

Dog Access Pilot Project Work Group Recommendation: Off-Leash Dog Access Program

Process

Throughout the 11-meeting work group process, the Dog Access Work Group (“Work Group”) agreed to use the consensus decision-making method of “Fist-to-Five” (three fingers means the member can live with the decision and will not undermine it; less than three fingers means the member does not agree, and three to five fingers indicates the level of agreement). In the case that consensus was not possible, the work group used a majority vote.

Recommendation

A. Policy Guidelines for Off-Leash Dog Access Pilot Program

At the December 3, 2019 meeting, there was consensus among Work Group members to recommend the following policy guidelines for the off-leash dog access pilot program:

- (1) Off-leash dogs must be under voice and sight control:
 - a. Voice and sight control means the owner/handler must be in control of dog at all times and must be able to recall and leash dog at any time.
 - b. Owner/handler must have a leash for each dog under owner/handler control.
 - c. Dog must return immediately when called (within 10-second return time).
- (2) Dogs must remain on designated trails, within view and earshot, and no more than 25 feet away from owner/handler.
- (3) Dogs must be on-leash in developed areas (i.e. near traffic, parking lot, lawn or play field deck, picnic areas, etc.).
- (4) No more than two dogs off-leash per owner/handler.
- (5) Dogs are presumed to NOT be under control when they:
 - a. Threaten, harass or chase other animals or wildlife;
 - b. Display threatening behavior;
 - c. Physically harm people directly or indirectly by their actions;
 - d. Touch or jump on other park users who have not invited or engaged in interaction with the dog; or
 - e. Do not return when called (as previously defined).

NOTE: This highlighted section will be discussed further at the January 13, 2020 work group meeting.

The Work Group could not reach consensus regarding the sixth policy guideline (listed below), so the Work Group voted. Eight members supported the sixth policy

and two were opposed (one member was absent). Reasons for opposition to the policy below included concerns that this policy would make it illegal for two separate visitors with off-leash dogs to let them encounter each other off-leash.

(6) Dogs must be recalled and leashed when encountering others.

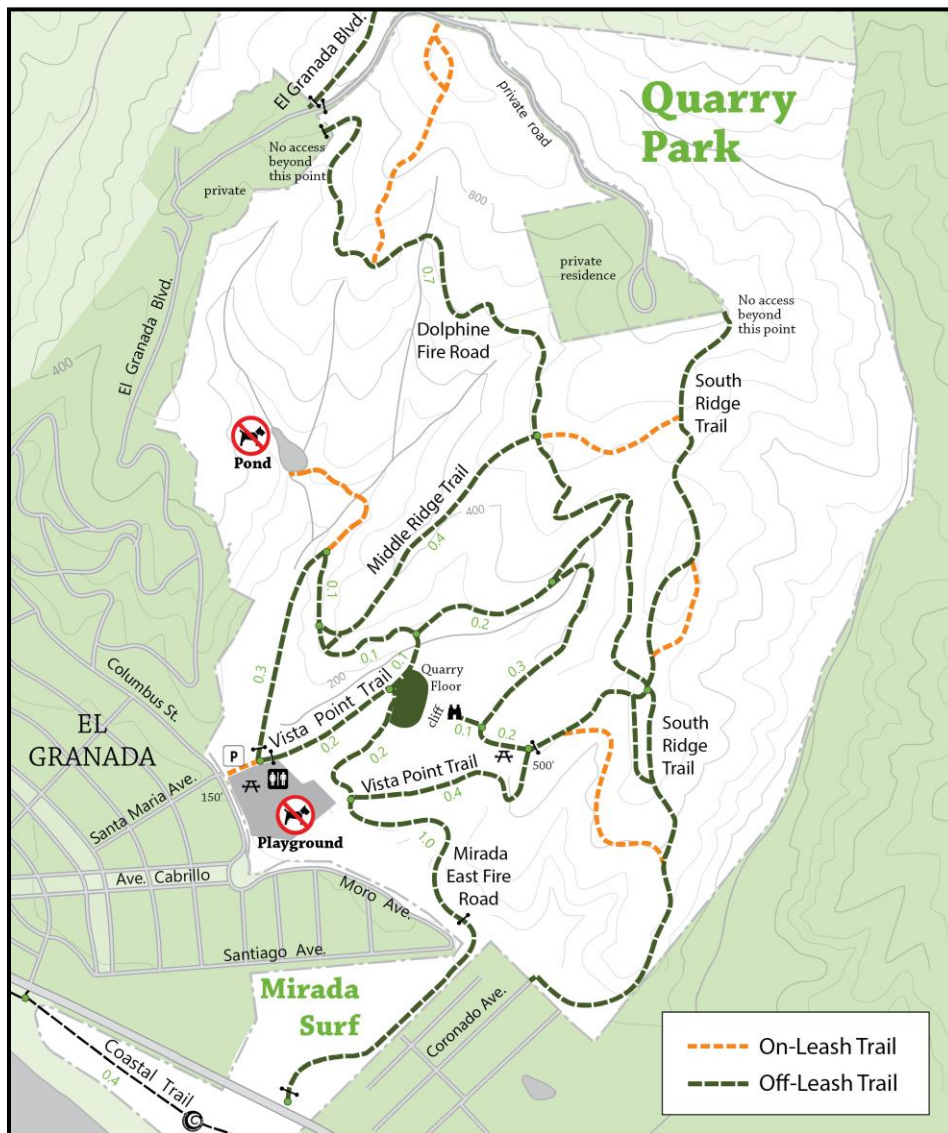
B. Two Off-Leash Dog Access Pilot Locations: Quarry Park and Pillar Point Bluff

(1) Quarry Park: Off-Leash Dog Access Pilot Location #1

At the October 7, 2019 meeting, the Work Group confirmed its consensus decision to recommend piloting off-leash dog access at Quarry Park.

Proposal at Quarry Park (see map below)

- On-leash dogs are allowed on all trails
- Off-leash dogs are allowed on designated multi-use trails
- To protect children and sensitive species and habitat, dogs are not allowed in the playground or pond.

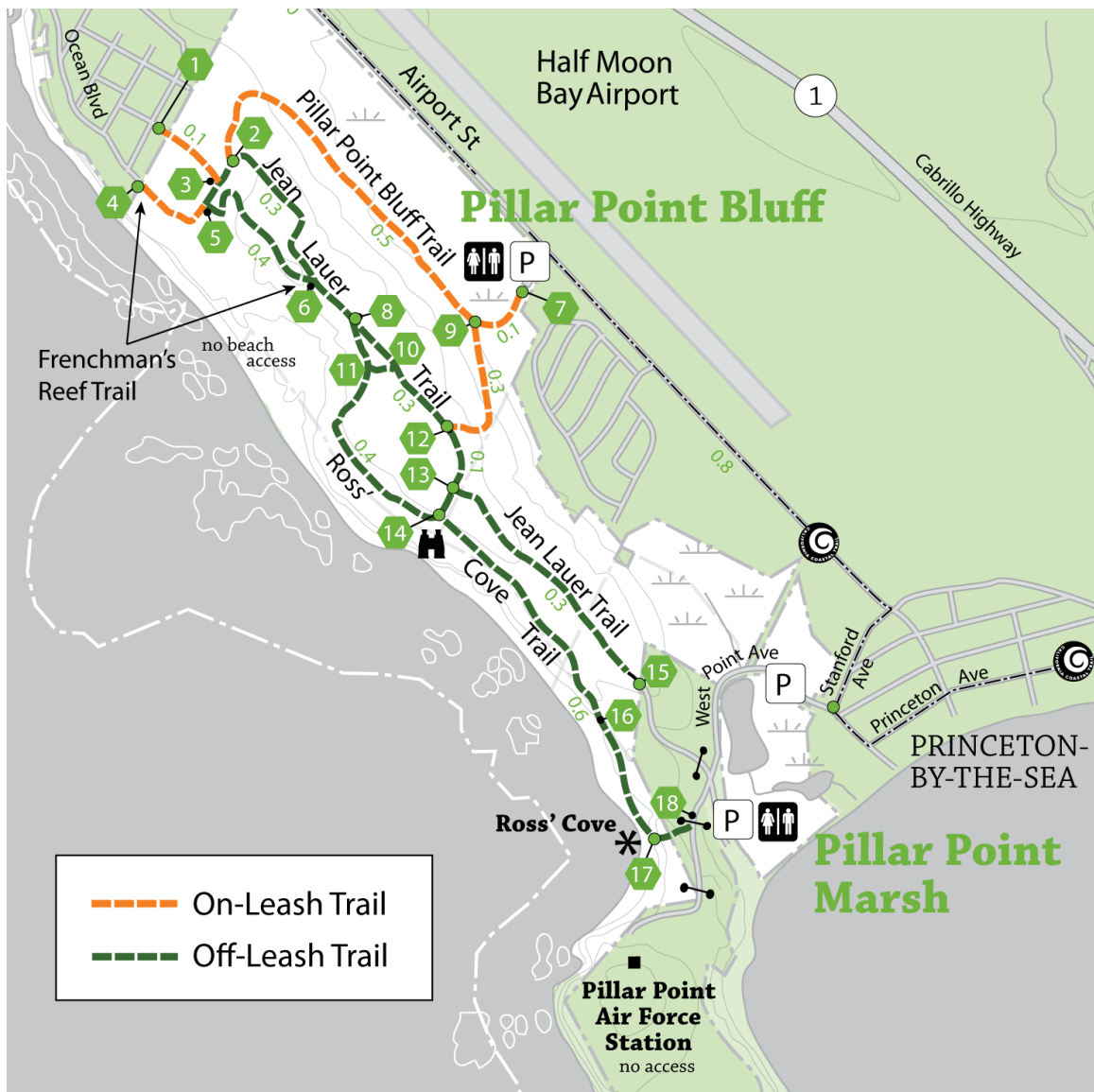


(2) Pillar Point Bluff: Off-Leash Pilot Location #2

Because the Work Group could not reach consensus after discussing off-leash dog access at Pillar Point Bluff over three meetings, the decision was reached through a majority vote at the November 7, 2019 meeting. Seven members voted in favor of the proposal below, two members were opposed, and two members were absent. Reasons for opposition to the proposal below included concern regarding proximity of off-leash dog access areas to the marine reserve and seal pup habitat, and the need for a full environmental study to identify any native or protected plants and wildlife at Pillar Point Bluff.

Proposal at Pillar Point Bluff

- Sections of trails in Pillar Point Bluff are open to dogs off leash and under voice and sight control of their handler(s). See map:
 - Jean Lauer Trail, post 3-15
 - Ross' Cove Trail, post 5-17
 - Between post 3 and 5
- To protect sensitive species and habitat, dogs are prohibited in all marsh areas, on all trails leading down to the beach, and on the entire beach.



C. Criteria for Evaluation of the Off-Leash Dog Access Pilot Program

There was consensus among the work group members to approve the following evaluation criteria for the off-leash dog access pilot program.

Off-Leash Dog Access Pilot Project Evaluation Criteria

Criteria	Methodology/Method for Tracking	Baseline	Frequency	Lead
Environmental Impacts				
Vegetation	Staff will survey trails before, during and after pilot period for presence of native and non-native vegetation and any species of concern within a buffer on either side of trails in pilot parks. Visual observations will be recorded in digital collector forms. Special survey will be done for any plants of concern.	Visual assessment pre-pilot.	Before pilot, and every 2 weeks during pilot.	Natural Resources
Wildlife	Staff will monitor change in presence, behavior, location, and timing of wildlife as recorded by the wildlife cameras and any other type of wildlife surveys needed. Any visual observation of dogs harassing wildlife will also be recorded.	Data collected before initiation of the pilot.	Ongoing monitoring before and during pilot.	Natural Resources
Water Quality	Number of unattended dog waste observed by staff, including measurement of number of bagged waste and unbagged waste, and if applicable, any other tracking requirements per the Regional Water Quality Control Board. Will be tracked by Ranger field forms and in digital collector form.	Visual assessment, including pre-pilot data observation.	Ongoing monitoring.	Natural Resources; Ranger staff
Visitor Interactions				
Visitor interactions	Staff will gather information regarding visitor interactions with dogs through field forms. Courtesy notices, incident reports, citations and public written comment will also be included.	Field forms collected before off-leash dog access pilot.	Ongoing monitoring.	Ranger Staff
Parks Resources				
Staff Workload	Number of staff time hours required to implement pilots, including evaluation criteria monitoring as well as interactions between rangers and dogs and dog owners. The number of ranger contacts will also inform this measurement.	Field forms collected before off-leash dog access.	Total will be reported at end of pilot.	Fiscal Staff; Ranger Staff
Signage and other infrastructure	Measured by cost of improvements and infrastructure required for dog access, including signage and additional waste stations, including initial costs and any ongoing costs such as maintenance.	Assume baseline of zero.	Total will be reported at end of pilot.	Fiscal Staff
Park Use				
Park visitor numbers	Measured by change in number of park visitors using existing visitor counters, comparing pre and during pilot numbers. Data will be collected by automated trail counters.	Compare count data from corresponding month for the previous year.	Ongoing monitoring before pilot and during pilot.	Visitor Services

Attachments:

- 1) Dog Pilot Project Work Group Process Map
- 2) Dog Pilot Project Work Group Roster List

DOG WORK GROUP PROCESS MAP



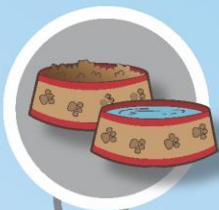
NOV. 2018

Board of Supervisors approved Dog Recreation Ordinance & directs implementation of pilot program



JAN. 2019

Dog Work Group convened to inform pilot program



JAN. - APR. 2019

Gather information & begin to draft recommendation for 1 or 2 on-leash pilot sites based on policy



MAY - JULY 2019

Finalize recommendation for on-leash pilot site(s)
Present to Parks Commission & Board of Supervisors



AUG. - SEPT. 2019

Draft and finalize recommendation for 1 off-leash pilot site based on policy



OCT. - DEC. 2019

Present off-leash pilot site recommendation & on-leash pilot update to Parks Commission & Board of Supervisors



SEPTEMBER 2020

Reconvene Dog Work Group to receive report on pilots and proposed next steps based on program evaluation



Note: All Committee meetings are open to the public, with opportunities to address topics being discussed. Dates and times of meetings are posted on the Park Department website:

PARKS.SMCGOV.ORG



San Mateo County Dog Pilot Work Group 2019 Roster

Members

Barbara Bonilla, SMC Parks Commission

Faye Brophy, Equestrian Trails and Recreation Advisory Council*

Joel Cervantes, District 2, Ranger III (Huddart, Wunderlich, Edgewood, Flood, Friendship)

Christine Corwin, Coastside Dog Owners Group of San Mateo County*

Matthew Del Carlo, District 4, Ranger IV (San Pedro Valley, Devil's Slide, Sanchez Adobe, Fitzgerald)

Marine Reserve, Moss Beach Park, Pillar Point Bluff, Quarry, Mirada Surf, Tunitas)

Nic Erridge, Pescadero Municipal Advisory Council*

Jerry Hearn, Conservation community*

Chris Johnson, Coastside resident*

Neil Merrilees, SMC Parks Commission*

Kevin O'Brien, District 1, Ranger III (Coyote Point and Crystal Springs Trail)

Jim Sullivan, Pacifica Open Space Council and Mountain Biker*

**Served on Dog Management Committee*

Parks Department Staff

Peggy Jensen, Acting Parks Director

Ellie Dallman, On Special Assignment

Laurel Finnegan, Ranger IV

Priscilla Alvarez, Ranger IV

Carla Schoof, Public Information/Communication

Hannah Ormshaw, Natural Resource Coordinator

Facilitator

Pat Brown