



**WELCOME!**

**TO THE PUBLIC SCOPING  
WORKSHOP  
FOR**

**GOLDEN GATE NATIONAL  
RECREATION AREA  
DOG MANAGEMENT PLAN/EIS  
(ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT)**

# **Golden Gate National Recreation Area**

## ***Dog Management Plan/EIS***

### ***Public Scoping***



## **We Need Your Help!**

**The project is in the public scoping phase and we need your input on:**

- The stated purpose, need and objectives of the dog management plan
- Alternatives you would like to see considered
- Environmental issues and impacts that should be analyzed

### **Three ways to comment:**

- give us your comments tonight
- online at <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/goga> (Select “EIS/Dog Management Plan)
- by mail to Superintendent, GGNRA, Fort Mason, Building 201, San Francisco, CA 94123, Attn: EIS/Dog Management Plan).

**Comment deadline is April 24, 2006**

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## **The NEPA Process**

### 1. Internal Scoping

- NPS internally identifies purpose, needs, objectives of the plan/EIS

### 2. Public Scoping—**YOU ARE HERE!**

- Public reviews and comments on results of internal scoping, preliminary alternatives, and any other issues

### 3. Analysis

- NPS analyzes the impacts of current management (no-action alternative) and action alternatives on each resource, and identifies a preferred alternative

### 4. Public Review of Draft EIS

- 60-day public review and comment period on Draft EIS

### 5. Final EIS and Record of Decision

- NPS addresses all substantive comments on the Draft EIS, making changes to the EIS as necessary
- NPS decision-makers decide on alternative to implement and file a Record of Decision

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## **Need for Action**

- GGNRA resources and values, as defined by the park's enabling legislation and the NPS Organic Act, could be compromised to the extent that, without action, areas of the park might not be available for enjoyment by future generations.
- A history of dog management inconsistent with NPS regulations and increased public expectations for use of the park for dog recreation have resulted in controversy, litigation, and compromised visitor and employee safety, affecting visitor experience and resulting in resource degradation. The conflicts would likely escalate if not addressed in a comprehensive dog management plan.

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## **Purpose of the Dog Management Plan/EIS**

- To provide a clear, enforceable policy to determine the manner and extent of dog use in appropriate areas of the park.
- To promote the following objectives:
  1. Protection and preservation of natural and cultural resources and natural processes
  2. Provide a variety of visitor experiences
  3. Improve visitor and employee safety
  4. Reduce user conflicts
  5. Maintain park resources and values for future generations

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## **Dog Management Plan Objectives That All Alternatives Must Address**

### **Create Dogwalking Opportunities By:**

- Establishing criteria consistent with NPS Management policies to determine whether and/or where dogs restrained by voice control or leashes are acceptable and where no dogs are appropriate
- Minimizing conflicts related to dog use by providing a variety of safe, high quality, visitor use experiences, including areas where dogs are allowed
- Maximizing dog walker compliance with clear, enforceable parameters in order to improve park operations and use of staff resources in managing dogwalking.
- Building community support for the plan to maximize management of dogwalking use.
- Creating an enforceable commercial dogwalking policy
- Increasing public understanding of NPS policies

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## **Dog Management Plan Objectives That All Alternatives Must Address (cont'd)**

### **Create Dogwalking Opportunities While:**

- Protecting sensitive species and their habitat—including federal and state-listed, unique or rare species, from the detrimental effects associated with dog use.
- Ensuring safe and healthy working environment for park staff
- Protecting native wildlife and their habitat from detrimental effects of dogs, including harassment or disturbance by dogs.
- Minimizing degradation of soil and water resources by dog use.
- Providing adaptability and flexibility so that information gathered from monitoring can be used in future decision making based on estimated outcomes, including in new park areas.
- Preserving opportunities for future natural and cultural resource restoration and enhancement.

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## **Potential Environmental Impact Topics**

The following topics have been preliminarily identified as likely to be impacted – positively or negatively - by a dog management plan:

- Adjacent land owners
- Animal & plant species of special concern
- Fish/fish habitat
- Health of humans, wildlife, dogs
- Park Operations
- Socioeconomics
- Safety for visitors and park staff
- Soils
- Soundscapes
- Vegetation
- Visitor Experience
- Water Quality
- Wildlife

Are there other topics that should be considered?

Do you have comments about the topics on this list?



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## **What are some of the dogwalking-related management issues at GGNRA?**

Increased:

- Park visitation
- Numbers of professional dog walkers
- Diversity of uses (hiking, running, dogwalking, wildlife viewing, horse-back riding, windsurfing, etc.)
- Dog-related visitor conflicts among user groups (jumping/running dogs, visitor comfort levels around dogs, desire of some non-dogwalking visitors for quiet solitude versus desire of dogwalking visitors for social interaction/experience, etc.)
- Pressure on park staff related to dog-related rescues (human and dog), dog waste removal, and maintenance of areas heavily used by dogs

Need for:

- Protection of animal and plant species habitats, including special status species

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## **NEPA Requirements for Reasonable Alternatives**

NEPA requires analysis of a full range of reasonable options. Reasonable alternatives are those that are economically and technically feasible and show evidence of “common sense.”

What alternatives would not be “reasonable”?

- Economically infeasible - unreasonably expensive or unlikely to be funded
- Technically infeasible - logistical or technical problems that would prohibit implementation

What alternatives would show “common sense”?

- Meet the stated purpose and objectives for a plan or project
- Are within laws, policies and regulations that are unlikely to be changed
- Don’t overly duplicate other alternatives considered.

The spectrum of alternatives is more important than how many alternatives are analyzed. Each alternative should be a distinct approach that resolves issues, meets objectives and compares impacts to different resources.

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## **Ideas We've Heard from the Public**

(From public comment during the Advanced Notice of Proposed Rulemaking)

- Implement the 1979 Pet Policy
- No off-leash dogwalking
- More off-leash areas would limit overuse, be less destructive to the environment
- Limit off-leash dogwalking to specific, designated areas
- Fence environmentally sensitive areas to reduce impacts from off-leash dogwalking
- Physically separate off-leash dogwalking areas
- Schedule specific times for off-leash dogwalking
- Create a licensing process for off-leash dogs
- Provide educational programs to teach non-dog owners how to interact with off-leash dogs and teach dog owners how to properly control their off-leash dogs
- Limit the number of off-leash or on-leash dogs per person
- Encourage volunteer efforts to assist in stewardship of off-leash areas

**Do you have other ideas?**

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## **Negotiated Rulemaking Committee**

GGNRA has chosen to form a negotiated rulemaking committee to help identify where it may be appropriate to allow dogwalking within GGNRA-managed lands. The first committee meeting was March 6; the second will be April 18. Committee meetings are open to the public.

### The Committee:

- is composed of individuals who represent interests that will be significantly affected by the rule, including representatives of off-leash dog advocates, environmental advocates, and other park users such as equestrians, the elderly, disabled and children
- will seek to reach consensus on a proposed rule for dog management in GGNRA

### The NPS:

- will to the greatest possible extent consistent with its legal obligations, use whatever consensus the Committee is able to achieve as the basis for one or more alternatives in the EIS
- will use the preferred alternative of the EIS as the basis for a special regulation for dog management at GGNRA

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## Nepa and Negotiated Rulemaking

<u>Negotiated Rulemaking</u> <u>(Reg-Neg)</u>	<u>NEPA</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◆ Voluntary</li><li>◆ Supplements notice-and-comment procedures of rulemaking with a negotiation process with the intent of reaching consensus among stakeholders before an agency issues a proposed regulation</li><li>◆ Uses a negotiated rulemaking committee of appointed stakeholders</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◆ Required by law</li><li>◆ Analyzes the impacts of a range of reasonable alternatives and uses the analysis in decision-making</li><li>◆ Involves the interested and affected public before any decision affecting the environment is made</li></ul>

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## **NEPA and Negotiated Rulemaking:**

### **Why Use Both?**

By conducting the NEPA and negotiated rulemaking processes concurrently, both processes will benefit from information sharing.

- Impact analyses on a range of reasonable alternatives will be shared with the negotiated rulemaking committee during their negotiations, thus allowing the committee to consider the environmental impacts that dogwalking will have on specific park resources while they are still negotiating
- The consensus on a proposed rule will be incorporated into one or more alternatives in the Draft EIS for broader public review
- After review of all public comments on the Draft EIS, a final EIS is released