Solop served as principal investigator and Kristi Hagen served as co-principal investigator for this study. James Bowie served as Project Manager. The SRL provided technical research consultation and development of the review process, methodology, coding protocol, data collection, data analysis, and report writing.

The SRL received a set of 26 binders from GGNRA. According to the original coding scheme devised by GGNRA, the binders contain photocopies of 9,446 documents recording public comments about pet management regulations in GGNRA sites. The documents were in the form of letters, postcards, printed e-mails, petitions, and transcripts of public hearings. After reviewing all documents, it became evident that some comments were submitted to the National Park Service two and three times, sometimes to different entities within the Park Service. GGNRA and SRL worked together to purge the dataset of duplicate documents. The final number of individual documents included in this analysis is **8,580**.

SRL researchers initially examined a random sample of documents to develop a systematic understanding of their content. Based on this understanding, a preliminary coding protocol capturing relevant information from the public comments was developed. This preliminary protocol was presented to GGNRA, finalized based on expansion of categories to represent the full range of public comment on the ANPR, and implemented.

Sixteen variables were identified for inclusion and coding in the dataset. Three of these variables had already been coded by GGNRA officials before the documents were sent to the SRL. GGNRA coding consisted of: a sequential document number, the number of pages in the document, and a geographic code indicating the location from which the document was sent¹. These codes were written directly at the top of the first page of each document by GGNRA staff.

The remaining variables were the SRL developed coding protocol: the type of the document (e.g., letter, postcard, e-mail), whether the document contains especially substantive comments, the government agency sending the comment (if any), the particular organizational affiliation of the author (if relevant), whether the author is a dog owner, the GGNRA site(s) mentioned, the author's positions on pet management regulations regarding off-leash dog walking and on whether additional sites should be opened or closed to on-leash dogs, justifications given to support these positions, proposed suggestions, and the number of signatures on the document. Coders were also instructed to enter particularly illustrative

¹ In some cases, this code referred not only to a geographic location, but also indicated whether it was from an individual, public agency or organization.

verbatim quotes from the documents, as well as to note any problems encountered while coding the document. SRL staff members later addressed each problem on a case-by-case basis. For a more detailed description of the variables in the dataset, see the attached coding protocol (Appendix A).

A team of ten graduate student coders at Northern Arizona University was assembled by the SRL. Each coder attended a training session in which they were familiarized with the coding categories, methodology, and procedures. Coders were provided with a coding key to insure standardized responses across coders. Coders directly entered information into SPSS, a statistical software package. Their work was constantly monitored and checked by the project manager. All documents were coded between June 13 and June 28, 2002.

During the coding process, coders discovered anomalies in the document numbering process. GGNRA and SRL worked together to identify documents with multiple signatures and to only record the final document once. In some cases, two separate documents were erroneously assigned the same document number. In these cases, SRL and GGNRA assigned a new document number to one of the documents.

Of the 8580 documents coded by the SRL, 5527 (64%) were letters, 1833 (21%) were postcards, 1062 (12%) were emails, 144 (2%) were comments from public meetings, and 14 (.2%) were petitions. A total of 5274 (62%) of the documents were form letters, cards, or emails. Of these, 1266 contained comments from the sender that were in addition to the “form” content of the documents.

Throughout the course of the coding process, SRL staff members periodically conducted double-checking of randomly-selected samples of entered coding, in order to ensure that all coders were adhering to the previously-established protocol. In addition to this systematic double-checking during the coding process, a extensive post-coding data cleaning procedure was undertaken, during which possible data entry errors were searched for. By examining frequency and cross-tabulation data, SRL staff members could easily recognize certain types of data entry errors and quickly correct them. Additionally, all form letters were examined to ensure that they had been coded in standardized fashion.

Table Reading

Appendix B consists of banner tables that present information related to position justifications in a condensed form. Position justifications and suggestions given by respondents are cross-tabulated by demographic variables to illustrate similarities and differences across demographic features.

Each table provides a breakout of how different categories of respondents provided position justifications and suggestions about pet management in the GGNRA. Thus, each table shows how individuals with different positions, dog ownership statuses, comment types and geographic locations gave various position justifications and suggestions. Presenting data in this manner assists in making comparisons across categories.

Several of these categories have also been collapsed to simplify data presentation in the banner tables of Appendix B. For instance, the geographic location variable has been collapsed from sixteen categories into three: within the Bay Area, outside the Bay Area, and unknown.

Banner tables that contain variable categories with less than one percent are indicated by an asterisk (*%) and categories with no responses are indicated with a dash (-). Additionally, all figures are rounded off to whole numbers. Therefore, total responses to some questions may be greater or less than 100 percent.

Reading across the rows of the banner table, one can see the percentage of each type of respondent who presented that particular position justification or suggestion. So, for example, the first row of the first banner table reveals that 11% of all respondents supported their position by claiming that off-leash dog walking has benefits for people, that no supporters of Option A gave this justification, that 15% of supporters of Option B gave this justification, and so on.

II. Executive Summary

Commenter Positions regarding on-leash and off-leash regulations

Commenters were identified as holding one of two positions: Options A or B. If it was not clear which position a commenter held, no position was selected.

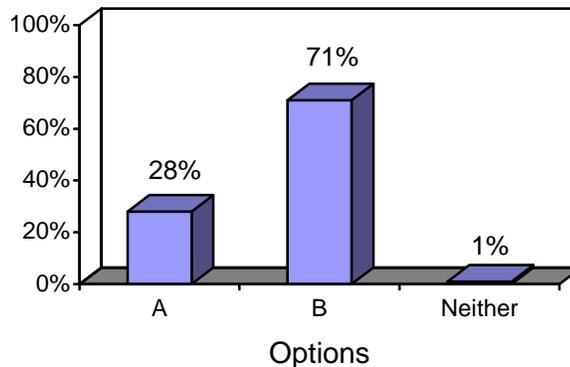
Option A: Enforce existing regulations requiring dogs on leash.

Option B: Allow off-leash dog walking in specific locations/ways.

Support for Options A and B

Twenty-eight percent of public comments favor Option A, calling for the enforcement of existing leash laws in the GGNRA. Seventy-one percent of public comments favor Option B, allowing for off-leash dog walking in selected GGNRA sites. One percent of respondents' comments could not be classified as supportive of either Option A or Option B.

**Figure 1:
Support for Options A and B**



Among commenters submitting form letters, there was greater support for Option A. Among respondents who signed petitions, made comments at public meetings, submitted form letters or cards with additional comments, and wrote letters that were not form letters, there was greater support for Option B (see Table 1).

Table 1 – Support for Option A/B by Comment Type

	Option A	Option B	Neither	Total*	N
Form letter	67%	33%	--	100%	2292
Petition	--	100%	--	100%	14
Comment form from public hearing	--	100%	--	100%	1
Form card with additional comments	2%	98%	--	101%	58
Form letter with additional comments	5%	95%	--	100%	1208
Comment from public hearing transcript	4%	92%	4%	100%	143
Form card	14%	86%	--	100%	1716
Letter	17%	82%	1%	100%	2027
Email	20%	78%	3%	100%	1062
Postcard	39%	59%	2%	100%	59
Total	28%	71%	1%	100%	8580

*Totals may not equal 100% due to rounding.

Location

Almost half (49%) of the documents came from residents of San Francisco County. Nine percent were from San Mateo County, six percent from the East Bay Counties (Alameda and Contra Costa), five percent from parts of California outside the Bay Area, five percent from Marin County, and one percent from Santa Clara County. Fourteen percent of documents came from outside of California. Ten percent of the documents came from unknown addresses.

There appears to be a marked difference in support for Option A or Option B based on the geographic origin of the document. Of the 6042 comments received from Bay Area residents, 86 percent favor Option B, while of the 1628 comments received from outside the Bay Area, 88 percent favor Option A.

Table 2 – Support for Option A/B by Geographic Location

	Option A	Option B	Neither	Total	N
Out of State	96%	4%	--	100%	1186
California (non-Bay Area)	69%	31%	1%	101%	442
California (no city specified)	5%	91%	5%	101%	21
San Mateo County	11%	89%	1%	101%	788
San Francisco County	12%	88%	1%	101%	4222
Unknown Address	14%	84%	2%	100%	846
Santa Clara County	19%	80%	1%	100%	111
East Bay Counties	24%	76%	--	100%	534
Marin County	32%	68%	1%	101%	387
Organizations / Other	33%	65%	2%	100%	43
Total	28%	71%	1%	100%	8580

*Totals may not equal 100% due to rounding.

Dog Ownership

Forty-eight percent of document authors identified themselves as dog owners, while 7 percent indicated that they did not own a dog. The remaining 46 percent did not specify whether or not they owned a dog. Dog owners are much more likely than other respondents to support Option B.

Table 3 – Support for Option A/B by Dog Ownership

	Option A	Option B	Neither	Total	N
Dog Owner	2%	98%	--	100%	4079
Non-Dog Owner	28%	71%	1%	100%	582
Unspecified	56%	43%	1%	100%	3918
Total	28%	71%	1%	100%	8580

Golden Gate National Recreation Area Site of Concern

The GGNRA site referred to most often by respondents in their comments was Fort Funston, mentioned in 23 percent of the documents. Crissy Field was mentioned by 12 percent of respondents, Ocean Beach by five percent, and Baker Beach by three percent. Table 4 shows the number of supporters of Option A and B who mentioned each park site in their comments, as well as the percentage of all documents in which each park was mentioned.

Table 4 – Supporters of Option A/B Mentioning Specific GGNRA Sites

	Option A	Option B	Neither	Total	% of All Documents
Fort Funston	70	1880	3	1953	23%
Crissy Field	62	995	10	1067	12%
Ocean Beach	49	394	4	447	5%
1979 Pet Policy sites	4	308	0	312	4%
Baker Beach	8	283	3	294	3%
The Presidio	28	133	4	165	2%
Land’s End	2	168	1	171	2%
Marin Headlands	10	58	0	68	1%
Rodeo Beach	8	57	0	65	1%
Muir Beach	14	48	0	62	1%
Tennessee Valley	9	22	1	32	<.5%
Fort Baker	1	27	2	30	<.5%
Stinson Beach	11	13	1	25	<.5%
1996 Compendium sites	0	23	0	23	<.5%
Milagra Ridge	4	8	3	15	<.5%
Cliff House	1	12	0	13	<.5%
Fort Point	1	10	0	11	<.5%
Alcatraz	0	11	0	11	<.5%
Sweeney Ridge	2	7	0	9	<.5%
Phleger Estates	3	3	1	7	<.5%
Muir Woods	3	3	0	6	<.5%
Sutro Heights	1	3	0	4	<.5%
China Beach	2	1	1	4	<.5%
Bolinas Ridge	0	2	0	2	<.5%
Olema Valley	0	1	0	1	<.5%

Additional Issues

Documents were coded for whether comments expressed support for opening or closing additional park areas to on-leash dog walking. Relatively few respondents made reference to this issue. Support for opening more areas to on-leash dogs was expressed in 28 comments, or one-third of one percent of the total. Support for closing more areas to on-leash dogs was expressed in 15 comments, or one-fifth of one percent of the total.

Support for respondents' positions was bolstered by various rationales and arguments. SRL researchers and coders identified 37 commonly-stated position justifications within the documents. All documents were coded for whether they contained any of these justifications. Position justifications were grouped into five broad categories, those related to people, dogs, the environment, legal or economic issues, and safety.

In addition, many respondents offered suggestions as to how off-leash dog recreation in the GGNRA might be dealt with. Eleven commonly made suggestions were coded into the dataset (see page 23).

A description of position justifications and suggestions, as well as selected illustrative quotes from the documents, is found in Section III. Appendix B presents banner tables which report the incidence of position justifications cross-tabulated by various characteristics of the document authors.

III. Position Justifications and Suggestions

A. Support for Option A

Eighteen justifications for support of Option A, enforcing existing regulations requiring dogs on leash, were coded into the dataset. They are described here in order of their prevalence. Illustrative quotes are provided.

Off-leash dogs harm wildlife.

2030 documents (84% of documents supporting Option A, 24% of all documents)

Off-leash dogs pose a threat to wildlife in GGNRA sites.

“I support leashing pets on public lands primarily as a human safety issue, but I also am concerned about wildlife...a wild animal frightened out of its territory may face starvation, birds flushed during nesting seasons may abandon the next generation of eggs.”

“I am on the side of keeping the birds safe...our bird population is declining. I am worried about further stresses on birds, such as unleashed dogs.”

“Many dogs, which are generally well behaved, will not obey if a squirrel, deer, or a group of gulls on the beach present themselves. That chase instinct is ever present. It is not fair to risk damage to wildlife.”

Off-leash dogs have a negative impact on the environment.

1996 documents (83% of documents supporting Option A, 23% of all documents)

Off-leash dogs cause environmental damage by destroying vegetation and disrupting wildlife habitats.

“On any given day one can see countless violations of the leash law throughout even the most ecologically sensitive regions of the park. This has drastic implications on the over 100 rare and sensitive species that inhabit the GGNRA.”

“Please maintain current restrictions on dogs so that they (and their owners) do not trample the fragile dunes and beach nesting areas.”

“High levels of off-leash dog use contributes to the degradation of natural areas by causing soil disturbance, altering soil properties by adding massive amounts of nitrogen and other nutrients, and directly damaging sensitive plants and animals.”

Altering National Park Service pet management regulations would set a negative precedent.

1184 documents (49% of documents supporting Option A, 14% of all documents)

Creating an exception to NPS rules to allow for off-leash dogs in the GGNRA would establish a precedent that could lead to off-leash dog walking, as well as other currently prohibited activities, in other National Park System units.

“Changing the rules here in the Bay Area, only, will serve to create a precedent all over the country that will give dog owners the excuse they want to continue to not obey laws and create confusion and conflict.”

“If this resolution were to pass and the Park Service were to agree to end enforcement of the leash laws, other user groups in parks across the country could use this as precedent to gain access for other recreational activities, including off-road vehicle use and recreational mining.”

Dogs are dangerous/threatening.

1156 documents (48% of documents supporting Option A, 13% of all documents)

Those citing this reason often expressed their discomfort around and/or fear of off-leash dogs, or pointed to the potential of dogs to endanger their children.

“During a recent pregnancy, I went for walks each day in the Presidio. On numerous occasions off-leash dogs came close to knocking me over. The dog walkers invariably say, ‘Don’t worry, he’s friendly.’ I’m not worried if the dog is not friendly: my concern is that the dog’s friendliness will cause it to jump with excitement and knock me off balance.”

“...A dog that was not on a leash bit my daughter. We were fortunate that the owners showed us the dog’s medical records.”

“I often take walks along the beach of Crissy Field together with friends...hundreds of unleashed and unmuzzled dogs are an annoyance, a big nuisance, and a danger, by running around loose, indiscriminately barking and mixing in with the crowd. When we tried once to walk at Fort Funston, we did not even step out of our car at the parking lot. The rampaging dog population was overwhelming!”

Off-leash dogs make parks unsafe for visitors.

1126 documents (47% of documents supporting Option A, 13% of all documents)

Threats posed by off-leash dogs make GGNRA sites less safe for park users.

“Unleashed dogs present safety hazards to the GGNRA’s wide variety of recreational users. Dogs can bite other dogs and people, trip pedestrians, skaters and cyclists, and jump on and knock down people.”

“Allowing unleashed dogs in the GGNRA would result in an increase in dog attacks, high-risk encounters between people and dogs, and create a nuisance that would be incompatible with people’s peaceful enjoyment of the GGNRA. There is no shortage of stories about dogs attacking people. By allowing an off-leash policy in the GGNRA you are increasing the likelihood of dog attacks against people and other animals.”

Off-leash dogs discourage park use by minorities, the elderly, children, and people with special needs.

954 documents (39% of documents supporting Option A, 11% of all documents)

For various cultural and physical reasons, the presence of off-leash dogs at GGNRA sites detracts from the park experience .

“At present, the off-leash dogs at Ft. Funston make the entire facility not usable to many of us. For years I loved to hike there. Now I can't go there because the roaming bands of off-leash dogs are everywhere. They're dangerous to us humans and they destroy the natural flora and fauna. They're a nuisance! I can't take my young son there because the dogs are too dangerous for small children. I'm handicapped and I'm afraid that even the good natured dogs will crash into me while they are chasing each other all over the place. (And some of the dogs are not safe or good natured.)”

“They [off-leash dogs] take over the beach from people by intimidating small children...”

The presence of off-leash dogs increases the need for rescue and intervention efforts.

910 documents (38% of documents supporting Option A, 11% of all documents)

Dogs and people sometimes must be rescued from the coastal cliffs and other treacherous areas in the GGNRA; allowing off-leash dogs increases the number of costly rescues.

“Lax enforcement at GGNRA has resulted in many documented cases of off-leash pets threatening or biting park visitors and hazardous rescues of uncontrolled pets and their owners.”

“Golden Gate National Recreation Area records indicate numerous incidents of dog bites, threats of dogs to park visitors, and instances where park rangers were forced to risk their own safety to rescue uncontrolled pets and pet owners trapped on cliffs or in the ocean.”

Allowing off-leash dogs would violate the National Park Service’s mandate.

307 documents (13% of documents supporting Option A, 4% of all documents)

Permitting off-leash dogs would be inconsistent with the mandate of the National Park Service.

“[Allowing off-leash dogs] will further move the National Park System away from the principle and philosophy upon which it was founded - the conservation of ‘the scenery and the natural and historic objects and wild life therein and to provide for the enjoyment of the

same in such a manner and by such means as will leave unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations.”

“Allowing pets off-leash is inconsistent with the park mission to protect natural resources and the safety of all visitors.”

Dog owners are selfish/inconsiderate.

155 documents (6% of documents supporting Option A, 2% of all documents)

Dog owners who walk their dogs off-leash show little regard for the needs and feelings of others.

“...many dog owners can not judge the behavior of their pets in a manner that can be considered safe to other people in public: the elderly, children, etc. No dog owner will deny that they are ‘responsible dog owners.’ Many times, a criticism of leash laws is voiced that responsible dog owners should not be penalized with such laws because of a minority of dog owners who are not responsible. It seems to me that the leash laws are precisely for the purpose of making all dog owners keep their dogs on a leash because it is not possible to trust in the judgment of the dog owners when they say their own dog is not a threat and is under control.”

“Unfortunately, we have dog owners who are not considerate and have not trained their animals.”

“...there is a very high rate of disobedience among dog owners, and this makes it even more difficult to enforce a leash law.”

Dog excrement issues.

135 documents (6% of documents supporting Option A, 2% of all documents)

Off-leash dogs despoil GGNRA sites by defecating and urinating in them, and dog owners sometimes fail to clean up after their dogs.

“Owners with dogs off leash are less likely to clean up after them because they can't see when messes are made (or choose not to).”

“Off-leash dogs unduly increase the possibility that feces will not be seen or picked up by owners. This has an impact on other users as well as the environment.”

“Dog feces and urine present public health problems, and leave foul smells for both humans and other wildlife.”

Freedom/right to enjoy parks with dogs on-leash.

91 documents (4% of documents supporting Option A, 1% of all documents)

Dogs in GGNRA sites should be kept under control because people have the right to enjoy the parks without being bothered by off-leash dogs.

“Shouldn't our parks and beaches be safe, peaceful places for people to relax? Why can't owners use those 25-foot leashes so the dogs have some free movement?”

“Park areas are for people and children to enjoy without being distracted by dogs. People have a right to walk in parks without having animals loose.”

GGNRA land was given by the city to be managed as a National Park.

67 documents (3% of documents supporting Option A, 1% of all documents)

NPS regulations regarding off-leash dogs should apply in the GGNRA because it is established as a national park.

“National Parks were not intended for recreational needs of dogs but for humans and environmental uses...GGNRA areas are and were set up for supporting our beautiful environment and for human use, paid for by humans. Let's keep it that way.”

Freedom/right to enjoy parks without dogs.

57 documents (2% of documents supporting Option A, 1% of all documents)

People have the right to be free from all dogs in GGNRA sites.

“I do not go to dog parks and interfere with the activities there, and I do not want dogs interfering with my activities in the GGNRA.”

“I see no reason whatever that dog owners should trample on the enjoyment of the parks by hikers, bikers, walkers, and horse riders.”

Having dogs off-leash results in more conflicts between dogs.

28 documents (1% of documents supporting Option A, less than .5% of all documents)

Dogs running free are more likely to attack one another, and less able to be controlled by their owners.

“I have seen numerous dogs fighting, while the owners were screaming for them to stop, to no avail.”

“Dogs may become aggressive with other dogs when off-leash. What if I were walking a dog that was attacked by another dog whose owner is far off? What could I do?”

Benefits for people free from off-leash dogs.

30 documents (1% of documents supporting Option A, less than .5% of all documents)

Off-leash dogs interfere with the ability of people to use GGNRA sites to obtain health benefits by exercising.

“I enjoy running and walking on the beach, although I have been literally knocked down by an unleashed Rottweiler there.”

“I hope that the dog owners will not be allowed to infringe on the right of walkers and runners to enjoy the many paths in the GGNRA. As a runner, I am constantly inconvenienced and endangered by careless owners and their dogs. I should not be prevented from using my favorite running paths by these inconsiderate people. I am fearful of many dogs and I just don't see that the ‘right’ exists for dog owners to allow their dogs to terrorize people who are afraid of dogs.”

Parks and their resources should be preserved for the enjoyment of future generations.

27 documents (1% of documents supporting Option A, less than .5% of all documents)

GGNRA sites need to be protected from damage caused by off-leash dogs so they could continue to be enjoyed into the future.

“For the long-term sustainability and enjoyment of many future generations, please DO NOT change the current on-leash dog rules in the Bay Area, and countrywide, federal park lands.”

“These lands belong to all Americans and need protection from destructive off-leash dog use. It's up to you to keep these areas intact for future generations.”

Commercial dog walking is an unregulated, commercial activity taking place on public lands.

19 documents (1% of documents supporting Option A, less than .5% of all documents)

Professional dog walking exploits public lands for private gain.

“It doesn't seem right that someone making money on public lands should be able to make it too dangerous for a normal citizen to take a walk and enjoy nature.”

“Make commercial dog walkers park concessionaires. Require them to pay for the privilege of doing business on park lands. I couldn't open a hot dog stand on east beach, could I? The same principles should apply to dog walkers.”

The cost of repairing damage done by off-leash dogs is too high.

10 documents (less than .5% of documents supporting Option A, less than .5% of all documents)

Allowing dogs off-leash results in an expense to the public as damage to park facilities and land caused by dogs must be repaired.

“The ecology is too sensitive and too much funding, both private and public, has been spent to restore this important area to allow for potential damage from dogs.”

“Costs of the regulation change will not only come from the legislative rulemaking process, but will come from providing increased protection and rehabilitation of the natural and historic areas within the parks. In today's era of tax and governmental budget cuts, many park areas are struggling to cover the costs of day to day maintenance and operation.”

B. Support for Option B

Nineteen justifications for support of Option B, allowing off-leash dog walking in specific locations/ways, were coded into the dataset. These justifications are described here in order of their prevalence within public comments. Illustrative quotes are provided.

Exercise benefits for off-leash dogs.

1654 documents (27% of documents supporting Option B, 19% of all documents)

Off-leash dog recreation is vital to dogs' physical well-being.

"It is crucial to have open areas for dogs to exercise and relieve pent-up energy due to living in small spaces in the city."

"Just like healthy human beings, dogs need exercise that they cannot adequately get walking on a leash."

"Off-leash walks provide better exercise for my dogs, allowing them to cover more ground. Exercised dogs are better behaved, less anxious and high-strung, and bark less. My dogs are actually more wild and hard to control on-leash than they are off-leash! The more exercise they get, the better behaved they are!"

GGNRA land was given by the city with the understanding that existing uses, including off-leash dog walking, would continue.

1059 documents (17% of documents supporting Option B, 12% of all documents)

The transfer of land to the GGNRA was done with the understanding that traditional uses of the land would be allowed to continue.

"When S.F. transferred its beaches and parks to GGNRA, off-leash activities were included in the activities to be allowed in these areas. How can the GGNRA now reverse this agreement? Let off-leash dogs and people enjoy the GGNRA areas as intended."

"The issue is purely and simply whether an activity that has always been a part of the GGNRA is going to continue to bring happiness to so many people and their pets, or is going to be prohibited simply because a one-size-fits-all regulation was promulgated thirty years ago and three thousand miles away."

Sociability benefits for off-leash dogs.

984 documents (16% of documents supporting Option B, 12% of all documents)

Off-leash dog walking allows dogs to socialize and play with one another in ways that are not possible while on-leash.

"Off-leash areas are essential to the well-being of dogs. Regular off-leash exercise burns off pent-up energy, builds confidence, improves a dog's social skills and helps prevent

aggression. Conversely, limiting dog play results in under-socialized, under-exercised, under-stimulated dogs and often leads to behavior problems.”

“Crissy Field is one area where dog owners can bring their dogs to socialize. Socialization of animals is very important to teach them to get along with other animals as well as other people. Such activity reduces aggressive tendencies.”

Benefits of off-leash dog walking for people.

917 documents (15% of documents supporting Option B, 11% of all documents)

Off-leash dog walking provides physical and mental health benefits to people, especially those who are incapable of walking dogs on-leash.

“The physical aspects of being able to walk our two dogs off leash daily...helps maintain a healthy body and mind.”

“The therapeutic value of being off-leash extends to all the people who, like myself, feel more relaxed and happy seeing their pets playing.”

Dog owners are responsible/self-regulating.

841 documents (14% of documents supporting Option B, 10% of all documents)

Dog owners are considerate of others, controlling their dogs so as to avoid conflicts, cleaning up after their dogs, and chastising fellow dog owners who fail to act responsibly.

“I have used public parks and beaches in San Francisco...to walk my dog, and I have observed that most dog owners are responsible people who keep their dogs in check, pick up after them, and don't let them dig or disturb wildlife. Dog owners love our parks and help keep them safe and clean. Every day I am dismayed by the litter I see in our public spaces, and I am not the only dog owner who detours to pick up a bottle, a discarded pizza box, or a soda can on the trip to discard dog droppings. In the very great majority, ours is a friendly, civilizing presence.”

“Dog owners are responsible individuals and we should credit them with the ability to supervise their pets.”

“I believe that most dog owners are responsible and are cognizant that other people who don't own dogs need to enjoy the area as well.”

Sociability benefits for people walking off-leash dogs.

842 documents (14% of documents supporting Option B, 10% of all documents)

Dog owners are able to feel social connections and a sense of community by walking their dogs off-leash at GGNRA sites.

“I have been to Fort Funston with my dogs many times over the last few years, and on every occasion I have had the pleasure of meeting a large number of happy, healthy dogs and warm, friendly dog owners. It is rare in large cities like San Francisco to be able to interact with strangers as freely as one seems to be able to in an off-leash dog park. Perhaps the shared experience of dog ownership breaks down social barriers, or perhaps the energy and enthusiasm of the canine at play is contagious.”

“The community of people we have encountered while walking dogs is an extremely warm and supportive one. People who would never talk to each otherwise get into friendly conversation because of their dogs. This is particularly important to us, as visitors from out of town who don't know many people. We have had long conversations with other older people who thrive on the social outlet that dog walking provides.”

Freedom/right to walk dogs off-leash.

508 documents (8% of documents supporting Option B, 6% of all documents)

Walking dogs off-leash is a matter of individual freedom or rights.

“It would be a mistake to do away with the freedoms of one population to satisfy another; i.e., those phobic of dogs...we all have the right to enjoy nature.”

“There MUST be areas [for off-leash dog walking] in ALL parks, otherwise you are denying taxpayers their rights to exercise their dogs.”

Only a small portion of GGNRA land is used for off-leash dog walking.

475 documents (8% of documents supporting Option B, 6% of all documents)

Off-leash areas make up less than one percent of GGNRA land, therefore off-leash recreation should be allowed to continue.

“There is room for off-leash activity in GGNRA's 75,000 acres. Traditionally, off-leash use has occurred in only 0.5% of this land. Off-leash activity can continue while respecting other park uses, including the preservation of natural resources and other recreational uses.”

“Within the 75,000 acres of park land there must be enough space to accommodate everyone's recreational needs. I understand the need to limit off-leash activity in some areas, but do not believe that banning it entirely is fair to the dog owners of this city. Currently, I believe off-leash dog walking is permitted in 0.5% of the 75,000 acres of GGNRA. That does not seem excessive considering there are 120,000+ dogs residing in this city.”

Dogs are friendly/enjoyable.

393 documents (6% of documents supporting Option B, 5% of all documents)

Off-leash dogs are fun to be around and they bring happiness to people.

“Rarely have the [off-leash] dogs ever bothered me. It is actually kind of fun to watch them play.”

“The dogs at Crissy Field do no harm to anybody or anything. They interact with people and each other in a positive way while off leash, for they do not feel threatened by the inability to protect themselves as they sometimes do while under restraint.”

Urban park, not wilderness.

384 documents (6% of documents supporting Option B, 5% of all documents)

GGNRA sites should not be subject to NPS regulations regarding off-leash dogs because, as parks in an urban area serving the population of a major city, they are fundamentally different from the typical National Park.

“Fort Funston is a part of many people's daily lives as most National Parks are not, and to manage it the same way as Yosemite is wholly inappropriate.”

“The GGNRA is an urban park in the midst of a very diverse community. It should continue to be used for diverse, urban recreational activities, including off-leash dog walking, just as it has always been.”

“As an urban park, the GGNRA is different from most national parks, because urban parks are not pristine wilderness preserves. They are supposed to provide a variety of recreational opportunities for the community.”

The presence of off-leash dogs makes parks safer.

319 documents (5% of documents supporting Option B, 4% of all documents)

A park full of people taking advantage of the ability to take their dogs off-leash in an environment that encourages social interaction is safer and less conducive to criminal activity than one with few users who may not share any social connection.

“Frankly, where dogs are allowed there are people - so I feel safer. When dogs were allowed in the park, there was less perceived criminal activity in the area at night because people with their dogs were out recreating.”

“I visit Ocean Beach every other day, and I love seeing the dogs there. They also make one feel safer there, since they would bark if someone were making trouble. It is well known that criminal types prefer to avoid dogs. So dogs make the GGNRA safer.”

“I [as a woman] would not, absolutely would not, walk in most of the City's parks without my dogs. Even with them, I have met strange folks in secluded places. At least I know my boys”

would set off a vocal alarm if there were a problem. If I were alone, I might not be able to do that. Neither would I walk the streets at night without my dogs.”

Off-leash dogs encourage park use by minorities, the elderly, children, and people with special needs.

284 documents (5% of documents supporting Option B, 3% of all documents)

The presence of off-leash dogs enhances the park experience of certain populations.

“I see many children, elderly, and racial/cultural minorities at the Fort. In fact, I have seen many people in wheelchairs walking their dogs. All kinds of people have dogs- with this common bond- we all come together at the Fort.”

“On a fine, sunny day at Fort Funston, you will see a lot of urbanites who don't have the means or ability to leave the City to go backpacking in the Trinitities, skiing in the Sierras, or camping in Yosemite. There are elderly people who meander slowly along the paths as their dogs sprint around them. I've seen people with disabilities walking their dogs as they are supported by a son or daughter. I've seen people in wheel chairs taking their dogs for an unleashed walk, the only kind of walk they can take with their dogs. You will see mothers with strollers and kids and the family pet, all enjoying themselves together. You will see people who don't have dogs, but enjoy looking at them and playing with them.”

On-leash dogs are more territorial and aggressive.

178 documents (3% of documents supporting Option B, 2% of all documents)

Confining dogs with leashes leads to behavioral problems that could impact people and other dogs.

“There are fewer problems between the dogs when they can socialize off-leash, than when they are tightly tethered.”

“The only time I was bitten badly was by a dog on a leash.”

“We've also found that dogs on leash often think of themselves ‘on guard,’ and object to any person or animal approaching the other end of the leash, just as they alarm at intrusion into their fenced yard; off-leash dogs generally welcome the approach of strangers, whether human or canine.”

Off-leash dogs do not have a negative impact on the environment.

161 documents (3% of documents supporting Option B, 2% of all documents)

Dogs do not have a significant effect on land in GGNRA sites; human users of GGNRA sites may present a greater threat to the environment.

“I respect the land, my dog respects the land and in 20 years of hiking (18 without a dog) I have never seen a dog disrespect the land. I have seen the ravages of mountain bike riders and even rollerbladers.”

“I have not seen any deterioration in the environment on Baker Beach. If anything, the impact of off-lead dogs pales in comparison to beach-goers and picnickers who litter the place.”

Exceptions to National Park Service regulations exist elsewhere.

142 documents (2% of documents supporting Option B, 2% of all documents)

Exceptions to NPS regulations are made to allow for activities such as hunting and snowmobiling in other parks, so a similar exception could be made for off-leash dog walking in GGNRA sites.

“If hunting dogs can be allowed to run free in wild parks, surely an area can be set aside in an urban park where pet dogs can be allowed to run free.”

“The solution is NOT to ban the 1979 Pet Policy, but to incorporate it into the regulations as a special rule for the GGNRA (i.e., Section 7 Exemption) - just as hang gliding and off-trail bicycle riding are permitted by special rules.”

Off-leash dogs do not harm wildlife.

107 documents (2% of documents supporting Option B, 1% of all documents)

Off-leash dogs pose no threat to wildlife.

“The huge grass area along the walk is perfect for people and for off-leash dogs as is the beach along the water. Though I know there are many birds that also love that environment, again I'll stress that the numbers of people walking and running along the paths and beaches are already an extreme deterrent to the nesting and/or resting habits of the natural wildlife. Off-leash (well trained) dogs would have no worse an effect.”

Restricting off-leash dog walking causes crowding and ecological impacts in the remaining off-leash areas.

28 documents (1% of documents supporting Option B, less than .5% of all documents)

Limiting off-leash areas in the GGNRA forces all off-leash dogs into a smaller number of local areas that allow dogs off-leash, resulting in problems due to overcrowding.

“The areas of off-leash are extremely overcrowded now that dogs are no longer allowed in GGNRA. Our dog recently caught giardia from one of the parks due to overcrowded arrangements.”

“The recent closures of off-leash recreation areas have led to over-use of the areas that exist now. More off-leash areas would be less destructive to the environment.”

“The less land you allow to off-leash recreation, the more impact regular users (dog guardians are regular because we have to be!) will have on the lands we are allowed in. Expansion of off-leash areas is not only the wise choice; it is necessary for the health of these few off-leash area ecosystems. The dogs and their guardians are not going to leave the area - we LIVE here - and there are a lot of us. The wise choice would be to make room for us, rather than restrict us to too small an area, and then wonder why there is an increase in the impact on these areas.”

Commercial dog walking provides a benefit to the community.

14 documents (less than .5% of documents supporting Option B, less than .5% of all documents)

Professional dog walkers provide a public service.

“For several years, [professional dog walkers] have provided an extremely valuable daily service to my 7-year-old lab, Ruby, and myself. Walking is a misnomer really. They run her....I don't know what I would do if I couldn't use my dog walker's services, especially when I'm working, which is often.”

The cost of enforcing a leash law is too high.

11 documents (less than .5% of documents supporting Option B, less than .5% of all documents)

Enforcement of leash laws is expensive.

“Selective enforcement would occur unless the GGNRA is planning to have more staff policing the leash policy. Yes, there would be a set policy against off-leash dogs, but the enforcement of that policy would not be consistent without increased policing and personnel.”

“Enforcing on-leash rules will not be cheap or easy. Expect some peaceful protests, expect groups of people respectfully disobeying the rules. Why not spend the money you would have spent enforcing the on-leash policy on enforcing voice command rules, anti-fowl chasing rules, dog handler manners and giving out littering fines for people who don't pick up the poop?”

C. Suggestions

Eleven commonly made suggestions regarding pet management regulations in GGNRA were coded into the dataset. They are described below in order of their prevalence within public comments. Illustrative quotes are provided.

Limit off-leash dog walking to specific designated areas.

411 documents (5% of all documents)

Off-leash dog walking should be allowed in designated (not fenced) areas only.

“...a reasonable compromise needs to be reached. For example, dogs were formerly allowed on the far west side of Baker Beach. There are no plants there to trample, and 90% of the beach was off-limits to dogs. There is no reason this policy should not continue...dogs could be allowed off-leash on the beach portion of Fort Funston. Again, there is nothing there but sand, cliffs, and water and the remainder of the beach area (Ocean, etc.) could be dog-free. At the very least, the sandy portion just off the Ft. Funston parking lot could be fenced with dogs allowed to run around in this area.”

“Some areas should require dogs to be on leash. Some areas should allow dogs off leash. For example, at Crissy Field, dogs should be allowed on leash on paths and some beaches, allowed off leash on the field and some beaches, and not allowed on the beach at the main beach at the South parking lot.”

Cite only irresponsible dog owners.

334 documents (4% of all documents)

Rather than tarring all dog owners with the same brush, GGNRA authorities should cite and fine dog owners who are exhibiting undesirable behavior such as failing to control or clean up after their dog.

“I fully support enforcement of policies for responsible off leash dog walking and to protect our environment. Dog owners need to pick up after their dogs, and should be severely fined if they do not; the same way other individuals who litter should be fined.”

“It's not clear why the GGNRA is taking such a harsh stance against a large group of responsible tax paying citizens. Why not cite people who break litter, voice control, digging, bird chasing laws, instead of ticketing everyone? We go through considerable time, effort and expense to train our dogs. We work very hard to educate each other and to be the best citizens we can be. Your blanket no-tolerance policy seems lazy and unfair.”

Schedule specific times for off-leash dog walking.

139 documents (2% of all documents)

A schedule should be established so that people who wish to take their dogs off-leash and people who wish to avoid off-leash dogs would know when they could frequent GGNRA sites.

“Have ‘dog-free’ days - crowded Indian Summer holidays come to mind, summer weekends, perhaps, or alternating weekends. But it could be a regular schedule of Dog-Free Days, so that people become expectant of when they can ‘have the beach to myself (and my dog)’ as the case may be. Conversely, have ‘Dogs Run Free’ days, anti-dog types come not thither, not on THOSE days anyway.”

“Dogs might be allowed off leash between the hours of 6-9 am and 2 hours before sunset. Dogs might be allowed off leash except on weekends and holidays.”

Create separate and/or fenced areas for off-leash dogs.

132 documents (2% of all documents)

Off-leash dogs and their owners should be physically separated from park users who do not wish to encounter dogs.

“I would not be opposed to accommodating dogs and their owners in a modest fenced in ‘dog run.’”

“The only reasonable compromise would be to fence in part of the new grass area for a ‘Bark Park,’ where dogs could run free and not be a danger to the public. Many cities have established these parks to protect the public and public areas.”

Create a licensing process for off-leash dogs.

102 documents (1% of all documents)

Permits or licenses for off-leash dog walking should be granted to dog owners who demonstrate voice control of their dogs and/or pay a fee.

“If the dog is under voice or signal control there is no reason that he/she should not be allowed to be off leash. I am sure that local training schools would be more than happy to develop and provide ‘Park-Approved’ training and provide certificates to the pet and owners.”

“I would require dog walkers to obtain an annual permit, for a fee, and then police the areas very stringently to insure that dog walkers pick up dog litter and take care of the property. Violation of park rules would result in the loss of their permit and park privileges.”

Fence environmentally sensitive areas to reduce environmental impacts of off-leash dogs.

90 documents (1% of all documents)

Environmentally sensitive areas of the GGNRA should be fenced to protect them from off-leash dogs.

“My suggestion would be to keep the areas that you would like preserved blocked off, yet still have off-leash areas marked. Maybe a few more signs could be put up to designate the certain areas.”

Increase educational efforts about off-leash activities.

54 documents (1% of all documents)

Educational programs to inform non-dog owners about dealing with off-leash dogs and teaching dog owners how to properly control their off-leash dog should be promoted.

“Perhaps a comprehensive educational process is needed. We must insist that dog owners understand that the choice to have a dog, particularly in a crowded urban environment like San Francisco, is a very huge responsibility and cannot be taken lightly.”

“Simple educational leaflets about how to interact with dogs at trailheads where they are allowed off-leash. Education of dog owners about habitat and wildlife needs.”

Limit the number of off-leash dogs per person.

49 documents (1% of all documents)

This suggestion was most often made with reference to professional dog walkers who may attempt to take a large number of dogs off-leash at once.

“Why not limit all professional dog walkers to 3 dogs so that they cannot only better control but clean up after the dogs under their care?”

“If you want to avoid large groups of dogs, put some restraints on the dog walkers who bring lots of dogs to the beach and let them go wild. Playing with a dog or allowing a dog to run with an owner keeping an eye on him should be permitted.”

Limit the number of on-leash dogs per person.

19 documents (less than .5% of all documents)

This suggestion was made primarily in reference to professional dog walkers.

“I further think that the rule should be one owner, one dog on leash. How can dog walkers and others control several dogs in their care leashed, to say nothing of unleashed?”

“I believe that no single human should be allowed to walk more than two dogs on leash in the park, a larger number being unmanageable.”

Scientific studies should be conducted to determine the impact of off-leash dogs.

19 documents (less than .5% of all documents)

Studies to address the controversy more objectively should be undertaken.

“To ensure proper maintenance and protection of area flora and fauna, the Park Service should engage in a survey every two to five years to determine the impact of off-leash use on native plants and wildlife and endangered species.”

Encourage volunteer efforts to assist in stewardship of off-leash areas.

15 documents (less than .5% of all documents)

Volunteers could be enlisted to help maintain safe, lawful off-leash areas.

“I would encourage you to find ways to encourage dog owners to voluntarily comply with the regulations. Perhaps creating a volunteer patrol for dog owners so that peer to peer education and enforcement could occur (similar to mountain bike patrols in some parks). Create stewardship opportunities - say a monthly dog feces pick-up party. It sounds odd, but creating ways for dog owners to give back to the park, also helps them to understand the larger park values and makes them more likely to comply.”

IV. Appendix A – Coding Protocol

Public comments were coded for the following information.

Document number

Document numbers had previously been assigned by GGNRA and written directly onto the first page of each document.

Pages

The number of pages in each document had been counted by GGNRA and written directly onto the first page of each document, immediately after the document number.

Geographic code

An alphanumeric geographic code indicating the origin of the document had been assigned by GGNRA and written directly onto the first page of each document, immediately after the number of pages. SRL coders translated this code into a numeric code for inclusion in the dataset. Upon request of GGNRA, SRL coders attempted to break down the code of “1D – East Bay Counties” into specific codes for Alameda and Contra Costa Counties. When, in the course of coding, “1D” was encountered, coders were instructed to enter in a separate field any identifying geographic information from the document. In most cases where such information could be found, this consisted of the zip code of the sender. Based on this information, these documents were subsequently assigned the geographic codes of “6” for Alameda County or “7” for Contra Costa County. In this manner, 297 of the 550 documents originally coded as “East Bay Counties” by GGNRA were recoded as “Alameda County” or “Contra Costa County.”

Location	GGNRA Code	SRL Code
San Francisco County	1A	1
Marin County	1B	2
San Mateo County	1C	3
East Bay Counties	1D	4
Alameda County	--	6
Contra Costa County	--	7
Santa Clara County	1E	5
California (non-Bay Area)	CA	8
California (unspecified)	2A-CA	9
Out of State	3A	10
Unknown Address	3B	11
Bay Area Dog-Related Organization	4A	12
Non-Bay Area Dog-Related Organization	4B	13
Bay Area Environmental Organization	5A	14
Non-Bay Area Environmental Organization	5B	15
Local Agency	6	16
State Agency	7	17
Organization (Other Affiliation)	8	18
Other	9	19

Type of document

The type of each document was coded by the SRL using the following codes:

Type	SRL Code
Letter	1
Form letter	2
Form letter with additional comments	3
Postcard	4
Form card	5
Form card with additional comments	6
E-mail	7
Petition	8
Comment form from public meeting	9
Public meeting transcript	10

As they read the documents, SRL coders noted documents that had identical content and identified them as form letters. As each particular form letter was discovered, it was assigned a code number and was photocopied for inclusion in a notebook shared by the coders, so that subsequent appearances of the same form letter could be easily recognized. In all, 35 different form letters¹ and form cards were identified and cataloged. In some cases, these form letters and form cards contained additional comments added by the author to supplement the form content of the document. These documents were coded as form letters or form cards with additional comments.

Substantive comment

Documents considered to contain comments that were particularly insightful or informative were flagged (with a code of “1”) by the coders.

Comment from government agency

Comments received from government agencies were assigned the following codes, based on the type of agency that had sent them:

Agency Type	SRL Code
County	1
Federal	2
Tribal	3
State	4
City / Local	5

¹ Form emails were coded as form “letters” in order to avoid confusion because sometimes the same form content was received by both letter and email.

Dog ownership status

Authors of documents were coded as to whether they identified themselves as being the owner of a dog or not.

Dog ownership status	SRL Code
Dog Owner	1
Non-Dog Owner	2
Not specified	3

GGNRA Park Sites of Concern

Specific park sites mentioned by respondents in their comments were coded. Up to five park sites per document were coded. If more than five sites were mentioned in a document, a special code of “more than five sites listed” was coded as the fifth site. Two special categories of sites were also used in cases where respondents referred to park sites mentioned in the 1979 Citizens’ Advisory Commission Pet Policy or in the 1996 Superintendent’s Compendium.

GGNRA Park Site	SRL Code
Alcatraz	1
Baker Beach	2
Bolinas Ridge	3
China Beach	4
Cliff House	5
Crissy Field	6
Fort Baker	7
Fort Funston	8
Fort Point	9
Land’s End	10
Milagra Ridge	11
Marin Headlands	12
Muir Beach	13
Muir Woods	14
Ocean Beach	15
Olema Valley	16
Phleger Estates	17
Presidio	18
Rodeo Beach	19
Stinson Beach	20
Sutro Heights	21
Sweeney Ridge	22
Tennessee Valley	23
More than five sites listed	24
1979 Pet Policy sites	79
1996 Compendium sites	96

Position on Off-Leash Dog Walking

Respondents were coded as either being in support of Option A (enforcing regulations against off-leash dog walking), Option B (allowing off-leash dog walking in certain GGNRA sites), or neither.

Position on Opening Additional Areas to On-Leash Dogs

Respondents were coded as either being in support of opening additional GGNRA areas to on-leash dog walking, being against the idea, or neither.

Position Justifications

The reasons given by respondents to support their positions were coded. Documents could be coded for as many reasons given by the respondent as necessary.

Position Justifications	SRL Code*
Dogs are dangerous/threatening.	1
Dogs are friendly/enjoyable.	2
Dog owners are selfish/inconsiderate.	3
Dog owners are responsible/self-regulating.	4
Off-leash dogs discourage park use by minorities, the elderly, children, and people with special needs.	5
Off-leash dogs enhance park use by minorities, the elderly, children, and people with special needs.	6
Freedom/right to walk dogs off-leash.	7
Freedom/right to enjoy parks with dogs on-leash.	8
Freedom/right to enjoy parks without dogs.	9
Benefits of off-leash dog walking for people.	10
Benefits for people free from off-leash dogs.	11
Sociability benefits for people walking off-leash dogs.	12
Exercise benefits for off-leash dogs.	21
Sociability benefits for off-leash dogs.	22
Dog excrement issues.	24
On-leash dogs are more territorial and aggressive.	25
Having dogs off-leash results in more conflicts between dogs.	26
Off-leash dogs harm wildlife.	31
Off-leash dogs do not harm wildlife.	32
Off-leash dogs do not have a negative impact on the environment.	33
Off-leash dogs do not have a negative impact on the environment.	34
Urban park, not wilderness.	35
Restricting off-leash dog walking causes crowding and ecological impacts in the remaining off-leash areas.	36
Parks and their resources should be preserved for the enjoyment of future generations.	39

* The code numbers were assigned non-consecutively so as to leave space for any additional codes needed within each of the 5 categories of position justifications.

(continued)Position Justifications	SRL Code
Exceptions to National Park Service regulations exist elsewhere	51
Altering National Park Service pet management regulations would set a negative precedent.	52
Commercial dog-walking is an unregulated, commercial activity taking place on public lands.	53
Commercial dog-walking provides a benefit to the community.	54
GGNRA land was given by the city with the understanding that existing uses, including off-leash dog walking, would continue.	55
GGNRA land was given by the city to be managed as a National Park.	56
Only a small portion of GGNRA land is used for off-leash dog walking.	57
The cost of enforcing a leash law is too high.	58
The cost of repairing damage done by off-leash dogs is too high.	59
Allowing off-leash dogs would violate the National Park Service's mandate.	60
The presence of off-leash dogs makes parks safer.	71
Off-leash dogs make parks unsafe for visitors.	72
The presence of off-leash dogs increases the need for rescue and intervention efforts.	73

Suggestions

Suggestions made by respondents regarding the off-leash dog walking controversy were coded. Documents could be coded for as many suggestions made by the respondent as necessary.

Suggestion	SRL Code
Create separate and/or fenced areas for off-leash dogs.	81
Fence sensitive areas to reduce environmental impacts of off-leash dogs.	82
Schedule specific times for off-leash dog walking.	83
Limit off-leash dog walking to specific designated areas.	84
Create a licensing process for off-leash dogs.	85
Increase educational efforts about off-leash activities.	86
Limit the number of off-leash dogs per person.	87
Limit the number of on-leash dogs per person.	89
Scientific studies should be conducted to determine the impact of off-leash dogs.	91
Encourage volunteer efforts to assist in stewardship of off-leash areas.	92
Cite only irresponsible dog owners.	94

Number of signatures

The number of signatures on each actual document was entered, no matter how many document numbers had been assigned to the document.

Organization Represented

If the document author was writing as a representative of an organization, the organization name was entered.

Illustrative quotes

Coders occasionally entered from documents verbatim quotes that illustrated particular commonly-made points. Some such quotes have been included in this report.

Problem

Any problems with coding a document were entered in a separate field and addressed separately by SRL researchers.

Position Justifications – People

	=POSITION=	=DOG OWNERSHIP=	=====LOCATION=====			==COMMENT TYPE==						
	Total	Opt. A	Opt. B	Dog Owner	No Dog	Un-known	Bay Area	Else-where	Un-known	Form	Form+ Cmnts	Not a Form
Benefits of off-leash dog walking for people	11%	-	15%	17%	8%	4%	13%	1%	10%	2%	24%	17%
Off-leash dogs discourage park use by certain groups	11%	39%	-	*%	2%	24%	3%	48%	2%	22%	1%	2%
Dog owners responsible	10%	*%	14%	15%	9%	4%	12%	1%	12%	2%	12%	19%
Sociability benefits for people with off-leash dogs	10%	-	14%	17%	7%	3%	13%	1%	7%	1%	36%	10%
Freedom / right to walk dogs off-leash	6%	*%	8%	8%	5%	3%	7%	1%	8%	1%	8%	11%
Off-leash dogs enhance park use by certain groups	3%	-	5%	5%	3%	1%	4%	*%	2%	*%	12%	4%
Dog owners inconsiderate	2%	6%	*%	*%	4%	3%	2%	*%	3%	-	*%	5%
Freedom / right to enjoy parks with dogs on-leash	1%	3%	*%	*%	2%	1%	1%	*%	2%	*%	*%	3%
Freedom / right to enjoy parks without dogs	1%	2%	-	*%	3%	1%	1%	*%	1%	-	-	2%
Benefits for people free from off-leash dogs	*%	1%	*%	*%	1%	1%	*%	-	1%	-	-	1%

(*Less than one percent)

Position Justifications – Dogs

	=POSITION==		==DOG OWNERSHIP==			====LOCATION=====			==COMMENT TYPE==			
	Total	Opt. A	Opt. B	Dog Owner	No Dog	Un-known	Bay Area	Else-where	Un-known	Form	Form+ Cmnts	Not a Form
Exercise benefits for off-leash dogs	19%	-	27%	29%	17%	10%	23%	3%	22%	4%	37%	33%
Dogs are dangerous/ threatening	13%	48%	*%	1%	21%	26%	7%	39%	9%	22%	2%	8%
Sociability benefits for off-leash dogs	11%	-	16%	18%	9%	5%	14%	2%	11%	2%	26%	17%
Dogs are friendly / enjoyable	5%	-	6%	6%	9%	2%	6%	1%	5%	1%	10%	8%
Dog excrement issues	2%	6%	-	*%	4%	3%	2%	1%	3%	*%	*%	4%
On-leash dogs are more territorial, aggressive	2%	-	3%	4%	1%	1%	3%	*%	2%	*%	6%	3%
Having dogs off-leash results in more conflicts between dogs	*%	1%	-	*%	1%	*%	*%	-	1%	-	*%	1%

(*Less than one percent)

Position Justifications – Environment

	==POSITION== ==DOG OWNERSHIP== =====LOCATION===== ==COMMENT TYPE==											
	Total	Opt. A	Opt. B	Dog Owner	No Dog	Un-known	Bay Area	Else-where	Un-known	Form	Form+ Cmnts	Not a Form
Off-leash dogs harm wildlife	24%	84%	*%	1%	15%	49%	9%	86%	7%	43%	3%	8%
Off-leash dogs have a negative impact on the environment	23%	82%	*%	1%	16%	48%	9%	86%	7%	43%	3%	7%
Urban park, not wilderness	4%	-	6%	5%	4%	4%	5%	1%	5%	1%	3%	9%
Off-leash dogs do not have a negative impact on the environment	2%	*%	3%	2%	2%	1%	2%	*%	3%	*%	1%	4%
Off-leash dogs do not harm wildlife	1%	-	2%	2%	1%	1%	2%	*%	1%	*%	1%	3%
Restricting off-leash dog walking impacts the remaining off-leash areas	*%	-	1%	*%	1%	*%	1%	-	*%	*%	*%	1%
Parks and their resources should be preserved for future generations	*%	1%	*%	*%	*%	1%	*%	*%	*%	*%	*%	1%

(*Less than one percent)

Position Justifications – Legal/Economic

	=POSITION=		==DOG OWNERSHIP==			====LOCATION=====				==COMMENT TYPE==		
	Total	Opt. A	Opt. B	Dog Owner	No Dog	Un-known	Bay Area	Else-where	Un-known	Form	Form+ Cmnts	Not a Form
Altering NPS regulations sets a negative precedent	14%	49%	*%	*%	4%	29%	6%	50%	2%	28%	2%	1%
Land given with traditional uses to continue	12%	-	17%	14%	7%	12%	15%	1%	13%	6%	20%	18%
Only a small portion of GGNRA used for off-leash	6%	*%	8%	7%	5%	4%	7%	1%	7%	2%	6%	10%
Allowing off-leash dogs violates NPS mandate	4%	13%	*%	*%	4%	7%	4%	2%	2%	6%	*%	2%
Exceptions exist elsewhere	2%	*%	2%	1%	2%	2%	2%	*%	2%	*%	*%	3%
Land was given to be managed as a national park	1%	3%	*%	*%	2%	1%	1%	1%	1%	*%	-	2%
Commercial dog walking benefits the community	*%	*%	*%	*%	*%	*%	*%	-	*%	*%	*%	*%
Commercial dog-walking is unfair use of public land	*%	*%	*%	*%	1%	*%	*%	-	*%	-	*%	1%
Costs of repairing damage caused by off-leash dogs	*%	*%	-	-	1%	*%	*%	*%	*%	*%	-	*%
Costs to enforce leash law	*%	*%	*%	*%	-	*%	*%	-	*%	-	*%	*%

(*Less than one percent)

Position Justifications – Safety

	=POSITION=	==DOG OWNERSHIP==			====LOCATION=====				==COMMENT TYPE==			
	Total	Opt. A	Opt. B	Dog Owner	No Dog	Un-known	Bay Area	Else-where	Un-known	Form	Form+ Cmnts	Not a Form
Off-leash dogs make parks unsafe for visitors	13%	46%	*%	1%	20%	25%	7%	39%	7%	22%	1%	7%
Off-leash dogs increase the need for rescue and intervention efforts	11%	38%	*%	*%	12%	21%	4%	38%	3%	22%	1%	*%
The presence of off-leash dogs makes park sites safer	4%	-	5%	6%	3%	1%	5%	*%	2%	*%	17%	3%

(*Less than one percent)

Suggestions

	==POSITION==		==DOG OWNERSHIP==		====LOCATION=====				==COMMENT TYPE==			
	Total	Opt. A	Opt. B	Dog Owner	No Dog	Un-known	Bay Area	Else-where	Un-known	Form	Form+ Cmnts	Not a Form
Limit off-leash dog walking to designated areas	5%	1%	6%	5%	4%	5%	6%	1%	6%	2%	6%	8%
Cite only irresponsible dog owners	4%	*%	5%	5%	3%	3%	4%	1%	6%	1%	3%	7%
Schedule specific times for off-leash dog walking	2%	*%	2%	2%	1%	1%	2%	*%	1%	*%	2%	3%
Separate off-leash areas	2%	3%	1%	1%	3%	2%	2%	*%	2%	*%	2%	3%
Fence off sensitive areas	1%	*%	1%	2%	1%	1%	1%	*%	1%	*%	2%	2%
Increase educational efforts	1%	*%	1%	1%	1%	*%	1%	*%	1%	*%	1%	1%
Licensing of off-leash dogs	1%	1%	1%	2%	1%	1%	1%	*%	2%	*%	1%	3%
Limit the number of off-leash dogs per person	1%	*%	1%	1%	1%	*%	1%	*%	1%	*%	*%	1%
Conduct scientific studies	*%	*%	*%	*%	-	*%	*%	*%	*%	*%	*%	*%
Encourage volunteer efforts to steward off-leash areas	*%	*%	*%	*%	*%	*%	*%	*%	*%	-	*%	*%
Limit the number of on-leash dogs per person	*%	*%	*%	*%	-	*%	*%	*%	*%	*%	*%	*%

(*Less than one percent)

Additional Information / Copies

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