

GGNRA Management Plan

For

Visitors with Dogs

October 27, 2007

Submitted by the Following Committee Members and
Alternates Pursuant to the Final Version, May 15, 2006

Negotiated Rulemaking Protocols, page 2 as
“alternatives that reflect and incorporate, to the extent possible,
the various interests that have been expressed.”

Gary Fergus, Martha Walters, Linda McKay, Joseph Hague, Carol Copsey,
Cynthia Adams, Laurie Routhier, Christine Rosenblat, Jeri Flinn and Cindy Machado

These materials are supported as indicated on the attached pages
by the following Committee Members and Alternates:

Keith McAllister, Judith Teichman and Holly Prohaska,

leash at other times. This is the time period that the beach is the busiest. The following nearby beaches in the GGNRA do not allow dogs Kirby Cove, Black Sand Beach, Tennessee Valley Beach and Stinson Beach.

Rodeo Beach As indicated above, in conjunction with the Discussion Draft for Muir Beach, there is a Discussion Draft that Rodeo Beach be off leash from the lagoon to the water's edge.

Oakwood Valley There is a Discussion Draft which provides that there be off leash on the Oakwood Valley Road from Tennessee Valley Road to the junction of Oakwood Valley Trail and on leash from the junction to Alta Road. Another option would be to include a small parking area to promote visitor safety and, if necessary for mitigation, post and cable fencing with mesh near the creek adjacent to the Oakwood Valley Road.

Upper Ft. Mason As a result of discussions with other interest groups, there is a suggestion for the various locations within Upper Ft. Mason for a variety of visitor experiences. The off leash areas include the Great Meadow, Laguna Green and possibly the Parade Ground. On leash would be allowed on MacArthur East; MacArthur West; East 101, the GGNRA Headquarters Building Lawn; residential area lawns parking lots, roads and sidewalks providing access to the administrative, residential and event buildings. No dogs would be allowed on the Bowl, adjacent to the Burton Statue, North Meadow, East Meadow and the Officers Club.

Crissy Field The preferred option provides a no dog visitor experience in the West Bluff area as well as the western most portion of the Grassy Field, with appropriate landscaping, as indicated in the attached map. Off leash would be permitted on both the East and Central Beaches. The West Beach area would continue to be subject to seasonal restrictions as set forth in the Compendium which allows on leash near the water for dogs ten months a year and two months off leash. We propose that the park consider installing post and cable fences in critical locations around the wild life protection area to limit access so park visitors will not trample the western snowy plovers where they rest in the high dunes. The preferred option provides that the promenade would be off leash during the week and prior to 10 a.m. and after 4 p.m. on weekends and holidays. This could allow seniors, disabled and other park visitors (especially when there is a high tide and visitors are unable to walk on central beach) an opportunity to use the promenade. Another option would be to also make a small area of the eastern most portion of East Beach no dog assuming that appropriate landscaping can be done.

Baker Beach There are three options for Baker Beach. The preferred alternative is that no dogs would be allowed west of Lobos Creek, in the area adjacent to the west parking lot and the western picnic area as indicated on map Option I. Off leash dogs would be allowed from Lobos Creek to and including the social sand trail access at the east end of Baker Beach. During weekdays off leash dogs would be allowed from the social sand trail to the eastern end of Baker Beach. On weekends and holidays, off leash dogs would be allowed from the social sand trail to the eastern end of Baker Beach before 10 a.m. and after 4 p.m.; on leash at other times. Option II provides a no dog experience west of

Lobos Creek and at the east end of Baker Beach from the social sand trail to the east end of Baker Beach. Off leash dogs would be allowed from Lobos Creek to and including the social sand trail at the eastern end of Baker Beach. Option III is the same as Option II except that the eastern most portion of Baker Beach would be on leash.

Land's End/ Ft. Miley The small group discussed a compromise for evaluating Land's End and East Ft. Miley. There was no solution discussed for West Ft. Miley. Under the proposed compromise, the Sutro Baths and the Ocean View Trail would offer a no dog experience. The Coast Trail would be on leash for its entire length. El Camino Del Mar would be off leash, the parking lot/road between El Camino Del Mar and the Museum would be on leash and East Ft. Miley would be off leash from the Museum along Lincoln Golf Course. West Ft. Miley is the same as in the alternative proposals with on leash to the intersection of trail to the Octagonal House. From that intersection to and including the grassy field, off leash during the week and before 10 a.m. and after 4 p.m. on weekends and holidays. The trail to the Octagon House as well as beyond up the hill to the former batteries would be off leash. The El Camino Del Mar trail has been identified as one where post and cable fencing would be appropriate on either side of the off leash trail which would run from the steps from the Museum to the Memorial Parking lot. Another option would keep the Sutro Baths and Ocean View Trail as no dog as well as El Camino Del Mar to the cross over steps leading to the Coast Trail. The Coast Trail would be off leash during the week to Eagle Point overlook and before 10 a.m. and after 4 p.m. on weekends and holidays. East and West Ft. Miley would be the same as proposed in the small group compromise suggestion.

Ocean Beach/Ft. Funston Our preferred option would be off leash from the Cliff House to stairwell 24, from Panama Point south to the end of Ft. Funston, between and including the "chipped" trail and horse trail and on the central & sand-ladder trails to beach. No dogs would be allowed from Sloat to Panama Point, around the ranger station and the hang glider platform. On leash dogs would be allowed from stairwell 24 to Sloat, in the hang glider landing area, Sunset trail, most of central grassy area, on trails around northern-most closed areas. There is a Discussion Draft that proposes that the buffer zone for the Snowy Plover on Ocean Beach be moved from Stairwell 21 to 24. Under this proposal, off leash would be allowed north of Stairwell 24 as well as south of Panama Point in Ft. Funston. Off leash dogs would also be allowed between Chip Trail and up to but not including the horse trail as well as on central & sand-ladder trails to beach. A parallel corridor for off leash dogs would be considered adjacent to the horse trail. No dogs would be allowed between Stairwell 24 and Sloat, around the ranger station, the hang glider platform, the horse trail and the trails around northern-most closed areas. On leash dogs would be allowed from Sloat south to Panama Point as well as in the Hang glider landing area, the Sunset trail, and most of central grassy area.

Pedro Point On leash near Highway 1; Off leash on the trail to the border of GGNRA property. GGNRA will have to work in conjunction with local jurisdictions that operate adjoining trails.

Muir Beach, Marin County

Overview

Muir Beach is primarily used by fishermen, local residents and other park visitors for off leash recreation. The Discussion Draft and the proposed three options attempt to provide a diversity of uses for each park visitor, and to protect the wildlife found in the creek and small lagoon. The preferred option proposes off-leash for the southern portion of the beach (the southern most portion of the beach is not within GGNRA boundaries) and on-leash use at the northern end. The second option proposes no dogs at the northern portion of the beach, and dogs off-leash at the southern portion. The third option proposes no dogs at the northern portion of the beach and on-leash use at the southern portion.

Summary

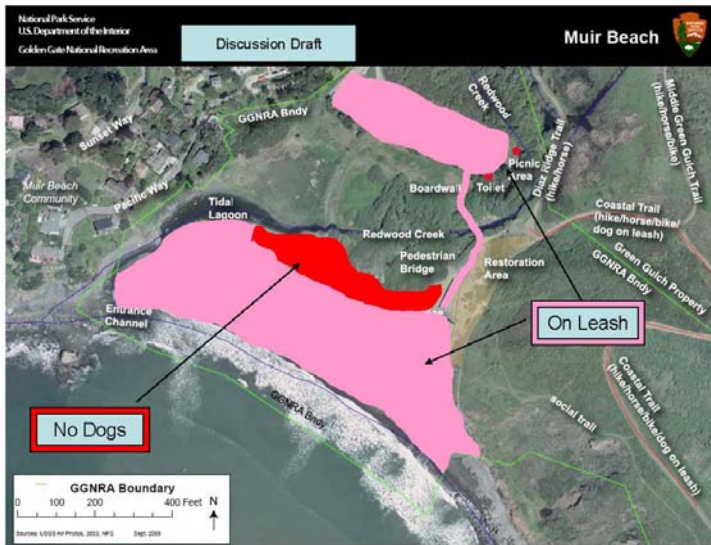
Muir Beach is located adjacent to the community of Muir Beach which borders the beach on the bluff to the north. The beach has historically been used by locals with their dogs. The daily user groups are made up of “beach-combers”, people walking with their dogs, people fishing and occasionally an equestrian.

On the rare warm, fog-free sunny days, multiple user types gather mid-day on the beach. There is a large parking area. Next to the parking area are restrooms and picnic tables. The beach is accessed by crossing over a boardwalk and footbridge that connect the parking area to the beach. There are also several trails that come down from the bluff that rises above the south end of the beach.

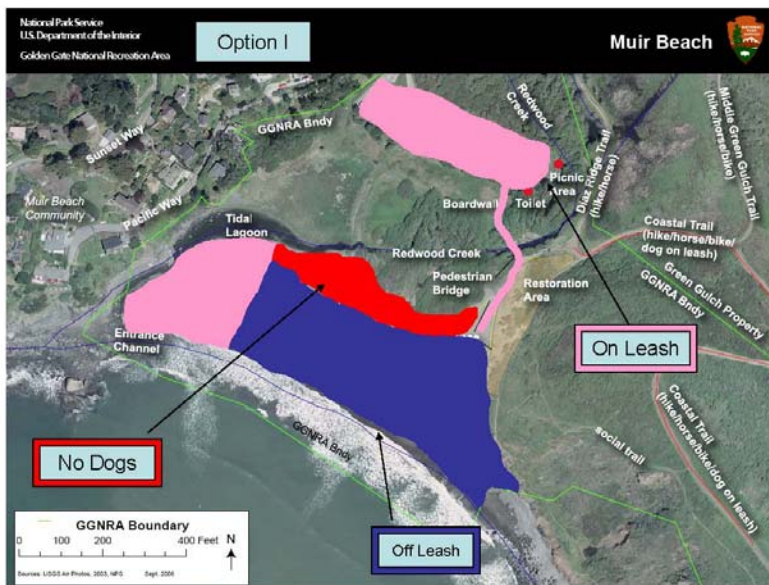
Threatened and endangered species are found in and around the creek and small lagoon that border the beach. There is post and cable fencing around the lagoon and more post and cable is planned to border the creek.

The proposed three options attempt to provide a diversity of uses for each park visitor, and to protect the wildlife found in the creek and small lagoon. The preferred option proposes off-leash for the southern portion of the beach (the southern most portion of the beach is not within GGNRA boundaries) and on-leash use at the northern end. The second option proposes no dogs at the northern portion of the beach, and dogs off-leash at the southern portion. The third option proposes no dogs at the northern portion of the beach and on-leash use at the southern portion.

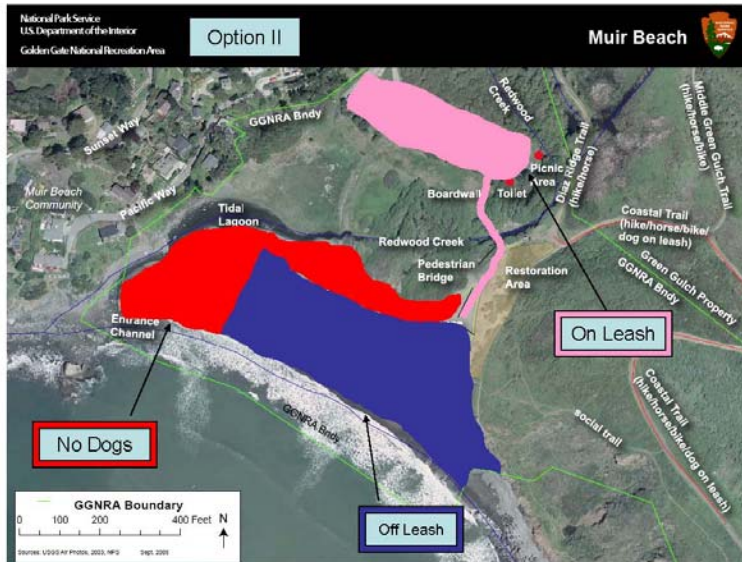
Discussion Draft



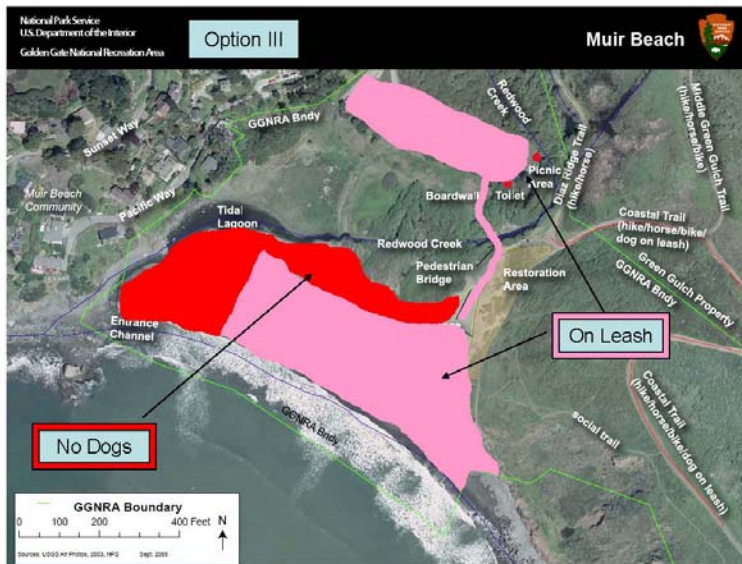
Option I



Option II



Option III



Options for Muir Beach

The following are options for Muir Beach to allow local residents and park visitors, and their dogs, continued access to Muir Beach. The following points are in support in particular of Option 1, the recommended and preferred option. Given the fenced creek and lagoon, and trails up from the beach to the south, Muir Beach has already achieved a positive balance between wildlife habitat and the needs and wishes of the local residents and park visitors – to provide an area for dogs to be taken off-leash.

Rodeo Beach at Fort Cronkite, Marin County

Overview

Rodeo Beach is primarily used by surfers, fishermen, and local residents and other park users with their dogs for off-leash recreation. The Discussion Draft and proposed two options attempt to provide a diversity of uses for each park user. The preferred option proposes off-leash for the entire beach. The second option proposes timed-use on weekends during the summer months; and the third option proposes on-leash use on the northern end of the beach and off-leash use from the foot-bridge entrance south.

Summary

Rodeo Beach is characterized as having low park visitor use most of the year with low conflict. The daily park visitor groups are made up almost exclusively of surfers, people walking with their dogs, people fishing and occasionally an equestrian. During the week, in addition to the groups mentioned above, there are some park visitor groups from the Headlands Institute. At optimum low tide, Rodeo Beach runs from the “surfer” parking lot at the north end to South Rodeo Beach at the extreme south end. Winter tides and summer high tides limit use of the south end of Rodeo Beach from the “bluff” to the extreme south end.

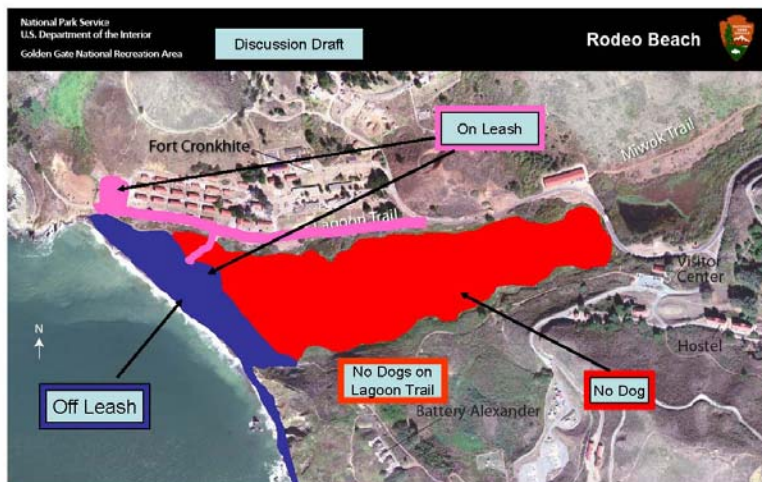
On those occasional fog-free, sunny weekend days in the summer, multiple park visitors gather mid-day on the beach. The majority of all park visitors arrive via Mitchell Road and access the beach from the north end via the metal footbridge across Rodeo Lagoon or from the “surfer” parking lot.

Threatened and endangered species are found in and around Rodeo Lagoon, *not* on Rodeo Beach. The beach is steep and not attractive to most bird groups and does not provide the nutrients that shore birds require.

Note

The NPS is currently considering four alternatives for The Marin Headlands and Fort Baker Transportation Infrastructure and Management Plan (TIMP). Alternative 3 is the NPS preferred alternative; this alternative would initially impose parking fees at Rodeo Beach. The long-term goal of the plan is to initiate a shuttle service and eliminate park visitor autos to Rodeo Beach. If Alternative 3 is selected and users can no longer drive their autos to Rodeo Beach, the question of how park visitors with dogs would get to Rodeo Beach is raised.

Discussion Draft



Oakwood Valley Road at Oakwood Valley

Overview

Oakwood Valley Road is one of two access points from Tennessee Valley Road into Oakwood Valley. The other access point is Oakwood Valley Trail that runs parallel to Oakwood Valley Road; it is a narrow trail versus the “road” which is wider. Historically the “trail” has been on-leash only while the “road” has been off-leash/voice control.

Under current conditions, the Oakwood Valley Road off-leash area extends from the Tennessee Valley Road up to Alta Avenue. The off-leash hike then continues north on Alta Avenue to the parking area at the end of Donahue Street in Marin City. This is a good hour hike. There is a moderate level of commercial dog walking on the Alta fire road.

The current off-leash consideration is Oakwood Valley Road from Tennessee Valley Road to the junction of Oakwood Valley Trail. This is a short 10 minute walk. There does not appear to be commercial dog walking in this short segment of the trail.

Summary of Characteristics

- *Difficult and unsafe auto unloading at Oakwood Valley Road access point at Tennessee Valley Road*
- Coyotes are known to frequent the Oakwood Valley area down-slope of Alta Avenue but above the Oakwood Valley Road
- ”No plant species of special concern are known to be present at this site, with the exception of summer lupine and varied color lupine which serve as host plants except in the summer there is lupine which serves as host plants for federally endangered mission blue butterfly.” (Oakwood Valley Trail Attributes-deliberative draft)
- ”Low to moderate use by runners, bicyclists, hikers.” This is not used as an equestrian trail
- Tree dwelling Northern Spotted owl habitat thought to exist, however, Great horned owls are currently present and experts from Wildcare state that the Great Horned owl will trump the presence at any time of any smaller owls at Oakwood Valley

Mitigations:

Current Conditions: *Unloading from cars on Tennessee Valley Road at Oakwood Valley Trail is dangerous. There is a very narrow parking strip on the Oakwood Valley side of the roadway. There is also a narrow parking strip on the opposite side of the road. Parking on the opposite side adds the risk of crossing against traffic. This is an especially dangerous situation for the handicapped and elderly, as it is for anyone with a dog(s).*

Mitigation: We recommend that the NPS build a new parking area on the Oakwood Valley side of the road to provide safe parking and access for park users and their dogs.

Current condition: The riparian habitat and stream adjacent to Oakwood Valley Road is attractive to dogs. The NPS has indicated that they do not want dogs to access the stream.

Mitigation: We recommend that the NPS build a fence along the entire road area, separating the road from the stream, preventing dogs from running down into the stream.

No Dog Experience: Dogs are not allowed (on or off-leash) on Tennessee Valley Trail which leads to Tennessee Valley Beach. Both Tennessee Valley Road and Tennessee Valley Beach are no dog areas. The trailhead and large parking area for Tennessee Valley Trail is just down the road from Oakwood Valley.

Recommendations:

It is unclear why this small segment of the trail has been proposed and not the exiting connection to Alta. There is very little parking and the parking that exists is not safe. Oakwood Valley is a very small area, and a creek runs down the middle of it. It is located a long distance from Park Rangers, and requires Rangers to enter Oakwood Valley to determine current activity.

Alta Fire Road (please see option 1 map) on the other hand, has a large parking area at the end of a dead-end street. It is a wide fire road that runs on top of the ridge above Marin City. The first section of the Alta Fire Road is privately owned with a permanent easement into the GGNRA. Activity on the fire road can be easily observed and managed.

The west side of the fire road slopes down to Marin City, the east side of the fire road slopes down to Tennessee Valley. Both of these areas have considerable human activity.

The road has natural barriers along much of it (steep banks), and post and cable fence has been installed marking Mission Blue habitat that lies west of the road. There is a large buffer zone between the road and the post and cable fence.

Alta Fire Road is currently used by cyclists, walkers, and by humans with dogs. Since the road is wide throughout there is little conflict. There are no horses on this road.

The fire road is used as an entrance into the GGNRA by service vehicles including the NPS, PG&E and MMWD. This is not pristine wilderness, but rather a road that is used by both Park users and maintenance staff.

Alta Fire Road intersects with Oakwood Valley Trail about 2 ½ miles out.

Management Measures for Oakwood Valley

Commercial Dog Walkers: CDWs must apply and receive a commercial permit to walk dogs from the GGNRA. Limit number of dogs walked at one time.

OTS/TAG Program: Each dog owner must apply, review the video and receive a TAG to walk their dog in the GGNRA. This GGNRA sponsored program will allow the park the ability to educate and enforce dog etiquette and leash law requirements.

Public outreach: Create brochures, clear signage about off leash, on leash and no dog areas. Make sure that these areas are posted at trailheads (and fire roads), and on bulletin boards, and web site postings at the park. Designate a point person for the dog walking community to contact. Conduct waste clean up events. Make doggie bags and trashcans available.

- MacArthur Avenue is the only location on the east side of the park for voice and sight control recreation. The only cars are those looking for parking as it is not a through road, only a loop. There is indirect light in the evenings and some protection from the wind.

B. On Leash Areas (Pink Areas as depicted on Map)

1. GGNRA Headquarters Building Lawn
2. Residential area lawns
3. Parking lots, roads and sidewalks providing access to the administrative, residential and event buildings

Summary of Rationale (For further details see Mitigation/Rationale)

- Location of GGNRA Headquarters
- Residential area
- Public access ways are common areas
- Provides safety and comfort level for some park visitors

C. No Dog Areas (Red Areas as depicted on Map)

1. Bowl (adjacent to East Meadow and Bufano Statue)
2. North Meadow (between Great Meadow and Park Building, contains Bufano Statute)
3. East Meadow (flat lawn north of Great Meadow between Bufano Statute and stairs to piers)
4. Officer's Club Lawn

Summary of Rationale for Option I

- Picnickers and sunbathers utilize these areas on rare occasions;
- Provides safety and comfort level for some park visitors;
- Variety of terrain including both hilly and flat areas;
- These areas are adjacent to main parking lot and provide access to and from Aquatic Park and Lower Fort Mason;
- Officer's Club rented for special events;
- Allows for an extensive stroll between Lower Fort Mason and Aquatic Park that is either no dog or on leash only.

D. Barriers

1. Landscape barriers would be necessary for Laguna Green
2. Proposed landscape barriers for No Dog Areas to address compliance and general safety concerns
3. Landscape barriers can be visually appealing within the urban park

E. Mitigation/Rationale

While the park visitors utilizing the Great Meadow are predominantly dog owners, there are other park visitors during the day.

Voice and Sight Control Areas

Park visitors without dogs rarely utilize the above identified voice and sight control areas. Many people actually considered the Laguna Green to be somewhat outside the Park because of the current landscaping between the Great Meadow and Laguna Green. As such, allowing off leash recreation would not appear to interfere with other park activities. There is little commercial dog walking here.

Landscape Barriers are proposed for Laguna Green along the perimeter for safety from the adjacent traffic. One possibility would be a mid-height hedge with an impermeable interior barrier high enough to protect against the traffic, but not so high as to encourage vagrancy or other safety issues. The hedge should be sufficiently wide and should contain some sort of fencing that can be hidden within the hedge.

This option proposes the barriers to be just inside of the paved walkways that parallel the city sidewalks along Bay Street and along Laguna Street. This way, all visitors can utilize the walkway or the sidewalk that is directly alongside the traffic. Additionally, the landscape barrier would not interfere with the sight of drivers as they approach the turn from Bay onto Laguna.

These voice and sight control areas have the benefit of providing indirect light from street lamps during the winter months when evening falls so early. They also allow for some shelter from the wind.

The water fountain adjacent to the Great Meadow is the only fountain with a ground level faucet and drinking bowl for dogs.

The Great Meadow provides critical voice and sight control recreation. It is the only area large enough to allow for reasonable dispersion of the high number of dogs that visit the Park. This area is the only area with a paved sidewalk providing seniors and disabled park visitors the ability to exercise their dog in an environment safe for them to do so.

Many retired and elderly dog-owners walk their dog during the day.

On Leash Areas

In acknowledgement of the GGNRA Headquarters and parking lot, Option I proposes the lawn in front and around the building as on leash only.

The residential lawn is in close proximity to the front lawns of the homes in the area. Option I proposes it be on leash, rather than no dog, because there are dog owners and dogs that reside in this area.

No Dog Areas

Option I proposes these no dog areas so other park visitors may enjoy this area without dogs. Weather permitting, you will see occasional sunbathers and picnickers along the slopes leading down the West Meadow and in the relatively flat area making up the North Meadow. These areas are adjacent to the GGNRA Headquarters parking lot. They provide access between Upper Ft. Mason and Aquatic Park, the Youth Hostel and Lower Ft. Mason (via the stairs to piers).

The North and West Meadows are easily identifiable areas that are easily amenable to landscape barriers. Such barriers would help to ensure that there is a separation between voice and sight control and no dog areas.

These no dog areas provide a substantial barrier between the voice and sight control areas and the Park Service buildings and parking lots.

In light of the special events that take place at the Officer's Club, the Option I proposal includes the Officer's Club Lawn as a no dog area.

Management Measures for Upper Ft. Mason

Commercial Dog Walkers: CDWs must apply and receive a commercial permit to walk dogs from the GGNRA. Limit number of dogs walked at one time.

OTS/TAG Program: Each dog owner must apply, review the video and receive a TAG to walk their dog in the GGNRA. This GGNRA sponsored program will allow the park the ability to educate and enforce dog etiquette and leash law requirements.

Public outreach: Create brochures, clear signage about off leash, on leash and no dog areas. Make sure that these areas are posted at trailheads (and fire roads), and on bulletin boards, and web site postings at the park. Designate a point person for the dog walking community to contact. Conduct waste clean up events. Make doggie bags and trash cans available.

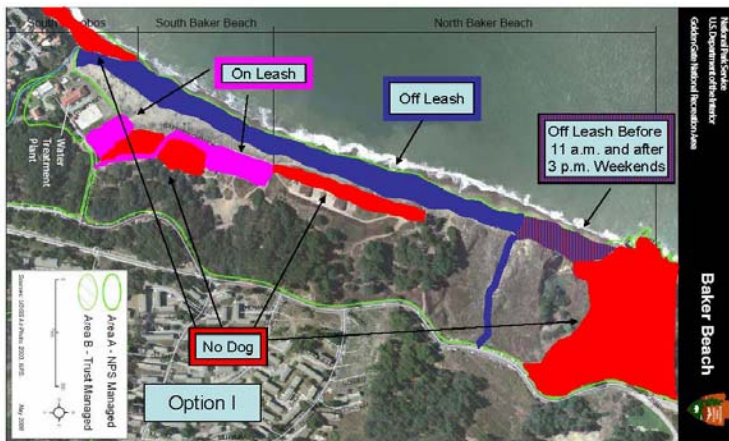
Baker Beach

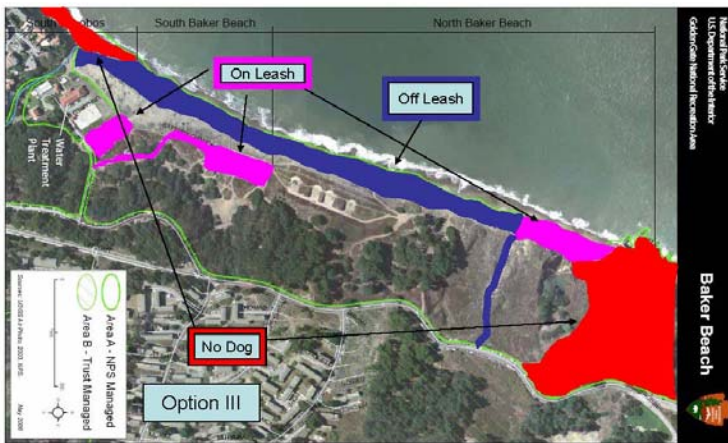
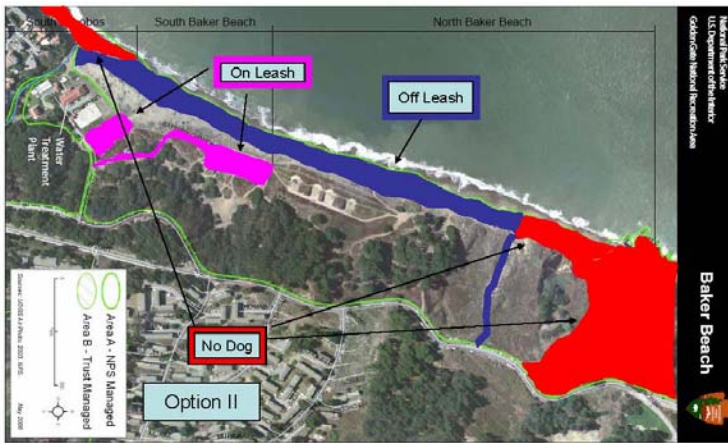
Overview

Baker Beach is primarily used by fishermen, local residents and other park visitors for off leash recreation. The proposed three options attempt to provide a diversity of uses for each park visitor. The preferred option proposes off leash for most of the beach and timed use at the eastern end. The other two options propose no dog at the eastern end of the beach. Local residents, who use this beach daily, proposed the timed use at the eastern end because this is when it is most heavily trafficked with other park visitors.

Summary

Baker Beach is comprised of man made fill sand over chert /shale. There are active dune restoration projects underway which are separately signed and fenced. There are low to moderate visitor conflicts reported on this beach. There have been some reported problems with vandalism and/or drinking/drug activities. There are some shorebirds during the winter but the numbers are small compared to the northern portion of Ocean Beach. Baker Beach is almost exclusively used by park visitors with dogs and fisherman on foggy, windy days or on early mornings and late afternoons. On warm sunny days (about 14 days a year) during the summer or holidays, the beach is a popular destination for all types of park visitors. Park visitors with dogs are generally local residents. There is a popular nude beach at the northern end of the beach. The beach is particularly wide and offers separation between park visitors.





Management Measures

The following are options for Baker Beach to allow local residents and park visitors, and their dogs, continued access to Baker Beach. These options have been shared with and are supported by most of the local residents and park visitors. The following points are in support in particular of Option 1, the recommended and preferred option. Given the fenced sand dunes and substantial trails up to Lincoln Boulevard, Baker Beach has already achieved significant and positive balance between wildlife habitat and the needs and wishes of the local residents and park visitors – to provide an area for dogs to be taken off- leash.

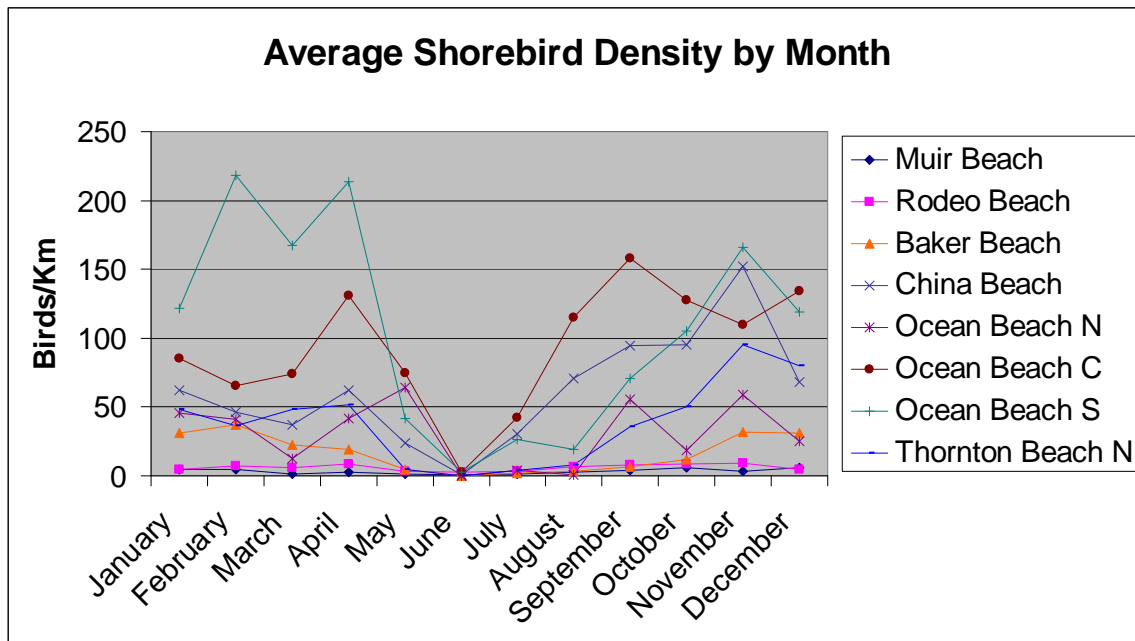
1. Ocean Beach: No dogs from Quintara to Sloat –

- ❑ The Park Service has expressed concern about enforcing the leash law on Ocean Beach because the beach is so wide. By the time a ranger is able to get to the dog owner, the dog is leashed up.
- ❑ Given the low number of off leash violations that have been issued in this since it was closed to off leash dogs, it is inaccurate to state that the regulation can't be enforced.
- ❑ Consider using cameras to record the violation, and then issue the ticket regardless of whether the dog(s) has been subsequently leashed.
- ❑ *We see it as a failure of imagination to create no dog areas simply because the Park Service perceives enforcement to be too difficult; other measures should be considered first, and closure of the area to on leash dogs should be part of the adaptive management measures if there is low compliance in the on leash areas.*

2. Fort Funston: No dogs on horse trails –

- ❑ Equestrians with dogs would not be able to use these trails
- ❑ If enforcement is the issue, we recommend using the TAG program for the educational and enforcement solution here. (Use the TAG video to educate people about native species near the trails; use the tag enforcement – and threat of losing off leash privileges – to gain leash law compliance)
- ❑ *Again – no dogs on the horse trails should be part of the adaptive management measures if there is low On leash compliance on these trails.*
- ❑

These proposals are consistent with the shorebird data that has been provided:



Management Measures for Fort Funston/Ocean Beach

Commercial Dog Walkers: CDWs must apply and receive a commercial permit to walk dogs from the GGNRA. Limit number of dogs walked at one time.

OTS/TAG Program: Each dog owner must apply, review the video and receive a TAG to walk their dog in the GGNRA. This GGNRA sponsored program will allow the park the ability to educate and enforce dog etiquette and leash law requirements.

Public outreach: Create brochures, clear signage about off leash, on leash and no dog areas. Make sure that these areas are posted at trailheads (and fire roads), and on bulletin boards, and web site postings at the park. Designate a point person for the dog walking community to contact. Conduct waste clean up events. Make doggie bags and trash cans available.