

CRB



CALIFORNIA
STATE LIBRARY
FOUNDED 1850

California Research Bureau
900 N Street, Suite 300
P.O. Box 942837
Sacramento, CA 94237-0001
(916) 653-7843 phone
(916) 654-5829 fax

Dogs on the Beach: A Review of Regulations and Issues Affecting Dog Beaches in California

By Lisa K. Foster

Requested by Assemblymember Ted W. Lieu

MAY 2006

CRB 06-006

**Dogs on the Beach:
A Review of Regulations and
Issues Affecting Dog Beaches
in California**

By Lisa K. Foster

**ISBN 1-58703-212-0
Revised Edition**

Contents

| | |
|--|-----------|
| EXECUTIVE SUMMARY | 1 |
| DOGS ON THE BEACH | 3 |
| AN OVERVIEW | 3 |
| STATE BEACHES | 3 |
| FEDERAL BEACHES | 5 |
| CITY AND COUNTY BEACHES..... | 6 |
| SHARED MANAGEMENT | 7 |
| CALIFORNIA BEACHES THAT ALLOW DOGS..... | 8 |
| RUNNING OFF-LEASH AT ON-LEASH BEACHES | 25 |
| OFF-LEASH BEACHES: THE ISSUES | 27 |
| BENEFITS | 27 |
| CONCERNS | 27 |
| CALIFORNIA’S OFF-LEASH BEACHES | 35 |
| A MODEL OFF-LEASH DOG BEACH | 45 |
| APPENDIX A – CALIFORNIA CODES | 49 |
| PUBLIC RESOURCES CODE | 49 |
| APPENDIX B – FEDERAL CODES | 51 |
| CODE OF FEDERAL REGULATIONS | 51 |
| APPENDIX C – EXCERPTS FROM HEAL THE BAY / 15TH ANNUAL BEACH REPORT CARD, MAY 25, 2005 (ANNOTATED)..... | 53 |
| SOURCES..... | 57 |
| ENDNOTES..... | 61 |

Acknowledgements

Diana Kenlow, Masters of Social Work Intern with the California Research Bureau, provided extensive assistance with the dog beach survey.

Internet Access

This report is also available through the Internet at the California State Library's home page (www.library.ca.gov) under California Research Bureau Reports. The report is formatted for printing pages on both sides (back to back) so some pages are intentionally left blank.

Revised Edition

This report was updated in June 2006.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Millions of residents and tourists use California's public beaches each year to play in the sand and surf. Dog advocacy groups and dog owners are increasingly lobbying for a share of the beach to enjoy the same activities with their canine companions. However, whether dogs should be allowed on beaches is an issue that engenders strong feelings.

Broadly defined, a "dog beach" may refer to any beach that permits individuals to bring their dogs, either on a leash or off-leash. Dogs on leashes are permitted on several California beaches. Some cities and counties have also established specific areas on their beaches where dogs can play off-leash. Off-leash dogs are allowed on some beaches managed by the federal government. They are also permitted on two state beaches that are managed by local governmental entities.

The late Assemblymember Mike Gordon introduced Assembly Bill 359 in 2005. This bill would authorize the Department of Parks and Recreation, the Coastal Commission, and other interested parties to develop an agreement to establish and evaluate a one-year, off-leash dog beach pilot program at a state beach. * Mr. Gordon's successor, Assemblymember Ted Lieu, requested that the California Research Bureau (CRB) conduct a study of dog beaches in the state.

This report identifies beaches along the California coast that allow dogs both on and off-leash. ** It also identifies relevant state statutes and regulations pertaining to dogs on beaches. A narrower definition of a "dog beach" is the sand and surf equivalent of a dog park – an area set aside for dogs to exercise and play off-leash in a controlled environment. For purposes of this report, the term "dog beach" means an off-leash dog beach. In addition, although they share some characteristics with on-leash dog beaches, off-leash dog beaches are the primary focus of this report.

Off-leash dog beaches provide benefits and pose concerns. Besides promoting exercise for dogs and their owners, advocates point out that communities benefit from well-socialized and exercised dogs that are likely to be less aggressive and create a public nuisance. An off-leash area provides a public space and opportunity for dog owners to meet, share information, and form community bonds; it promotes responsible dog

* Assembly Bill 359 (Gordon) is currently in the Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Water. It would establish an off-leash dog beach pilot program at Dockweiler State Beach in Los Angeles County.

** CRB identified dog beaches in California through several sources: federal, state, and local parks and recreation websites, dog friendly travel books, and dog advocacy organizations. We confirmed the current status of each beach (access to dogs—leashed or un-leashed), and obtained information from beach contacts, through a telephone survey. It is important to note that beach rules may change over time so this information is a "point in time" snapshot. In addition, we may have inadvertently overlooked a beach on which dogs are permitted, especially a community beach that does not publicize its existence beyond its local population.

ownership through social peer pressure; and it makes it less likely that dogs will be let loose in other areas.

This report also discusses the major concerns associated with dog beaches – habitat, health, safety, liability, and cost. (The organization CalDOG succinctly labels the common concerns: poop, bites, liability, noise, and wildlife.¹)

- Off-leash dogs are not permitted on several beaches in order to protect plant and animal habitat (for example, the Western Snowy Plover, a shore bird listed as a threatened species under the federal Endangered Species Act).
- The presence of dogs may lead to health concerns about beach and water quality, although the effect of dog waste is difficult to determine in comparison with other sources of pollution.
- Concerns are often raised about potential safety and liability issues that may result when several dogs and persons are sharing the same area. While dog bites do occur, they are not common and no lawsuits have been reported.

Several local governments, after studying and addressing these issues, have established off-leash dog areas. California State Parks, however, views off-leash dog areas as a local recreation need that is appropriately addressed at a municipal- or county-owned beach. As a result, the first and primary state policy issue in relation to establishing an off-leash dog area on a state beach is determining whether this use is a state-level recreation need.

This report describes a number of off-leash dog beaches, ranging from city-maintained Carmel Beach (where dogs are allowed 24-hours a day) to the Huntington Dog Beach that limits dogs to the wet sand and water and is maintained by non-city staff and volunteers. The report also identifies common elements and unique characteristics, and discusses how to structure a model off-leash dog beach, including roles, responsibilities and evaluation criteria.

DOGS ON THE BEACH

AN OVERVIEW

Beaches in California are owned by the public and managed by public entities. Most of the 1,100 miles of beaches along the California coast are officially closed to dogs. However, beach-goers can legally bring their dogs to over 60 beaches up and down California's coastline. These beaches span nine counties and are located within the boundaries of state, county, and city parks. Some of these beaches are also located on federal land administered by the National Park Service and the Bureau of Land Management.

The rules and regulations pertaining to dogs are determined by the local, state, or federal entity that has jurisdiction over each beach. In some cases, beaches are governed by two or more governmental entities that share jurisdiction.

Dogs must be leashed on most beaches. However, dogs can run leash-free on at least seventeen beaches in the state if they are under their owners' voice control. Some of this leash-free beach time is limited to specific areas of the beach, specific times of the day, or specific times of the year. The table that begins on page 8 lists the beaches that allow dogs.

STATE BEACHES

The California Department of Parks and Recreation (also called California State Parks) is responsible for managing the beaches on almost one-third of the state's coastline. The department's mission is "to provide for the health, inspiration, and education of the people of California by preserving the state's extraordinary biological diversity, protecting its most valued natural and cultural resources, and creating opportunities for high-quality outdoor recreation."²

California State Parks, on its website, acknowledges the benefits of visiting a state park with one's dog – exercise for body and spirit. However, these benefits may conflict with State Parks' mission to

**CA CODE OF REGULATIONS
TITLE 14. NATURAL RESOURCES
DIVISION 3. CHAPTER 1.**

4312. Control of Animals.

- (a) No person shall permit a dog to run loose, or turn loose any animal in any portion of a unit, except upon written authorization by the District Superintendent.
- (b) No person shall keep an animal in any unit except under his/her immediate control.
- (c) No person shall keep a noisy, vicious, or dangerous dog or animal or one which is disturbing to other persons, in any unit and remain therein after he/she has been asked by a peace officer to leave.
- (d) No person shall permit a dog or a cat to remain outside a tent, camper, or enclosed vehicle during the night.
- (e) No person shall bring a dog into, permit a dog to enter or remain, or possess a dog in units under control of Department of Parks and Recreation unless the dog is on leash of no more than six feet in length and under the immediate control of a person or confined in a vehicle.
- (f) No person shall bring a dog into, permit a dog to enter or remain, or possess a dog:
 - 1) beyond the limits of campgrounds, picnic areas, parking areas, roads, structures or in posted portions of units except as provided elsewhere in this section.
 - 2) on any beach adjacent to any body of water in any unit except in portions of units designated for dogs...

CALIFORNIA STATE PARKS: YOUR DOG IN THE PARK

Your dog must be kept on a leash at all times while in this park. Leashed dogs are allowed in campgrounds, picnic areas, parking lots, and other specifically designated areas – provided you control and clean up after your pet. Dogs are prohibited from most trails, beaches and developed areas for the following reasons:

- ❑ **To protect park resources** – Dogs are predators by nature, and their presence or lingering scent will disturb and frighten wildlife nearby. Dogs can transmit diseases and parasites to native animals, including foxes, coyotes, and deer. Dogs that run loose or become lost often harass or kill park wildlife.
- ❑ **For the safety and enjoyment of other visitors** – Some people are intimidated by dogs, even by friendly ones. Dogs reduce the amount of wildlife that hikers are likely to see. Also, dog waste along trails is a nuisance to encounter and may contaminate the local water supply.
- ❑ **To prevent problems for you and your dog** – Dogs in wild areas can be bitten by snakes, raccoons, or other wildlife they happen to startle. Dogs frequently pick up ticks and are sometimes injured by toxic or thorny plants. If your dog comes in contact with poison oak, it can easily transfer the irritating oil to your skin. An unleashed dog can suffer painful or sometimes fatal falls. Occasionally a dog is a victim to some larger predator, such as a mountain lion or a bear.

Park regulations, common courtesy, and good judgment all require that you take special care when bringing your pet to this natural area. Thank you for your cooperation!

California State Parks, 2004

protect resources and provide a quality recreational experience for all visitors at state beaches.

Public Resources Code Section 5008.1 provides that park visitors may bring dogs (and other pets) into state parks if it is in the public interest; however, animals must be under the direct control of the visitor and are not permitted to pose a threat to the public welfare or natural or cultural resources, or to create a public nuisance. (See Appendix A.) It is California State Parks' position that "direct control" requires that dogs be leashed.³

California State Parks' Operations Manual states that: "Unleashed, stray or feral dogs can harass and kill wildlife and can intimidate and injure visitors. Dogs look like a predator to most wild animals. Because of this, even the presence of a dog at a distance, whether on or off a leash, often disturbs wildlife. Dog feces may transmit diseases to native wildlife and increase park maintenance work.... is a misdemeanor offense for a person to have an off-leash dog in a state park."⁴

Park rules relating to dogs are intended to ensure the health and safety of all park visitors. (See box at left.)

State Parks' regulations (see box on preceding page) require that a dog leash must be no more than six feet long, and that a dog's owner must not leave the dog unattended. A rabies certificate or dog license may be required. Dog owners are also advised that they are financially responsible for any injuries or damage caused by their dogs and that rule violations may result in citations. For example, it is a

misdemeanor offense for a person to have an off-leash dog in a state park.

Dogs are allowed on leashes at 23 state beaches. One beach – Lighthouse Field State Beach – permits dogs off leash. This beach is managed by a local entity, not State Parks.

FEDERAL BEACHES

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

The U.S. Department of the Interior oversees the National Park Service – which includes National Parks, National Recreation Areas, and National Seashores – and the Bureau of Land Management. All of these federal entities manage California beaches.

Point Reyes National Seashore, north of San Francisco, encompasses 70,000 acres of coastal beaches and headlands, estuaries, and uplands that include both wilderness and historic sites. It is a sanctuary for a myriad of plant and animal species.

The Golden Gate National Recreation Area (GGNRA) spans 76,500 acres of land and water in northern California. It starts at the coastline south of San Francisco, moves into San Francisco and then north of the Golden Gate Bridge.

The GGNRA encompasses several beaches in both Marin and San Francisco counties where dog owners may bring their pets: Rodeo, Baker, Fort Funston, and Ocean. Dogs are also permitted in specific areas of Limantour and Kehoe beaches at Point Reyes.

The National Park Service pet regulation requires that dogs be restricted by cage or leash. Where dogs are permitted in National Parks and Recreation Areas, federal regulations require that they be on a leash no longer than six feet.⁵ Dog owners may be cited or fined for violations of leash, wildlife, or litter laws. However, as noted in the box at right, the leash laws are currently not being enforced in the GGNRA.*

According to the Point Reyes National

DOGS IN THE GOLDEN GATE NATIONAL RECREATION AREA

The Leash Law Lawsuit

In Golden Gate National Recreation Area (GGNRA), dogs had been allowed on leashes – and off leashes under voice control – since 1979 under a pet policy created by a Citizen’s Advisory Commission following public hearings. When in 2002 the National Park Service started enforcing the Park Service leash laws and issuing citations, dog-owners sued. In 2005, the U.S. District Court dismissed the tickets, ruling that the Park’s 20-year failure to enforce National Park leash laws created a de facto policy in some parts of GGNRA that could not be changed without public input.

As a result, the GGNRA is pioneering a “negotiated rulemaking” effort that is being used for only the third time by the Park Service. Instead of the federal agency making policy, this process consists of those who are interested or most affected setting policy by consensus.

A neutral mediator recommended a list of members for the Negotiated Rulemaking Committee for Dog Management that will be negotiating a new regulation. The first meeting – open to the public – was held March 2006. Concurrent with the Negotiated Rulemaking process, a dog management plan and Environmental Impact Statement will be completed through the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process. Both processes include public input.

Until a new regulation is in place, the 1979 policy that allows dogs to be managed by either leash or under voice control remains in effect.

National Park Service
Negotiated Rulemaking Information Line
(415) 561-4728

* Information on GGRNA dog walking regulations is available at www.nps.gov/goga/pets/.

Seashore official website: “Dogs are wonderful animals that give comfort and companionship. However, a national park is not the best place for them. Dogs chase, scare and can transmit diseases to wild animals such as nesting birds or marine mammals. Dogs leave behind a ‘predator’ scent typical of all wild canines like wolves and coyotes. This scent can linger in the area for long periods of time and can disrupt or alter the behavior of the native animals this park has been set aside to protect.”⁶

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

The Samoa Dunes Recreation Area, located on Humboldt Bay, is a 300-acre park managed by the federal Bureau of Land Management (BLM). It is a multiple-use recreation site with activities ranging from Off-Highway Vehicle riding and other recreational activities to scientific study of rare plants. The BLM’s mission is to sustain the health, diversity and productivity of public lands for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations. The Bureau does not have an official policy regarding dogs on BLM land. For consistency, it enforces the policy of the county (Humboldt) in which the land is located.⁷ This policy allows dogs on-leash or off-leash under voice control.

U.S. FOREST SERVICE

Pfeiffer Beach is located in the Los Padres National Forest, which stretches over 200 miles from the Carmel Valley to the western edge of Los Angeles County. It encompasses nearly two million acres in the coastal mountains of central California. The U.S. Forest Service manages this land and focuses on protecting and enhancing watersheds, providing recreation and wilderness opportunities, and promoting use of the forest as a "living laboratory" for ecological diversity and scientific research. The Forest Service does not have an official policy regarding dogs. Like the BLM, it enforces the policy of the county (Monterey) in which the land is located.⁸ This policy requires that dogs must be on a tended leash that is no more than six feet in length.

CITY AND COUNTY BEACHES

Most city and county park departments that allow dogs on public lands require that dogs be leashed, and all require that owners clean up after their dogs. Additional regulations that apply to dogs on the beach vary among local jurisdictions. The city of Avila Parks Department, for example, allows owners to bring their leashed dogs to the beach before 10 a.m. and after 5 p.m. Sonoma County Regional Parks Department allows dogs on beaches during regular beach hours if they are on leashes no more than six feet long and have rabies certification.

At least ten city and county jurisdictions permit dogs to play on their beaches off-leash (Contra Costa, Humboldt, Orange, and San Diego counties; and the cities of Carmel, Coronado, Del Mar, Huntington Beach, Long Beach, Santa Cruz, and San Diego). In Del Mar, dogs are permitted off-leash From September 15 to June 15; they must be on-leash the rest of the year. In contrast, the city of Carmel allows dogs to play on its beach off-leash 24 hours a day as long as they are under their owner’s control. (See the table beginning on page 8 for more detail.)

SHARED MANAGEMENT

Different levels of government share the management of some beaches. For example, the National Park Service and California State Parks jointly manage Redwood National and State Parks. Across from the federal Samoa Dunes Recreation Area, the South Spit is state-owned and managed in partnership by the Bureau of Land Management, California Department of Fish and Game, and Humboldt County.



Photograph by Oakley Stephans, used with permission by the San Francisco SPCA

| CALIFORNIA BEACHES THAT ALLOW DOGS | | | | |
|--|--|---|--|--|
| [Beaches that permit dogs off-leash are indicated in bold] | | | | |
| COUNTY | BEACH | ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE | DESCRIPTION | RULES/REGULATIONS |
| Contra Costa | Point Isabel Regional Shoreline | East Bay Regional Park District (EBRPD) Area south of canal Point Isabel Dog Owners and Friends (Volunteer org.) | Approximately 21 acres of mixed-use open space on south side of canal. Facilities include telephone, restrooms, drinking fountain, parking lot, dog wash, and café. Hours: 5 a.m. to 10 p.m. Fees: None | Dogs must be under voice control and within sight of owner. No more than three dogs per person without permit. Owners must carry leash, clean up feces, stop dog from digging, fill in holes, and prevent dog from going into marsh and disturbing feeding birds. |
| Del Norte | Beachfront Park | Crescent City | Undeveloped beach across from park. Facilities include trash cans and dog bags. No specified hours or fees. | Dogs must be on a leash no more than six feet long; owners must pick up after their dogs. |
| Del Norte | Crescent Beach | Crescent City | Undeveloped beach south of Crescent City. No specified hours or fees. | Dogs must be on a leash no more than six feet long; owners must pick up after their dogs. |
| Del Norte | Gold Bluff's Beach | Redwood National and State Parks Jointly managed by California State Parks and the National Park Service | Facilities include running water, restrooms, and campsites. Hours: Sunrise to sunset Fees: \$6/day use | Dogs must be on tended leash no more than six feet long; owners must pick up after their dogs. |

| CALIFORNIA BEACHES THAT ALLOW DOGS | | | | |
|--|------------------------------------|---|---|---|
| [Beaches that permit dogs off-leash are indicated in bold] | | | | |
| COUNTY | BEACH | ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE | DESCRIPTION | RULES/REGULATIONS |
| Humboldt | Clam Beach County Park | Humboldt County | Undeveloped beach. Facilities include pit toilets. No specified hours or fees. | Dogs must be on leash. |
| Humboldt | Mad River Beach County Park | Humboldt County | Facilities include toilets, water fountain, and campgrounds. No specified hours or fees. | Dogs must be on leash. |
| Humboldt | Samoa Dunes Recreation Area | Bureau of Land Management | 300-acre sand dune park. Hours: One hour before sunrise to one hour after sunset Fees: None | Dogs may be on leash or off-leash under voice control. Owners must have leash. |
| Humboldt | South Spit | Cooperative Management Area State of California (Dept. of Fish and Game)/Humboldt County/Bureau of Land Management | No running water, chemical toilets. Hours: One hour before sunrise to one hour after sunset Fees: None | Dogs may be off-leash under voice control from September 15 to February 28. Must be on-leash during snowy plover nesting season March 1 to September 15. |

| CALIFORNIA BEACHES THAT ALLOW DOGS | | | | |
|--|-----------------------------|--|--|---|
| [Beaches that permit dogs off-leash are indicated in bold] | | | | |
| COUNTY | BEACH | ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE | DESCRIPTION | RULES/REGULATIONS |
| Los Angeles | Dog Zone, Long Beach | City of Long Beach Parks, Recreation & Marine Department Recreation Dog Park Association and Haute Dogs (Volunteer organizations) | A 2.9 acres, unfenced, section of waterfront beach Hours: 6 a.m. to 8 p.m. daily; same as normal beach hours Fees: None | One dog per person. Dogs must wear collar/tags, have current vaccinations, be more than four months old, and respond to voice commands. Aggressive dogs and female dogs in heat are not permitted. |
| Los Angeles | Leo Carillo State Beach | California State Parks | One and one-half miles of beach with running water, picnic tables. Hours: 8 a.m. to 10 p.m. Fees: None | Dogs must be on tended leash no longer than six feet. Owners cannot leave pets unattended and must clean up after them. |
| Marin | Agate Beach | Beach located within Duxbury Reef State Marine Sanctuary Managed by Marin County | Two miles of shoreline during low tide. Facilities include portable toilets. Hours: Sunrise to sunset Fees: None | Dogs must be on a leash no longer than six feet. |
| Marin | Kehoe Beach | Point Reyes National Seashore | Facilities include chemical toilets. Hours: Sunrise to sunset Fees: None | Dogs are allowed north of trail but must be on leash no longer than six feet; leaving pets unattended and tied to tree or object is prohibited. Dogs not permitted south of trailhead (protected habitat for the snowy plover). |

| CALIFORNIA BEACHES THAT ALLOW DOGS | | | | |
|--|-------------------------|---|---|--|
| [Beaches that permit dogs off-leash are indicated in bold] | | | | |
| COUNTY | BEACH | ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE | DESCRIPTION | RULES/REGULATIONS |
| Marin | Limantour Beach | Point Reyes National Seashore | Facilities include chemical toilets. Hours: Sunrise to sunset Fees: None | Dogs are allowed south of trail but must be on leash no longer than six feet; leaving pets unattended and tied to tree or object is prohibited. Dogs not permitted north of trailhead (protected habitat for the snowy plover, harbor seals). |
| Marin | Muir Beach | Golden Gate National Recreation Area | Facilities include chemical toilets. Hours: Sunrise to sunset Fees: None | Dogs are permitted under voice control. |
| Marin | Point Reyes/Great Beach | Point Reyes National Seashore | Facilities include chemical toilets. Hours: Sunrise to sunset Fees: None | Dogs must be on leash no longer than six feet; and leaving pets unattended and tied to tree or object is prohibited. Dogs are not allowed from the North Beach parking lot to the south, as this area is protected habitat for the snowy plover. |
| Marin | Rodeo Beach | Golden Gate National Recreation Area | Facilities include running water, restrooms and drinking fountain. Hours: Sunrise to sunset Fees: None | Dogs are permitted off leash under voice control from the shoreline to the crest of the dunes. |

| CALIFORNIA BEACHES THAT ALLOW DOGS | | | | |
|--|--|---------------------------------|---|---|
| [Beaches that permit dogs off-leash are indicated in bold] | | | | |
| COUNTY | BEACH | ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE | DESCRIPTION | RULES/REGULATIONS |
| Marin | Upton Beach | Marin County | Facilities include trash cans. Hours: Sunrise to sunset Fees: None | Dogs must be on leash no longer than six feet. |
| Mendocino | Mendocino Headlands State Beach (Big River Beach) | California State Parks | Facilities include chemical toilets. Hours: Sunrise to sunset Fees: None | Dogs must be leashed. |
| Mendocino | MacKerricher State Park | California State Parks | Campsites, tables, restrooms. Hours: 6 a.m. to 10 p.m. Fees: None | Dogs must be on tended leash no longer than six feet. Owners cannot leave pets unattended and must clean up after them. |
| Mendocino | Van Damme State Beach | California State Parks | Facilities include running water, restrooms. Hours: 6 a.m. to 10 p.m. Fees: None | Dogs must be on tended leash no longer than six feet. Owners cannot leave pets unattended and must clean up after them. |
| Mendocino | Westport-Union Landing State Beach | California State Parks | Two miles of beach with tables and restrooms. Hours: 6 a.m. to 10 p.m. Fees: None | Dogs must be on tended leash no longer than six feet. Owners cannot leave pets unattended and must clean up after them. |

| CALIFORNIA BEACHES THAT ALLOW DOGS | | | | |
|--|--------------------------|---|--|--|
| [Beaches that permit dogs off-leash are indicated in bold] | | | | |
| COUNTY | BEACH | ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE | DESCRIPTION | RULES/REGULATIONS |
| Monterey | Asilomar State Beach | California State Parks | Facilities including running water and restrooms. Hours: 8 a.m. to half-hour after sunset Fees: None | Dogs must be on tended leash no more than six feet long and have current license and rabies shots; owners must pick up after their dogs. Dogs may be off-leash, under voice control, on south portion of beach, past stream. |
| Monterey | Carmel City Beach | City of Carmel Carmel Residents Association (Volunteer org.) | One mile of beach. Hours: Open 24 hours Fees: None | Dogs are allowed off-leash under voice control. |
| Monterey | Carmel River State Beach | California State Parks | Approximately one mile of beach with running water and restrooms. Hours: 8 a.m. to half-hour after sunset Fees: None | Dogs must be on tended leash no longer than six feet and have current license and rabies shots. Owners cannot leave pets unattended and must clean up after them. |
| Monterey | Garrapata State Beach | California State Parks | Two miles of beachfront with running water and restrooms. Hours: 8 a.m. to half-hour after sunset Fees: None | Dogs must be on tended leash no longer than six feet and have current license and rabies shots. Owners cannot leave pets unattended and must clean up after them. |

| CALIFORNIA BEACHES THAT ALLOW DOGS | | | | |
|--|-----------------------------|--|---|---|
| [Beaches that permit dogs off-leash are indicated in bold] | | | | |
| COUNTY | BEACH | ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE | DESCRIPTION | RULES/REGULATIONS |
| Monterey | Monterey State Beach | California State Parks | One-half mile of sandy beach with chemical toilets. Hours: 6 a.m. to half-hour after sunset Fees: None | Dogs allowed on beach in designated area only; must be on tended leash no more than six feet long; owners must pick up after their dogs. |
| Monterey | Pfeiffer Beach | Los Padres National Forest | Located in Big Sur; facilities include restrooms. Hours: 8 a.m. - sunset Fees: \$5/car | Dogs must be on tended leash no more than six feet long; must have current license and rabies shots; owners must pick up after their dogs. |
| Orange | Huntington Dog Beach | City of Huntington Beach Preservation Society of Huntington Dog Beach (Non-profit org.) | One-mile of fenced beach. Hours: 5 a.m. to 10 p.m. daily (parking lot closes at 8 p.m.) Fees: None | Dogs must be on tended leash no more than six feet long (except on wet sand and water –see p. 40). Owners must pick up after their dogs. |
| Orange | Laguna Beach | City of Laguna | Facilities include running water, restrooms, and showers. Hours: 24 hours Fees: None | Dogs are permitted on-leash before 8 a.m. and after 6 p.m. from June 1 to Sept. 16, and anytime during the rest of the year. |

| CALIFORNIA BEACHES THAT ALLOW DOGS | | | | |
|--|--|---|---|--|
| [Beaches that permit dogs off-leash are indicated in bold] | | | | |
| COUNTY | BEACH | ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE | DESCRIPTION | RULES/REGULATIONS |
| San Diego | Coronado Beach | City of Coronado | <p>Facilities include running water for dogs.</p> <p>Hours: Daylight</p> <p>Fees: None</p> | Dogs permitted off-leash on the two-block area at the north end of the beach. |
| San Diego | Del Mar Dog Beach (also known as North Beach) | <p>James Scripp Bluffs Reserve</p> <p>City of San Diego</p> | <p>North of the San Dieguito River mouth. Facilities include chemical toilets, restrooms, showers, and water.</p> <p>Hours: Sunrise to sunset</p> <p>Fees: None</p> | From Sept. 15 to June 15, dogs are permitted off-leash under voice command from Via de la Valle south to 27th Street. From June 15 to Sept. 15, dogs must be on a leash 8 feet or less in length. |
| San Diego | Dog Beach on Ocean Beach | City of San Diego | <p>Dog Beach is on the west end of the San Diego River Floodway.</p> <p>Hours: Open 24 hours</p> <p>Fees: None</p> | Dogs are permitted off-leash. Owners are asked to pick up after their dogs. Also, puppies are not allowed until they have had all of their required vaccinations; dogs must have up to date vaccinations and current license. |

| CALIFORNIA BEACHES THAT ALLOW DOGS | | | | |
|--|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|---|
| [Beaches that permit dogs off-leash are indicated in bold] | | | | |
| COUNTY | BEACH | ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE | DESCRIPTION | RULES/REGULATIONS |
| San Diego | Fiesta Island | City of San Diego | Located in Mission Bay; park has a 5.2 mile asphalt path around the island and chemical toilets. Hours: 6 a.m. to 10 p.m. Fees: None | Dogs are allowed off-leash except for the fenced areas. Owners must pick up after their dogs. Puppies are not allowed until they have had all required vaccinations; dogs must have current vaccinations and license. |
| San Francisco | Baker Beach | Golden Gate National Recreation Area | South of the Golden Gate Bridge. Facilities include restrooms and running water. Hours: Sunrise to sunset Fees: None | Dogs are permitted under voice control on Baker Beach north of Lobos Creek. |
| San Francisco | Chrissy Field Beach | Golden Gate National Recreation Area | On San Francisco Bay. Hours: Sunrise to sunset Fees: None | Dogs are permitted under voice control. |
| San Francisco | Fort Funston/Burton Beach | Golden Gate National Recreation Area | Beach and park with water faucet/trough. Hours: Sunrise to sunset Fees: None | Dogs are permitted under voice control at Fort Funston and Phillip Burton Beach. Dogs must be on-leash in the Bank Swallow habitat area. |

| CALIFORNIA BEACHES THAT ALLOW DOGS | | | | |
|--|--------------------------------|---|--|--|
| [Beaches that permit dogs off-leash are indicated in bold] | | | | |
| COUNTY | BEACH | ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE | DESCRIPTION | RULES/REGULATIONS |
| San Francisco | Ocean Beach | Golden Gate National Recreation Area | <p>Four miles of beach with chemical toilets.</p> <p>Hours: Sunrise to sunset</p> <p>Fees: None</p> | Dogs are allowed on Ocean Beach under voice control from Stairwell 1 to Stairwell 21. Dogs must be on leash south of Stairwell 21 to Sloat Boulevard to protect the snowy plover. |
| San Luis Obispo | Avila Beach and Old Port Beach | City of Avila Beach | <p>Developed and undeveloped beaches. Facilities include restrooms, showers, and water.</p> <p>No specified hours or fees.</p> | Dogs are not allowed between 10 a.m. and 5 p.m. and must be leashed. |
| San Luis Obispo | Cayucos State Beach | California State Parks | <p>Picnic tables, restrooms, outdoor shower, drinking fountain.</p> <p>Hours: 6 a.m. to 11 p.m.</p> <p>Fees: None</p> | Dogs must be on tended leash no longer than six feet. Owners cannot leave pets unattended and must clean up after them. |
| San Luis Obispo | Morro Strand State Beach | California State Parks | <p>Facilities include picnic area, no running water</p> <p>Hours: Sunrise to 10 p.m.</p> <p>Fees: None</p> | Dogs must be on tended leash no more than six feet long; owners must pick up after their dogs. |

| CALIFORNIA BEACHES THAT ALLOW DOGS | | | | |
|--|--|---------------------------------|--|---|
| [Beaches that permit dogs off-leash are indicated in bold] | | | | |
| COUNTY | BEACH | ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE | DESCRIPTION | RULES/REGULATIONS |
| San Luis Obispo | Oceano Dunes State Vehicular Recreation Area | California State Parks | 3,600 acre off-road area with 5 1/2 miles beach. Facilities include running water, restrooms, and showers. Hours: 6 a.m. to 11 p.m. Fees: \$5/day use (drive in), free walk in | Dogs must be on tended leash no longer than six feet. Owners cannot leave pets unattended and must clean up after them. |
| San Luis Obispo | Pismo State Beach | California State Parks | Facilities include no running water, chemical toilets. Hours: 8 a.m. to 11 p.m. Fees: \$5/day use | Dogs must be on tended leash no longer than six feet. Owners cannot leave pets unattended and must clean up after them. |
| San Luis Obispo | San Simeon State Beach | California State Parks | Facilities include no running water, chemical toilets. Hours: 8 a.m. to 11 p.m. Fees: None | Dogs must be on tended leash no longer than six feet. Owners cannot leave pets unattended and must clean up after them. |
| Santa Barbara | Douglas Family Preserve | City of Santa Barbara | A 70-acre open space area with wide undeveloped beach below mesa. Hours: 24 hours Fees: None | Owners must clean up after their dogs and keep dog leashed on non-City access trails and beaches. |

| CALIFORNIA BEACHES THAT ALLOW DOGS | | | | |
|--|---|--|--|---|
| [Beaches that permit dogs off-leash are indicated in bold] | | | | |
| COUNTY | BEACH | ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE | DESCRIPTION | RULES/REGULATIONS |
| Santa Barbara | Goleta Beach County Park | Santa Barbara County | Beach and park about one-half mile long. Facilities include bathrooms, water, and food. Hours: 8 a.m. to sunset Fees: None | Dogs must be leashed. |
| Santa Barbara | Rincon Park and Beach | Santa Barbara County | One-half mile long; facilities include picnic tables and restrooms. Hours: 8 a.m. to sunset Fees: None | Dogs must be leashed. |
| Santa Cruz | Davenport Landing Beach | Santa Cruz County | Facilities include running water. No specified hours or fees. | Dogs must be leashed. |
| Santa Cruz | Lighthouse Field State Beach & Its Beach | Owned by California State Parks Managed by City of Santa Cruz Friends of Lighthouse Field (Volunteer org) | Facilities include restrooms, lifeguards. Hours: Sunrise to sunset Fees: None | Dogs can be unleashed from sunrise to 10 a.m. and from 4 p.m. to sunset. Dogs are not allowed from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. |

| CALIFORNIA BEACHES THAT ALLOW DOGS | | | | |
|--|------------------------------|---------------------------------|---|---|
| [Beaches that permit dogs off-leash are indicated in bold] | | | | |
| COUNTY | BEACH | ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE | DESCRIPTION | RULES/REGULATIONS |
| Santa Cruz | Mitchell's Cove Beach | City of Santa Cruz | This is a "summer beach;" it mostly disappears in the winter. Facilities include restrooms, lifeguards. Hours: Sunrise to sunset Fees: None | Dogs can be unleashed from sunrise to 10 a.m. and from 4 p.m. to sunset. Dogs are not allowed from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. |
| Santa Cruz | Manresa State Beach | California State Parks | Hwy. 1; South of Aptos. Facilities include running water and restrooms. Hours: 8 a.m. to half-hour after sunset Fees: \$6/parking | Dogs must be on tended leash no longer than six feet. Owners cannot leave pets unattended and must clean up after them. |
| Santa Cruz | Natural Bridges State Park | California State Parks | Facilities include running water, restrooms. Hours: 8 a.m. to half-hour after sunset Fees: \$6/parking | Dogs must be on tended leash no longer than six feet. Owners cannot leave pets unattended and must clean up after them. |

| CALIFORNIA BEACHES THAT ALLOW DOGS | | | | |
|--|--------------------------|---------------------------------|---|---|
| [Beaches that permit dogs off-leash are indicated in bold] | | | | |
| COUNTY | BEACH | ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE | DESCRIPTION | RULES/REGULATIONS |
| Santa Cruz | New Brighton State Beach | California State Parks | 93 acres in Capitola; facilities include running water and restrooms Hours: 8 a.m. to half-hour after sunset Fees: \$6/parking | Dogs must be on tended leash no longer than six feet. Owners cannot leave pets unattended and must clean up after them. |
| Santa Cruz | Palm State Beach | California State Parks | Hwy. 1 in Watsonville; facilities include picnic tables, showers, restrooms, and BBQ. Hours: 8 a.m. to half-hour after sunset Fees: \$6/parking | Dogs must be on tended leash no longer than six feet. Owners cannot leave pets unattended and must clean up after them. |
| Santa Cruz | Rio Del Mar State Beach | California State Parks | Facilities include running water and restrooms. Hours: 8 a.m. to 10 p.m. summer/to sunset in winter Fees: \$6/parking | Dogs must be on tended leash no longer than six feet. Owners cannot leave pets unattended and must clean up after them. |
| Santa Cruz | Seabright State Beach | California State Parks | Facilities include running water, restrooms, and fire rings. Hours: 8 a.m. to 10 p.m. Fees: \$6/parking | Dogs must be on tended leash no longer than six feet. Owners cannot leave pets unattended and must clean up after them. |

| CALIFORNIA BEACHES THAT ALLOW DOGS | | | | |
|--|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|---|---|
| [Beaches that permit dogs off-leash are indicated in bold] | | | | |
| COUNTY | BEACH | ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE | DESCRIPTION | RULES/REGULATIONS |
| Santa Cruz | Seacliff State Beach | California State Parks | Picnic area, running water, restrooms, and showers. Hours: 8 a.m. to 10 p.m. summer/to sunset in winter Fees: \$6/parking | Dogs must be on tended leash no longer than six feet. Owners cannot leave pets unattended and must clean up after them. |
| Santa Cruz | Twin Lakes State Beach | California State Parks | One-mile beach has outdoor showers, restrooms. Hours: 6 a.m. to 10 p.m. Fees: \$6/parking | Dogs must be on tended leash no longer than six feet. Owners cannot leave pets unattended and must clean up after them. |
| Sonoma | Doran Regional Park Campgrounds | Sonoma County | Two-mile beach with campsites, tables, restrooms. Hours: Sunrise to sunset Fees: \$5/day use | Dogs must be on leash no more than six feet long and must have rabies certification. Owners must clean up after their dogs. |
| Sonoma | Gualala Point Regional Park Beach | Sonoma County | 195-acre park with beaches, trails, campsites, tables, and restrooms. Hours: Sunrise to sunset Fees: \$4/day use | Dogs must be on leash no more than six feet long and must have rabies certification. Owners must clean up after their dogs. |

| CALIFORNIA BEACHES THAT ALLOW DOGS | | | | |
|--|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---|---|
| [Beaches that permit dogs off-leash are indicated in bold] | | | | |
| COUNTY | BEACH | ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE | DESCRIPTION | RULES/REGULATIONS |
| Sonoma | Sea Ranch Coastal Access Trails | Sonoma County | Six trail access points to beaches. Hours: Sunrise to sunset Fees: \$4/day use | Dogs must be on leash no more than six feet long and must have rabies certification. Owners must clean up after their dogs. |
| Sonoma | Sonoma Coast State Beach | California State Parks | Three long sandy beaches separated by rocky bluffs and headlands; running water and restrooms. Hours: Sunrise to sunset Fees: \$6/parking | Leashed dogs are allowed at Shell Beach, Portuguese Beach and Schoolhouse Beach. Owners must pick up after their dogs. |
| Sonoma | Stillwater Cove Regional Park | Sonoma County | Small beach in park with campground, tables, restrooms. Hours: Sunrise to sunset Fees: \$4/day use | Dogs must be on leash no more than six feet long and must have rabies certification. Owners must clean up after their dogs. |
| Ventura | Hollywood Beach | Ventura County | One mile-stretch with restrooms and running water. Hours: 24 hours Fees: None | Dogs are allowed on beach before 9 a.m. and after 5 p.m. on-leash only; owners must clean up after their dog. |

| CALIFORNIA BEACHES THAT ALLOW DOGS | | | | |
|--|---------------------|---------------------------------|---|--|
| [Beaches that permit dogs off-leash are indicated in bold] | | | | |
| COUNTY | BEACH | ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE | DESCRIPTION | RULES/REGULATIONS |
| Ventura | Oxnard Shores Beach | City of Oxnard | Developed beach with restrooms, water. Hours: 7 a.m. to dusk Fees: None | Dogs must be on-leash; owners must clean up after their dog. |
| Ventura | Silver Strand Beach | Ventura County | One-mile stretch with restrooms and running water. Hours: 24 hours Fees: None | Dogs are allowed on beach before 9 a.m. and after 5 p.m. on-leash only; Owners must clean up after their dogs. |

RUNNING OFF-LEASH AT ON-LEASH BEACHES

As the preceding table shows, most California beaches that permit dogs require that they be on-leash. Beach managers and others responding to the CRB survey observed that, in addition to receiving some complaints about dogs off-leash, they regularly see dogs running off-leash in areas where leashes are required. In some cases dog owners may not know the rules, but in many cases they know and disregard the leash laws.

Dog-owners can be cited and fined for having their dogs off-leash. In many locations, however, enforcement is sporadic or minimal. This is generally attributed to enforcement agencies responding to higher priority calls with their limited staffing resources.

At some beaches, off-leash use has evolved over the years into a common practice and dog owners routinely let their pets loose in spite of leash requirements. For example, on beaches like Upton and Cayucos State Beach there is a history of informally allowing dogs off-leash. Leash laws are typically not enforced at some beaches located in small communities and their off-leash use is not publicized outside of the community.

“...In search of dog-friendly beaches, we recently called and researched ocean beaches throughout the United States and Canada. While we did find hundreds of beaches that allow dogs, the majority of beaches throughout the U.S. and Canada do not allow pets. Based on an unscientific poll by DogFriendly.com, the top reason for banning dogs from beaches is the disregard for leash laws.

Violation of the leash law is a hot topic and park officials can be very sensitive about this issue. Many popular beaches have banned dogs because there were incidents with a person or even a dog being bothered by someone else's dog, or park officials were concerned about such conflicts arising. Even beaches that have recently allowed leashed dogs are now banning dogs completely because too many people are choosing to ignore the leash law....”

Tara Kain
Dog Etiquette for a
Dog-Friendly Beach
April 26, 2003

OFF-LEASH BEACHES: THE ISSUES

“It is a tricky balance. I used to work for the GGNRA here and have seen first-hand the damage that a dog of careless owners can do to the resources [and themselves – I have a friend whose dog chased a ball over the cliff’s edge and broke the upper left quadrant of his jaw/gums. Poor ol’ hound dog!] I also know that dogs must have off-leash play time to stay sane. And I also know that everyone who pays their taxes has a right to utilize those same resources ... with their children safely in tow.”⁹

BENEFITS

According to the Director of the Behavior Clinic at the Tufts University School of Veterinary Medicine, the San Francisco Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals and other organizations and dog trainers, off-leash play is essential to the well-being of dogs – they do not get sufficient exercise without it. Regular off-leash play makes for healthy, well-adjusted dogs. It burns off pent-up energy, builds confidence, improves a dog’s social skills and helps prevent aggression.¹⁰

Advocates and others who have studied this area point out that off-leash recreation benefits communities in addition to dog owners and their dogs.¹¹ These benefits include:

- Well-socialized and exercised dogs are less aggressive and less likely to create a public nuisance.
- Designating off-leash space for dogs reduces the likelihood that dogs will be let loose in other areas where they could bother or infringe on the rights of other park users.
- Off-leash areas promote exercise for dog owners.
- Dogs often help “break the ice” and bring people together. An off-leash area often functions as a social center – it provides a public space and opportunity for dog owners to meet, share information, and form community bonds.
- Off-leash areas promote responsible dog ownership. Social peer pressure from regular area users tends to enforce the basic rules such as cleaning up after one’s dog and controlling behavior.

CONCERNS

Several issues are consistently raised during discussions and debates about creating areas for dog owners to share the beach and water with their unleashed dogs. These include concerns about adverse impacts to wildlife and plant habitat, and about impaired quality of both the beach and water. Other concerns center on the safety of the people and dogs that share the same space, and the potential for increased liability due to these health and safety risks.



WESTERN SNOWY PLOVER

The Western Snowy Plover is a sparrow-sized, light-colored shorebird with dark patches on either side of the neck, behind the eye, and on the forehead. Snowy plovers have lived on California beaches for thousands of years, but today human use of their remaining beach habitat seriously threatens their survival. Once numbering in the thousands, less than 1500 breeding plovers remain. Prior to 1970 they nested at 53 locations; today they nest in only half as many sites. California State Park beaches provide much of the suitable habitat remaining for this small shorebird.

*Rules & Guidelines for
Protecting the Snowy Plover,
California State Parks, 2002*

HABITAT

Dogs are not permitted on some beaches in order to protect specific habitat. While the potential adverse impact of dogs on a variety of animal and plant life is of concern, the Western Snowy Plover – a small shorebird – is the primary “lighting rod” issue on the beach.

SNOWY PLOVER PROTECTION¹²

The Pacific coast population of the Western Snowy Plover is listed as a threatened species under the federal *Endangered Species Act*. In addition to protection on federal land, California State Parks has a legal obligation to protect snowy plovers on State beaches. (See box at left for a description of this bird.)

The State Parks system is concerned about the impact of both humans and domestic animals on this shore bird. Because the birds blend in with their surroundings and are hard to see, park visitors may inadvertently disturb them or their nests. Unleashed dogs may chase or catch birds and destroy nests. State Parks literature points out that even leashed dogs that are nearby may frighten plovers off their nests. A frightened plover may abandon its nest or chicks, or may crush its own eggs while running off a nest, or

may use up its small reserves of energy fleeing instead of gathering food – which can be enough to kill the bird.

The provisions of the *Endangered Species Act* apply to all beachgoers.* This means that killing, harming, or damaging the snowy plover’s habitat is prohibited. It also means that if an individual brings a dog onto a beach and the dog disrupts the feeding of a bird, leading to the bird’s injury, it is a violation of the law.

California State Parks reports taking several measures to help the Western Snowy Plover recover and to protect the beach ecosystem. These include fencing off nesting sites

* The federal Endangered Species Act makes it a crime “to harass, harm, pursue” a threatened species without special exemption. “Harm” is defined to include significant habitat modification or degradation which actually kills or injures wildlife by significantly impairing essential behavioral patterns, including breeding, feeding or sheltering. “Harassment” is defined as an intentional or neglectful action that creates the likelihood of injury to wildlife by annoying it to such an extent as to significantly disrupt normal behavior patterns which include, but are not limited to, breeding, feeding, or sheltering.

(using highly visible orange plastic fencing, for example), posting warning signs, and educating beach goers. In addition, some recreational activities (like kite flying) are restricted and some portions of the beaches are closed to dogs to protect nesting areas.

Federal and local beaches with snowy plovers or other endangered or threatened species take similar actions. For example, when migratory shore birds, including snowy plovers, turned up unexpectedly at Ocean Beach Dog Beach in 2004, wildlife officials erected protective fencing around the birds' nests in the sand dunes until the end of nesting season to accommodate them.¹³

PUBLIC HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT¹⁴

There are over 150 million visits to California beaches each year. Over the past few years, beachgoers have become increasingly concerned about water quality. Waters that are polluted may contain several different disease-causing organisms, commonly called pathogens. This is especially true in Southern California, one of most densely populated coastal regions in the country.*

Bacterial pollution comes from numerous sources including sewer line breaks, sewage spills and overflows, waste from pets and other domestic animals, waste from marine mammals and birds, poorly maintained septic tanks, and oil spills. Polluted water makes its way into the bays and ocean through storm drains and storm water runoff. This storm and urban runoff is the leading cause of pollution along the state's coastline. (State and local health officials recommend that beachgoers never swim within 100 yards of any storm drain.)

Exposure to contaminated water has been linked to increased risk for a broad range of adverse health effects including fever, nausea, and gastroenteritis,

SNOWY PLOVERS & THE ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT

In 1993, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) listed the coastal population of the Western Snowy Plover as a threatened population. In 1999, the USFWS designated critical habitat; it re-issued critical habitat in 2004 following a lawsuit over failure to analyze the economic impacts of the designation. The USFWS developed a recovery plan in 2001 that remains in draft form.

Some dog advocacy and other organizations challenge the legitimacy of the federal process used to designate the snowy plover as "threatened," and subsequent protections. The USFWS is continuing to review petitions received in 2002 and 2003 to de-list the Western Snowy Plover based on a challenge to the genetic distinctiveness of the plover population.

CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION

The California Coastal Commission, in partnership with cities and counties, plans and regulates the use of land and water along the coast. The Commission has jurisdiction over activities that change the intensity of use or public access to land, and construction on beaches. A major concern is potential restrictions to beach access (for example, a fence across the beach). Some dog beach-related actions may require a permit from the Coastal Commission. The Commission, however, does not have a specific policy related to dogs or dog beaches.

* The population growth in Southern California results in open land converted into hard surfaces. This increases the rate of urban runoff and can impact water quality through adding sediment, toxic chemicals, microbial pathogens, and nutrients to the ocean.

as well as cold and flu-like symptoms such as nasal congestion, sore throat, fever and/or cough. Children, the elderly, and persons with impaired immune systems, are at the greatest risk.¹⁵

California statutes require that state and local agencies monitor water quality by analyzing water samples for specific bacteria that indicate the presence of pathogens.* The bacteria counted are total coliform, a rough indicator of decay, and fecal coliform and enterococci, which are associated with human sewage and the excrement of warm-blooded animals.

Water quality is generally analyzed during three time periods – summer dry weather, year-round dry weather, and wet weather conditions – because different conditions affect pollution levels. For example, after a rain, bacteria counts usually far exceed state health criteria for recreational water use. (State and local health officials recommend that beachgoers never swim in any coastal water during a rainstorm, and for at least three days after a storm has ended.)

When water monitoring reveals unhealthy levels of bacteria, or rainfall runoff threatens the coastal water quality, lifeguards or other beach officials post advisories to warn the public. They generally close beaches that are contaminated by sewage spills or other serious health hazards.

Heal the Bay, an environmental organization, produces *The Beach Report Card*, an annual consumer-friendly summary of the state's beach water quality monitoring programs.¹⁶ Endorsed by the State Water Resources Control Board, this summary assigns a grade to approximately 350 beaches where the water quality is monitored year-round (and additional beaches where water is monitored during specific times of the year). *The Beach Report Card 2004-2005*, with dog beaches annotated, is included as Appendix C.

With a few exceptions, beaches that allow dogs received excellent to very good grades (A or B) for dry weather during the past two grading cycles. (Over 75 percent of all beaches received an F for their wet weather grade.) Goleta Beach in Santa Barbara, an off-leash beach, received a C grade. Ocean Beach Dog Beach, which has ongoing water quality problems, improved from a D in 2003 to a C on the latest report card. According to city staff, the poor water quality is primarily attributed to the beach's location at the mouth of the San Diego floodway, an urban runoff site (see page 46 for a description of Dog Beach clean-up efforts).¹⁷

There are limitations associated with the current water quality testing processes: water testing analyses do not indicate the source of contamination: the water is not tested often enough, or at the right times, to accurately determine if there is harmful bacteria contamination: and the time lag between collecting the data, disseminating the results,

* California Health and Safety Code Sections 115875-115915 specify requirements related to water quality testing and notifying the public of health hazards through posting advisories and closing the beach.

and posting warnings about water quality may lead to outdated information.¹⁸ In addition, a recent epidemiological study found that the types of bacteria that health officials test for do not relate to the illnesses that beachgoers contract. As a result, the traditional testing methods may not be a reliable indicator of whether water is safe for recreation.¹⁹

Viruses are believed to be a major cause of water-borne illnesses.²⁰ There is also what has been referred to as a “toxic cocktail” of pesticides, herbicides, heavy metals and other pollutants in the water.²¹ Water quality processes do not routinely include tests for any of these.

State regulations prohibit dogs on public swimming beaches that have a lifeguard (see box at right). Environmental groups and others have raised health concerns about the effect of dogs and dog waste (feces and urine) on the beaches and water. The primary concern is that people are more likely to become ill after swimming at beaches that allow dogs in the surf zone due to small amounts of fecal matter that remain on the sand and contaminate the water. (And, in spite of efforts by dog-owners to scoop their dogs’ poop, there will always be some dog waste left behind.)²²

Dog waste is clearly a part of the pollution mix. However, given current testing practices and limitations, it is difficult to measure and quantify the amount of contamination that dog waste contributes to the beaches and water.

The interrelationship among pollutants and the beach environment is complex. The characteristics of the beach (such as open beaches versus beaches adjacent to a natural or concrete storm drain) and the range of contamination sources impact the water quality. At some beaches, dog waste may be a major offender, at others a different source, like droppings from sea birds, may turn out to be a primary polluter.²³

SAFETY

Dogs and people will inevitably interact on a dog beach. In addition, it is likely that dogs will come in

CA REGULATION PERTAINING TO DOGS AND BEACHES

7985.1 Animals.

No person shall bring onto or allow any animal, except guide dogs used by the blind, to remain on any beach which has been designated a public swimming beach by the state, or any city, county, or city and county and where life guards are provided, except that horses may be ridden on designated equestrian trails and areas.

This regulation is not intended to prohibit or supersede any local ordinance now in effect or which may be enacted.

California Code of Regulations,
Title 17, Group 10.1, Article 2

HEAL THE BAY’S RECOMMENDATIONS ON DOG BEACHES

1. The dog park must be located above the highest high tide line. [Heal the Bay does not support dog beaches that allow dogs in the water or on any part of the beach that is subject to the tide.]
2. The dog park should be fully enclosed by fencing or other means to ensure dogs stay within the designated area.
3. The area should be clearly marked as a dog park so that tourists and other visitors will understand the area is a dog park.
4. Rules requiring the immediate clean-up of dog feces should be strictly enforced.
5. A routine maintenance program should be implemented to keep the designated area clean of dog feces and trash.

contact with people who are on sunning, swimming, jogging, or biking on adjacent portions of the beach. When a large group of people and a large group of dogs are placed together, this situation can lead to a confrontation between a dog and an adult, child, or another dog.

California State Parks does not permit off-leash dogs on state beaches. In a letter to the City of Santa Monica, the Deputy Director of Parks Operations observes that dogs may be a potential threat to visitors, park staff, and other dogs, when not under the physical restraint of a leash. In addition, “dogs can impact aesthetics and the ‘sense of place’ sought by many visitors to state parks. While many people enjoy the companionship of their dogs, many other park visitors complain that their experience is negatively impacted by dogs.” Further, some people are afraid of dogs. And even friendly dogs that enthusiastically jump on people can be an unpleasant, frightening, or dangerous experience, especially for children and the elderly.²⁴

The California Surf Lifesaving Association does not have an official position on dog beaches. However, at the February 28, 2006 Santa Monica City Council meeting, Los Angeles County lifeguards – charged with the primary enforcement rules at the beach – expressed concern that the need to “police” dogs on the beach would distract them from protecting swimmers, their primary mission.

Conflicts between dogs and people (including confrontations between dog owners that result from encounters between their dogs) occur at dog beaches. Long Beach lifeguards have complained that in warm weather there can be up to 50 dogs on the beach and that disputes arise among swimmers, windsurfers, and dog owners.²⁵

Some dog beaches attempt to eliminate or minimize potentially hazardous situations by addressing them through rules. For example, Long Beach Dog Zone rules state that children must be accompanied by an adult and “must not run, shout, scream, wave their arms, or otherwise excite or antagonize dogs.” The Dog Zone also limits the number of dogs to one per adult to ensure that each dog can be adequately supervised at all times.

According to Steve Hammack, Superintendent of Parks, during the past three years there have been four persons known to have been bitten by dogs (including a Park Ranger and a toddler) at Santa Cruz’s Lighthouse Field State Beach.²⁶ Dog bites and other injuries have also reportedly occurred at some beaches in the Golden Gate National Recreation Area.*

* In their August 2005 Emergency Petition submitted to the U.S. Department of the Interior that requests the leash law be enforced pending completion of the federal negotiated rulemaking process, several organizations that oppose off-leash dogs at the Golden Gate National Recreation Area (GGNRA) state that, since September 2000, off-leash dogs have harmed dozens of visitors, including thirteen serious physical injuries (see box on page 5). However, in its response to this petition, a dog owners group asserts that these incidents are not authenticated and that many of them involve unleashed dogs in areas that require them to be on-leash.

Managers at other dog beaches report that they are not aware of bites or other injuries caused by unleashed dogs. In addition, the literature and a recent study of 17 California dog parks conducted by the University of California (UC), Davis, School of Veterinary Medicine conclude that injuries to people from dog bites in off-leash areas are rare.²⁷ Anecdotally, however, there are dog bites to humans that go unreported, for example, if the person does not want to jeopardize the dog beach.²⁸

*“A dog park is like a cocktail party, where you don’t know anyone and everyone is drunk. You could have fun, but it could be a disaster.”**

Dog beaches, like dog parks, may be dangerous to dogs. When dogs play – and are running and jumping in groups – there is always the potential for the activity to get out of hand and fighting may occur. Different play styles among dogs may cause misunderstandings or fights, or dogs from the same family may gang up on another dog. In some cases, a small dog may be treated as prey by a larger dog. (It is not uncommon for dog parks to have separate large and small dog areas to prevent this situation).²⁹

Dog beach managers report that confrontations among dogs are not uncommon. However, no injuries or formal reports were reported. The UC Davis dog park study also found a low risk of dog bites to dogs.³⁰

According to DogPAC Santa Barbara, a dog-advocacy group, *“There are no perfect solutions to prevent accidents for adult recreational users or dogs, though dog safety should be a consideration when choosing appropriate parks. But dog safety is ultimately the dog owner’s responsibility.”*

A related concern is the spillover effect of a dog beach on adjacent areas. For example according to Huntington State Beach staff, many dog owners park outside the off-leash area on State Park property and unleash their dogs before they arrive at the city owned dog beach. These dogs often disturb wildlife, sun bathers and other beach users while enroute to the off-leash area.³¹

LIABILITY

Various dog beaches in California have been in operation from three to over 25 years. Our survey of beach managers found no examples of lawsuits at any of these areas.

Public entities carry general liability coverage. Several cities and counties have addressed the potential liability involved in owning or managing a dog beach by posting signs in conspicuous locations, such as the entrance. The signs advise visitors that 1) the park is an off-leash area and that they use the area at their own risk, and 2) they are assuming all risk and that the city is “held harmless” for any injury or damage caused by their off-leash dog. (See the box at right for an example.)

* Trish King, CPDT, Director of Behavior and Training, Marin Humane Society.

LIABILITY LANGUAGE

“Use of the dog exercise area by the dog shall constitute implied consent of the dog’s owner to all regulation and shall constitute a waiver of liability to the City of Long Beach and an agreement to protect, defend, indemnify, and hold harmless the City of Long Beach, its officials and employees for any injury or damage caused by a dog when the dog is not on a leash.”

City of Long Beach
6.16.310 Dog Beach Zone
ORDINANCE NO. C-7859 S.

However, this type of language has not been tested in court to determine whether it provides the desired immunity. In addition, there are some caveats to consider. The court may not consider the language and signage to be adequate relative to the city or county permitting a hazard to exist. The term “dog-owner” may not adequately cover all persons in the dog area. In addition, regardless of the validity of the lawsuit, public entities may be sued due to the public’s perception of “deep pockets.”³²

Other cities do not address liability specific to an off-leash dog beach (or in addition to the city’s general liability coverage). Managers of these beaches report that liability has been neither a concern nor an issue to date.

COSTS

We did not find comprehensive information about the start-up costs that are required to establish the dog beach. However, they are generally reported as minimal and typically consist of purchasing additional trash cans, dog waste bags, bag dispensers, and signage. A 2002 news item about Ocean Beach Dog Beach in San Diego states that the city spent \$10,000 on mutt mitts (dog bags), trash cans, and signs to improve and, in effect, re-start the dog beach.³³

Some cities and counties provide the total amount of funding and all of the maintenance services for the dog beach. In these cases, city or county crews generally perform regular beach maintenance with funds budgeted for all of the beaches (the dog beach is not broken out as a separate item). The city or county also provides dog waste bags and trash cans, while individual dog owners are expected to remove their dog’s waste.

A common approach, especially for newer dog beaches, is shared maintenance. In these cases, city or county crews provide regular beach maintenance with funds budgeted for all of the beaches (the dog beach is not broken out as a separate item). In addition, a community group partners with the city to maintain the dog beach. Specifically, the partners take on the responsibility and cost of cleaning up the dog waste and undertake other duties, such as providing dog waste bags and educating beachgoers about the rules.

The participation of volunteers – through donations and services – often offset city and county costs. Two of the dog beaches generate revenue. Huntington Dog Beach generates income indirectly through parking fees, and Point Isabel receives income through on-site concessions.

A beach manager pointed out that the primary negative cost impact of a dog beach is that it attracts more visitors to the beach, which results in the need for increased maintenance and enforcement. There are, however, some economic benefits to local government and/or nearby merchants created by increased visitors.

CALIFORNIA'S OFF-LEASH BEACHES

Several cities, and some other entities, have established off-leash dog areas in response to dog owners' requests for access to the beach and water to exercise and play with their dogs. This decision generally entailed a public process that addressed the impact that off-leash dogs would have on habitat, health, safety, liability, and costs.

Beaches in northern California that do not require dogs to be leashed include the Samoa Dunes Recreation Area, South Spit, Upton Beach, some beaches in the Golden Gate Recreation Area (Rodeo, Baker, Fort Funston/Burton, and Ocean Beaches), Carmel City Beach, Lighthouse Field State Park and Mitchell's Cove.

Southern California beaches allowing unleashed dogs include the beach at the Douglas Family Preserve, Point Isabel, Long Beach Dog Zone, Huntington Dog Beach, Ocean Beach Dog Beach, Del Mar Dog Beach, Coronado Dog Beach, and Fiesta Island.

Several are described below (from north to south) to identify common characteristics and characteristics that are unique to specific beaches.

CARMEL CITY BEACH³⁴

*"For dogs lucky enough to live in Carmel-by-the-Sea, life just doesn't get any better. The upscale tourist town of art galleries and beautiful coastal vistas has a soft spot for its four-legged residents. Carmel now has a special place for dogs to quench their thirsts as well. Carmel has dedicated the "Fountain of Woof," a dogs-only drinking fountain at Carmel Plaza... Other amenities for pooches in Carmel include the right to run free on the city's white-sand beach."*³⁵

Carmel does not have a specific "dog zone" at its beach. Dogs have had the full off-leash run of the beach for over 25 years.

Signs posted along the pedestrian walkway parallel to the beach advise visitors to clean up after their dogs. The city provides dog bags for this purpose and the Police Department is responsible for enforcement. City employees also maintain the beach, although the Carmel Residents Association assists with monthly beach clean-ups. Beach maintenance costs are included in the city budget.

According to Mike Branson, head of the City Forest, Parks & Beach Department, the consensus among Carmel residents is to allow dogs on the beach. However, conflicts flare up at times in spite of this longstanding tradition. One problem is related to an increase in beach usage – as the numbers of dogs increase, so does the potential number

CARMEL-BY-THE-SEA DOG ORDINANCES

The city of Carmel ordinance states that "It is unlawful for the owner or person having charge of any dog to permit the dog to run at large on any City-owned beachlands or on any City-owned park lands unless the owner or person having charge is also present and in control of the dog at such time as it is running loose."

Other dog ordinances make it unlawful for female dogs in heat and vicious dogs to be off-leash. The dog owner, having knowledge that the dog has menaced, attacked or bitten any person or animal, cannot permit the dog to run leash-free unless the dog is wearing a muzzle. Further, such dogs cannot be tethered on any sidewalk or public property unless muzzled.

LIGHTHOUSE FIELD STATE BEACH (LFSB) LAWSUIT

In 2001, the city of Santa Cruz began a process to update the 1984 General Plan for LFSB. While the 1984 Plan stated that dogs should not be off-leash, in 1993 the City Council instead allowed dogs off-leash. The 2001 Plan update proposed to change the off-leash policy to conform with the 1993 decision. The public hearings for this process generated controversy, with complaints about “sensitive habitat degradation” and uncontrolled dog behavior (pooping, barking, chasing, and snarling).

A lawsuit was filed against the city claiming that the Initial Study for the Plan did not adequately address a change in policy and requesting that the City prepare an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) on the impact of dogs on the beach. The court denied the lawsuit in 2004, and the ruling was appealed.

In August 2005, the Court of Appeal ruled that an EIR was not required, but found that the Initial Study should be amended to discuss potential increases in dog usage over the years.

In response to the court decision in October 2005, the California Department of Parks and Recreation informed the city of Santa Cruz that it would have to comply with its 1984 General Plan and that members of the public would be prohibited from using LFSB for off-leash dogs by November 15, 2007. This date was established to allow the City a grace period to consider alternative off-leash locations at city-owned facilities.

The City Council is debating their response to State Parks. Council members are hearing from residents who have had negative experiences with dogs and feel that they don't belong in a state park, and from a large number of dog advocates – many displaying the slogan “I Like Dogs and I Vote.”

of conflicts among dogs, and by extension, their owners. Nearby state beaches require that dogs be leashed or banned altogether. As a result, more dogs and their owners come to Carmel to play off-leash.

Another issue is an increase in the number of dog owners who do not pick up after their pets. The city and the Residents Association are reviewing options to combat this problem.

Carmel does not address liability in relation to dogs on its beach in the municipal ordinances. This issue has not been a city concern to date and no lawsuits have been filed.

LIGHTHOUSE FIELD STATE BEACH³⁶

Forming the northern boundary of Monterey Bay, this area is one of the last open headlands in any California urban area. Surfers, tourists, birds – and dogs – use this area. In the mornings and late afternoons, dogs can run leash-free in the field on the cliff and on the beach below.

The State owns Lighthouse Field State Beach (LFSB). Under a 1977 agreement that expires in 2007, the city of Santa Cruz has the authority and responsibility for developing, operating, and maintaining the area. The state and county retained approval over any changes in policy and operations.

Rules about dogs on the beach have changed over time in Santa Cruz. In 1964, dogs had to be leashed; by 1976 dogs were banned from all beaches. In 1993, the City Council changed the city leash law to allow off-leash areas. With the consent of the state and county, the City Parks and Recreation Superintendent designated Santa Cruz's three beaches – Lighthouse Field, Its, and Mitchell's Cove – as off-leash areas during morning and late afternoon (from sunrise to 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. to sunset).

However, many violate the off-leash hours. The Superintendent of Parks reports that, during the past four years, Lighthouse Field State

Beach park rangers have issued around 900 citations, primarily to individuals with unleashed dogs during on-leash hours.

Friends of Lighthouse Field (FOLF) was formed in 2002 during the midst of the LFSB lawsuit (described in the box). Its members “support the preservation of the beauty and recreation opportunities for people and dogs off-leash at Lighthouse Field and Its Beach.” FOLF sponsors periodic volunteer clean-up days, provides clean-up bags, and educates the public on park rules and responsibilities.³⁷

DOUGLAS FAMILY PRESERVE OFF-LEASH BEACH³⁸

The Douglas Family Preserve is a 70-acre grassy mesa with a wide area of undeveloped ocean frontage. Dog owners walked their dogs both on- and off-leash before the land was gifted to the city of Santa Barbara several years ago to be used as an open space park.

During the eight years it took the city to approve the Douglas Family Preserve Master Plan, no changes were made in the off-leash practices. The most contentious issue raised during the plan approval process was the off-leash provision. The approved plan for the Preserve provides that dogs can be off-leash on the mesa and on the beach, though they must be on-leash when walking through adjacent county property to access the beach. (Dog owners reportedly often violate the county leash requirement and let their dogs off-leash before reaching the Preserve.)

City employees maintain the beach. Dog waste bags (Mutt Mitts) and trash cans are located on the way in, before visitors reach the Off-Leash Beach, so dog owners need to remember to pick up empty bags and deposit full ones on their way out. Maintenance costs for this beach are included in the city’s general maintenance budget.

The city posts signs identifying the area as a dog beach. Ordinances and signs state that the dog owner, and not the city, is responsible for any actions by their dog.

POINT ISABEL³⁹

Since 1987, the East Bay Regional Park District (EBRPD) has maintained Point Isabel Regional Shoreline as a mixed-use, open space area where dog owners can bring their canine companions to run off-leash. Point Isabel consists of approximately 21 acres on the south side of the canal. The surroundings attract various species of birds at different times of the year.

The area across the bridge from Point Isabel – known as North Point Isabel – is owned by the State of California and is part of the East Shore State Park. The area south of the canal is owned and managed by EBRPD; dogs are permitted to run off leash in that area.

The park includes a dog-wash facility (Mudpuppy’s Tub and Scrub) and a café (The Sit and Stay Café); both are EBRPD concessions. In addition to providing revenue for the park, these facilities function as an “information center” for Park District staff and visitors.

POINT ISABEL PARK RULES

1. Dog owners must always carry a leash. Maximum length is six feet. Dogs should be on leash in parking areas.
2. Dogs must be under voice control and within sight of their owners.
3. Owners must clean up feces deposited by their dogs. Bags are provided in boxes located throughout the park.
4. Dogs showing aggressiveness toward people or other dogs must be leashed immediately and muzzled if necessary.
5. Owners must stop dogs from digging and must fill in any holes created by their dogs.
6. Owners must prevent their dogs from going into the marsh at the east end of the park and disturbing the feeding birds at low tide.
7. No more than three dogs per person are permitted without a permit from EBPRD.

Park staff is responsible for the maintenance work (pick up litter, empty garbage, and cut grass), but does not collect dog waste. Maintenance costs are covered in the Park's budget.

Point Isabel Dog Owners and Friends (PIDO), a volunteer organization founded in 1981, works with the park district to maintain the area. Members sponsor monthly clean-up days. PIDO members also inform visitors of their responsibilities to obey the park rules. PIDO contributes its membership fees and donations to the EBPRD Foundation to support and enhance Point Isabel, publishes a brochure, and conducts educational tours, including about the need to protect the birds that nest and feed in the park.

There have been no complaints reported about off-leash dogs. In contrast, the Park Superintendent reports that a few complaints have come from dog owners about other people using the park (fishermen, bikers, etc.) In addition, liability has not been a concern at this park – there have been no lawsuits.⁴⁰

According to Park Superintendent Kevin Takei, well over one million dogs and people visit Point Isabel in a year. This park is very popular and is often crowded.

LONG BEACH DOG ZONE⁴¹

The Long Beach Dog Zone is a 2.9-acre stretch of unfenced beach along the water's edge. The zone's borders are marked by stenciled trash cans placed at the perimeters with rows of orange highway cones. Open daily from 6 a.m. to 8 p.m.; the Dog Zone serves 35 to 100 dogs and their owners each day.

The Dog Zone originated from a series of monthly off-leash dog events – known as Haute Dogs on the Beach days – organized by a local community activist. In response to the hundreds of dog owners advocating for permanent beach access, in 2003 the Long Beach City Council piloted the Dog Zone. The one-year test was an opportunity to study whether a dog beach would interfere with other beach recreation, and to determine what effects dogs might have on water quality and the beach.

The pilot started with limited hours and expanded to all-day use during the summer. It included water quality tests, sand sampling, observations from lifeguards and incident reports. In addition, it was made clear at the outset that the city could not actively supervise or maintain the Dog Zone, nor would it be responsible for any injuries. In short, dog-owners had to take care of the Dog Zone themselves or they would lose it.

The Dog Zone pilot evaluation included a public health risk assessment performed by an environmental consultant. The report concluded that there were no discernable effects on the water quality or sand. There were also no reported dog bite incidents to humans.

During the year pilot period, approximately a dozen incident reports were filed. These involved people not having control over their dogs, dogs outside of the Dog Zone, and more dogs per adult than allowed. (The evaluation points out that it is reasonable to assume that some people were unaware of the rules or boundaries as the program was not formally enforced during the pilot.)

In September 2004, the City Council permanently established the Long Beach Dog Zone. The City entered into an agreement with the Recreation Dog Park Association, a non-profit organization, to implement the dog beach ordinance and assist in developing the Dog Zone. The Dog Park Association's role is to educate visitors about the rules and their purpose and to participate in beach clean-ups.

City maintenance staff monitor the beach and provide dog waste bags. The beach maintenance costs are included in the city budget. The rules are posted on a sign at the entrance to the Dog Zone. Animal control officers, lifeguards, and police officers can enforce the rules and cite violators.

To address liability, the city enacted "hold harmless" language for injuries or damage caused by dogs (see box on page 34). However, in spite of the fact that Long Beach does not accept responsibility for the actions of dogs or people, both emergency and non-emergency incident reporting procedures are in place.

LONG BEACH DOG ZONE CITY ORDINANCE RULES

Dogs must stay on-leash until they enter, and once they exit, the Dog Zone (between the two yellow flags at the parking lot). They are only allowed to cross the bike path.

Dogs are not permitted on the beach at any time other than the scheduled hours, or at any place other than the Dog Zone. Only one dog per adult is permitted and must be under visual and voice control at all times. Dogs must not be left unattended.

The dog owner must use a suitable container or instrument to remove dog waste and dispose of it in waste containers provided for that purpose. The dog owner must also provide drinking water for their dog. No food is allowed.

Dogs that do not respond to voice command and aggressive dogs are not permitted. Dogs younger than four months old and female dogs in heat are not permitted.

Dog owners are entirely responsible for their dogs' actions, and accept the risk of allowing their dog to interact with people, other dogs, existing beach conditions, and City vehicles. Dog owners are legally responsible for any injury caused by dogs.

All dogs must wear a collar with current tags, have current vaccinations, and be licensed. Spiked collars on dogs are not permitted.

Professional dog trainers may not use the area to conduct classes or individual instruction.

Children must be accompanied by an adult and must not run, shout, scream, wave their arms, or otherwise excite or antagonize dogs.

Bicycles, roller blades, roller skates, skateboards, strollers, and the like are not permitted; wheelchairs and other aids for the disabled are allowed.

Team sports, such as football, soccer, baseball, and volleyball are not permitted. The use of a Frisbee or small ball is allowed.

Dog Beach Zone, 6.16.310
ORDINANCE NO. C-7859

CREATIVE PLANNING TO MEET A NEED ...

The California Parks and Recreation Society (CPRS) presented the Long Beach Dog Zone with a 2005 "Park Planning Achievement Award" for excellence in the design of a recreation area that "promotes participation in recreational experiences, strengthens community image, protects environmental resources, and facilitates community problem solving." ...

CPRS recognized the extensive process involved in creating the Dog Zone including location selection, analysis of impact on other beach users, establishing maintenance and water testing practices to ensure beach and water quality standards, and adopting operating rules and regulations. ...

CPRS also acknowledged the [Long Beach Parks, Recreation and Marine Department's] efforts to outreach to citizens during the proposal phase including ... conduct public forums to present the project and hear issues from residents.

Long Beach Press Release, 2005

To date continued weekly water testing at the Dog Zone has recorded no change in water quality. In addition, no dog bites to humans have been reported. Geoffrey Hall, Special Projects Officer with the Parks, Recreation & Marine Department, reports that on the whole the Dog Zone has been pretty quiet in the last year. There were some dog confrontations that became verbal conflicts between dog owners, but that is not uncommon in dog park environments.

One part of the Dog Zone plan that has not been very successful, even during the pilot, has been the volunteer "Ambassador" program. Although there is a small contingent of very dedicated volunteers who perform both scheduled and impromptu clean-ups, no one is providing "user education," that is, informing visitors about Dog Zone rules and etiquette. (Some of the first ambassadors said that people they approached "did not appreciate" their efforts to educate them, so they stopped.) The city is considering alternative resources for enforcement (for example, having police officers patrol the beach part-time) and asking patrons to make voluntary contributions for the

maintenance and enforcement of the Dog Zone.⁴²

HUNTINGTON DOG BEACH⁴³

The Huntington Dog Beach is on an open stretch of Huntington Beach's City Beach located along the Pacific Coast Highway. The city has a history of dogs on its beaches. Dogs on leashes were allowed when the city beach was a state beach over 20 years ago. The city amended its ordinances to continue that practice when it took over in 1985, but complaints about dogs continued, in part because owners were not cleaning up after their dogs. The city banned dogs in the 1990's. The current Dog Beach was established in 1998, primarily through the efforts of a local dog advocate.

The current Huntington Beach City ordinance allows dogs on the beach only in a specific area (Dog Beach) and only if they are on a leash no longer than six feet in length.⁴⁴ When unleashed dogs are on the sand, city enforcement officers (lifeguards and police officers) first seek to obtain voluntary compliance with the ordinance from the dog owner before taking other actions (like issuing citations).

Descriptions of Huntington Dog Beach indicate that dogs are allowed to be off-leash in the wet sand and water. While technically the city ordinance requires that dogs must also be on-leash in these areas, this requirement is typically not enforced.

There are no fees to use the beach. However, the city parking lot is metered, so Huntington Beach receives parking revenue from visitors bringing their dogs to the beach who pay to park.

The Preservation Society of Huntington Dog Beach, a non-profit organization, partners with the city to maintain Dog Beach.⁴⁵ The Preservation Society has 15,000 members and fourteen staff, including a Dog Beach clean-up crew that consists of four paid employees in the summer and two in the winter.



The Preservation Society installed 60 dog bag dispensers on the beach and “use more than one million bags each year.” The clean-up crew patrols on weekends, holidays, and some weekdays, informing visitors about the rules and boundaries and providing bags and cleaning utensils for visitors to use. This ongoing cleaning method replaces the previous once-a-month clean-up day. Volunteers also sponsor educational and charity events to support Dog Beach.

The Preservation Society maintains a website (www.dogbeach.org) to provide information, enroll members, and accept donations. The clean-up crew carries official Huntington Dog Beach gifts and souvenirs for sale and visitors are encouraged to “stop by and pick up a new neon T-shirt or doggie toy ... every donation goes towards the upkeep of Dog Beach.”

The city does not specifically address liability ordinances or post signs that address liability. The Preservation Society carries a group insurance policy that covers every person on Dog Beach for liability and medical expenses. There have been no claims since the policy was put in place two years ago.

The city provides the same basic maintenance functions for Dog Beach that it does for other city beaches. The Dog Beach budget is included in the City’s beach budget.

According to Kyle Lindo, Head of the Marine Safety Division, some beachgoers reportedly feel that the presence of dogs means that the water quality is unhealthy due to dog waste. However, based on regular water testing by the Huntington Beach Health Department, there is no evidence of higher bacteria levels or other water quality problems relative to other city beaches.

Complaints at Huntington Dog Beach generally arise from situations that begin with one individual trying to enforce the rules, and can escalate into dog-owner versus dog-owner

conflicts. Anecdotally, there are occasional dog bites to humans that go unreported because the person does not want to jeopardize the Dog Beach.⁴⁶

A short documentary about Huntington Beach Dog Beach can be viewed at <http://www.heatherbartlett.com/films.html>.

OCEAN BEACH DOG BEACH⁴⁷

For over 30 years, San Diego's Ocean Beach Dog Beach has been a leash-free beach where people and their pets enjoy the sand and water with surfers. With 38 acres, Dog Beach is one of the largest leash-free beaches for dogs in the country. According to San Diego Park and Recreation, during San Diego's warmest months an estimated 10,000 dogs visit each week.

In 1972, the Ocean Beach Town Council formally adopted the site to protect it as a community asset. But, after 25 years of continual use, the beach was in disrepair. For the 25th Anniversary of Dog Beach, the Ocean Beach Town Council established a non-profit subcommittee – the Dog Beach Committee – to fundraise and make improvements. This volunteer subcommittee works closely with the Parks and Recreation Department and other city offices, community groups, business partners, and volunteers. It uses donations and public/private partnerships when possible. The Dog Beach Committee maintains a Dog Beach website at <http://www.dogbeachsandiego.org/>.

City Parks and Recreation Department staff maintains Dog Beach; they collect trash and groom the sand, and stock plastic bag dispensers that have been installed along the beach (although volunteers do the majority of this task). Park rangers, police officers, and lifeguards monitor dog owners to be sure that they are picking up after their dogs. Those who do not may be charged with a misdemeanor or an infraction, and fined.

DOG BEACH

The city spent roughly \$10,000 on extra trashcans, nagging signs and plastic “mutt mitts” at its Dog Beach, where the surf was closed to swimmers 125 times in 2000. The measures led to “measurably fewer dog piles. That’s the term we use,” says Ted Medina, deputy director for coastal parks. He estimates the beach is 30% - 40% cleaner than it was before the effort started last year...

Traci Watson,
Health & Science,
USA Today, June 6, 2002

On-going funding for Dog Beach comes from the city general fund beach maintenance program; it is not a separate item. The City of Ocean Beach does not receive any revenue from Dog Beach.

Public health and water quality issues plagued Dog Beach a few years ago. Dog poop was left on the beach and water monitoring found high levels of bacteria that led to beach closures on a regular basis. The possibility of closing the beach to dogs was even raised.

As a result, in 2002 a volunteer organization, Friends of Dog Beach, raised funds and completed a number of improvements. With some city funds and community involvement, the group added dog bag dispensers, plastic trash barrels, a dog drinking fountain, new signs, and an improved entrance to the beach.⁴⁸

The Friends of Dog Beach continues to work with the city to maintain Dog Beach. They provide plastic dog bags and sponsor weekly cleanups with other organizations.

Water quality has gotten better as a result of the improvements made at Dog Beach. However, it remains a chronic problem due to the beach's location at the mouth of the San Diego floodway, which is an urban runoff site.* According to county officials, pet waste from Dog Beach is a contributing factor, but it is not the primary component in the water quality problems.⁴⁹

Liability at Dog Beach is addressed by listing the regulations at the entrance. They state that the dog owners and users are responsible for themselves and their pets while using the facility and that when problems arise it is up to the involved parties to resolve those issues among themselves. Lifeguards or animal control officers respond to safety issues.

CORONADO DOG BEACH⁵⁰

Coronado's Dog Beach was established about five years ago after residents petitioned their city council. The Dog Beach is a two-block area at the north end of the two-mile long city Beach. There are no formal hours or other rules posted. There are also no lifeguards or park rangers, although the city provides regular beach maintenance services along with dog bags and dispensers. The cost is included in the city maintenance budget for all beaches.

Dog owners are responsible for cleaning up and monitoring the beach. They are also responsible for any incidents involving their dogs. The city does not post information regarding liability. The Recreation Department receives complaints or reports.

DEL MAR DOG BEACH AND FIESTA ISLAND DOG BEACH⁵¹

Del Mar Dog Beach in San Diego has been in existence for about 25 years. It is a "seasonal" dog beach: the off-leash season runs from mid-September through mid-June. It is open from sunrise to sunset. Fiesta Island Dog Beach in San Diego was established about five years ago. This dog beach is a 5.2 mile fenced area that includes the shoreline. It is open from 6 a.m. to 10 p.m.

At both beaches, lifeguards and park rangers are located on site and enforce the rules. The city of San Diego performs regular beach maintenance plus dog waste disposal.

Dog owners are expected to clean up after their dogs. On Fiesta Island, owners are required to keep their dogs on a leash when outside of the dog run area. Owners are also responsible for incidents involving their dogs but, like Coronado's Dog Beach, there are no formal signs describing responsibility. San Diego's Parks and Recreation Department receives complaints or reports.

* According to Heal the Bay's *Beach Report Card* website (<http://www.healthebay.org/brc/closures.asp>), Ocean Beach Dog Beach was closed for four days in early April 2006 due to a water/sewer line spill.

OFF-LEASH DOGS ON THE BEACH: ONE VIEW

“Happy dogs...happy owners...happy community! Dog Beach has been a blessing to me long before I owned a dog. As an active cyclist, I would often cycle the trail along PCH and would often stop at dog beach. I admired the City of Huntington Beach (I am an 8 year resident) for having this beach. I would watch in amazement the dogs enjoying themselves and people, even surfers and other non-owners, enjoying the therapeutic effects which pets engender. I couldn't wait to get a dog, so that I too can enjoy dog beach.

I currently became a dog owner and have thoroughly been enjoying dog beach. The most pleasant (and shocking) observations that I've made at Dog Beach is, first and foremost, its cleanliness. One would expect a pet "playground" to be a disgusting area. However, owners are very conscientious and "pick up" after themselves which is encouraged by the availability of "baggies." Secondly, I am continuously surprised by all the people that come to Huntington Beach from cities that are not necessarily nearby. People actually "travel" to come to Huntington Dog Beach!”

Alvin
Huntington Beach, CA
Letter on Dog Beach Website

OFF-LEASH DOGS ON THE BEACH: AN ALTERNATE VIEW

“My family always had dogs and I love a friendly well-behaved dog but I am strongly opposed to off-leash dogs dominating Its Beach and Lighthouse Field. Before off-leash dog use, I would go to Its Beach almost every fine day in summer. Now I avoid the Field and Its beach because of the up to 50 uncontrolled dogs running loose, defecating and barking at all times of the day. The diverse bird-life has all but disappeared. City leaders and State Park personnel have caved in to a special interest group. Dog owners should find and fund an appropriate site for a fenced park. Off-leash dogs are not an acceptable use for any State Park or beach.”

Gil Greensite
Rescue Santa Cruz Beaches Petition
August 15, 2004

A MODEL OFF-LEASH DOG BEACH

The off-leash dog beaches described in the previous section range from a city-maintained beach where dogs are permitted 24 hours to a dog zone that limits dogs to the wet sand and water, and is maintained by non-city staff and volunteers. These beaches share common elements and also have unique characteristics.

California State Parks views an off-leash dog area as a local recreation need that is more appropriately addressed at a municipal- or county-owned beach. In contrast to these recreation spaces, state parks and beaches are intended to provide recreation that reflects statewide interests. (See box at right for an excerpt of the state's "Recreation Policy," a broad policy that addresses the needs of Californians and encompasses the range of recreation and park providers at all levels.)

Perhaps the first and primary policy issue in relation to establishing an off-leash dog area on a state beach is determining whether providing recreational opportunities for dog owners and their pets is a state responsibility.

CALIFORNIA STATE PARKS UNLEASHED DOG PILOT⁵²

The California Department of Parks and Recreation developed the parameters of an off-leash dog area pilot program, including a pilot at a State Beach, a few years ago. Although the pilot program was not implemented, the "blueprint" created provides a useful model of a dog park (or dog beach).*

BACKGROUND

In 2001, Senator Jackie Speier introduced legislation that would have required the California Department of Parks and Recreation to review and identify state park locations that would be suitable for an unleashed dog area pilot program.** As a result, the department created a task group that consisted of staff from California State Parks and the

CALIFORNIA'S RECREATION POLICY – AN EXCERPT

Adequacy of Recreation Opportunities

The supply of parklands, waters, open space, recreation facilities and services must be adequate to meet future and current demands, particularly in the State's most populated areas.

It is State policy that: ... "Public service providers closest to the recreation resources, and particularly to the sources of recreation demand, shall have the primary responsibility for providing comprehensive recreation opportunities. In urban, suburban and rural areas, these essential responsibilities shall generally fall to agencies of the cities, counties and special districts. It will be the responsibility of State agencies to take the lead where resources or recreation demands are of regional or far-reaching significance..."

California's Recreation Policy, 2005

* According to the Department of Parks and Recreation, the pilot was not implemented because the Department of Finance determined that establishing a dog beach was an inappropriate use of bond funds (i.e., establishing and maintaining a dog beach is a function normally associated with local parks).

** SB 712/2001 (Speier), as introduced, included the "unleashed dog area" provisions. However, these provisions were later amended out of this bill.

Senator's office, advocates of off-leash dog areas, and representatives of the Audubon Society, the Sierra Club and the California State Park Ranger Association.

**SUGGESTED DOG PARK
ETIQUETTE**

- ❑ Dogs must be leashed prior to arriving and leaving the designated off-leash area. Owners/handlers must carry one leash per dog while in an off-leash area.
- ❑ Dogs must be properly licensed, inoculated against rabies, and healthy. No dog less than four months of age is permitted in the off-leash area.
- ❑ Female dogs in heat are not permitted within a dog park.
- ❑ Aggressive and menacing behavior is not allowed. Any dog exhibiting aggressive behavior must be removed from the facility immediately.
- ❑ Owner/handler shall carry a suitable container and/or equipment for removal and disposal of dog feces. Dog feces shall be immediately removed and properly disposed of in the covered trash cans.
- ❑ Dogs must be in sight and under the control of the owner/handler at all times.
- ❑ No more than three dogs per owner/handler is allowed in the facility at any one time.
- ❑ An adult must supervise children under the age of 14.
- ❑ The facility is open only during posted hours.
- ❑ Owners accept responsibility for the actions of their dogs.

The task group was charged with identifying potential pilot areas, recommending minimum site requirements, and establishing an evaluation program.* The task group's final product included roles and responsibilities for California State Parks and volunteers, rules governing the use of the facilities, and evaluation criteria (measures of success). These are identified below.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The task group proposed the following assignment of roles and responsibilities.

California State Parks

- Provide leadership required with this program.
- Provide overall coordination of volunteers.
- Provide the land for off-leash dog-park facilities; process a general plan amendment and appropriate California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) compliance where necessary.
- Design and oversee construction in accordance with CEQA compliance. The design will be a collaborative effort with volunteers, where possible.
- Provide normal grounds maintenance (not including cleaning up after dogs).
- Measure, assess, or otherwise evaluate impacts on resources and visitors.
- Provide cost estimates for new or renovated off-leash areas and provide necessary regulatory permits.

* Some of the "Desired Site Design Criteria" developed by the task group are not applicable to a dog beach. Other criteria such as "covered trash cans and plastic bag dispenser station" and "clear and well-placed signage for posting rules of etiquette and an information board for park information" clearly apply.

Volunteers

- Provide regularly scheduled site clean up.
- Distribute park rules to new users by handouts, bulletin-board posts, or through verbal conversations with other site users.
- Stock receptacles with plastic bags.
- Assist with monitoring, use of facility, and gathering of information related to measure of success.
- Work through District Superintendents or his/her designated representative regarding maintenance needs and establish priorities for repair and renovation.

Advocacy Groups

- Meet as needed with park staff to discuss successes, issues, problems, and recommendations.
- Organize volunteers to donate labor and materials, or funds for site improvement.
- Organize off-leash training sessions or other permitted special events.
- Assist in developing and distributing education information.
- Solicit and identify funding for amenities, programs, and improvement not provided by the department.

MEASURES OF SUCCESS

The four measures of success are directly related to the overall purpose of the off-leash dog area: “to provide a safe and enjoyable recreational experience to dog owner/handler and their dogs, while not impacting park visitors or the environment.”

1. *Dog owners/handlers*: The satisfaction level with the facility and the experience. The frequency of use and number of visits (to be included as a part of the owner/escort survey).
2. *Other visitors to the park*: The satisfaction level of park visitors without dogs (to be gathered as a part of the park’s ongoing Visitor Satisfaction Survey conducted by staff).
3. *Safety of dogs and park visitors*: Incidents of injuries to dogs or visitors. Park staff will gather this information as a part of the normal procedure for reporting visitor injuries, crimes, or other incidents.
4. *Environment*: The type of environmental assessment will be tailored to meet the needs of the selected site. Environmental assessment will be the responsibility of Departmental staff.

**EVALUATION
CRITERIA**

- Use
- Community Involvement
- Enforcement
- Safety
- Maintenance
- Economic Impact

Denver Parks and
Recreation, 2005

CITY OF DENVER EVALUATION CRITERIA

The city of Denver Parks and Recreation recently completed a twelve-month pilot that tested the feasibility of incorporating off-leash dog parks into the city park's array of services. The pilot criteria (see box) provided a structure for evaluating the pilot sites and developing standards for implementing permanent dog parks.⁵³

Some of these criteria – like community involvement, enforcement, and economic impact – would be useful to include with the “Measures of Success” criteria listed above when establishing and evaluating dog beaches.

APPENDIX A – CALIFORNIA CODES
PUBLIC RESOURCES CODE

5008.1 (a) When it is determined by the director to be in the public interest, and subject to the fees, rules, and regulations of the department, visitors to units of the state park system may bring animals into those units.

(b) Any animal brought into a state park system unit pursuant to subdivision (a) shall be under the immediate control of the visitor or shall be confined, and under no circumstance shall the animal be permitted to do any of the following:

(1) Pose a threat to public safety and welfare.

(2) Create a public nuisance.

(3) Pose a threat to the natural or cultural resources of the unit or to the improvements at the unit.

(c) The department may require a person bringing an animal into a state park system unit pursuant to subdivision (a) to provide proof of appropriate immunizations and valid licenses.

(d) This section does not apply to dogs used to lawfully pursue game in season at units of the state park system where hunting is allowed.

5008.2 (a) Peace officers and other designated employees of the department may capture any animal (1) which is not confined or under the immediate control of a person visiting the unit, (2) which poses a threat to public safety and welfare, to the natural or cultural resources of the unit, or to the improvements at the unit, or (3) which is a public nuisance.

(b) Peace officers may dispatch any animal which poses an immediate or continuing threat (1) to public safety and welfare or (2) to wildlife at the unit.

(c) Owners of animals with identification that have been captured or dispatched pursuant to this section shall be notified within 72 hours after capture or dispatch.

(d) This section does not apply to dogs used to lawfully pursue game in season at units of the State Park System where hunting is permitted.

(e) The authority conferred by this section on peace officers or designated employees of the department may only be exercised on or about property owned, operated, controlled, or administered by the department.

APPENDIX B – FEDERAL CODES
CODE OF FEDERAL REGULATIONS

TITLE 36 - PARKS, FORESTS, AND PUBLIC PROPERTY

CHAPTER I - NATIONAL PARK SERVICE, DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

PART 2 - RESOURCE PROTECTION, PUBLIC USE AND RECREATION

Sec. 2.15 Pets.

(a) The following are prohibited:

(1) Possessing a pet in a public building, public transportation vehicle, or location designated as a swimming beach, or any structure or area closed to the possession of pets by the superintendent. This subparagraph shall not apply to guide dogs accompanying visually impaired persons or hearing ear dogs accompanying hearing-impaired persons.

(2) Failing to crate, cage, restrain on a leash which shall not exceed six feet in length, or otherwise physically confine a pet at all times.

(3) Leaving a pet unattended and tied to an object, except in designated areas or under conditions which may be established by the superintendent.

(4) Allowing a pet to make noise that is unreasonable considering location, time of day or night, impact on park users, and other relevant factors, or that frightens wildlife by barking, howling, or making other noise.

(5) Failing to comply with pet excrement disposal conditions which may be established by the superintendent.

(b) In park areas where hunting is allowed, dogs may be used in support of these activities in accordance with applicable Federal and State laws and in accordance with conditions, which may be established by the superintendent.

(c) Pets or feral animals that are running-at-large and observed by an authorized person in the act of killing, injuring or molesting humans, livestock, or wildlife may be destroyed if necessary for public safety or protection of wildlife, livestock, or other park resources.

(d) Pets running-at-large may be impounded, and the owner may be charged reasonable fees for kennel or boarding costs, feed, veterinarian fees, transportation costs, and disposal. An impounded pet may be put up for adoption or otherwise disposed of after being held for 72 hours from the time the owner was notified of capture or 72 hours from the time of capture if the owner is unknown.

(e) Pets may be kept by residents of park areas consistent with the provisions of this section and in accordance with conditions which may be established by the superintendent. Violation of these conditions is prohibited.

(f) This section does not apply to dogs used by authorized Federal, State and local law enforcement officers in the performance of their official duties.

**APPENDIX C – EXCERPTS FROM HEAL THE BAY / 15TH ANNUAL BEACH
REPORT CARD, MAY 25, 2005 (ANNOTATED)**

Each threshold is based on the prescribed standards set in the California Department of Health Service’s Beach Bathing Water Standards. The magnitude of the water quality threshold exceedance and laboratory variability was addressed by the inclusion of standard deviations in setting the thresholds. The standard deviations used were developed during the 1998 laboratory inter-calibration study led by the Southern California Coastal Waters Research Project and the Orange County Sanitation Districts that involved over 20 shoreline water quality monitoring agencies in Southern California.

TABLE A-1. Bacterial Indicator Exceedance Thresholds in cfu/100ml.

| Group: | 1 T – 1 s.d. ¹ | 2 T + 1 s.d. | 3 > T + s.d. | 4 Very high risk |
|--|------------------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------|---------------------|
| Total Coliform | 6,711-9,999 | 10,000 ² -14,900 | > 14,900 | na |
| Fecal Coliform | 268-399 | 400 -596 | > 596 | na |
| Enterococcus | 70-103 | 104 -155 | > 155 | na |
| Total to fecal Ratio (when: Total > 1,000) | 10.1-13 | 7.1- 10 | 2.1-7 | < 2.1 |
| ¹ s.d.-standard deviation. | | | | |
| ² Bold numbers are the State Health Department standards for a single sample. | | | | |

The number of points subtracted from 100 for total coliform, fecal coliform and enterococcus are: **6 points** for bacterial densities falling in group one (threshold inus one standard deviation or T – 1 s.d.), **18 points** for group two (T + 1 s.d.), and **24 points** for group three (indicator densities > T + 1 s.d.). The point system for total to fecal ratio is: 7 points for group one, 21 points for group two, 35 points for group three, and 42 points for group four (very high health risk). Exceedance of the total to fecal ratio threshold leads to lower grades because exposure to water with low ratios causes an even higher incidence of a variety of adverse health effects relative to the health risk associated with the other bacterial indicators.

TABLE A-2. THRESHOLD POINTS

| Group: | 1 T – 1 s.d. ¹ | 2 T + 1 s.d. | 3 > T + 1 s.d. | 4 Very high risk |
|--|------------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|---------------------|
| Total Coliform | | | | |
| Fecal Coliform | 6 | 18 | 24 | |
| Enterococcus: | | | | |
| Total to Fecal Ratio: (when: Total > 1,000) | 7 | 21 | 35 | 42 |
| ¹ s.d.-standard deviation | | | | |

These points are added to obtain a subtotal for that week. The point subtotal for the most current week's worth of data is multiplied by 1.5 in order to give it more weight. Then the points from the previous three weeks are added in for an overall point total. The total number of points for the 28-day period is divided by the average number of samples collected in a week. This number is then subtracted from the original 100 points to obtain a grand total from which a letter grade is derived.

The grading system is as follows.

TABLE A-3. GRADING SYSTEM

| Grade | | Points |
|--------------|---|---------------|
| A+ | = | 100 |
| A | = | 90-99 |
| B | = | 80-89 |
| C | = | 70-79 |
| D | = | 60-69 |
| F | = | 0-59 |

2004-2005 Beach Report Card Grades By County

| County | Beach | AB411 | Dry | Wet | Dogs Allowed, Leash Required | Off-Leash Dog Beach/Zone |
|-----------------|--|--------------|------------|------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Humboldt | Clam Beach County Park near Strawberry Creek | A | A | D | X | |
| Mendocino | MacKerricher State Park at Virgin Creek | A+ | | | X | |
| Mendocino | Van Damme State Park at the Little River | A+ | | | X | |
| Sonoma | Gualala Regional Park Beach | A+ | | | X | |
| Sonoma | Stillwater Cove Regional Park Beach | B | | | X | |
| Sonoma | Doran Regional Park Beach | A | | | X | |
| Marin | Rodeo Beach, North | A+ | | | | X |
| Marin | Rodeo Beach, South | A+ | | | | X |
| Marin | Baker Beach, Horseshoe Cove SW | A+ | | | X | |
| Marin | Baker Beach, Horseshoe Cove NW | B | | | | X |
| Santa Cruz | Natural Bridges State Beach | A+ | A+ | A | X | |
| Santa Cruz | Seabright Beach | A | A | F | X | |
| Santa Cruz | Twin Lakes Beach | A+ | A | F | X | |
| Santa Cruz | New Brighton Beach | A+ | A | F | X | |
| Santa Cruz | Seacliff State Beach | A+ | A | D | X | |
| Santa Cruz | Rio Del Mar Beach | A+ | A | F | X | |
| Santa Cruz | Palm/Pajaro Dunes Beach | A+ | A+ | B | X | |
| Monterey | Asilomar State Beach, projection of Arena Av. | A+ | | | X | |
| Monterey | Carmel City Beach, projection of Ocean Ave. (west end) | A | | | | X |
| San Luis Obispo | Cayucos State Beach, downcoast of the pier | A+ | A | F | X | |
| San Luis Obispo | Olde Port Beach (Harford Beach) north | B | B | F | X | |

| County | Beach | AB411 | Dry | Wet | Dogs Allowed, Leash Required | Off-Leash Dog Beach/Zone |
|-----------------|---|--------------|------------|------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| San Luis Obispo | Avila Beach, projection of San Juan Street | B | B | F | X | |
| San Luis Obispo | Pismo Beach, projection of Wadsworth Street | A+ | A+ | F | X | |
| Santa Barbara | Goleta Beach | B | C | F | X | |
| Los Angeles | Leo Carrillo Beach at 35000 PCH | A+ | B | F | X | |
| San Diego | Del Mar, San Dieguito River Beach | A | B | F | | X |
| San Diego | Mission Bay, Fiesta Island Bridge (south side) | A+ | | | | X |
| San Diego | Ocean Beach, San Diego River outlet (Dog Beach) | D | C | F | | X |
| San Diego | Coronado at North Beach (NASNI Beach) | A | A | F | | X |

Source: *Heal the Bay's 15th Annual Report Card*, May 25, 2005.

SOURCES

- Action for Animals and other organizations. *Emergency Petition to the Golden Gate National Recreation Area, National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior to Promulgate and Enforce 36 C.F.R. Section 2.15(a)(2) at the Golden Gate National Recreation Area*. Filed in San Francisco, August 16, 2005.
- Batch, Eric, Matt Hale and Ellen Palevsky. *The Case for Space: Expanding Recreational Opportunities for Dog Owners and Their Pets*. A report prepared for FREEPLAY. Los Angeles: University of Southern California, School of Policy, Planning, and Development, [2004].
- Beck, David L. "Ruling May Prompt City to Revisit its Off-Leash Law." *San Jose Mercury News*, August 18, 2005, 3A.
- Blatter, Helene. "S.F. Beach Dogs to Stay Leashed for Now." *North Gate News Online*. Reporting by the UC Berkeley Graduate School of Journalism, October 22, 2003. <http://journalism.Berkeley.edu/ngno/stories/001480.html>.
- California. Department of Parks and Recreation. *Pilot Program for Unleashed Dog Areas*. Sacramento: The Department, December 17, 2001.
- California. State Parks. Provides general information and links to specific parks at www.parks.ca.gov.
- California. State Parks. *California's Recreation Policy*. Sacramento: California State Parks, 2005.
- California. State Parks. *Rules & Guidelines for Protecting the Snowy Plover*. Sacramento: California State Parks, 2002.
- Colwell, Mark A., and others. *Final Report: 2005 Snowy Plover Breeding in Coastal Northern California, Recovery Unit 2*. Arcata: Humboldt State University, [2005].
- Communication Partnership for Science and the Sea (COMPASS). *Beaches, Bacteria, and Bans: How California Can Keep Its Coast Healthy*. Fact Sheet. Protecting California's Ocean and Coast: Luncheon Briefings on Science and Policy, February 2, 2006.
- Denver Parks and Recreation Department. *Dogs Off-Leash Pilot Program, 2005 Report*. Denver: The Department, 2005.
- Dog Friendly. A commercial website listing pet-friendly accommodations and activities throughout the United States at <http://www.dogfriendly.com/>.

- DogPAC Santa Barbara. *Meeting the Need: Providing Off-Leash Recreational Space in Santa Barbara*. A Position Paper. Santa Barbara: DogPAC, 2002.
<http://www.dogpacsb.org/position2.html>.
- Jackson, Harlock. *Public Open Space and Dogs: A Design and Management Guide for Open Space Professionals and Local Government*. Prepared for the Petcare Information and Advisory Service. Available on PetNet at
<http://www.petnet.com.au/openspace/frontis.html>.
- Hatch, Daphne A. *Western Snowy Plover (A Federally Threatened Species) Wintering Population and Interaction with Human Activity on Ocean Beach, San Francisco, Golden Gate National Recreation Area, 1988 Through 1996*. San Francisco: Golden Gate National Recreation Area, Division of Resource Management and Planning, November 15, 1996.
- Heal the Bay. *Beach Report Card, 2004-2005*. 15th Annual Report. Santa Monica: Heal the Bay, May 25, 2005. <http://www.healthebay.org/brc/default.asp>.
- Herold, Ann. "Dog Heaven." *Los Angeles Times*. LATimes.com, March 19, 2006.
<http://www.latimes.com/features/magazine/west/la-tm-dogbeach12mar19,0,2223983.story>.
- Huntington Beach Dog Beach website at <http://www.dogbeach.org/faq.html>.
- Jiang, Sunny, and others. "Human Adenoviruses and Coliphages in Urban Runoff-Impacted Coastal Waters of Southern California." *Applied and Environmental Microbiology* 67, No. 1. January 2001. pp. 179-184.
- Kain, Tara. *Dog Etiquette for the Dog-Friendly Beach*. Dog-Friendly.Com at
<http://www.dogfriendly.com/server/travel/info/tips/beacheti/shtml>, April 26, 2003.
- King, Trish, with Terry Long. "Dog Parks: The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly." *Chronicle of the Dog* (The Association of Pet Dog Trainers) XI, No. 6, November/December 2004. Trish King is Director of Behavior and Training, Marin County Humane Society.
- Lafferty, Kevin D. "Birds at a Southern California Beach: Seasonality, Habitat Use and Disturbance by Human Activity." *Biodiversity and Conservation* 10, No. 11, November 2001.
- Lafferty, Kevin D. "Disturbance to Wintering Western Snowy Plovers." *Biological Conservation* 101, February 2001.
- McDonald, Jeff. "Volunteers Spruce up Dog Beach." *San Diego Union-Tribune*. November 27, 2005, B-2.

- National Resources Defense Council (NRDC). *Testing the Waters: A Guide to Water Quality at Vacation Beaches. California.* New York: NRDC, July 2005.
- Ocean Beach Dog Owners Group. *Response to the Emergency Petition to the Golden Gate National Recreation Area, National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior to Promulgate and Enforce 36 C.F.R. Section 2.15(a)(2) at the Golden Gate National Recreation Area.* San Francisco: Ocean Beach Dog Owners Group. September 28, 2005.
- Pasco, Jean O. "This Dog Park is a Shore Thing: Huntington Beach Area Offers Access Since Life Isn't a Beach Often Enough for Canines." Orange County (Orange Peeled: A Look at Life Inside the County). *Los Angeles Times*. July 21, 2003, B-3.
- Reiterman, Tim. "Fighting Beach Pollution in the Lab." *Los Angeles Times*. January 29, 2006.
- Rodgers, Terry. "Mission Bay Water is Found to be Safe." *San Diego Union-Tribune*. October 16, 2004.
http://www.signonsandiego.com/uniontrib/20041016/news_2m16swim.html.
- Rodgers, Terry. "Nest Fences Worry Dog Owners." *San Diego Union-Tribune*. September 30, 2004, B-4.
- Sample, Herbert A. "S.F. Dog Owners Barking Mad: They Say Pet Should Continue to Roam Unfettered in Parks." *The Sacramento Bee*, News, Sacbee.com, July 25, 2005.
- San Francisco Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA). *Benefits of Off-Leash Recreation.* San Francisco: SPCA, [undated]. www.sfspca.org.
- Scriggins, Shane, and Richard Murray. 'Off-Leash' Areas – Exercising Principles of Good Governance in Urban Animal Management. Australia Veterinary Association Annual Conference, 2000.
<http://www.ava.com.au?UAM?proc00/scriggins.htm>.
- Slater, Dashka. "Scenes: Dog Docket." *Legal Affairs*. July/August, 2002.
<http://www.legalaffairs.org/printerfriendly.msp?id=248>.
- Surfrider Foundation. *State of the Beach 2005 – California.* San Clemente: Surfrider Foundation, 2005.
- Thomas, Kate, and others. Effects of Human Activity on the Foraging Behavior of Sanderlings *Calidris Alba.* *Biological Conservation* 109, March 2002.
- United States. Department of the Interior, National Park Service (NPS). *Golden Gate National Recreation Area Dog Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement Public Scoping Workshops, Informational Brochure, Washington, D.C.:*

- NPS. 2006. Dog Management Information Hotline at 415-561-4728, and website at <http://www.nps.gov/goga/pets/regneg/index.htm>.
- United States. Geological Survey (USGS). *Fecal Indicator Bacteria and Sanitary Water Quality*. Lansing, MI: USGS, Michigan Water Science Center. [2005] <http://mi.water.usgs.gov/h2oqual/BactHOWeb.html>.
- University of California, Davis, School of Veterinary Medicine. *Guidelines for Establishment and Maintenance of Successful Off-Leash Dog Exercise Areas*. Program in Veterinary Behavioral Medicine, Center for Animals in Society. Davis: University of California, Davis, School of Veterinary Medicine, 2004.
- Valente, Dr. Suzanne. *Analysis of the Hatch Report*. San Francisco: Ocean Beach DOG. <http://oceanbeachdog.home.mindspring.com/id40.html>. Accessed March 24, 2006.
- Valente, Dr. Suzanne. *The Scientific Truth about the Snowy Plover*. San Francisco: Ocean Beach DOG. <http://oceanbeachdog.home.mindspring.com/id40.html>. Accessed March 24, 2006.
- Watson, Traci. "Dog Waste Poses Threat to Water." Health and Science. *USA Today*, June 6, 2002. <http://www.usatoday.com/news/science/2002-06-07-dog-usat.htm>.
- Yin, Sophia, and Claudia Kawczynka. "An Interview with Dr. Nicholas Dodman." *The Bark Unleashed* (e-zine) at http://thebark.com/ezine/living_behavior/behavior.html, accessed April 3, 2006.

ENDNOTES

- ¹ California Dog Owners Group (CalDOG), a nonprofit organization representing advocates of off-leash space, website at <http://www.caldog.org>.
- ² California State Parks website at http://www.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=91.
- ³ Letter from Bradly S. Torgan, General Counsel, California State Parks, to John Barisone, City Attorney, and Danettee Shoemaker, Director, City of Santa Cruz Parks and Recreation, dated October 26, 2005.
- ⁴ DPR Operations Manual 0311.5.7.4 Dogs, September 2004, 3-38.
- ⁵ National Parks website at <http://www.nps.gov>; 36 CFR Part 2.
- ⁶ Point Reyes National Seashore Official Website, *Visiting with Dogs at Point Reyes National Seashore*, at http://www.nps.gov/pore/visit_dogs.htm.
- ⁷ Bureau of Land Management representative in telephone conversation February 28, 2006.
- ⁸ Los Padres National Forest Brochure, obtained from website at <http://www.fs.fed.us/r5/lospadres/about/>.
- ⁹ Karin Jaffe, telephone conversation on March 24, 2006.
- ¹⁰ San Francisco Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA), *Benefits of Off-Leash Recreation* (San Francisco: SPCA) [undated]; Marin Humane Society; and Sophia Yin and Claudia Kawczynka, "An Interview with Dr. Nicholas Dodman," *The Bark Unleashed* (e-zine) at http://thebark.com/ezine/living_behavior/behavior.html [undated]. Dr. Dodman is the Director of the Behavior Clinic, Tufts University School of Veterinary Medicine.
- ¹¹ San Francisco SPCA; Eric Batch and others, *The Case for Space: Expanding Recreational Opportunities for Dog Owners and Their Pets*, A report prepared for FREEPLAY (Los Angeles: University of Southern California, School of Policy, Planning, and Development [2004]); and Santa Barbara DogPAC at <http://www.dogpacsb.org>.
- ¹² California State Parks, *Snowy Plover Protection* at http://www.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=22542, and California State Parks, *Rules & Guidelines for Protecting the Snowy Plover* at http://www.parks.ca.gov/pages/937/files/snowyplover_rules.pdf.
- ¹³ Terry Rodgers, "Nest Fences Worry Dog Owners," *San Diego Union-Tribune*, September 30, 2004, B-4.
- ¹⁴ Heal the Bay, *Beach Report Card*, 2004-2005, 15th Annual Report (Santa Monica: Heal the Bay, May 25, 2005), http://www.healthebay.org/assets/pdfdocs/brc/annual/2005/report_web.pdf; and Surfrider Foundation, *Health Threats from Polluted Coastal Waters*, Coastal A-Z (San Clemente: the Foundation, 2005), http://www.surfrider.org/a-z/health_water.asp.
- ¹⁵ Heal the Bay, *Santa Monica Bay Restoration Project, Epidemiological Study* (Santa Monica: Heal the Bay, 1995).
- ¹⁶ Heal the Bay *Beach Report Card*.
- ¹⁷ Barry Kelleher, Park Designer, Park and Recreation Department, City of San Diego, telephone conversation on March 24, 2006.
- ¹⁸ Communication Partnership for Science and the Sea (COMPASS), *Beaches, Bacteria, and Bans: How California Can Keep Its Coast Healthy*, Fact Sheet, Protecting California's Ocean and Coast: Luncheon Briefings on Science and Policy, February 2, 2006; and Tim Reiterman, "Fighting Beach Pollution in the Lab," *Los Angeles Times*, January 29, 2006.
- ¹⁹ Dr. Jack Colford, *Mission Bay Epidemiology Study*, National Beaches Conference, 2004; Terry Rodgers, "Mission Bay Water is Found to be Safe," *San Diego Union-Tribune*, October 16, 2004.

http://www.signonsandiego.com/uniontrib/20041016/news_2m16swim.html; and Heal the Bay, *Beach Report Card*.

²⁰ Sunny Jiang and others, "Human Adenoviruses and Coliphages in Urban Runoff-Impacted Coastal Waters of Southern California," *Applied and Environmental Microbiology* 67, No. 1, January 2001, 179-184.

²¹ Surfrider Foundation, *Health Threats from Polluted Coastal Waters*.

²² Surfriders Foundation and Heal the Bay expressed this concern to the Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Water, *Bill Analysis of AB 359 (Gordon)*, April 11, 2005. (Hearing Date June 14, 2005); and Heal the Bay's website at <http://www.healthebay.org/currentissues/dogbeach/default.asp>.

²³ Tim Reiterman, "Fighting Beach Pollution in the Lab."

²⁴ Letter from Theodore Jackson, Jr., Deputy Director, Park Operations, California State Parks, to Elaine Polachek, Manager, Open Space Management, City of Santa Monica, dated April 19, 2005.

²⁵ Santa Monica City Council Meeting, Agenda Information Item 12-A: Request of Georja Umamo Jones that Council Consider a Proposed Pilot Project for a Dog Park on the Beach, January 11, 2005.

²⁶ Steve Hammack, Superintendent of Parks, City of Santa Cruz, e-mail dated May 1, 2006.

²⁷ University of California, Davis, School of Veterinary Medicine, *Guidelines for Establishment and Maintenance of Successful Off-Leash Dog Exercise Areas* (Davis: University of California, Davis, School of Veterinary Medicine, Program in Veterinary Behavioral Medicine, Center for Animals in Society, 2004).

²⁸ Kyle Lindo, Director, Marine Safety Division, Huntington Beach, telephone conversation on March 10, 2006.

²⁹ Trish King with Terry Long, "Dog Parks: The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly," *Chronicle of the Dog* (The Association of Pet Dog Trainers) XI, No. 6, November/December 2004. Trish King is Director of Behavior and Training, Marin Humane Society.

³⁰ University of California, Davis, School of Veterinary Medicine, *Guidelines for Establishment and Maintenance of Successful Off-Leash Dog Exercise Areas*.

³¹ Letter from Ron P. Schafer, Departments Angeles District Superintendent, California State Parks, to Elaine Polachek, Manager, Open Space Management, City of Santa Monica, dated March 8, 2005.

³² Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Water, *Bill Analysis of AB 359 (Gordon)*, 2005.

³³ Traci Watson, "Dog Waste Poses Threat to Water," *Health and Science, USA Today*, June 6, 2002. <http://www.usatoday.com/news/science/2002-06-07-dog-usat.htm>.

³⁴ Mike Branson, City Forester, Department of Parks and Beach, City of Carmel, telephone conversation, March 6, 2006.

³⁵ Associated Press, "Carmel-By-The-Sea Unveils Latest Treat for its Canine Residents," *SFGate.com*, Sunday, August 24, 2003.

³⁶ Steve Hammack, Superintendent of Parks, City of Santa Cruz, telephone conversation on March 10, 2006; "Adventure No. 131" – Lighthouse Field State Beach Brochure at http://www.parks.ca.gov/default.asp?page_id=550; and David L. Beck, "Ruling May Prompt City to Revisit its Off-Leash Law," *San Jose Mercury News*, August 18, 2005, 3A.

³⁷ Friends of Lighthouse Field website at www.folf.org.

³⁸ Alison Biskner, Santa Barbara Parks and Recreation Department, telephone conversation on March 22, 2006; City of Santa Barbara website at <http://sbpd.com>; and Santa Barbara DogPAC website at <http://dogpacsb.org>.

-
- ³⁹ Kevin Takei, Park Superintendent, East Bay Regional Park, Point Isabel, telephone conversation, March 14, 2006; Park brochure and other information, Point Isabel Dog Owners (PIDO) at <http://pido.org>, accessed March 10, 2006.
- ⁴⁰ Kevin Takei, Park Superintendent, East Bay Regional Park, Point Isabel.
- ⁴¹ Geoffrey Hall, Special Projects Officer, Parks, Recreation & Marine Department, City of Long Beach, telephone conversation on March 17, 2006; *The Dog Zone Project Description* submitted to the California Park and Recreation Society for the Facility Design and Park Planning Awards, [2005]; *City of Long Beach Recommendation to Approve an Ordinance Permitting Beach Access for Dogs (District 3)*, September 21, 2004; and Hatedogs, a network of dog owners and supports, website at <http://www.hatedogs.org/beach.html>.
- ⁴² Geoffrey Hall, Long Beach Parks, Recreation & Marine Department.
- ⁴³ Huntington Dog Beach website at www.dogbeach.org; Kyle Lindo, Director, Marine Safety Division, Huntington Beach, telephone conversation on March 10, 2006; Jean O. Pasco, "This Dog Park is a Shore Thing: Huntington Beach Area Offers Access Since Life Isn't a Beach Often Enough for Canines," *Los Angeles Times*, July 21, 2003, B-3.
- ⁴⁴ Huntington Beach Municipal Code, Chapter 13.08.070, Dogs and other animals.
- ⁴⁵ Martin Senat, President of Preservation Society of Huntington Dog Beach, e-mail correspondence dated April 4, 2006.
- ⁴⁶ Kyle Lindo, Marine Safety Division, Huntington Beach.
- ⁴⁷ The Original Dog Beach in Ocean Beach website at www.dogbeachsandiego.org; Barry Kelleher, San Diego Park and Recreation Department; and Dennis Simmons, Beach Manager, Developed Regional Parks, Park and Recreation Department, City of San Diego, e-mail correspondence with Daryl Barnett, President of Freeplay, dated January 28, 2004.
- ⁴⁸ Dennis Simmons, San Diego Park and Recreation Department.
- ⁴⁹ Barry Kelleher, San Diego Park and Recreation Department.
- ⁵⁰ Eric Raiter, Coronado Beach Visitor Center, San Diego Park and Recreation Department.
- ⁵¹ Ryan Hanson, San Diego Park and Recreation Department; and Barry Kelleher, San Diego Park and Recreation Department.
- ⁵² California Department of Parks and Recreation, *Pilot Program for Unleashed Dog Areas* (Sacramento: The Department, December 17, 2001).
- ⁵³ Denver Parks and Recreation Department, *Dogs Off-Leash Pilot Program 2005 Report* (Denver: Parks and Recreation Department) 2005.