

# Dogwalking in GGNRA

Golden Gate National Recreation Area (GGNRA) is beginning a planning process to decide how best to manage dogwalking in the park. This process will result in a dog management plan/Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).

A Negotiated Rulemaking Committee representing the diverse interests likely to be affected by a dog management plan has also been appointed by the Secretary of the Interior. The Committee will work to develop consensus recommendations to the park about where it may be appropriate to allow dogwalking in GGNRA managed lands. The park intends to integrate the recommendations of the Committee's efforts into one or more alternatives for analysis in the EIS.

## Your Participation is Needed Now!

We want to know if you have ideas on the scope of the planning process and potential alternatives. Your input will provide information to both the development of the dog management plan and the work of the Negotiated Rulemaking Committee.



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# Public Scoping Workshops

**Tuesday, April 4, 2006**  
**Marin County**  
Bay Model Visitor Center, Sausalito  
4 - 7:30 pm

**Wednesday, April 5, 2006**  
**San Francisco**  
Fort Mason Officers Club  
4 - 7:30 pm

Each workshop will present information about GGNRA dog management and the planning and negotiated rulemaking processes. Park staff and other National Park Service (NPS) specialists will be on hand to answer your questions and you will be able to submit comments by filling out comment forms at the meeting.

## Public Comments

We hope that you will attend one of the workshops to provide your input. You may also submit comments:

- online:  
through the NPS Planning, Environment and Public Comment (PEPC) website  
<http://parkplanning.nps.gov/>  
Go to Golden Gate National Recreation Area and select EIS/Dog Management Plan for GGNRA
- by mail:  
Superintendent  
GGNRA  
Fort Mason, Building 201  
San Francisco, CA 94123  
Attn: Dog Management Plan

Comments must be submitted or postmarked by 11:59 pm, Monday, April 24, 2006. For more information call the Dog Management Information Line (415) 561-4728.



National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
Golden Gate National Recreation Area  
Fort Mason, Building 201  
San Francisco, CA 94123

National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior



Fort Mason, Building 201  
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# Golden Gate National Recreation Area

## Dog Management Plan/ Environmental Impact Statement



# Public Scoping Workshops

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## History Of Dog Management at GGNRA

The NPS-wide pet regulation requires dogs to be restricted by cage or leash. However, GGNRA practices following the park's Citizens Advisory Commission's 1979 development of a voice control dogwalking policy for certain GGNRA areas, accompanied by an increase in the number of dog walkers using the park and changing expectations for use of the park, have resulted in confusion, controversy, and litigation over dog management and voice control dogwalking.

GGNRA began to emphasize education and enforcement of the NPS pet regulation parkwide in 2002; however, the regulation was routinely ignored by many park visitors. Park staff were overextended attempting to enforce the NPS regulation, ensure visitor (and dog) safety, maintain areas heavily used by dogs, and monitor and prevent resource damage.

A 2005 decision by the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California affirmed a dismissal of three citations for violations of the NPS leash regulation. The decision noted that the 1979 dogwalking policy had been in effect in the park for many years, and that prior to enforcing the NPS-wide leash regulation a formal public notice and comment was required per the Code of Federal Regulations, but had not been carried out by the park.



## Purpose of and Need for Taking Action

The recent court decision, combined with park concerns about visitor conflicts, staff and visitor safety, and the park's increased awareness of resource management issues have underscored the need for a dog management plan to help alleviate confusion and resolve impacts on visitors, staff, and resources.

The purpose of this planning process is to develop a range of alternatives that will provide clear, enforceable guidelines to determine the manner and extent of dogwalking in appropriate areas of the park. The goal of the process is to allow dogwalking while:

- protecting park resources
- providing a variety of visitor experiences
- reducing visitor use conflicts
- ensuring that park resources and values are available for future generations
- increasing the safety of visitors and staff

The park will evaluate alternatives for managing dogwalking in the dog management plan/EIS and identify a preferred alternative. The alternatives will specify which of the GGNRA managed lands are available for on-leash dogs, off-leash dogs, and which are closed to dogs or other visitors. If dogwalking is managed in any areas through seasonal or other partial closures, these will also be identified.

The final plan/EIS will become the basis of a formal "rulemaking" process that will establish regulations for dogwalking in GGNRA. The EIS will be used as the factual basis for rulemaking.

## Guidelines for a GGNRA Dog Management Plan

The following objectives will guide the development of alternatives for the dog management plan/EIS:

- provide for a variety of safe, high quality visitor experiences, including areas where dogs are allowed
- protect native species and habitat, including any threatened, endangered, unique, or rare species from impacts associated with dogwalking
- minimize degradation of soil and water resources by dogwalking
- ensure a safe and healthy working environment for park staff
- be clear, easy to understand, and include educational components
- be enforceable
- be adaptable to changing needs and research and monitoring results

Each alternative developed will include specific criteria to determine where and under what conditions dogwalking opportunities would be appropriate. These criteria would be applied both to existing GGNRA lands and to any lands added to the park in the future.

All alternatives must also be within the fiscal ability of the park to manage. Otherwise, solutions that do not require as much park staff effort (such as fenced closures) may need to be used to achieve protection objectives.

## Negotiated Rulemaking Contributes to the Planning Processes

Together, these processes will result in a dog management plan which could be the basis for a special regulation for dogwalking at GGNRA, with an accompanying environmental impact statement (EIS), as required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969.

The Negotiated Rulemaking Committee was appointed by the Secretary of the Interior, as allowed by the Negotiated Rulemaking Act of 1990, to help identify where dogwalking may be appropriate in GGNRA managed lands. If the Committee reaches a consensus on recommendations, those recommendations will be integrated into one or more alternatives in the EIS. If no consensus is reached, GGNRA will draft recommendations for a proposed regulation, likely using information from the Committee negotiations as a guide.

Both processes include public input. The public may attend Committee meetings and comment on agenda items under rules to be established by the Committee. The EIS process will seek public comment through both public workshops and written comments.

For more information on negotiated rulemaking or the EIS process, please go to: <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/> and select Golden Gate National Recreation Area, then either click on [EIS/Dog Management Plan](#) or [Negotiated Rulemaking for Dog Management](#). You may also call the Dog Management Information Line at 415-561-4728.

