

Dog Task Force Committee Meeting Notes
January 12, 2004
Downtown Library, Large Conference Room, 12:15PM

Task Force Committee Members:

Kim Kiefer, Parks and Recreation
Sue McGregor - Capital Kennel
James King, Trailmix
Karla Hart - Fish and Game
Chava Lee - Humane Society
Sue Schrader - Public

Kathy Buss - Public
Kathy Hocker - Discovery Southeast
Bob Grochow, Parks and Recreation
Ron Marvin - Forest Service
Mike Eberhart - State Parks

I. Public Comment

Rich Gordon would like to comment on 3 items:

He is very enthusiastic about Bob Armstrongs' idea. The land at Honsinger Pond would be a great place to train dogs and would take pressure off the wetlands. He suggested maybe the city try to buy this area. Kim Kiefer mentioned that it was identified in the Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Plan to try to buy if it became available.

Mendenhall Dike – Thinks consideration should be given to use this area for time zoning - those seasons of year where there are high concentrations of birds and then other times off leash would be fine. Also dog leash laws should be enforced.

Walking with canes - He believes that maybe some dogs are bothered by canes. The two times he has been bite in the last 5 years have come from (supposedly non-aggressive dogs) and the dogs came from behind and bite him in the calf. He believes education is important because he honestly believes some dog owners are in total denial. He has the same rights as non-cane users.

Ron Berg -The points I wanted to convey are these:

Wildlife information -- Because so many trails will be in areas that are the home of some species of wildlife, I prefer to provide the public information about habitat types and examples of wildlife species they might expect to encounter in a particular habitat. For example, along the shoreline and adjacent meadows and streams, the public could expect to encounter mammals, including mink, otter, and ermine, but also bear and deer. In forested areas, the public could expect to encounter these animals, and also pine marten and porcupine. In alpine areas, the public could expect to encounter the above animals and also marmots and occasionally goats.

With respect to bird species, a large assemblage of various bird species, including ducks and shorebirds will be found along the shoreline, meadows, and streams. In the forested areas, blue grouse will be common. In the alpine, ptarmigan will be common. Encountering mother grouse and ptarmigan with their chicks is highly probable along

trails through forested areas and in the alpine in late spring and during the summer months.

The above examples are simplistic. Nonetheless, I think whatever message the wildlife committee will recommend must be kept simple (the KISS principle).

Signage (and also brochures, etc.) - Signage will be a major tool in informing the public about wildlife concerns and potential conflicts with dogs. I think the Education Committee needs to consider user-friendly signs that inform the public about the types of habitat and associated species of wildlife the public could expect to encounter in an area on the basis of habitat types. Dog owners must be encouraged to have a leash ready (usually in hand or in a pocket) to restrain a dog in case wildlife is encountered. For that matter, a responsible dog owner needs to have a leash ready in case of encountering other dogs or people.

Enforcement - My current job involves regulating commercial fishermen. We've learned that most fishermen will obey regulations if they have participated in their development and that the final regulations make sense.

Similarly, most dog owners will voluntarily comply with guidelines if they are involved in their development and the final guidelines make sense. Voluntarily compliance is necessary, because I doubt CBJ will have the fiscal resources for 24/7 enforcement of dog control regulations. We won't achieve 100% compliance. Some leakage occurs with any regulation or guideline.

The Wildlife subcommittee might recommend an area that is so important to wildlife that very high compliance is needed at some time during the year. CBJ would give such an area higher priority with respect to enforcement. Nonetheless, all wildlife areas are important to some degree, necessitating that dog owners constrain their dogs (with the readily available leash) when a negative encounter is about to occur. To be pragmatic, I believe that voluntary compliance, not strict enforcement, should be the objective of the dog committee.

II. Subcommittee Reports

- A. Parks/Off Leash Areas – Sue McGregor said their subcommittee put up maps of areas and identified areas that people were using with their dogs and how often. This helped identify areas valuable to talk about. The statistics from this meeting were compiled but are only statistics from people who attended the meeting. Tonights meeting is at 5pm.
- B. Education – Chava Lee reported that their subcommittee began by throwing out every possible idea and then in the end pared down to what they could actually do. They are considering not meeting until the other groups are finished to determine what direction they should go. Did hear strongly dog and non dog owners issues. It was

mentioned people need to be told multiple times. Need to begin advertising the scoop-the-poop campaign and need to use more than one form of education.

- C. Wildlife/Sensitive Habitat – The subcommittee is reviewing background research from the following articles and websites.
1. The Use of Border Collies in Avian and Wildlife Control Programs by Dr. Nicholas Carter - www.birdstrike.bcrescue.org
 2. Predatory Behavior in Dogs at: www.bobmckee.com
 3. Domestic Dogs in Wildlife Habitats, Effects of Recreation on Rocky Mountain Wildlife at www.montanatws.org
 4. Status of the Science - On Questions that Relate to BLM Plan Amendment Decisions and Peninsular Ranges Bighorn Sheep, Updated March 14, 2001
 5. Who Arcata Marsh users are, what they do there and what they think about dogs - www.arcataeye.com
 6. Wildlife Report - News from the Colorado Div of Wildlife, Release date 6/5/98 "Free Roaming Dogs Pose a Threat to Wildlife"
 7. USGS-Western Ecological Research Center "Human Disturbance of Shorebirds on California Beaches by Kevin Kafferty, 2001 Klafferty@usgs.gov.
 8. City of Boise Parks and Recreation website "Dogs & Open Space Advisory Committee Proposal".
 9. "Emerging Infectious Diseases of Wildlife - Threats to Biodiversity & Human Health", Science Magazine, Vol 287, January 2000. www.sciencemag.org
 10. Public Access and Wildlife Compatibility, March 2001, San Francisco Bay Conservation & Development Commission - www.bcdc.ca.gov
 11. Montana Chapter of the Wildlife Society, "Effects of Recreation on Rocky Mountain Wildlife: Summary of the September 1999 Review for Montana, pg 6 - Carnivores - www.montanatws.org

The group worked on the problem statement adopted at their January 5th subcommittee meeting which states:

Increased use of trails, parks and other public lands is impacting the experience of many users. Contact between dogs and other users is increasing, and rules, regulations, and enforcement policies are not clearly understood by the public. The special needs of dog users also are not being addressed.

The purpose of this sub-committee is to address the issue of dog usage on trails, open spaces, parks and other public areas, and to provide recommendations on usage to the Dog Task Force.

The pressure on wildlife continues to grow as Juneau's population increases and there is increased recreational activity on trails and open spaces. Of specific concern to the wildlife subcommittee are: wildlife and habitat disturbances associated with dogs,

interference with wildlife viewing and photography, activities by dogs, and access improvements (new or enhanced) that could bring more dogs into critical wildlife habitats. Amalga Meadows is relevant to this statement. Presence of dogs does cause disturbance to an area even while on leash.

Hopefully the education subcommittee could reach out to other general areas in the meantime. Example - Allowing dogs to chase deer is illegal. Allowing your dog to chase migration birds is harmful. Then later would only have to identify key areas and points.

F&G did commercials in Anchorage a couple of years of years ago and maybe Juneau could use these.

This committee has the opportunity to reach out to a lot of different groups and when information goes out from the task force these groups should be identified. Some of these groups are: Territory Sportsman, Ducks Unlimited, Mendenhall Advisory Board. If we got their endorsement they in turn could send out to their members. Then everybody could understand how we got to this point.

Karla Hart recommended a definitions of terms be created at the February meeting - example "off leash".

It was recommended that all meetings be emailed to dog committee members and possible links be created to various websites.

III. Upcoming Meetings:

Dog Task Committee, February 2, 2004, Downtown Library, Large conference room.

Parks/Off Leash Subcommittee meeting, Jan 12th, 5pm, Downtown Library

Wildlife/Sensitive Habitat Areas Subcommittee meets Jan 16th, Friday, Downtown Library, Large Conference Room, 12:15.

IV. Adjournment