

Golden Gate National Recreation Area is sharing this statement on behalf of the National Park Service Headquarters.

National Park Service Statement

May 15, 2017

STATEMENT FOR RELEASE (attributed to Ray Sauvajot, Associate Director for Natural Resources Stewardship and Science):

The National Park Service takes our mandate to provide safe access to our parks to all visitors seriously. The National Park Service recognizes well-managed dog walking as a healthy and popular way to enjoy parklands.

Following the release of the Final Environmental Impact Statement on the Dog Management Plan at the Golden Gate National Recreation Area in December 2016, we learned that a former employee used a personal email account to communicate with outside parties, and did not forward those communications to a government e-mail account.

Since that time, I have commissioned an independent review panel of three government officials from non-NPS federal agencies with expertise in environmental planning, rulemaking and National Environmental Policy Act procedures to review this use of personal email. I have requested they evaluate and report on how these emails may have impacted the planning, rulemaking process, and environmental impact study, and make recommendations on how best to proceed given the significant body of work to date - including thousands of comments and more than a decade of analysis.

I have given the review panel access to all records and information associated with the planning, rulemaking and environmental review conducted on the Dog Management Plan and asked that the panel deliver a report to me this summer. We intend to determine the National Park Service's next steps related to dog management at GGNRA following the completion of the report, and we will report the results of the internal review to the public. Our goal is to restore trust in the process and proceed with transparency around this critical issue for the park and the community.

Following more than ten years of public engagement, including more than 4,100 comments*, and investment in a process intended to balance the needs of all park users, the findings of this independent review team will help us determine the best path forward to meet the needs of all park visitors at Golden Gate NRA.

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** on the Proposed Rule for Dog Management in the GGNRA*