Compendium of Voice and Sight Tag Program Evaluation Comments

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Section I

Statements from Stakeholder Groups

To: OSBT
RE: Green Tag Modifications
From: FIDOS
Date: January 25, 2013

Thank you for considering FIDOS suggestions for enhancing the Green Tag Program.

After observing December's City Council study session, it appeared that there is considerable confusion, misconceptions and differing opinions regarding the Green Tag program and how it should be modified.

Although there is always room for improvement, FIDOS continues to believe that the impacts and conflicts involving dogs on OS have been greatly overstated. We have publicly criticized OSMP's studies to be biased, and poorly conducted. The GT program has not been the financial, or the operational failure OSMP has depicted. As leaders, it is important for you not to overly-penalize a specific user group under these unreliable circumstances. It is also important to give the OS Dept clear direction on these modifications to avoid the pattern of overly restrictive interpretations.

There are several of the recent 8 OSMP proposals that appear to have consensus:

1) Info Sessions
2) Rabies mandate
3) Additional outreach strategies
4) Increasing Fines (although exact amount have not been decided)

The issues identified as needing further discussion include:

1) Revocation
2) Reinstatement
3) Fees
4) Future Monitoring

We would like to address these issues below:

REVOCATION

FIDOS would like to propose a 3 tier system for dog violations:

1) Dogs causing injury or death

FIDOS will support a no-tolerance policy (one strike and you're out) for egregious incidents involving death or injury to any visitor or animal on OS. Any dog causing death or injury should have their off-leash privileges revoked.

FIDOS does not believe the act of chasing wildlife should be considered egregious, and therefore should not be included in a no-tolerance policy. Chasing wildlife is wrong and dog owners should take responsibility for these actions. Currently there is an additional $250 fine for chasing wildlife, which is a significant deterrent. However, revoking off-leash privileges for a dog chasing a squirrel, for example, is overly harsh—an additional $250 fine will be an adequate penalty.

Evidence suggests that most species of concern in Boulder's OS, are thriving. This includes many of OSMP's indicator species, such as bears[i], Abert's squirrels[ii] and wild turkeys[iii]. Local deer populations have recently experienced a Chronic Wasting Disease epidemic, which is responsible for their declining population[iv]. There has never been a study linking dog chasing to a reduction in any of these species' ability to reproduce and thrive. Experts agree the serious impacts to wildlife are climate change, fires, fire mitigation, beetle kill, forest thinning (as we've recently seen in Shanahan Ridge), and communicable diseases. Even deforestation and pesticides used thousands of miles away can have an impact on our local bird species. Getting flushed by dogs may be a disturbance to these creatures, but rarely is it life-threatening. Some species, such as deer, suffer from communicable diseases resulting from over-population and lack of stress on their population. It would be wrong to classify this type of disturbance as "egregious."

2) **Dogs violating Voice & Sight Ordinance** (no injury or death)**:**

This would fall into a more lenient threshold of tolerance such as our current 3 strikes policy, or 2 strikes in 2 years:

- Dogs chasing wildlife
- Dogs chasing livestock
- Dogs flushing wildlife
- Dogs chasing people
- Dog not demonstrating sufficient V&S control

It should be considered that there are planned discussions to possibly further increase restrictions. Much is unknown about these proposed changes and how they will be enforced and received. We can't base the threshold of violations using today's standards because we don't understand how these standards will be affected by future increases in restrictions and enforcement. Perhaps the continual offenders are the only people who have received more than 2 violations within 2 years by today's standards, but as restrictions and enforcement increase, lesser offenders will get caught up in this web.

Until a pattern of violation behavior has been established, we ask that you consider increasing the number of violations allowed within 2 years, or decreasing the timeframe to one year. For example; 2 violations in 1 year, or 3 violations in 2 years, or even 3 violations in 3 years. We ask this because if a dog/person received an unlucky ticket, they would be on eggshells for 2 years, fearing the consequences of revocation. This punishment is too harsh and would significantly impair the visitors' experience for a considerable length of time.

3) **Dog guardians not following rules**

It is important that violations caused by people not following the rules be separate from dog behavior violations, since the solutions for these differing violations minimally overlap. For example, it doesn't make sense to subject an owner to dog behavior training when the offense has nothing to do with dog behavior. These violations include:

- Not picking-up dog waste
- Having a dog off-leash in a leash or no-dog area
- Not having a leash present
- Hiking with more than 2 dogs off-leash

2

- Not having a Green Tag

Reinstatement

FIDOS supports the ability to reinstate a GT after revocation. Certain solutions may appear logical on the surface, however, they will be difficult and expensive to administer.

- *Dog Testing* – Not only is it unlikely this solution will be effective, the city will be creating a complicated bureaucracy to maintain it. It is unlikely that a testing environment will adequately represent an OS environment. There will be dogs that can pass a test, but may not be able to transfer the skills to OS. There will also be dogs that may not test well, but are not a problem in OS. This direction is certain to create ongoing controversy and is likely to cause more problems than it solves. We also expect that if such a bureaucracy is created it will be self-fulfilling and ever expanding.
- *Watching a Video*- This is a workable solution.
- *Taking a test* - This is a workable solution.
- *Attend an information session* - This is a workable solution.
- *Dog training* – Any dog convicted of injuring or killing on OS, should be required to obtain additional training.
- *Community Service* – This is appropriate for violations involving owners not obeying rules such as not picking up, and possibly others.

FEES

We must be clear what the purpose of implementing a fee system is. **Fees alone will do nothing to increase compliance, which is the purpose of modifying the GT program.**

Regional tiered increases: FIDOS is agreeable to the concept of a 3 tiered fee system, where those out of the city pay more than city residents, and those out of the county pay more than county residents.

Cost Recovery – OSMP has greatly misrepresented the expenses required to maintain this program. Although, we agree that the program should pay for itself, fees do not have to be large to accomplish this. It is our understanding that the purpose of a fee program is not to generate revenue.

Renewals – A renewal can be an effective reminder of the rules. If renewals are required less than every three years, it will be unnecessarily onerous, and is unlikely to produce a significant increase in effectiveness. It is important that participating in the GT program not be overly arduous to discourage people from participating.

Excess revenue – Any excess revenue generated from this program should go towards dog programs such as providing trash cans.

Punitive – It is not reasonable to implement fees for the intent of discouraging usage. Off-leash privileges should not become an elite activity. This approach will have the unintended effect of pushing off-leash walkers underground if they can't afford a fee.

MONITORING

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Future monitoring and studies should focus on impacts. There is much discussion and emotional rhetoric addressing the impacts of dogs on wildlife and flora in Boulder's Open Space, but little is understood. Questions regarding overall health of local species are the primary concern of most people, yet there continue to be misconceptions and little agreement.

In the last decade, a great deal of expense and time has been extended by the OS Dept. with the intent of quantifying the behavior of dogs. We estimate that the multiple studies (many of them long-term with multiple stages) over the last 10 years to cost in the millions of dollars. In spite of this expense, not much has been learned about this user group. The legitimacy of recent studies conducted by OSMP has been question by members of City Council as well as Op Ed writers in the Daily Camera. The need and productivity of these types of studies should be questioned moving forward. Rather than commit OSMP resources to studies that are designed for dogs to fail, we should focus on the impacts all users (human and canine) are allegedly causing. Again, these impacts are the issues that continually come up, but they are mostly assumed.

The City's OS Dept., as well as several grassroots community organizations, has spent a great deal of time and effort working through issues pertaining to dog access over the last 15 years. As leaders on this issue, we hope you consider how your decisions could impact these organizations' ability to work together, and the continual draining of resources required of them. For example, any mandate for dog testing is sure to be controversial, and will most likely become a new, on-going front in this debate. FIDOS believes that it is in everyone's best interest that any changes to the GT program be clean and straight forward in order to minimize potential time-consuming and unproductive debate.

We hope you have found our comments to be helpful.

Sincerely,

Jim Illg
Lori Fuller
Tony Gannaway
Eileen Monyok
Deborah Flick
Daniel Sukle
Jessica Yates
Sue DeRose
Aldona Siczek

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[i] http://www.denverpost.com/willoughby/ci_20630848/willoughby-bear-populations-growing-game-managers-ok-increase

ii http://www.fs.fed.us/r2/projects/scp/assessments/abertsquirrel.pdf

[iii] http://www.dailycamera.com/science-columnists/ci_22047156/jeff-mitton-wild-turkeys-are-thriving

[iv] http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2602978/

TO: City Council

FROM: FIDOS

Re: Revisions to the Green Tag Program

Date: November 9, 2012

FIDOS thanks you for this opportunity to share our input on the eight proposed "program enhancements" (actually revisions) to the Green Tag program, as first put forth by OSMP staff, and now modified by the OSBT. We appreciate the time and effort that many people have put into considerations for revising the Green Tag Program.

FIDOS believes that the new Green Tag recommendations are excessively harsh and punitive. Punishment is the most ineffective form of motivation. Yet, the predominant theme of the new Green Tag recommendations remains punishment, with higher fines, loss of Green Tag privileges for one or two strikes depending upon the violation, and increased fees - now proposed annually.

In addition, the new Green Tag recommendations discriminate against a single user group – dog guardians. No other user group must pay annually (or at all) for access to Open Space. No other user group faces revocation of Open Space access for a single offense. No other user group must purchase tags and then follow an increasingly complex and punitive set of rules to maintain access to Open Space. Finally, no other user group is scrutinized and studied to the extent that dogs and their guardians are studied on OSMP lands.

FIDOS proposes a three-pronged approach to improving upon the current Green Tag recommendations: A) Lessen the harsh and punitive nature of the proposed punishments and fees, B) Start <u>specific</u> <u>positive</u> programs for dog guardians that will truly motivate them to adhere to Voice and Sight guidelines, and C) Use the money generated from the Green Tag program to support educational programs, purchase compostable dog waste bags, and begin a composting program.

<u>A) Lessen the harsh and punitive nature of the proposed punishments and fees</u>

FIDOS has several recommendations to improve upon proposals #4, #5, and #7 in ATTACHMENT B of the November 13th Council Study Session Document (NOTE: ATTACHMENT B represents the OSBT revision of the original OSMP Green Tag "enhancement options." ATTACHMENT B has been included at the end of this letter.)

4. ***Fines for B.R.C. 6-13-2 Voice and Sight Evidence Tag Required are increased to $100, $200, and $300 (minimum) for first, second and third or more convictions. Provide mechanism for dismissal of tickets for lawful participants who inadvertently failed to display tag.***

Doubling the currently existing fines for the first and second offenses is unnecessarily severe, especially considering the nature of these violations.

FIDOS recommends that the new fines be no more than 30% higher than the currently existing fines.

5. ***a. Revocation of program privileges will occur with one conviction of Aggressive Animal Prohibited (B.R.C. 6-1-20) or Failure to Protect Wildlife (or livestock) (B.R.C. 8-3 -5). This revocation is applicable to dog and/or dog guardian. Include a clear path for reinstatement of privileges.***

   b. Revocation of program privileges will occur with two convictions in two years for specified other dog-related violations on OSMP property. Include a clear path for reinstatement of privileges.

First, the loss of program privileges for a single offense is exceedingly harsh. It is more severe than consequences imposed under a DUI program. A dog that chases a squirrel up a tree could have his green tag revoked. A driver that is driving while intoxicated does not lose his license for the first offense, despite posing a much graver threat to society. Generally, no-tolerance laws are problematic because these types of stringent approaches don't acceptably consider abnormal circumstances, and the associated consequences are unintentionally severe.

FIDOS recommends that there be no revocation of a Green Tag for any single offense, or even for two offenses. FIDOS feels that a three strikes policy represents a fair balance, especially for newer dog guardians who are making their best effort to train their dogs.

Second, the statement, *"Revocation of program privileges will occur with two convictions in two years for specified other dog-related violations on OSMP property,"* is currently not specific and is still open-ended with regard to the term, "specified other dog-related violations."

FIDOS recommends that this statement be further clarified with regard to the specific dog violations that will be included in the potential loss of Green Tag privileges.

Finally, FIDOS recommends that violations for failure to pick up after your dog be kept separate from the Green Tag program. The Green Tag Program relates

specifically to proper Voice and Sight Control of your dog. Dog guardians without Green Tags for their dogs can fail to pick up after their dogs just as easily as dog guardians who have Green Tags for their dogs. **FIDOS sees a failure to pick up after your dog as a littering violation, as opposed to a Voice and Sight related Green Tag violation.**

At the October 10th OSBT meeting discussing the Green Tag program, it was understood that one could regain a Green Tag after revocation. However, this process has not been defined, only implied. It is important that there is a clear and defined process for re-obtaining a Green Tag if it has been revoked.

7. ***Modify the program registration process and fees to include a graduated initial fee and annual renewal for residents of the city, residents of the county, and non-county residents. The annual renewal fee for non-city residents will be significantly higher.***

FIDOS opposes annual renewal and an annual renewal fee in order to continue in the Green Tag program. As previously mentioned, dog guardians represent the only user group who must pay for their access to Open Space. To then require the payment of an annual renewal fee is equivalent to rubbing salt in the wounds. The annual fee will be additionally burdensome to low income families. **FIDOS recommends no sooner than a three-year renewal that coincides with the dog's three-year rabies vaccination renewal.**

In addition**, FIDOS recommends that the Green Tag fees should be tied to each dog or tag, not to each "household participant,"** as was stated in the initial OSMP recommendation.

B) Start specific positive programs for dog guardians that will truly motivate them to adhere to Voice and Sight guidelines

FIDOS proposes that the following positive reinforcement programs be part of the changes to the Green Tag Program. We feel that positive reinforcement will improve program compliance far more than the excessively punitive changes that OSMP staff is proposing.

1. Rangers could begin to hand out "Good Dog" cards when they observe positive dog and dog guardian behaviors. This gesture of good will could help to remove some of the punitive associations that the public holds with rangers.

2. FIDOS feels that the idea of a Gold Tag program should be reconsidered. If dog guardians see that they can strive for a higher goal that confers additional privileges, it would provide positive motivation for excellent dog

and dog guardian behavior. FIDOS would be happy to work with OSMP staff to design this program.

C) Use the money generated from the Green Tag program to support educational programs, purchase compostable dog waste bags, and begin a composting program.

ATTACHMENT B

OSBT Recommendation for Tag Program Enhancements

On October 10, 2012 the Open Space Board of Trustees (OSBT) unanimously approved and recommended Voice and Sight Tag Program enhancements to the Boulder City Council.

In order to ready materials for a November 13, 2012 City Council study session, the OSBT approved the section of the October 10, 2012 minutes containing the specific wording of the OSBT's motion on Voice and Sight Tag Program enhancements.

MOTION
Allyn Feinberg moved that the Open Space Board of Trustees approve and recommend to the Boulder City Council that the Voice and Sight Tag Program be modified with items one through eight as listed in the staff memo of October 10, 2012 with the changes made in the Board discussion. Tom Isaacson seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

1. Require all program participants attend an information session. New program participants must attend a session before they can register in the program. Existing participants will have a one year period after implementation to attend the information session.

2. Require that dogs managed under voice and sight control will be registered in the program only if proof of current rabies vaccination/City of Boulder dog license is provided.

3. Additional education and outreach strategies as recommended in Attachment B.

a. Provide training programs
Strategy for OSMP: No
Strategy for the community: Yes

b. Increase outreach/education about training opportunities
Strategy for OSMP: Investigate options; can be accomplished through information session
Strategy for the community: Yes

c. Support stake-holder efforts
i. Adopt a trail program
ii. Dog ambassador program (i.e. FIDOS Trails Group)
Strategy for OSMP: Yes

Strategy for the community: Yes

d. Revise and update the voice and sight video
Strategy for OSMP: Yes
Strategy for the community: No

e. Create refresher videos on requirements, etiquette or issues
Strategy for OSMP: Consider phase-in based on time and cost
Strategy for the community: No

f. Use traditional and social media to provide instructive educational information to participants
Strategy for OSMP: Email communication should be limited to important program updates
Strategy for the community: No

g. Provide educational walks for dogs and dog guardians
Strategy for OSMP: Trial basis
Strategy for the community: Yes

h. Improve clarity and information on signs
Strategy for OSMP: Yes
Strategy for the community: No

i. Palm cards for explaining requirements
Strategy for OSMP: Yes
Strategy for the community: No

j. Implement a "gold tag" dog training incentive program
Strategy for OSMP: Not recommended at this time
Strategy for the community: No

k. Increase outreach and education to visitors without dogs about voice and sight control and what to expect
Strategy for OSMP: Yes
Strategy for the community: Yes

l. Provide areas on OSMP where voice and sight control training is allowed
Strategy for OSMP: Possible to consider under specific conditions and on a well suited property
Strategy for the community: No

4. Fines for B.R.C. 6-13-2 Voice and Sight Evidence Tag Required are increased to $100, $200, and $300 (minimum) for first, second and third or more convictions. Provide mechanism for dismissal of tickets for lawful participants who inadvertently failed to display tag.

5. a. Revocation of program privileges will occur with one conviction of Aggressive Animal Prohibited (B.R.C. 6-1-20) or Failure to Protect Wildlife (or livestock) (B.R.C. 8-3-5). This revocation is applicable to dog and/or dog guardian. Include a clear path for reinstatement of privileges.

b. Revocation of program privileges will occur with two convictions in two years for specified other dog-related violations on OSMP property. Include a clear path for reinstatement of privileges.

6. Encourage courts to order such additions to fines as watching the voice and sight video, attending the voice and sight information session, dog training, and/or demonstration testing for egregious or repeat dog-related violations consistent with the nature of the violation. In particular we recommend community service for dog poop violations.

7. Modify the program registration process and fees to include a graduated initial fee and annual renewal for residents of the city, residents of the county, and non-county residents. The annual renewal fee for non-city residents will be significantly higher.

8. Adaptive management and monitoring program, to evaluate program success, will be developed prior to implementation of the voice and sight program changes.

On October 10, 2012, John Putnam called for a vote to accept section 5(b) of the larger motion. The OSBT vote to approve section 5(b) passed 4:1, (Feinberg, Hartogh Isaacson, and Putnam in favor; Dunbar dissenting).

On October 10, 2012, Allyn Feinberg made the motion described above for the entire recommendation. The motion was seconded by Tom Isaacson. The motion passed 5:0, (Dunbar, Feinberg, Hartogh, Isaacson, and Putnam in favor).

On October 24, 2012, Shelley Dunbar made the motion to approve the Voice and Sight motion as amended. The motion was seconded by Tom Isaacson. The motion passed 4:1, (Dunbar, Feinberg, Isaacson, and Putnam in favor; Hartogh dissenting).

RE: Green Tag Program
To: OSMP
From: FIDOS
Date: July 3, 2012

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input on the proposals that have been outlined in the Voice and Sight Tag Program Evaluation report (April 2012). FIDOS believes that some of these proposals have the potential to be successful and improve the GT program, while others will be problematic.

FIDOS continues to believe that the "problems" involving dogs on Open Space are exaggerated and that current conditions, while not ideal, are acceptable. We have grave concerns over OSMP's broad and inconsistent definition of conflict, as well as some of the unorthodox approaches used in ascertaining information through surveys and observational studies. We are worried that the results of these controversial studies and metrics will actually mislead people into supporting solutions that fuel alarm, rather than solve real problems.

Proposals FIDOS supports:

1) **Required attendance at an information session -** FIDOS believes that the key to increasing V&S compliance is education. Although mandating an on-site, information session will be inconvenient and we expect there to be push-back from many in the community, it is a reasonable approach and should successfully increase awareness of V&S expectations.

2) **Require successful completion of an online voice and sight control test -** FIDOS supports this educational approach. This type of "checking for understanding" has been shown to be highly effective for retaining information, while being less onerous for our constituency.

3) **Peer-to-peer outreach** - We believe this approach has a lot of potential, especially for organizing neighborhood poop clean-ups. Programs that encourage dog owners to educate each other on the trails, such as the Dog Ambassador concept, could also be successful, as people may be more willing to accept feedback from those who are considered to be "friendly." Additionally, an Adopt-a-Trail program in partnership with OSMP provides for both stewardship of Open Space and another opportunity for outreach, education, and joint messaging to convey to the public the expectations for GT compliant dog behavior.

4) **Proof of vaccinations** – As long as the city is willing to absorb the cost and liability of stating that GT dogs are up to date on their rabies vaccines, we won't oppose it. However, we feel this is a good example of a solution looking a problem, and that no cost of implementing this program should be passed along to our user group.

5) **Administrative Changes** – There is nothing here that gives us immediate concern. We agree that periodic renewal of GTs would increase users' retention of GT requirements. However, many city residents feel that dogs and their guardians are discriminated against within OSMP. Requiring disproportionate access fees for this single user group will exacerbate these perceptions. Any increase in fees must be reasonable.

Proposals FIDOS opposes:

1) **Dog Testing** – This solution is unacceptable for a myriad of reasons. Even in cases that seem reasonable, such as when a dog has been ticketed, this proposal is highly troubling. The true extent of the problem regarding dog behavior simply does not justify the expansion of bureaucracy created by this proposal.

    - Most of the problems associated with dogs on OS are violations of guardians' compliance, rather than the dog. Testing dogs is completely unrelated to guardians taking dogs into no-dog areas, having them off-leash in leashed areas, picking up poop, and most of the dog concerns we face on OS.

    - There is too much subjectivity on the part of the tester, which may be perceived as bias. Dogs may perform better or worse in a testing environment than they would on OS.

    - This solution will be viewed as the latest assault on dog access by OSMP, and your credibility and relationship will further erode with this user group.

    - This solution is highly costly and inconvenient to everyone involved.

2) **Trail Corridors** – This concept violates the concept of Voice & Sight, which focuses on dog control, not distance. Ensuring that your dog is in close proximately to the trail at all times will require guardians to constantly call and re-call their dogs, diminishing the enjoyment of OS for both parties. There are circumstances, such as young dogs playing, where corridors are insufficient and overly restrictive. A trail corridor requirement for dogs only will single out our user group as not being allowed off-trail in Recreation and Natural Areas, which is inconsistent with the VMP.

    It should also be noted that a trail corridor solution was never suggested by staff during the extensive WTSA discussion. It's confusing why this is now getting put on the table. The comprehensive and exhaustive WTSA was a more appropriate forum to vet this type of proposal as it severely affects the dog community.

3) **Consequences for Violations** – Although some consequences may be reasonable, the devil is in the details for this proposal. Any "one strike you're out" approach is unacceptable as there are possible aberrant situations that may cause a dog to act unusually. Revoking a GT for human error, e.g. not carrying a leash, would be exceedingly harsh and singles out users who recreate with their dogs for unreasonable punishment. Generally, we feel that it's time to start rewarding positive behavior rather than continue to increase consequences for negative behavior. FIDOS would gladly work with OSMP to devise creative, low cost and easy-to-implement reward systems.

4) **Establish Residency Requirements for Participation in Tag Program** – FIDOS believes that limiting GT access to only those who live in the city or county would be an

elitist policy. A better approach would be to encourage the county to designate off-leash area for dogs so they can better serve their residents, while taking pressure off the city trails. Although limiting GT access to those within the county will not affect the majority of our constituency, we feel it would be an exclusionary, unfriendly practice that sends the wrong message about our community.

FOBOS POSITION - Voice and Sight Control

The trails and lands of OSMP have long been a favorite destination for individuals wishing to recreate – both with their dogs and without dogs. As the OSMP 2012 evaluation report states:

> The popularity of OSMP for dog guardians and their canine companions is due, at least in part, to the opportunity for dog guardians to allow their dogs to be off-leash according to voice-and-sight control requirements.

With approximately 5 million people visits/year and 2 million dog visits/year[1] and growing, our open space system will not be able to provide enjoyment for future generations and harbor native species unless we constrain our use today and in the coming years.

On 68% of the trails, dogs with Green Tags are allowed off leash under "voice and sight" control. As defined in city codes and explained in OSMP brochures, that means

> the dogs you are responsible for must be within your sight and under your verbal command at all times, regardless of distractions which can occur during a walk. If your dog cannot immediately obey verbal command, your dog must remain on-leash. Also, keep in mind that dogs under voice and sight control are not allowed to charge, chase or display aggression towards other people or dogs or chase, harass, or disturb wildlife and livestock.

Management of dogs off-leash on open space is one of our greatest challenges based on several indicators.
► OSMP's evaluation of the trial voice and sight program (2012) shows that compliance levels do not meet the standards set in the Visitor Master Plan.

> 86% of off-leash dogs had Green Tags visible
> 40% of visitor parties complied with the requirement that only 2 dogs may be off-leash per guardian[2]
> 93% kept their dog(s) in their field of vision[3]
> 56% of dogs returned to their guardian within two separate & distinct commands to"come"[4]
> 15% of visitor parties participated in at least one conflictive behavior
> 46% complied with "poop pick-up" rules

► Approximately 73% of all violations issued since 2006 have been dog-related; and while the numbers vary a bit from year to year, they are generally consistent over time. Ticketing violations and levying fines have not resulted in changes of behavior.

► Boulder's 2010 Resident Survey shows that 44% of all respondents feel that dogs off-leash make their visits to OSMP less pleasant. When asked about conflicts involving dogs and the impact of the Tag Program, 55% felt there was either no change or more conflict.

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[1] Vaske et al, 2009
[2] Increased since 2006, according to results of OSMP Montoring Report
[3] Increased since 2006, according to results of OSMP Montoring Report
[4] Decreased since 2006, according to results of OSMP Montoring Report. Unreliable verbal control violates B.R.C. 6-1-16 and is considered by staff to be the primary contributor to dog related conflicts.

Dog guardians have a responsibility to manage their dogs to retain the unique privilege of walking dogs off-leash that Boulder offers. Many have not met this responsibility, raising the question whether the voice-and-sight program should be continued and, if so, in what form.

FOBOS believes that the voice-and-sight program should continue only if dog guardians meet program requirements, and specifically recommends the following program revisions.

● FOBOS supports revised procedures for Green Tags, including
a) the staff suggestion to require all guardians to attend **an information class** that includes an explanation of opportunities for training and demonstration of skills as a prerequisite for obtaining a green tag (2012 Draft Voice and Sight Tag Program Evaluation Report, p.19). However, we think that such a program needs to be phased in -- initially, requiring violators[5] and new applicants for Green Tags plus applicants from outside of Boulder County[6] to participate.
b) requiring all applicants (including renewing guardians) for a Green Tag to take **an online test** to show that they understand the programs' requirements and expectations and to pay **a fee** set at a level to pay for all program costs. Tag **expiration dates** and renewals should mesh with expiration and renewal dates for the rabies vaccinations for each dog.

● FOBOS proposes that OSMP implement a **pilot-program that requires guardians found in violation of voice-and-sight control requirements (B.R.C. 6-1-16) to demonstrate their ability to control their dog off-leash**.[7] Ideally, dog guardians would be required to demonstrate to OSMP personnel that their dog is in fact under voice-and-sight control before obtaining a green tag. But with approximately 20,000 dogs having green tags, enabling all dog guardians to demonstrate their ability to control their dogs under voice-and-sight control appears to require too dramatic a change in procedure and too many staff.

● FOBOS recommends that **penalites** for other ranger issued dog violations[8] include community service requirements, suspension of Green Tags, and, for the most serious violations, a mandatory court appearance, rather than fines.

● To enable us to sustain the values of this system and limit the pressures on our lands, we favor adding the requirement that **dogs on voice-and-sight control stay within the trail corridor**. We believe this is a reasonable requirement that will significantly reduce adverse effects on habitat and wildlife.

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[5] Based on the number of violations of B.R.C. 6-13-2 from 2006 through 2011, such a program would need to accommodate an average of 150 dog guardian violators/year. While some have assumed that college students are the most frequent violators of the Green Tag requirement, the data show that most violations occur in the 23- to 42-year-old age bracket. In addition, it is noteworthy that in the first half of 2012, 130 violations were issued to guardians of dogs off-leash without required Green Tags; so, the number of violations may be increasing.

[6] OSMP reports that through 2011 57% of Green Tags have been issued to addresses outside of the City of Boulder; a fraction of that group are non-Boulder County residents. And an OSBT member has suggested, those from outside of Boulder County may benefit more from an information session than in-county residents who share our values.

[7] Based on the number of violations of B.R.C. 6-1-16 from 2006 through 2011, such a program would need to accommodate an average of 265 dog guardians/year and would focus on the guardian and dog populations most in need of improvement. Guardians and dogs unable to demonstrate the required skills would still be able to visit OSMP lands on-leash.

[8] Aggressive animal prohibited B.R.C. 6-1-20, Failure to protect wildlife B.R.C. 8-3-5, Failure to remove excrement B.R.C. 6-1-18, Dog prohibited or seasonal leash B.R.C. 8-3-3

RE: Green Tag Program
To: Open Space Board of Trustees
From: FIDOS
Date:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input for the improvement of the Green Tag program. FIDOS understands that City Council stated that this program has the potential to be more effective. We agree that the program can be improved.

There are many different views of the problems that a revision to the Green Tag program should address. A good program is one that is widely understood and fully accepted. Therefore, in this document, FIDOS has prioritized and classified problems and concerns with the existing program. FIDOS is proposing a problem-based and solution-focused approach to maximizing the effectiveness of the Green Tag program rather than broad changes that only remotely relate to the perceived shortfalls of the existing program.

In doing so, FIDOS is rejecting many of the more draconian proposals that OSMP staff have suggested, not because FIDOS is so adamantly pro-dog as to be blind to off-leash problems in Open Space, but because OSMP's own data show that these problems simply do not exist on a scale warranting major changes to the GT program. With such high voice and sight compliance rates and relative few documented behavioral issues, it is a waste of resources – and utterly unfair – to punish the vast majority of responsible dog guardians who have taken voice and sight control seriously.

Introduction and Executive Summary

Last Fall OSMP initiated the GT review discussion by arguing that Green Tag dogs have <u>not</u> improved since 2006. Staff established monitoring criteria in 2005 and initiated monitoring in 2006. The Green Tag monitoring criteria and the monitoring report was not released until December 2011.

The monitoring protocol was not vetted by public process. Results from 2006 and 2007 were not released until the final report had been completed. The larger community was not informed of either progress or problems. Education and outreach to the dog community did not occur.

FIDOS has analyzed data from Green Tag Monitoring Report provided by OSMP, but in contrast to the premise by OSMP for GT program changes, FIDOS concludes that compliance by both dog guardians and their dogs actually is very high. OSMP's proposal to change the GT program has very little or no correlation with any off-leash behavioral issues, and instead seems to be geared more at addressing concerns by some vocal user groups based not on data but their subjective perceptions. For example, dog waste issues have nothing to do with whether a dog is on or off-leash.

The reality is that OSMP, after having gone to the trouble to collect data on the GT program, now feels compelled to validate its efforts by changing the program dramatically. These "solutions" are in search of problems that do not exist.

Notwithstanding that OSMP's discussion of the GT program discussion is now premised on a broad attempt at controlling any and all dog behavior on Open Space, FIDOS believes that the discussion presents an opportunity to consider improvements in the OS experience for all types of users. However, there are two important distinctions that must be considered with this review of the Green Tag program:

- Violations by dog guardians must not be confused with behavioral violations of dogs. For example, inadequate compliance with leashing restrictions is an entirely human based problem and no amount of dog behavior testing will improve leashing compliance. The same observation applies to poop pickup issues.
- Some possible revisions to the program which are being discussed are at best only remotely related to the Green Tag program. An example of such a misplaced mandate is the suggestion that all dogs, even if they reside outside of the city, be vaccinated and licensed as a requirement for obtaining a Green Tag. There is no similar requirement in the city of Boulder proper where dogs from outside Boulder routinely interact with our citizens in dog parks, city parks, on the streets and outside the cafes of Boulder.

Accordingly, we have separated problems associated with *violations by dog guardians* from *dog behavior violations*. FIDOS feels that these areas are vastly different in nature and require different responses. There is not a "one size fits all" solution for all identified problems. (Note: All data referenced in this memo are from the OSMP Green Tag Monitoring Report unless otherwise noted.)

- <u>Perceptions of inadequate poop pickup:</u> Dog waste is an issue, but OSMP data show a compliance rate of 94%. This is a far cry from suggestions that dog guardians routinely disregard their dog waste responsibilities. The failure to pick up dog waste also is not an off-leash issue. Accordingly, GT program changes will make no difference. Instead, peer education, peer pressure, and enforcement of existing rules should make an impact.
- <u>Failure to comply with leash requirements or access restrictions</u>: Dogs do not read, so this issue obviously relates to human behavior, not dog behavior. Again, education and enforcement (along with clear signage) are the answers to this issue.
- <u>Dog behavior when off-leash</u>: OSMP staff are always quick to recite an incident of a dog chasing deer or other bad behavior, but OSMP's own data show compliance rates are extremely high. Simply put, the vast, vast majority of dogs on Open Space are not out of control. Concerns unrelated to voice and sight control, such as dog sniffing or playing with other dogs, can be addressed through education of all user groups regarding trail etiquette.

OSMP proposals for revoking a dog's GT after one violation, "blanket testing" or an "invisible" 10-foot leash are simply not necessary under its own data. But more to the point, they would greatly diminish the experience of many, many OS users. No one has received three tickets and very few have received two. One ticket is apparently enough to educate guardians and change behavior. Walking OS with the looming threat of losing their GT if they incur one rule violation would dramatically diminish the user experience and is particularly draconian.

Behavioral testing of all dogs would be expensive to implement, burdensome for guardians, and would present an unfair and intrusive barrier to OS access for the vast majority of compliant guardians. Demanding that dogs stay within a certain small radius, of their owners is extreme. Most humans, including families with small children, do not even maintain such a small distance when hiking as a group.

FIDOS respectfully suggests that OSMP has started this hike on the wrong foot. A thorough and honest evaluation of this data is needed before the City can improve the GT program. And the City needs to consider peer programs and other options that will address actual documented problems supported by data, while maintaining the GT program as-is for the large majority of participating dog guardians that are compliant.

Any changes to the Green Tag Program should focus on the majority by educating and training dog guardians in a positive manner. Examples of such modifications could include:

- Update the Green Tag video so that it accurately and clearly reflects GT regulations and preferred etiquette. Include a post-video on-line quiz as a possible up-front requirement to obtain a Green Tag. If a user of the system gets the answer wrong, a prompt would explain the right answer and the rationale. Users could take the quiz again, with its purpose being educational. FIDOS recommends that a neutral authority review the quiz for clarity, accuracy, and user-friendliness.
- Peer education: For example, a FIDOS Trails Group or Adopt-A-Trail group can monitor fellow dog guardians on trails as a means to educate.
- Green Tag cards: Business sized cards distributed at trail heads or on trails outlining the rules and expectations of dog access.
- Direct email communication with green tag holders utilizing a professional email system that will show open rates and click through rates.
- Trail Etiquette cards: Similar cards encouraging basic trail etiquette for all trail users and educating users about what can be expected when sharing trails with dogs. Guardians can learn about how to react to a person concerned about dogs. Individuals without dogs can learn about common dog behaviors, such as sniffing or seeking, and learn about how best to communicate with dog guardians if there are concerns about an approaching dog.
- Ample and clear signage about where dogs are permitted and what leash rules apply.
- Increased numbers of waste receptacles to encourage guardians to walk to the nearest trash can to throw away dog waste.

FIDOS appreciates the opportunity to comment on OSMP proposals and to continue a dialogue about how to maintain and improve positive OS experiences for everyone.

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Section 1 Violations and Errors of Dog Guardians

1.1 Problem: Inadequate Poop Pickup

Dog waste is the biggest dog concern on OS today. Many OS visitors are offended by the presence of dog waste. This includes dog guardians who regularly walk their dog off-leash and comply with requirements for waste pickup. Notwithstanding the prevalence of this concern, the GT monitoring study showed that 3% of those observed did not pickup poop and another 3% left poop bags along the trail. This equates to a 94% compliance rate. Accordingly, although poop pickup is a problem that should be addressed, the target audience should be the relatively small number of non-compliant trail users, not the vast majority of compliant dog guardians.

NOTE 1: Dog waste is not an off-leash issue and doesn't directly relate to the GT program. After all, there is no evidence that the non-compliant trail users even had green tags for their dogs. Dog waste should not be used as a gauge of the success of the GT program as non-GT users are also contributing to this problem.

NOTE 2: Two-thirds of the violations of poop pickup requirements noted in the monitoring report occurred at just two locations: Eagle West and Dry Creek. At Dry Creek, an out and back trail, the majority of violations were for poop bags left along the side of the trail. On Eagle West, all of the violations were for bags left by the trail.

SOLUTIONS:

A. **Community Service**: Those caught for non-compliance could be offered the option to spend a couple of hours picking up at a popular dog trail instead of paying a fine. This would directly improve the dog-waste situation on OS, and reinforce positive behavior, while providing an option for lower income people.

B. **Tickets/Fines**: Not only can fines be an effective deterrent, they also can be an opportunity to educate visitors about current regulations. Note that no one has accumulated three tickets to date and very few people have received two tickets.

C. **Community Pressure:** People respond to peer expectations and peer pressure. Some trails are very clean and others are not. We know that the clean trails often have volunteer (and often unrecognized) caretakers who remove poop and poop bags. FIDOS believes that we can engage dog walkers by encouraging pride in their local trail. Two community options are 'Adopt-A-Trail' and organized and scheduled "poop pick-ups" with the FIDOS Trails Group.

D. **Increase presence of waste receptacles**: This is a simple method to facilitate compliance. The availability of more trash cans, including small cans placed some distance up a trail, will discourage poop bags being left along the trail.

E. **GT Video**: Methods of picking up poop and ways to pack it out, or deposit it in receptacles where available, should be clearly illustrated in a new, revised GT video. Specifically, FIDOS recommends a quiz at the conclusion of the video to reinforce understanding of points of compliance. One question would focus on not leaving poop bags along the trail.

1.2 Problem: Dog Guardian Access Violations (not abiding rules and restrictions)

- Guardian does not have a leash for each dog with GT of leash
- Guardian did not leash the dog at the trailhead
- Guardian did not leash dog in parking lot
- Guardian has a dog off-leash in a leashed area
- Guardian has a dog in a no-dog area
- Guardian's dog is not wearing a green tag (See Appendix: Chart 3 & Graph 3.)
- Guardian had more than two dogs w/GT off-leash (See Appendix: Chart 4 & Graph 4.)
- Dog is not in sight of guardian (See Appendix: Graph 7.)

.

It is important to recognize that many dog violations are a result of dog guardians' behavior and not the dog itself. Guardians may be genuinely ignorant of or confused about the rules, or they may make conscious decisions to violate them and "take their chances."

Furthermore, for those infractions for which we had access to data, incidents of violations are small and compliance has improved since 2007. For example, compliance for dogs not wearing a green tag improved from 85% in 2007 to 90% in 2010. Compliance improved from 98% in 2006 to >99% in 2010 for guardians who had more than two dogs with Green Tags off leash. Ninety-six percent of guardians kept their dog in within sight in 2010. Compliance improved from 89% in 2006 to 96% in 2010.

The dog community has improved in many areas during the study period.

SOLUTIONS:

A. GT Video: Specific access violations (leashing in parking lots; leashing at trail heads where it applies; leashing in leash only areas, etc.) should be clearly depicted in the new GT video, and correct behavior clearly demonstrated. The quiz at the end should specifically address leashing requirements.

B. Testing: An on-line test for the guardians to ensure their understanding could be useful. Since these types of violations do not involve dog control, it is not productive to require dog training/testing for these types of violations. On-line testing, designed to reinforce understanding of the rules and why they are important, can be required for dog guardians who are in violation, which would be a more viable solution to these types of infractions.

C. Tickets/Enforcement: Ticketing is a powerful means of education and deterrent for those who *choose* to violate the rules. However, the nature of the infraction should be considered when determining a fine. The fine should fit the infraction. It doesn't make sense

to impose a larger fine for trailhead leashing violations than for actual crimes such as shop-lifting, for example.

D. Ensure rules are fair: Compliance will increase if users feel they are treated fairly and with respect. Those users that feel there is a bias against them and their dogs are less likely to take the rules as seriously as those that feel genuinely welcome on OS.

E. Clear rules: With many zones and different trail regulations it is important that rules are clear to all visitors, not just dog walkers. Clear and ubiquitous signage, like that along Springbrook trail, is critical.

Section 2 Dog Control and Behavior: V&S Ordinance Violations and Etiquette Problems

2.1 Problem: Dogs in violation of the V&S Ordinance

2.1.1 Dogs that charge, chase (excluding play chasing) or cause injury to people, wildlife, livestock, other dogs

The six-year GT monitoring program showed that of all the V&S problems and etiquette issues identified, dogs that charge and chase is the least frequent occurrence. The compliance rates below indicate that this is more of a feared problem than an actual problem.

Green Tag dog compliance is very high for the most serious offenses. (See Appendix Chart 11 and 11.a.)

- Dogs who did **not** Flush Wildlife 99.0%
- Dogs who did **not** Chase Wildlife 98.6%
- Dogs who did **not** Chase Livestock 99.9%
- Dogs who did **not** Physically Injure Wildlife 100.0%
- Dogs who did **not** Physically Injure livestock 100.0%

2.1.2 Dogs who do not respond to their guardian's recall

We anticipate that OSMP will present data purporting to show that there are many problems with guardians not being able to call back their off-leash dogs. However, it is important to note that in the vast majority of cases, no recall was even needed or requested because the dog was perceived to be in compliance and the guardian was in control. This number has increased in recent years, from 58 percent in 2006 to 74 percent in 2010. That figure is significant in showing the increased quality of behavior and control in dogs in OS. (See Appendix Chart 9, Chart 10, Graph 10, Graph 10a.)

It should not be a surprise that in the minority of instances where a recall was requested, sometimes the dog did not respond appropriately to the recall. After all, a

recall was only needed where there were concerns about voice and sight control in the first place. Still, 60 percent of the time, the recall was successful, showing that the guardian had established voice and sight control. Accordingly, when considering the total number of times that the recalls were not requested and if requested were successful, 85 percent of dogs were under voice and sight control in 2006, improving to 90 percent in 2010.

"Successful recalls" in conjunction with "No {need to} recall" provides a broader picture of the dog population. The overall trend is positive and shows continual improvement.

SOLUTIONS:

A. Dog and guardian training and testing: This category of violation of the Voice & Sight ordinance is the only circumstance in which it is appropriate for any kind of dog testing or training to be considered.

B. **Appropriate use of testing:** As we have demonstrated above, observations of out-of-control dogs actually are rare on open space, and most guardians are doing a good job of exercising voice- and sight- control.

If a dog is cited for control reasons it would be appropriate for a situational test. If a dog is behaving they should not be required to perform any situational testing. Most guardians consider this to be intrusive and harassing behavior that greatly diminishes their OS experience. Also, some dogs may be distracted one moment because of, for example, playing with another dog, but then be very responsive to voice commands the next moment. If any testing is needed, it should isolate the dog from such distractions so that a true picture of the dog's behavior status can be understood.

If testing is needed and a dog fails the test there should be a graduated approach to the consequences in light of the potential for behavioral improvements. For example, a training program could be the next step, but a dog should be granted at least one warning before undergoing a required training course, so that guardians have an opportunity to work with the dog on their own. Also, dogs that as puppies may lack control will usually become more controllable just through time, experience and age. So any testing should never mandate a permanent "ban" on a dog from the GT program.

C. **Blanket testing:** FIDOS strongly objects to any kind of test which all dogs would have to pass in order to obtain a GT for the following reasons:

- Blanket testing dogs does not address the most commonly reported issues identified above; dog guardian violations and errors (poop pick up, not leashing at trailheads, off-leash in leashed areas, etc.), and yet is intrusive and burdensome to dog guardians.
- Testing all dogs - We do not believe that the 99% should be collectively assumed guilty until proven innocent for the infractions of a tiny minority.

- Implementing a testing program is cumbersome and costly.
- Testing of all trail users with dogs is patently unfair. Many trail users without dogs create trail-related problems such as cutting over switchbacks, causing erosion, leaving tissue and other trash on open space, and sometimes exercising poor trail etiquette. This type of user has not been under the microscope by OSMP, nor has OSMP suggested any kind "testing" for no-dog users.

2.2 Problem: Dogs and their guardians not displaying appropriate etiquette

It is important to distinguish between an outright violation of the V&S ordinance and a breach of etiquette. For example, some people react negatively to dogs approaching and sniffing people, which is not a V&S violation. But many visitors welcome and encourage contact with dogs by looking at them and smiling, reaching out their hand for the dog to sniff, talking to the dog, or engaging the guardian in conversation. Many FIDOS members report that families with children will often stop to engage the dog, which presents a good learning experience for children about how to approach dogs they do not know, and what kinds of trail interactions are appropriate. We agree that ideally dogs should not engage in uninvited physical contact; however, there is quite a bit of confusion and subjectivity around this issue. And just like other public settings, where a certain level of tolerance and accommodation is needed to share park space, roads, side walks and bike paths, there needs to be a similar understanding in OS that emphasizes civility and tolerance among OS users.

Unfortunately, so-called breaches of etiquette are being treated as "problems" by OS. Many include routine dog behaviors that have no impact on other trail users or wildlife, such as dogs sniffing other dogs or sniffing the ground. But sniffing behavior is a major part of the dog's sensory system and is how the dog perceives and learns about the world around him.

As OSMP's own statistics show, the number reported "breaches of etiquette" actually are quite low, but are worthy of comment:

2.2.1 Dog Etiquette 1 - Chasing Other Dogs:

Chasing other dogs was reported as the top breach of etiquette, although only 4.7% of dogs were observed chasing other dogs. This includes two dogs from the same owner that are accustomed to such behavior. This is a very small number, but critically, dog-chasing also is normal dog behavior and play. The reality is that dog guardians are actually very effective at policing these situations themselves – after all, they are used to doing so in dog parks and other situations. OSMP has not presented a valid reason that this needs additional regulation on OS, but proper trail etiquette could note that guardians should ask each other to verify consent for dog-dog play chasing. (See Appendix: Chart 12.)

2.2.2 Dog Etiquette 2 - People /Dog Interactions

- Dog chasing person (once since 2005) 0.3%
- Dog jumping--making physical contact 1.0%
- Dog licking--making physical contact 0.2%
- Dog pawing--making physical contact 0.0%
- Dog sniffing--making physical contact 2.0%
- Dog "other"--making physical contact 0.4%
- Dog physically injuring person 0.0%

2.2.3 Dog Etiquette 3 – Dogs barking repeatedly

Repeated barking was the Number 2 conflict Behavior noted at 2.3%. It is not clear what constituted "repeated barking," and therefore it is difficult for FIDOS to respond to this issue, although we note that the percentage of dogs exhibiting this behavior is small. (See Appendix: Chart 13)

All of the above numbers are very small, which suggests that OSMP is over-reacting by suggesting that GT program changes are needed to respond to these kinds of issues.

SOLUTIONS:

A. **GT Video**: It is appropriate to educate dog owners on OS etiquette as a requirement of a Green Tag program. However, OSMP should not be treating breaches of etiquette as OS violations.

B. **On the ground education**: When rangers observe breaches in etiquette it is reasonable for the ranger to approach the guardian and explain expectations. However, since these behavior issues are not against the ordinance, ticketing is not appropriate. We recommend handing out a 'Preferred Trail Etiquette' card to dog walkers and to the dog averse.

C. **Tolerance** of everyone's visitor experience should be encouraged.

Section 3 Requiring Vaccination & License

FIDOS does not believe that requiring proof of vaccination is relevant to the Green Tag program. This management action will not alleviate the current concerns of dogs on OS. We think the City should consider that there are some instances where dogs are not able to receive vaccinations due to the health problems of the dog. Colorado State Law allows for an exemption from rabies vaccination for those dogs whose veterinarians deem it disadvantageous to their health. These dogs are not a threat to the health of the ecosystem or to people. There has not been a documented case of rabies in dogs the area for 60 years. OSMP could state on the website or on the handouts that the last case of rabies in the area was over 60 years ago to alleviate concerns.

Although it may be convenient to tie Green Tags to licenses this again does not solve any current concern with dogs on OS. County residents are not required to have a city license and should not be required to possess one in order to obtain a GT. If the City of Boulder chooses to require proof of licensing and vaccination as a requirement for the green tag program, it should be by separate mandate. The current city dog licensing program could manage the program with the existing list of green tag dogs.

Section 3 Conclusion

The vast majority of Green Tag dogs and their guardians take V&S rules seriously and are in compliance with the program according to OSMP's own data as demonstrated in this memo.

Where there are violations of V&S rules and regulations, most are the result of poor dog guardian behavior, and not poor dog behavior. FIDOS prioritized and classified problems and concerns with the existing program and proposed a problem-based and solution-focused approach to maximizing the effectiveness of the Green Tag program. FIDOS suggested several ideas geared to improving the GT program and visitor experience.

FIDOS will work with our community to build effective programs. We acknowledge that there is room for improvement and we are willing to take reasonable steps to improve compliance. Happy and healthy dogs are very important to us.

During the green tag revision process, we hope the community and OSMP will build a balanced program that addresses the visitor experience of the dog community and the community at large. We believe this program has the potential to be more effective.

And just like other public settings, where a certain level of tolerance and accommodation is needed to share park space, roads, side walks and bike paths, there needs to be a similar understanding in OS that emphasizes civility and tolerance among OS users.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input for the improvement of the Green Tag program.

The FIDOS Board of Directors

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Appendix A Charts & Graphs

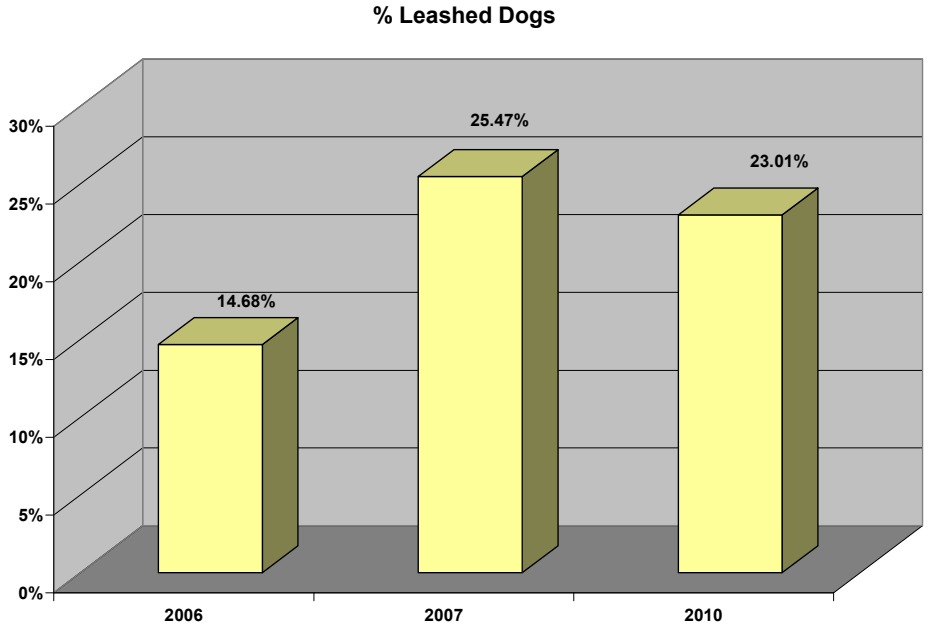
Chart 1 – Dog Populations

Dog Populations	2006	2007	2010	2010 %
# of Dog Parties	1075	1028	1009	
#. Dogs	1478	1374	1330	
# GT Dogs- Unleashed	NA	675	748	56.24%
Leashed Dogs	217	350	306	23%
# Dogs Unleashed -No Tag	NA	208	139	10.4%
# Dogs Unsure - Unleashed	NA	141	137	10.3%
# Dogs - Tag status known		1233	1193	89.7%
# of Dogs with GT + # Leashed		1025	1054	79.24%

Chart 2 - Percent of Leashed Dogs

	2006	2007	2010
% Leashed Dogs	14.68%	25.47%	23.01%
# Leashed Dogs	217	350	306

Graph 2 - Percent of Leashed Dogs

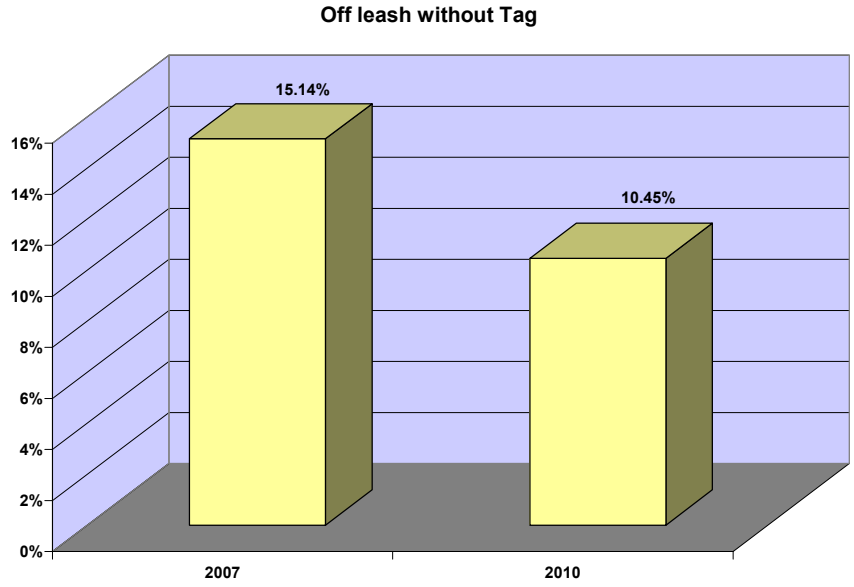


Leashing in the areas observed was not required, other than trailhead leashing for some areas. The number of dogs who are leashed has greatly increased since 2006. More people are voluntarily leashing their dogs and there is more situational leashing. See observer notes.

Chart 3 - Percent of Dogs off leash without a Green Tag

Voice + Sight Regulations	2007	2010
Off leash without Tag	15.14%	10.45%
Off leash without Tag	208	139

Graph 3 - Percent of Dogs off leash without a Green Tag



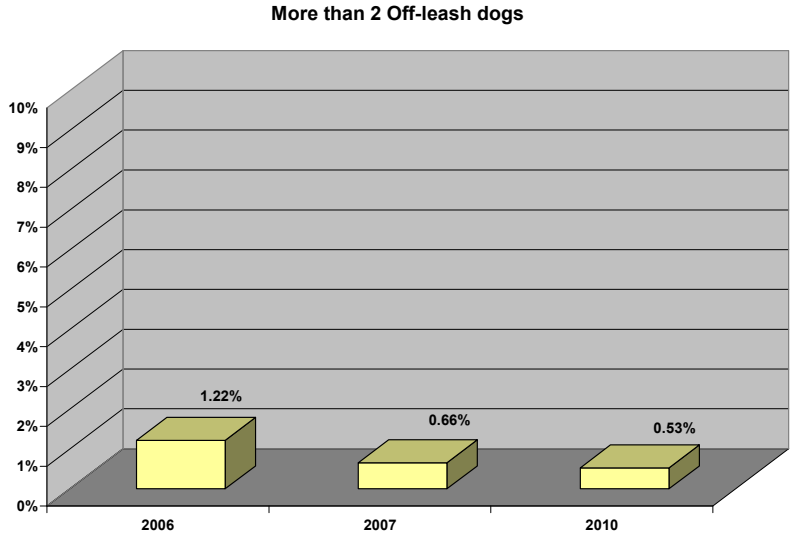
Dogs off leash without a Green Tag
Compliance improved from 85% in 2007 to 90% in 2010.

89.55% compliance

Chart 4 – More than 2 Dogs off leash at one time

Voice + Sight Regulations	2006	2007	2010
More than 2 off leash dogs	18	9	7
% More than 2 off leash dogs	1.22%	0.66%	0.53%

Graph 4 – More than 2 Dogs off leash at one time



More than 2 Dogs off leash
Compliance improved from 98% in 2006 to >99% in 2010.

99% compliance

V+S Regulations

Chart 5 – Voice + Sight Regulations

Voice + Sight Regulations	2006	2007	2010
Dog is not in Sight	155	65	44
More than 2 off leash dogs	18	9	7
No Tag- Unleashed	NA	208	139
Recall			
Recall not needed	1024	1081	1071
Recall Successful	294	180	154
Recall Not Successful	160	113	105
GT Dogs Recall not Successful	NA	88	72
Non GT Dogs - Recall Not Successful	NA	25	33

Chart 6 – Voice + Sight Regulations by percentage

Voice + Sight Regulations %	2006	2007	2010
Dog is not in Sight	10.49%	4.73%	3.31%
More than 2 off leash dogs	1.22%	0.66%	0.53%
Off leash without Tag	NA	15.14%	10.45%
Recall			
Recall not needed	69.28%	74.60%	80.53%
Recall - Successful /All		13.10%	11.58%
Recall - Not Successful /All	10.83%	8.22%	7.89%
% recalls not needed or successful	89.17	91.78	92.11

OSMP's recall evaluation chart – limited data set 259/1330 dogs in 2010

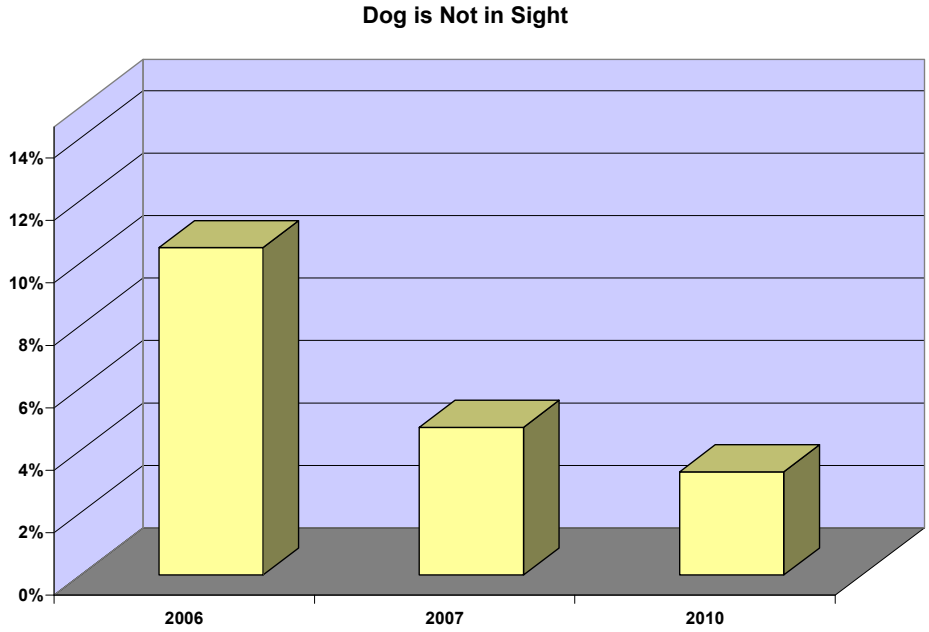
Recall Successful	294	180	154
Recall Not Successful	160	113	105

Total recalls	454	293	259
% recalls successful	64.76%	61.43%	61.35%
% not successful	35.24%	39.58%	41.83%

Chart 7 - Dogs not in sight of their guardians

Voice + Sight Regulations	2006	2007	2010
% Dog is not in Sight	10.49%	4.73%	3.31%
# Dogs who are not in Sight	155	65	44

Graph 7 - Dogs not in sight of their guardians



Dogs In Sight
Non-compliance dropped from 11% in 2006 to 4% in 2010.

96% compliance

The number of dogs not in sight of their guardians decreased from 14% in 2006 to 4% in 2010. This is a strong positive trend..

Guardian Ability to Recall Dog
Chart 8 – Voice + Sight Regulations -Recall

Dog Populations	2006	2007	2010	2007 off leash Dogs (Tag status known- not all dogs)	2010 off leash dogs (Tag status known)
# of Dog Parties	1075	1028	1009		
# Dogs	1478	1374	1330		
# GT Dogs- Unleashed	NA	675	748	54.74%	62.70%
Leashed Dogs	217	350	306	28.39%	25.65%
# Dogs Unleashed -No Tag	NA	208	139	16.87%	11.65%
# Dogs Unsure - Unleashed	NA	141	137		
# Dogs - Tag status known	NA	1233	1193		
# of Dogs with GT + # Leashed		1025	1054		
% Off leash compliance (known)				83.13	88.35

The observation data noted if an off-leash dog had a tag, did not have a tag or if the observer could not tell of the dog was wearing a tag. The latter was defined as unsure.

No. Dogs - Tag status known

When building the above table, the dogs where the tag status was unknown was removed from the calculation to determine the number of dogs in compliance. As a result, there are 88.25% of dogs in compliance.

The percentage of dogs off-leash without a green tag is decreasing as a percentage of all dogs on OS and as a percentage of dogs where the tag status is known.

Guardian Ability to Recall Dog
Chart 9 – Recall -Detailed

No of Dogs Observed	1478	1374	1330
No. of Dogs with GT + no. Leashed	NA	1025	1054
No GT and Unsure		349	276

	Number of Observations		
Voice & Sight - Per Dog	**2006**	**2007**	**2010**
Recall **not** needed	1024	1081	1071
Recall - Successful	294	180	154
Recall - Not Successful	160	113	105
Total recall attempts	454	293	259

Recall Per Dog	**2006**	**2007**	**2010**
Total of recalls not needed or successful	1318.00	1261.00	1225.00
Total of recalls or recalls not needed	1024.00	1081.00	1071.00
% recalls not needed or successful	89.17%	91.78%	92.11%

Note: In 2010; guardians should have called 8 GT dogs in the 'Recall Not needed' group based on the observers notes. This represents 0.006% of the population.

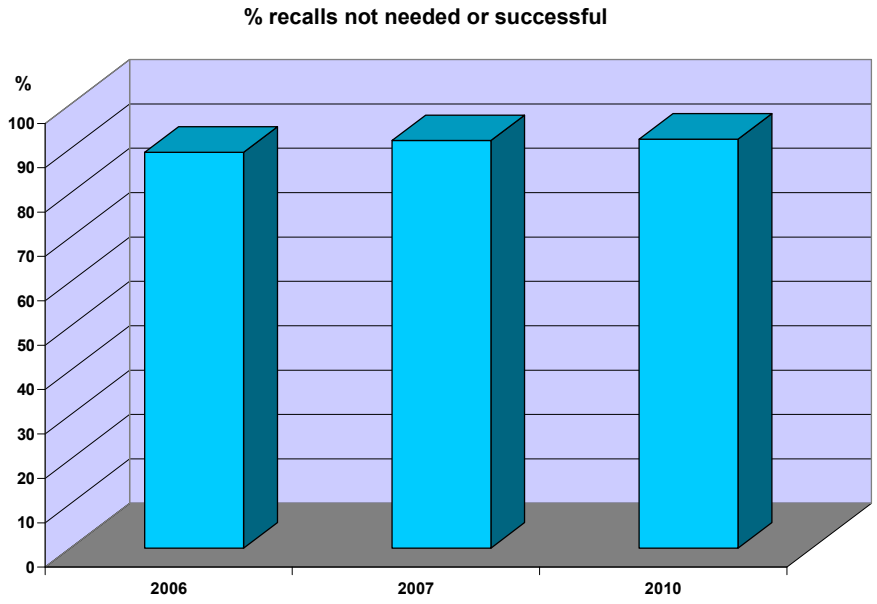
Recall Not Successful – Comparison of Green tag vs. Non-Green tag dogs

Chart 10 – Recall Not Successful - Detailed

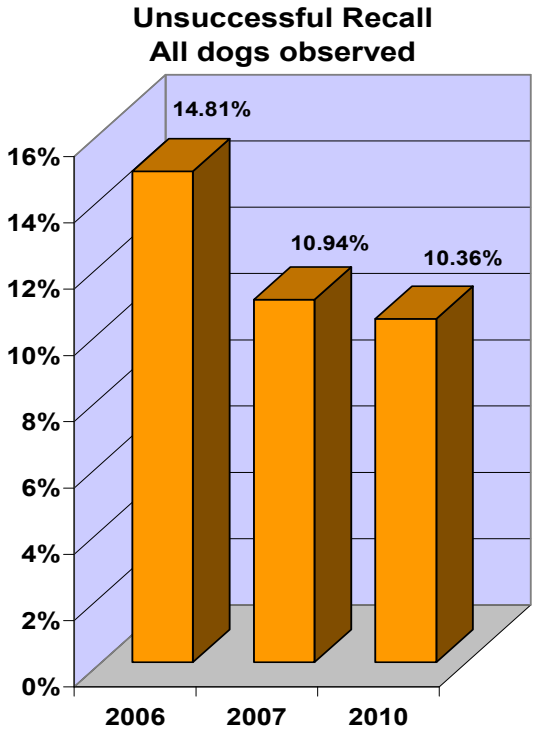
Recall Not Successful - GT Dogs	**2006**	**2007**	**2010**
Total No. Dogs Recall Not Successful	160	113	105
No. GT dogs -- Recall Not Successful	NA	88	72
Non GT/unsure dogs - Recall Not Successful	NA	25	33
GT Dogs -Recall Not Successful % of total		**2007**	**2010**
GT dogs - Recall - Not Successful		6.40%	5.41%
Non GT/unsure dogs - Recall - Not Successful		1.82%	2.48%

Of the Recall not successful group of dogs, 31.43% were not GT dogs.

Graph 10 – Successful Recall



Graph 10a – Recall Not Successful - Detailed



Behavior – Chasing Wildlife

Chart 11 – Chasing Wildlife

Voice + Sight Regulations	2006	2007	2010
No. Dog Parties - Chasing Wildlife	24	3	12
No. Dogs in Party - Chasing Wildlife	28/38	3 of 3	13/20
No. Dog Parties - Chasing Wildlife	2.23%	0.29%	1.19%
No. Dogs - Chasing Wildlife	2.57%	0.22%	0.98%

Chart 11a – Chasing Wildlife Detail

2006 Wildlife Detail	2007 Wildlife Detail	2010 Wildlife Detail
Bird- 5	Rabbit – 1	Duck/Waterfowl -1
Duck/Waterfowl -2	Squirrel – 2	Deer - 4
Deer -5		Prairie Dog - 6
Prairie Dog - 12		Rabbit – 2
'Chased' Prairie Dog on opposite sides of a fence. - 3		
Unknown - 1		

Behavior - Dog Chasing Dog

Chart 12 – Dog Chasing Dog

Codes	2006	2007	2010
# of Dogs 2ai -Dog chasing Dog	55	28	55
Guardian Attempted to Stop	6	1	0
% Dogs- Attempted to Stop	0.41%	0.07%	0
Code 3 - Barking	37	18	44
Code 10 -Misc. Non-Violations	18	7	11

Note: Guardian Attempted to Stop – data from notes.

Behavior – Other

Chart 13 – Misc. barking and Other

Codes	2006	2007	2010
Sum of all Behavior Codes per year	260	164	246
% dogs- Behavior Codes per Year	17.59%	11.94%	18.50%
Less 2ai (dog chasing dog)	211	163	191
% less 2ai	14.28%	11.85%	14.36%
less 3 (barking) & 10 non-violations	156	138	136
% less 3 & 10 non-violations	10.55%	10.04%	10.23%

Behavior-Chart 14 - Data by Dog

Behavior Code	Behavior Description	2006	2007	2010	Total Behaviors Observed*	% of Total	Code is a Voice + Sight (V+S) violation (Y or N) U=Unknown	% of actual V+S violations for all dogs	2006 to 2010 delta	Notes
0	'No Behavior Code'	1,241	1,233	1,128	3602	84.00%				
	Miscellaneous Behaviors						**4.75%**			
3	Repeated Barking	37	18	44	99	2.39%	N		Increased	#2 Behavior
7	Repeated Calling	8	12	21	41	0.99%	Y	0.99%	Increased	
8	Yelling/verbal confrontations	0	0	0	0	0.00%	N	0.00%	None	
9	Humans assaulting dogs	1	0	0	1	0.02%	U		Decreased	
10	Other**	14	16	26	56	1.35%	N		Significant Increase	Misc set of behaviors
1	**Wildlife**						**1.01%**			
1ac	Flushing Wildlife-Dog is leashed and < 10' of trail	3	0	0	3	0.07%	Y	0.07%	Decreased to None	
1ad	Flushing Wildlife-Dog is leashed and > 10' of trail	3	0	0	3	0.07%	Y	0.07%	Decreased to None	
1bc	Flushing Wildlife-Dog is off-leash and < 10' of trail	3	4	1	8	0.19%	Y	0.19%	Decreased to 1	
1bd	Flushing Wildlife-Dog is off-leash and > 10' of trail	10	7	11	28	0.68%	Y	0.68%	No Change	
2	**Chasing**						**6.64%**			
2ai	Dog Chasing Dog-guardians did not intervene	68	46	74	188	4.54%	N		Increased	#1 Behavior
2aii	Dog Chasing Dog-One of the guardians tried to prevent	7	0	0	7	0.17%	N		Decreased to None	
2aiii	Dog Chasing Dog-guardian-reaction was ambiguous	4	0	0	4	0.10%	N		Decreased to None	
2b	Dog Chasing wildlife	38	3	17	58	1.40%	Y	1,4%	Decreased 50%	
2c	Dog Chasing Livestock	1	0	0	1	0.02%	Y	0.02%	Decreased to None	
2di	Dog chasing person--nobody intervened	12	0	1	13	0.31%	Y	0.31%	Significant Decrease	
2dii	Dog chasing person--person tried to stop it or escape	0	0	0	0	0.00%	Y	0.00%	None	
2diii	Dog chasing person--reaction was ambiguous	0	4	0	4	0.10%	Y	0.10%	No change	

Behavior Code	Behavior Description	2006	2007	2010	Total Behaviors Observed*	% of Total	Code is a Voice + Sight (V+S) violation (Y or N) U=Unknown	% of actual V+S violations for all dogs	2006 to 2010 delta	Notes
5	**Dog-Person contact**						**3.74%**			
5a	Dog jumping--making physical contact	24	5	12	41	0.99%	Y	0.99%	Significant Decrease	
5b	Dog licking--making physical contact	3	6	1	10	0.24%	Y	0.24%	Decreased to 1	
5c	Dog Pawing--making physical contact	2	0	0	2	0.05%	U	0.00%	Decreased to None	
5d	Dog sniffing--making physical contact	13	41	32	86	2.08%	N		Significant Increase	#3 Behavior
5e	Dog "other"--making physical contact	8	2	6	16	0.39%	mix		Decreased	Very ambiguous categorizations
6	**Physical Injuries**						**0.02%**			
6a	Dog Physically Injuring Person	0	0	0	0	0.00%	Y	0.00%	None	
6b	Dog Physically Injuring Dog	1	0	0	1	0.02%	Y	0.06%	Decreased to None	
6c	Dog Physically Injuring Wildlife	0	0	0	0	0.00%	Y	0.00%	None	
6d	Dog Physically Injuring Livestock	0	0	0	0	0.00%	Y	0.00%	None	
	Totals	**1,478**	**1,374**	**1,330**	**4,182**	**100%**		**5.80%**		

Examples of 5e "other"	Detail
	Dog shaking water
	Growling
	Dogs considerably off-trail
	Dogs getting things muddy
	Dogs exhibiting aggression on leash
	Qualifying other behaviors (i.e. why a dog was barking)
	Dog digging in dirt

Behavior-Chart 15 - Data by Dog Party

Behavior Code	Behavior Description	2006	2007	2010	Total Behaviors Observed*	% of Total (sum of all years)	Code is a Voice + Sight (V+S) violation (Y or N)	% of actual V+S violations for all dogs (sum of all years)	2006-2010 delta	Notes
0	**No Behavior Code**	1,075	1,028	1,009	3,112	85.06%				
3	Repeated Barking	24	12	26	62	1.99%	N		Increased	**#2** Behavior
7	Repeated Calling	6	7	18	31	1.00%	Y	1.00%	Significant Increase	
8	Yelling/verbal confrontations	0	0	0	0	0.00%	N		None	
9	Humans assaulting dogs	1	0	0	9	0.29%	N		Decreased to None	
10	Other**	11	8	18	37	1.19%	U		Increased	Mixed V+S group
1	**Wildlife**						**0.84%**			
1ac	Flushing Wildlife-Dog is leashed and < 10' of trail	2	0	0	2	0.06%	Y	0.06%	Decreased to None	
1ad	Flushing Wildlife-Dog is leashed and > 10' of trail	2	0	0	2	0.06%	Y	0.06%	Decreased to None	
1bc	Flushing Wildlife-Dog is off-leash and < 10' of trail	2	2	1	5	0.16%	Y	0.22%	Decreased to 1	
1bd	Flushing Wildlife-Dog is off-leash and > 10' of trail	5	4	8	17	0.55%	Y	0.48%	Increased	1 dog was an escapee from a nearby apt.
2	**Chasing**						**6.59%**			
2ai	Dog Chasing Dog-guardians did not intervene	58	28	55	141	4.53%	N		Decreased	#1 Behavior
2aii	Dog Chasing Dog-One of the guardians tried to prevent	7	0	0	7	0.22%	N		Decreased to None	
2aiii	Dog Chasing Dog-guardian-reaction was ambiguous	2	0	0	2	0.06%	N		Decreased to None	
2b	Dog Chasing wildlife	24	3	12	39	1.25%	Y	0.30%	Decreased 50%	
2c	Dog Chasing Livestock	1	0	0	1	0.03%	Y	0.03%	Decreased to None	

2di	Dog chasing person--nobody intervened	8	2	1	11	0.35%	Y	0.35%	Significant Decrease	
2dii	Dog chasing person--person tried to stop it or escape	0	0	0	0	0.00%	Y	0.00%	None	
2diii	Dog chasing person--reaction was ambiguous	0	4	0	4	0.13%	Y	0.10%	None	
5	**Dog-Person contact**						**3.02%**			
5a	Dog jumping--making physical contact	10	3	8	21	0.67%	N	0.67%	Decreased	
5b	Dog licking--making physical contact	2	4	1	7	0.22%	N	0.22%	Decreased to 1	
5c	Dog Pawing--making physical contact	1	0	0	1	0.03%	N	0.03%	Decreased to None	
5d	Dog sniffing--making physical contact	6	23	25	54	1.74%	N		Significant Increase	#3 Behavior
5e	Dog "other"--making physical contact	5	2	4	11	0.35%	mix	0.35%	Decreased	Very ambiguous categorizations
6	**Physical Injuries**						**0.03%**			
6a	Dog Physically Injuring Person	0	0	0	0	0.00%	Y	0.00%	None	
6b	Dog Physically Injuring Dog	1	0	0	1	0.03%	Y	0.03%	Decreased to None	
6c	Dog Physically Injuring Wildlife	0	0	0	0	0.00%	Y	0.00%	None	
6d	Dog Physically Injuring Livestock	0	0	0	0	0.00%	Y	0.00%	None	
Totals		**178**	**102**	**177**	**465**	**100.00%**		**3.9%**		

Examples of 5e "other"	Detail
	Dog shaking water
	Growling
	Dogs considerably off-trail
	Dogs getting things muddy
	Dogs exhibiting aggression on leash
	Qualifying other behaviors (i.e. why a dog was barking)
	Dog digging in dirt

Section II

Emailed Comments

Irina

Comment: Please keep program as is! One of the few places my lab can still enjoy life outdoors the way he naturally should.

Louisa

Comment: voice and sight is a good idea but you should also have days like you do at Betasso, where certain days are allocated for certain user groups, to avoid user conflict.

Greg

Comment: Rabies aren't a concern -- lack of responsibility on the part of dog owners is. Too many dogs remain uncontrolled, bothering other trail users and wildlife. Owners seem to feel that they only need call their dog when a problem has started, rather than preventatively. But no voice in advance means no voice control. The dogs should be kept close to their owners when others are present on trails, much as leash laws provide for other trail users. If the owners followed the voice and sight regulations, I'd have nothing against this program; as it is, it seems to be abused by owners as allowing them to let their dogs run freely and uncontrolled until they've *caused* a problem.
I'd prefer leashes being required after having seen how this evaluation program has gone.

Kevin

Comment: generally a good program. planned rules to require testing of dogs is a bit excessive though.
Also - city should put poop bags and trash cans at more trail heads, for example at 6th and Baseline - a trailhead used by many.

Michaela

Comment: It is my understanding that the VST Program will be evaluated and potentially revised in the near future; this is due to OSMPs opinion that the program is not effective. It seems the definition of 'effectiveness' was based loosely on subjective criteria and opinions. I am a dog owner and I often take my dog around Boulder open space trails, so I encounter dog owners all the time. Very rarely have I had problems with dogs (or their owners, for that matter). I would venture to say that severely restricting access and/or increasing leash laws for dogs would prevent a large majority of the people who use these trails on a regular basis from continued use. I don't believe this potentially unintended consequence is the objective of OSMP. The people of Boulder and surrounding communities are helping support open space with their tax dollars; this includes dog owners. Restricting a certain population because they happen to own a dog is therefore inappropriate. Having access to trails not only gives dogs needed exercise (and their owners) but also benefits dogs by socializing them. This is how dogs learn how to act appropriately when they encounter people or other dogs - green tag or not. I take my dog to Coot Lake very often, and I feel comfortable taking my dog there because other dogs know how to behave. They understand the 'Coot Lake Rules', if you will. I do like the green tag program because it instantly gives me an idea if a dog coming towards me is friendly or at least the owner understands the basic rules of the program. But restricting it further would add nothing. I do believe many people do not know about the program, so making people more aware about the goals of the program would be beneficial. Perhaps OSMP should also do more to enforce the current green tag program.

Phil

Comment: The current voice and sight tag program seems to work for the most part. Leave well enough alone.

Stacy

Comment: I think the program works perfectly. My dog is well behaved and we have a great time, even with people that don't have dogs. Thanks for all you do.

Jacqueline

Comment: OSMP Correspondence:
RE: Dogs need off-leash opportunities to run, to sniff and to explore . Are there really all these problems with our dogs in Open Space?
Dear OSMP:
I wish I could meet you in person. I'm not sure what kind of people you are, but by your decidedly biased conducted surveys of the of the voice and sight dog tag issue.
I have had my voice and sight tag for a long time now. I have never violated any of your so called laws and my dogs have not offended anyone.
Please reconsider your program. I really love the program and I know so many other people do too.
You really are doing your community a dis-service by having your own agenda.

Brad

Comment: Please consider discrimination based on breed of dog. Retrievers and other polite breeds should be given more leeway. They are friendly and not aggressive by nature. Pit Bulls and other dangerous guard dogs need more restrictions. These are not humans - you can discriminate against the breeds and no lawyer will come after you expecting equal rights.

FIDOS

Comment: See attached document.

Dear Council Members,

Please find attached FIDOS' response to OSMP's proposed "program enhancements" to the Green Tag program. I hope this has reached you in sufficient time to be of value in forthcoming deliberations during your upcoming November 13 study session.

Best Regards,

-Jim ILLG
President, FIDOS

Lydia and Bill

Comment: OSMP Correspondence:
Yes, dog owners such as us, have consistently voted positively on open space tax issues and yet have noticed a definite ill-disguised hostility toward our dogs by contacts with some park rangers and a few hikers who cannot even give you a "good morning' and or a smile, while on our open space walks. And how about bicyclists who come up behind you at an amazing rate of speed and closeness and never utter a warning!! We have lived in Boulder since 1965 and we were happy to work with our dog to develop proper and safe people awareness so she was safe to other humans and dogs around her.

A matter of months ago I wrote an e-mail to the OSMP after reading the new requirements being considered as a prerequisite for being ALLOWED to have a green tag to be able to exercise on the land we ALL helped purchase. At that time I noted that there is NO place in the U.S. where dogs were expected to be trained better than most children are, in order to be allowed to wear a Green Tag while they walked and played on Open Space!!!

The jig is up! We may not expect the protection and the apparent supremacy of the Prairie dogs who carry disease and dig holes which break the legs of domestic animals, and worse yet denude the territory provided to them, but at least give our dogs some respect and honor our efforts to exercise them in our beautiful areas.

Comment: OSMP STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Require all program participants attend an information session. New program participants must attend a session before they can register in the program. Existing participants will have a one year period after implementation to attend the information session. - Education is good, training better.

2. Require that dogs managed under voice and sight control will be registered in the program only if proof of current rabies vaccination/City of Boulder dog license is provided. - Will this reduce confrontation on the trail which is what I thought the real issue is?

3. Fines for B.R.C. 6-13-2 Voice and Sight Evidence Tag Required are increased to $100, $200, and $300 (minimum) for first, second and third or more convictions. - Trail fines are excessive already. Take a look at non trail fines on a ticket and you'll see some egregious offenses carrying a disproportionately smaller fine.

4. Revocation of program privileges will occur with one conviction of Aggressive Animal Prohibited (B.R.C. 6-1-20) or Failure to Protect Wildlife (or livestock) (B.R.C. 8-3 -5). Revocation of program privileges will occur with two convictions in two years for all other dog-related violations on OSMP property.
- Wow, we need some clarification here. There's a big difference between the dog that frightens a deer but doesn't pursue, begins to pursue but can be called back, and the dog that pursues undeterred. And convictions can be as benign as having more than 2 well behaved dogs off leash. Personally, I'd rather a pack of well behaved dogs than one out of control dog.

5. Encourage courts to order watching the voice and sight video, community service, or attending the voice and sight information session, dog training, or demonstration testing for egregious or repeat dog-related violations. - Covered in #1, though as I mentioned, dog training is especially beneficial.
6. Modify the program registration process and fees to include the following:
- a household fee of $20 for Boulder County residents;
- a household fee of $30 for non-Boulder County residents;
- a $5 fee for each additional household participant; and, an annual household renewal fee of $10, $15, and $20 based on City of Boulder, Boulder County, and non Boulder County address. - I have no problem with this.

7. Additional education and outreach strategies as recommended in Attachment B.
- Outreach is good.

8. The program performance standard will be 90 percent compliance for voice and sight controlled dogs responding appropriately to a guardian's commands and the standard will be assessed three years after program enhancements are implemented. The program performance standard will indicate if additional adaptive management enhancements are necessary including but not limited to requiring a demonstration test before participants register in the program. - This is unreasonable and gives the shepherd and herding dogs an advantage. This also discriminates against hearing or vision impaired, especially the elderly. I have a 15 year old dog quite capable of hiking, but with age has compromised vision and hearing. She is always by my side and of no threat to other dogs, people, or wildlife. There needs to be an exception for these cases as there is no reason to put her on a leash.
Unfortunately these punitive measures are more likely to fall to the regular trail users by virtue of more frequent exposure and who are for the most part savvy and respectful. The real issue arises with the occasional hiker, or weekenders who are often oblivious to trail etiquette.

Comment:

Comment: OSMP Correspondence:
I'm very frustrated with the Open Space's definition of the Green Tag program not working. As a resident of this county and city, I cherish the ability to let my dog accompany me on walks and runs in open space without a leash. No dog should harass wildlife or other people and such behavior should not be allowed. But, sniffing, touching, or barking are dog characteristics that, within limits, are okay. I don't like what I see happening to Boulder - that is, becoming an uptight community that has zero tolerance of ANYTHING. Expecting perfect behavior from dogs is unreasonable. They are sentient beings and not machines!

Friends of Boul

Comment: See attached FOBOS Position Statement - Voice and Sight Control

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FIDOS

Comment: See Attached Document: FIDOS_2012 GT Position Paper_031212

Mike **Abraham**

Comment: OSMP Correspondence:
OSMP,

As a long-time dog owner an hiker who hikes the foothills daily with his dogs, I would like to register my concern over the newly-proposed restrictions being considered.

My wife and I are part of the Green Tag program, and we've worked very hard to be extra-considerate of other hikers on the trails. We pick up after our dogs. We leash our younger, more playful dog. We honor the restrictions of the Green Tag program. We even pull our dogs off the trail for every passing (non-dog) hiker. We have regularly been thanked for these efforts by other hikers. We feel that we wish to go the 'extra mile' to demonstrate that dog owners are understanding of the concerns of non-dog owners.

I feel that we are not alone in this extra effort. Other dog owners are very careful to put their dogs on leash as we approach, to ask if our dogs can greet each other, etc. I see consistent evidence of exemplary behavior on the part of other dog owners on the trails. In literally hundreds and hundreds of hikes, I have never seen an egregious violation or confrontation.

The additional restrictions being considered seem entirely disproportionate and unnecessary to me. Leaving aside the additional expense and manpower needed to enforce them, I see no evidence that there is a genuine problem in the first place.

I realize that others may see it differently, but I ask if you are certain that those who would like to see dog activity further restricted on our trails are acting in good faith. In other words, are you sure that those who would further restrict dogs have genuine grievances with which any reasonable person would agree, or could it be that they just don't like dogs, and don't want them on the trails?

I suspect it is the latter. And while I respect their wishes (if those are indeed their wishes), I also believe that we as a community need to make a fair-minded accommodation to all who wish to use the trails. Considering how many trails do not allow dogs at all (RMNP, for example), or do not allow dogs off leash (the Indian Peaks wilderness, for example), it seems only fair that dog owners have some access.

I believe that the current system, which places a non-trivial financial and time burden on dog owners, is nevertheless a workable system that does a good job of accommodating dog owners and non-dog owners alike.

Given that dog owners are working hard to honor the current Green Tag program, I ask that you please not give in to the extreme voices that ask for even more restrictions. Please do your best to make a reasonable accommodation for all and allow the current system to stay in place unchanged.

Thank you very much for your attention, and for giving me the opportunity to address this important matter.

Mike Abraham

Bob **Albrecht**

Comment: Added restrictions for training and licensing dogs and owners are largely appropriate; however, the general thrust of the changes penalizes ALL of the users rather than focussing on the dogs and owners causing the difficulties. Greater fines and greater enforcement aimed at those 'breaking the rules' would be more effective. I do appreciate the opportunity to use the Open Space under current rules and understand the parking fees.

Caroline **Alden**

Comment: comment: To whom it may concern:

I would like to comment on the proposed Voice and Sight Tag Program Options (page 18 of the Public Review Draft Tag Program Evaluation).

I am a Boulder dog-owner finishing my graduate work. In a year I will be deciding whether to remain in this city or not. I have to say that the current dog laws in Boulder open spaces are a major draw for me to this city. Many friends and acquaintances agree that being able to have our dogs off-leash is a very important part of the quality of life in Boulder. If the rules were to change to limit voice and sight control to trail corridors I would be very unhappy. I live here for the trails and I would consider those trails closed for access as I would not want to leave my dog at home or to run for miles keeping him on heel.

The ways in which the program has failed seem to me to be trivial: 44% failure rate in voice control at the very moment when ranger is present is not representative of the proportion of times that a dog comes when called in general. Conflict involving dogs is generally the result of problem dogs; cracking down on voice and sight control laws would clearly be an ineffective venue for addressing problem dogs in the community. Police reports are how these issues are addressed. The final failing is that only 86% of dogs have tags visibly displayed and not 90%. 86% seems like a fabulous success to me.

In sum I object to more tax dollars being spent or to freedoms being revoked in the face of nominal 'failures'. If however changes must be made I would support the following changes. I would be in support of measures to require proof of vaccinations. I would also support a small increase in fines for violation. I would NOT however support a measure to revoke privileges after ONE violation -- that is simply absurd. Requirements for information sessions or testing seem like an insane waste of public funds. After all all we are talking about here are dogs coming when called in open space.

I think that the committee should step back for a moment and consider that overall this is an extremely successful program as-is and not much needs to be changed.

Thank you

Caroline Alden

Leni **Arapkiles**

Comment: Hi,
I have recently written to you about this topic, so I will not repeat myself too much. I do walk everyday in the mountain parks, various times in the morning and evening. So the disturbing behavior of humans and dogs occurs at all times of the day. And because the dog population has increased so, the feces problem is in epic proportions as of late. In fact, I regularly witness a man who walks with his dog and uses the old tennis racket he carries everyday to flip his dog's and others' poop into the meadow and ridge areas. He declares his ""success"" so that all can congratulate him. Some notice, some don't, just as they don't notice their own dogs chasing what little wildlife remains or the poop the dogs left behind. When I inform them what their dogs have done while they were running, speaking on the phone, or conversing with their companions, they either act as if it is not a problem, or claim to have used all their plastic bags and ""will have to get it another time"". I see the feces everyday thereafter. The stench from the poop in this heat is pervasive and disgusting. And, one must watch one's step, I tell you.

This is all a small snapshot of a very big problem that could be somewhat minimized by mandatory leash laws (except the tennis racket guy). Our human/dog growth cannot be ignored.
Thanks,
Leni

Eleni **Arapkiles**

Comment: I am writing about the proposed changes to open space dog tag program and the changes suggested for commercial use on open space. My particular viewpoint is somewhat influenced by two details: I have walked the trails of Boulder Open Space for 35 years and I walk them at least once a day every day of the year. So I have noticed the changes which have happened over the long and short time frames.
The dog tag program could have been successful without the increase in population and use but a walk on any trail in the system easily reveals its original intention is lost. Dogs chase wildlife regardless of the voice commands of the guardians. In fact many times the dogs a so far away from their people that the chase is beyond voice or sight. This is also true as far as feces goes. People don't even pay attention when their dogs defecate and when I inform them of the incident many times they fail to find it if they try and other times they plea no bag. Also I have been charged by dogs on a regular basis and there have been numerous times when the people only called their dogs when I asked them to do so. More intimidating it is rare to come across people without more than one dog. Often a group could include up to 6 dogs. They run off trail and basically take over the area. It is uncomfortable unpleasant and rather frightening for me a small person to navigate the mess. The guardians are often very unaware and just caught in their socializing. As far as friendly play amongst dogs that does happened but I have also witnessed numerous times when unfriendly behavior happens and the people are not in the least able to control the situation. I could give you an account of daily incidences but I that should not be necessary. I am sure you get the point I am making. Suffice to say a leash law on all trails would greatly improve the situation.

As far a commercial use it seems with even the current requirements in place use is quite free. Groups of athletes coaches yelling encouragement constantly run up and down trials to simulate the effects of the stair master it seems photographers with dogs and models off trail dog trainer groups wilderness preparedness groups all seem very comfortable in the mountain parks. I fear loosening the control is a slippery slope one which will compromise any semblance of serenity left on the trails.

If anything we need MORE restrictions as the use continues to reveal itself through the chaos and damage to the trails and meadows.
Thank you Leni Arapkiles

Leni **Arapkiles**

Comment: Dear Board Members
I am very thankful to hear that you are reviewing the dog leash program. I walk the Dakota Ridge/Sanitas area everyday so am witness to regular behavior and changes. I have been walking these trails for 30 years and am always out in the morning hours. The dog situation has become completely out of control as far as I can tell. Though I appreciate dogs to a point because there are so many dogs now the off leash program should be a thing of the past. At least five time a week I witness a dog chasing wildlife. Most of the time the owners are either unaware or don't seem to think this is a problem. They state something to the effect that the dog will sleep well tonight or that is good exercise for the dog. Most often however the person is so far from the dog that he or she dose not even see this activity. The dog is completely on its own or ignores the calls. I also have seen dogs pooping when they are running free. And worse I see dogs poop while the person is walking ahead of it and they don't even know it's happening. So with that I will move on to the many times I have had dogs come at me with obvious aggression sometimes even to jump on me and knock me off my balance. I am small and for some reason they want to pounce on me. Some times the owners are apologetic some times they are not. I have asked people to call their dogs and several times they act asif that is a problem. One man actually told me to get a life when I asked him to call his dog off of me.
So maybe because I am out so much I see so many infractions but it also may have to do with a certain attitude of entitlement that has developed over the years. I know I walk in a part of the parks that seems to be a sacrifice for dogs but I don't think that is quite fair to the wildlife or the people who don't want this kind of disturbance in the parks at all. Please please consider it time to require leashes on dogs before it is all lost to this one user group.
Thanks so much
Leni Arapkiles

Bill **Archerd**

Comment: None

Susan **Baker**

Comment: I think the OSMP tag program has been a big improvement in dog compliance. I see many people who choose to keep their dogs on leash presumably because they can't follow the voice and sight rules. I personally have had less conflict with dogs that are out of control. Likewise I like that dogs owners are asked to keep the dogs on leash in the parking lots and trail heads. I think the program raises awareness and is a great teaching tool. Asking people to review the video yearly would remind people of expectation of dog behavior. Also offering dog training and compliance help, weather through the OSMP or in collaboration with other agencies like the Boulder Humane Society. I know money is tight, but I still feel enforcement may reach out to the small percent that ignore the rules. More trash cans help with waste removal as well.

Susan Baker

Comment: As a responsible dog owner that enjoys open space 3-5 time/week I'd like to weigh in on the purposed changes to the green tag program. Not only do I use the open space to exercise with my dog, but I mountain bike, hike, and horseback ride, so I understand the issues of these other user groups. By in large I think the Green Tag program has been an improvement over previous regulations. I see responsible dog owners clean up after their dogs, recall them effectively, restrict them from chasing other critters, and even keep them on leash in off leash areas because their behavior doesn't conform. Unfortunately they are still some issues. It's my opinion that most of these are caused by the irresponsible dog owners who flagrantly ignore the regulations. New changes to address this group of people should be reflected in the new regulation.

Changes that fine dog owners for irresponsible behavior, education, removal of the privilege of off leash, peer to peer support, are all great ideas. However, bureaucratic hoops that simply limit the applicant without addressing these issues like proof of vaccination, city residency, huge time or monetary commitment won't change the behavior of irresponsible dog owners. Also it is very distressing that Open Space has defined conflict so broadly. There is a vocal minority that would like to see dogs and even everybody off the open space. Dog owners are a huge user group that the open space officals can not afford to alienate. Certain expectations of dogs are too demanding to expect. Dogs get excited despite training, keeping them from barking, socializing with other dogs, swimming, or shaking water off themselves are behaviors that can't be regulated. Additionally, the purposed restrictions of 10-20 feet from their owners or staying on the trail corridor are essentially a long leash law that would totally ruin the off leash experience for our pets (look at the mountain bikers and runners who create parallel trails).

My dog is a high energy German Shepard who is well training and has never failed a recall, chased wild life, or negatively interacted with people or other dogs. He loves going to open space to chase his ball or Frisbee and to be condemned to staying within 10 feet would deprive him of his favorite activity.

Please support responsible dog owners and their pets by continuing an off leash policy and be more proactive in education and punitive action for those who don't abide by the rules.

Thank you!

Susan Baker

Randy **Bare**

Comment: I have some concerns with possible penelties for violation of rules. I think that revocation of the green tag for a 1st offense is extreme unless the violation justified that action. I would hate to think that if my dog didn't instantly recall, would loose priveleges in the program the same as say a viscous dog or dog chasing people or wildlife

I am also wondering how a practical test of dog obedience would be conducted. Will it be in an environment that isn't stressful or distracting to the dog? Will it be a one chance pass/fail? Dogs have personalities and moods as do we - they may not be in the zone (or distracted) at any given location or time.

I would think that enforcement would be better served by considering extenuating circumstances, history of issues, etc in making a judgement rather than having a 1 strike law that may not adequately assess the situation.

It seems that better education of the rules/policies as well as the enforcement of existing rules will be better serving the program than creating more rules that may be unenforceable. People using the program should be encouraged to be better stewards and provide education to the non compliantr individuals they encounter

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David **Bartlett**

Comment: My wife and I own two dogs and live 2 1/2 blocks north of Baseline & Lincoln Place.
We support the following staff recommendations: require that the green tag be renewed every five years and that the dog owner(s) see a video on proper dog etiquette. The one I saw five years ago was both perceptive and funny.

WE do not support direct testing of dogs nor enforcement of rules on how far off a trail a dog might be or on whether dogs playing together is a cardinal sin. It appears that there is a spectrum ""goodness"" in dogs. Owners with fantastically trained dogs can bravely try Chautauqua meadow at 5 pm on a Sunday afternoon. The rest of us can usually find ""off-hours"" when our dogs will be well-behaved given the small number of temptations they face. The same general philosophy goes for closing social trails. They should generally be kept open to give both dog owners and others some choice.

David **Baskett**

Comment: The type of “problems and conflicts” talked about below are crazy. That is doing what dogs do. As a “guardian” as prescribed by the City of Boulder I want a real dog not a robot. Within 10 ft. at all times, no sniffing the ground? Come on.

Preferred dog etiquette, defined as 'conflict' are the heart of the so called problems with dogs on open space. Following is the list of conflict behaviors in the green tag monitoring report..

No Sniffing-conflict behaviors recorded include:
•Dogs sniffing Dogs
•Dogs sniffing the ground (might be wildlife trace)
•Dogs sniffing any person

No Chasing other dogs.
That's right friendly play is considered to be conflict by open space staff. 4.7% of dogs were observed chasing other dogs. This includes two dogs from the same owner. We know that no one, including FIDOS knew that this was a 'problem'. However,it is the number one 'conflict' observed. i.e- the top reason to punish the dog community while revising the green tag program.

David A Baskett

Tiffany **Beechy**

Comment: See attached scanned comment from 5/24/12 Open House

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James **Beeson**

Comment:

I have been a Boulder resident for 43 years, and I have walked these hills with three generations of dogs I am a voter and I pay property taxes. My current dog is well trained (Humane society classes) and I have been complimented on his off-leash behavior many times by people who don't like dogs, and by rangers. We walk on OSMP trails almost every day. I support dog testing prior to receiving a green tag, and I would pay a fee to fund it, if provision was made for people with low income. I oppose an increase in fines because there are low income people in this community. I believe that the current voice and sight program regulations are adequate and that it would be a disaster to drive people off-trail. I have problems with the 2011 monitoring report. I suspect the number of dog violations per ranger trail patrol hour is very small. I am a scientist and I need to see the raw data and the statistics. A study by an independent agency would be much more convincing. Finally, I feel that OSMP needs to balance its goals against the real possibility of offending a large block of voters.

Brenda **Bell**

Comment: OSMP Correspondence:
Dogs need off-leash opportunities to run, to sniff and to explore . Are there really all these problems with our dogs in Open Space?

I absolutely do not support the unreasonable restrictions being considered for the green tag program. The claims of "problems" are outrageous. Increasing fees, requiring an in-person training, and possibly even a dog test, seem excessive but doable. The restrictions on dog-dog interactions and tight distance restrictions are insane. Clearly no attempt is being made to be reasonable.

Brenda Bell

Rhonda **Bellavia**

Comment: OSMP Correspondence:
Dogs need off-leash opportunities to run, to sniff and to explore . Are there really all these problems with our dogs in Open Space?
I am not a dog owner but use open space to run, hike and bike frequently. I never have problems with dogs. Most are friendly and under control. There are a few idiots that don't pick up after their dogs or have no control over them-but there's always a few outliers in any group. Don't make everyone suffer for a few bad apples. Please just punish the few.
In my opinion, people that don't appreciate dogs need to look within.
Sincerely,
Rhonda Bellavia

Valerie **Berg**

Comment: To: Council
Subject: Dogs off leash

I understand the Council is looking at this doggy issue.

I prefer that dogs stay on leash in open space areas, same as they are supposed to in town. I own 2 dogs and know that the experience of encountering off leash dogs is very unpredictable - some are great, some are insane.
And owners' perceptions of how well their dogs are trained - that's very subjective. Having dogs jump on little children while the owner tells you how friendly they are isn't always a great experience.

So I ask you to please keep the dogs on leash.

Regards-
Valerie Berg
Boulder, CO

Ricky **Berger**

Comment: The proposed changes do not add value and create unnecessary bureaucracy. The current program is fine; best ot leave it alone.

Craig **Beyer**

Comment: Good program now, especially for large working dogs and their athletic owners that need a lot of exercise.

Joy **Bishop**

Comment: OSMP Correspondence:
Dogs need off-leash opportunities to run, to sniff and to explore . Are there really all these problems with our dogs in Open Space? the problem is them not us. as long as there are people out there looking for problems they will find them - you find what you look for in life. sorry they are so negative.
The only way to get there attention is to cut there pay check-- vote NO more open space taxes and let it be known why you voted that way.
Joy Bishop

Gail **Bishop**

Comment: I strongly think guardians and their dogs should have to take an Obedience Class and pass a demonstration that they can control their dog in order to get a green tag.

Jenn **BMA**

Comment: OSMP Correspondence:
Did you write this? It's great!

On July 3, 2012 7:23:23 AM PDT, Mary Eldred wrote:

Tens of thousands of people who pay taxes in Boulder and Boulder County have dogs. Those dogs are well cared-for and well-behaved as a group. The intolerance that the "Star Chamber of OSMP" has exhibited harkens to a fascistic approach to government, even to the extent of something like where and how we walk our dogs.
Are there problems? Very occasionally, yes. Do those problems represent the majority? NO!

Part of the reason I got dogs for the first time in my life, when I moved to Boulder 5 years ago, was because of the Green Tag program- I thought "Wow - finally a local government that represents the people and their need for humane treatment of pets". Finally, a place that understands the needs of dogs to run, play, sniff and lead good lives as family members.

Silly me for letting go of my cynicism, believing that this supposed liberal, progressive open local government actually listens to the tax payers who fund it. After working for 20 years in the nation's capital I had become cynical and jaded. I guess I should have stayed that way, given the intransigent unfairness applied to dog owners and their dogs recently here.

The Coot Lake issue is a perfect example of what is wrong with the way OSMP/Parks and Rec are going about the Green Tag program unraveling. When I spoke in February with Matt Claussen in the parking lot there, about the fact that there are signs indicating no people, but NO signs indicating "NO DOGS ALLOWED BEYOND SIGN", he shrugged and said people should know it means dogs, too. Unless something is stated out right, how are people to know what the parameters are for their use of the parks?
I suggested also that the wire fencing that had recently been placed in between the buck and rail, had barely been in place when the City Council had its meeting about 'violations' of dogs going into the wetlands there and considered completely closing off the north/east shore of the pond. Really? Come on people! Let's be pragmatic and open and help people understand the limitations they're up against (AND the reasons for them) before condemning them and their dogs for not obeying invisible and un-posted rules.
(An Aside: I respect the Audubon Society's concern for the harrier and other nesting species that used to use Coot Lake. Clearly, dogs off-leash are not the cause of the absence of the birds, and there was never any science behind their claim that it was dogs scaring off the birds in the first place. At the same time, why on Earth are so many Russian olives still allowed to grow there? This is NOT a rhetorical question!
The time, money and attention spent on the one or two renegade dogs violating the SVprogram there, would be much better spent on removing invasive non-native species, and replacing them with native welcoming species helping to improve the native ecosystem for those birds. Then maybe we'd get somewhere with seeing bird species return to these open spaces.)

I also suggested to Matt Claussen that signage be posted about WHY certain areas have closures, and about the interesting species those closures are protecting. Matt didn't embrace that idea, either.. I've noticed people reading the pretty little poetry signs, so obviously they're ripe for more substantive information to read on their walks around that pond. Americans on the whole as a culture, are consensus-builders and value teamwork and tolerance. If you tell people why something is closed off, people will generally go "Oh, I see!" and comply. If you imperiously state a closure with no reason, people will feel belittled and unimportant in the decision and be more likely to violate that law. It's psychology put to good use. The National Park Service understands this, as do many other municipalities. Let's help educate the people of Boulder in their use of public spaces.

Most dog owners are compliant with the laws of this county and city. I have only seen one dog in the thousands of trips we've made to Coot Lake, without a green tag and behaving badly. I stopped and talked to the owners, and told them about the necessity of the program and the benefits of having it for dogs, people and wildlife. They were from Denver, and had only stopped on their way home from a trip up north. The vast majority of open space users with dogs are compliant, and actually appreciate and care about the privilege of having the Site and Voice program available. Please don't change that!!!

When you, as a government, educate your residents, and actively include them in decisionmaking processes, you create a stronger, more informed, thinking electorate (oh, oh, can't have that, can we?) Only good things can come of that. When you are complicit with ignorance, are imperious in your actions, and refuse to work with the will and needs the people; when you pointedly ignore the voices of the people, the wellbeing of the greater living community suffers, and people revolt. Many of you reading this are privileged Boulder employees, with good jobs, good benefits and a sense of security, so, why take to heart the opinions and thoughts of the taxpayers and other users of these special, and valued, places? Because it's your JOB and your DUTY to heed the voices of those who pay you. No ivory towers here, please.

I respectfully request that you reconsider the draconian changes proposed to the GT program. With more input and more interaction, not less, we'll create an even better community with understanding, tolerance and acceptance. Isn't that what Boulder is supposedly about?

Karen **Boardman**

Comment: Please do not approve the Voice and Sight Tag changes as proposed. Specifically, I hope you will strike items 2, 3, 4, and 6. First, it seems a bit unreasonable to revoke someone's tag after just one offense. How about a 3 strike and you're out until you can show your dog is worthy of the green tag?

Item 3 requires testing of all dogs. It seems a waste of effort, since the majority of dogs already comply. How about just making dogs who lose their privilege take a test?

Only allowing V/S in trail corridors is really reducing what we are now allowed. If the majority of dogs/dog owners were ""bad"" and violated the V/S control, I can see this change. But since the majority are under control and well behaved, it is an unfair change. Why punish those who cooperate?

While I can see the resident requirements on one hand, I also see how it seems unfair on the other hand. Some students are not residents here, but like taking their dogs on trails. If they get a green tag, they should be allowed this. If someone has a guest visiting from out of town/state, and the guest and dog pass the green tag requirements, why can't they enjoy our trails, too?

Please strike these four items from the proposed changes.

Thanks,
karen

Carol **Brand**

Comment: The voice and sight program is working well. The recent survey that noted ""problems"" was overly scrupulous and did not take into consideration all of the dogs who do comply with the regulations.

Specific issues....

Vaccinations. I'm assuming that you are talking about rabies. Tracking this would be expensive and time consuming. Also, it is a red herring. There has not been a case of dog rabies in the state of Colorado since 1974 (almost 40 years). Vaccines are a non problem.

Testing. I compete in AKC Obedience. I have no fear of demonstrating my handling and dog training skills. However, judging a dog's performance is a skill unto itself and I don't believe that you have the experience or resources to correctly train evaluators.

V&S on trail corridors only.... 20' is a small window. While most dogs move within this zone, sometimes they might move out of it. It will be almost impossible to policy this. How will you be able to correctly tell whether a dog is 25' or 40' from a handler. This leads to a lack of equity in enforcement.

Elaine **Braught**

Comment: My only comment is to please reconsider restricting the priviledge of a green tag to only those who LIVE in Boulder County. I WORK in Boulder County and have worked here for over 11 years....my comapny pays taxes, and I pay taxes when I shop, eat and recreate in Boulder County - which I do on a regular basis as I spend 60 to 70 hours a week in Boulder County. Being able to bring my dog to work and go for walks at lunchtime is probably the most important benefit I get from my company and is a HUGE factor in my continuing to work ib Boulder County. Thank you.

K **Brousseau**

Comment: The Voice and Sight Tag Program is a vital part of life in Boulder for the many residents who own, love, and care for dogs. I have walked the trails that participate in the program nearly every day for the past 12 years and have only had an encounter with one dog that was not under the control of its owner. I would anticipate a significant increase in dog-dog negative encounters if dogs had to be leashed due to the issue of leash aggression. The benchmarks by which the evaluators measure unwanted dog behaviors are unreasonable, harsh, and very biased. The evaluation process has not been reasonable, fair or balanced and to make decisions about limiting or discontinuing the green tag program is grossly unfair to dog owners, the vast majority of which are responsible.

David H **Burns**

Comment: Wow I must say this is most policed place I've ever lived.

Michael **Busenhart**

Comment: OSMP Correspondence:
Dogs need off-leash opportunities to run, to sniff and to explore . Are there really all these problems with our dogs in Open Space?

Vicki **Bynum**

Comment: Dear Mr. Armstead,

I call your attention to the Boulder Open Space mission and charter, specifically, Section 176, Open Space purposes (a) and (b), with regard to domesticated animal use of open space.
As a 30 year Boulder resident who has been paying taxes for public lands such as open space, public parks, dog parks, etc., I am concerned about your lack of attention to the above charter.

I continue to witness and smell the results of your lack of protection of our open space; it's clear to me that the tacit assumption you are working under is that Boulder Open Space is for dogs and dog owners only.

By not regulating domestic animals in ways clearly stated by the Open Space Charter you implicitly encourage the pollution of public property and discriminate against those who would prefer to enjoy our community open space free of dogs.

Essentially, all of our open space has become an enormous dog park and toilet for dogs. The "normative behavior," as one of your employees described it, is, for example, to leave dog feces in plastic bags on public trails.
This is clearly an infraction of the regulations stated or implied by the Open Space charter, and it's appalling that creeping norms for inappropriate behavior become "normative" and are then not enforced.

New "norms," like this, combined with the leashless policy in open space has now extended itself into our neighborhood streets, alleyways and even residential yards.

Even as I seek to enjoy observing wildlife free from constant harassment by dogs and free from the stench of dog urine and feces on trails not open to dogs, I find that I am accompanied by dogs and their owners.

Why? Because there are no consequences for following signage in the parks, and dog owners are even encouraged to disregard appropriate behavior in shared public places. And how did that come about? Because they learned inappropriate behaviors in our open space parks.

The public health consequences for exposure to dog feces and urine are extremely serious: they are vectors for diseases and harmful to plant and animal life as well. The chasing and harassment of wildlife and daily deposits of dog waste in our open space parks continues to alarm many concerned citizens, even other responsible dog owners.

Your lack of enforcement of clearly stated regulations and evident lack of concern for the very properties you are charged with protecting is deeply disturbing.

Please forward this to Joe Reale.

Respectfully ,

Vicki Bynum

Deborah **Byrd**

Comment: Just think if these severe regulations were imposed on kids! Second time a child makes a mistake, goes off trail or runs ahead more than 10 - 20 feet, then off to jail the kid goes, with a hefty fine to boot! There would be a huge outrage and the city of Boulder and city council would justifiably be called Nazis.

It is apparent Boulder has become overcrowded with too many people using and abusing trails, and city council takes it out on dogs. In 32 years in this town, I have never, not once, had a problem with a dog in Open Space. These proposed rules are extremely punitive and outrageous. We need to concentrate on more important issues that are forward-thinking and positive, like raising funds to keep Open Space well maintained by charging those who do not contribute to the tax base for using our precious resources.

Lawrence **Carlson**

Comment: I have been very happily using the open space areas that allow dogs off-leash for many years, now with a second dog. Between my wife and I, we take advantage of these areas at least once a day. From our standpoint, the system AS IS works just fine! Please don't mess up a beautiful thing with tighter restrictions.

Remember - dogs are dogs. They run, they play, they sniff, etc. There is plenty of open space where dogs must be on leash for people who have a problem with that.

Annie **Carmichael**

Comment: One of the main reasons I moved to Boulder is because of this program. I take my dogs on the trails every day, and so appreciate the ability to have them off leash.

I am sure that most responsible dog owners that value this privilege would not mind paying more per year to help fund the program, and whatever enhancements you might need to make (more enforcement, actual in-person testing before a green tag is given out).

It would really be a shame if the few irresponsible dog owners made the rest of us, who take dog ownership and off leash privileges very seriously.

Please let me know if there is anything more I can do to help protect this important program that so many Boulder residents use daily.

David **Carner**

Comment: Seems to be working well despite the ""big brother"" feel to this tactic.

Laurie **Carter**

Comment: OSMP Correspondence:
I will not continue to vote for open space if this campaign against dogs and dog owners continue. I spend a lot of time on the trails and RARELY have any negative contact. Your numbers are obviously off and biased.

Dogs need off-leash opportunities to run, to sniff and to explore . Are there really all these problems with our dogs in Open Space?

Lydia **Carter**

Comment: If I correctly interpret the possible impending criteria being considered, there probably aren't many well trained dogs in the entire country that could that could correctly PERFORM for the green Tag evaluators. My daughter and I have regularly walked our dogs in dog parks andy on open space and have found most dogs to be friendly, but well behaved while thoroughly enjoying themselves and others on their outings, altho we can't say the same for some of the humans!

Jessica **Catlin**

Comment: The voice and sight tag program overall works very well. Keep the ability of responsible owners to allow dogs off leash on trails.

Jeff **Chase**

Comment: I have had the great fortune and pleasure to visit Boulder for four months. I have hiked in the flatirons almost every day during my stay, All Over. I have no personal interest in dog access, and the level of dog presence concerns me. However, I would like to report that the very large majority of my encounters and observations of dogs and their guardians have been positive. Even so, there is a very small minority of militantly obnoxious dog owners who have permitted their loose dogs to make unwelcome contact and have responded aggressively to ""feedback"". These people are a major problem. I feel that the appropriate approach is continued outreach and public education in a positive spirit of protection of rights for dog owners, with the recognition that a small minority are imperiling these rights. I have also observed a number of OSMP enforcement events, which seem to me to be positively handled. You guys are doing a great job. And I think most dog owners are doing a good job too, and have earned our respect. I have never observed an instance of a dog running wild, except in the Chautauqua field, which--let's face it--is a sacrifice area. Maybe lower Shanahan. So: you should enlist the many dog owners who get it to put pressure on the few who don't, so that it is not adversarial: dog haters against dog lovers.

In my opinion, dogs misbehaving is not our problem. Our problem here is the little baggies of dog poop that litter the ground everywhere. People are bagging, but they're not packing it out. This is a major problem which will require investment in compostable bags and solar composting stations at major trailheads. Boulder is the kind of place where this can be made to work.

Joan **Cheng**

Comment: I am trying to get info on changes that are being considered for the OSMP Tag program but none of the links to the PDF docs seem to work. I have heard changes could be considerable and would like to know what those are. I do have a dog in the program. Once I began hiking with him off-leash about two years ago, life became more fun for me and Milo! I have encountered dogs off leash out there (Dakota Ridge/Sanitas) who have charged or even attacked Milo, and actually bitten me. Those dogs should not be allowed off leash. Milo isn't perfect - what dog is? - but the vast majority of dogs are like him, and their quality of life would be greatly reduced if they couldn't walk off leash in open space. Yes, Milo might sniff another hiker's leg or walk up to someone with a wagging tail expecting a pat. Personally, I believe that is within the bounds of acceptable behavior. Most dog owners with pets off leash are responsible and respectful and vigilant. Please don't ruin things for 99% of us to control the 1% who shouldn't have dogs off leash to begin with.

Stan **Clauson**

Comment: We have experience a very high level of compliance with this program and no dog conflicts. Limiting the program to residents would have unfortunate consequences for regular family visitors who have appropriately participated in the program. Rabies vaccination is essentially a state-wide requirement, and adding this would only increase administrative costs without significant benefits. In short, this program works really well and is a welcoming adjunct to visits to Boulder for out-of-town family. We believe that the proposed changes are not warranted.

Jennifer **Collins**

Comment: The current program is working great. Please don't make it more difficult to take our dogs out for walks unleashed. I have NEVER encountered a problem in all the years I have been taking my dogs out. The so-called complaints of it not working are ridiculous and anyone with dogs and the green tags agree. Not every dog is perfect and I do not discount the few problems that I am sure have happened, but to take away a beloved program for everyone is very un-Boulder, unfair and unproductive. I wouldn't be opposed to re-newing the tags or adding a charge for the tags but to take away something that has been working ranks right up there with the methodology of the new leadership at the Boulder library-unnecessary, inefficient, and down-right anti-community. Use this program to raise some revenue but don't take away something that a lot of people and dogs enjoy because a few curmedgeons don't have the sense to walk somewhere else if they are petrified of dogs.

Mary **Coonce**

Comment: OSMP Correspondence:
I am writing in support of the Green Tag program for open space.

My dogs throughout the years have been trained as Therapy dogs as well as companion dogs. I currently have a 3 year old black lab and have trained her to step aside when runners and cyclists approach.

I have lived in Boulder for 21 years and have witnessed a dramatic improvement in the dog handling skills of the residents since the Green Tag program has been established. I hike my dog everyday on the Sanitas trail system, or Coot Lake and various Chataqua Trails. Therefore I consider myself a consistent trail user who has witnessed thousands of dogs and their handlers over the years.

Please continue the support of the Green Tag Program.

Mary Coonce

Kevin **Cooney**

Comment: Re-instate access for dogs up Green Mountain. Upper Greenman does now not allow dogs at all, which seems crazy, as many people hike up Green Mountain from town this way. This is a well-used trail, and allows dog owners to take their companion with them without having to get into their car and drive up to the West Ridge trailhead.

Chris **Cooper**

Comment: OSMP Correspondence:
To whom it may concern.

I have lived in Boulder for over 22 years and have never had any issues with dogs. Obviously there are always going to be a few bad dog owners just like there are bad parents but they are in the small minority. It is my firm belief that there are some folks in charge of open space ordinances that just dont like dogs for whatever reason but that should not impact their decision making process on what is best for the community as a whole.

I feel very fortunate to live in Boulder where dogs are more tolerated than other cities surrounding us but we need to keep it that way at least if not expanding more areas to off leash access. Maybe instead of wasting time on secret observation techniques and more on enforcing real violations, then we would have more informed (better) dog owners and therefore less conflicts. I have yet to see anyone ticketed for any off leash violations.

Sincerely,

Chris Cooper

Chris **Cooper**

Comment: I feel privileged to live in Boulder which comparatively, is more dog friendly than some of our surrounding neighboring communities. That being said, I'm extremely dismayed at the trend over the last few years to take away our off leash areas that make Boulder so special. I've been living in Boulder for 22 years and if I lost all my easy access, off leash areas, I might actually consider moving from the area which is a real shame. I hope that this trend is reversed and that Boulder will remain a dog friendly city which brings a quality of life to this town that is priceless.

Maybe a little enforcement and ticketing for those ""bad"" dog owners that need to be taught a lessen that it's NOT OK to have dogs running around out of control but they are in the small minority of dog owners in Boulder.

Ann **Cooper**

Comment: OSMP Correspondence:
With the proposed new regulations for the Green Tag program, you are making criminal the normal play of dogs, and blowing off the behavior of the majority of dog-owners who are conscientious guardians.

No one who exercises a dog off leash on Open Space twice daily (as we do) would claim there are no incidents of dogs running wild and owners who fail to deal with the lapse. But these are rare. We can count on our fingers the number of consequential negative encounters we've seen since the inception of the tagging program And we are out on the busiest trail in the system EVERY SINGLE DAY AND OFTEN TWICE (Sanitas).

Up until now we have been staunch supporters of Open Space. We are loosing faith in your fair mindedness.

Please do not go ahead with these draconian measures. Don't use a pile driver to crack a nut.

Sincerely,

Ann Cooper
2839 3 rd Street
Boulder

Poppy **Copeland**

Comment: I am very concerned about the proposed changes in the Sight Tag Program. I have lived in Boulder since 1976 and always had dogs, many of whom were adopted from the Humane Society and trained with the help of the Humane Society. Every day I have taken a dog to Sanitas or other open space areas for an off leash run, critical to their emotional as well as physical health. If you remove this option, Boulder will have a large number of unhappy hyper dogs and frustrated owners. The real solution would be to have a 911 type telephone number to call when a dog agresses either on people and other dogs or wild life, not to mention being attacked by cayotes or mounntain lions.
Thank you for your attention.
Poppy Copeland LPC

Maria Greco Cox

Comment: OSMP Correspondence:
You mentioned a vote in the past. Perhaps that is what we need again, to include the issue on the November ballot. Since a lot is happening nationally vis a vis the voice of the people or rather the lack of a voice, it would be good to have us find our voice here in Boulder rather than be "bullied" by those who have some hidden agenda.

Thanks for what you are doing to keep us informed. Maria Greco Cox, dog guardian.

Randy Crittenden

Comment: I have been using the Voice and Sight Tag Program since it began. It has worked very well. I have not encountered a problem on the trails Iâve been using for many, many years.
I believe there have been a few issues that were stated in the report, but as I have said I havenât seen any problems for many, many years. The proposal that is on the table is too expensive. OSMP seems to continually single out dog owners. Dog owners have also paid for the use of open space with the understanding some areas would be open to us with our dogs. I will not support and more money going to the OSMP program if OSMP continues the persecution of dog owners. This proposal is ridiculous so I will support organizations to block it.

Charles Cross

Comment: The Voice and Sight program is extremely successful and is a primary enabler for my use of our Open Space system. The impact of dogs is minimal as compared to horses and mountain bikes which have fewer controls and are largely ignored by Open Space Management. Horses require huge parking lots, batter the trail in wet areas or conditions, and worse, leave HUGE piles of dung in the MIDDLE of the trail. This feces contains residue of medicines, antibiotics, weed seed, and foreign matter not native to the natural environment. Why don't equestrians have to pick up their poop? Why the maniacal focus on dogs by the OS Rangers while horses cause significant impacts as well. Stop overmanaging dogs and forgetting about horses.

I am a mountain biker and love being able to ride the open space. That said, the speed, carelessness, and rudeness of other bikers is a bigger threat. Rangers should be ticketing bikers going too fast for conditions and not yielding to oncoming bikers, hikers, dogs, and horses. Again, stop overmanaging dogs and forgetting about more significant threats. There seems to be a vendetta against dogs while the big picture for intelligent use by ALL is missed.

Thank you and please keep Open Space open to all users and their good and well behaved canine companions!

Jean **Crowley**

Comment: Don't punish the masses due to a few bad dog owners.
A few observations:
- the same rules do not apply to kids
- the same rules do not apply to bikes
Are there a hand full of people pushing to restrict dog access due to their bias, dislike of dogs, or bad experience. I have witnessed more than a dozen ""conflicts"" with bikes and kids yet I don't hear anyone complaining. I am a responsible dog owner and do not want to see any more trail closures to green tag use. Be fair in your decisions but based on the results from your survey it doesn't appear fair but very biased.

Tim **Curran**

Comment: I am writing to expression my opinion against the âPotential Tag Program Enhancement Optionsâ outlined in:
http://www.bouldercolorado.gov/files/openspace/pdf_VMP/overarching/Public_Review_Draft_Tag_Program_Evaluation.pdf

My understanding of the open space staff green tag study is that compliance has been very high and that the definition of conflicts is ridiculously over reaching when it includes sniffing, barking and playing in ways that do not bother anybody other than those who are categorically opposed to dogs being off leash. Given the success of the current program I see no reason to increase restrictions and/or increase costs (to taxpayers and/or participants) associated with further training, testing, and enforcement.

Tim **Curran**

Comment: board-comment: Dear Open Space Board of Trustees I am writing to encourage you to support the Green Tag Program in something close to its current form that does not increase the costs and restrictiveness of the program. My reading of the open space staff green tag study is that compliance has been very high and that the definition of conflicts is ridiculously over reaching when it includes sniffing barking and playing in ways that do not bother anybody other than those who are categorically opposed to dogs being off leash. I don't like screaming kids much when I hike either but I would not want to legislate against them. Given the success of the current program I see no reason to increase restrictions and/or increase costs (to taxpayers and/or participants) associated with further training testing and enforcement.
Sincerely
Tim Curran

Ruth and Glen Cushman

Comment: Dear Open Space and Mountain Parks Department:

The Green Tag program needs to be improved!

We often encounter dogs with green tags off leash on "leash only" trail such as Sawhill or Goshawk and on city streets. Often these dogs do not even respond to voice control or they are out of sight of their "guardian" who usually defends such behavior by saying that since the dog has a green tag it's o.k. for it to be off leash everywhere. Once a dog ran out onto an iced-over pond in the city limits & chased off all the geese including one Ross's goose, an uncommon goose in Colorado. The owner didn't even try to call the dog back until I protested. When she did call the dog, it ignored her. Unfortunately, that is not an isolated incidence. Owners need to be better trained, and enforcement needs to be stepped-up. Perhaps dog owners could be required to pass a test & sign a pledge that they will not let their dogs off leash except in the properly designated areas.

Please give wildlife and other trail users a break!

Sincerely,
Ruth Carol and Glenn Cushman
Co-authors, Boulder Hiking Trails

Dawn Demko

Comment: I recently was running trails with my dog - she has a green tag. As we were running along, my dog all full of energy with a big smile, running in the grass - a couple was watching her. THey both were smiling. As I ran past, the stopped to watch my dog sniffing away at a rock and tree. They were smiling the whole time - I eventually had to call my dog ""c'mon girl"" and she came running after me - the couple obviously was quite heartwarmed and enchanted by my dog - clearly in heaven running and playing in the open space. That smile and heartwarming experience, that sight, was brought to them by the green tag program.

Barb DiPasquale

Comment: I'm amazed at your methodology in determining ""conflict involving dogs"". While I take good care of my dog, pick up his poop, etc., I feel I'm being punished by a few outliers who don't - but to consider this a ""conflict"", is ridiculous.

I've never met anyone, during my time in Boulder, with a dog on the trail who was not interested in taking care of the outdoors. To treat people like children with the minutia involved in this regulation makes me enjoy paying taxes all the more. As time goes on, I'm less interested in living in Boulder. While everyone understands the supply and demand imbalance of Boulder, someone needs to question whether that will last or what type of community you will attract once life becomes so over-regulated. Tax ourselves on the Open Space - but can't use it without knowing all the rules; regulation to use only a certain type of bag at the grocery store - where will it end. When things become too complicated to enjoy easily, people will transition to a more carefree place.

Karen **Divine**

Comment: am curious what the reason is for possible changes to receiving green tags for dogs...I've heard there might be more stringent requirements and I wonder what the verification for this is. Have there been a lot of reported problems with dogs hurting people?

Susan **Donohoe**

Comment: I have lived in Boulder for 4 years, and I LOVE this program! So does my dog! People are going to walk/run their dogs off-leash no matter what, and having choices for people who don't want to encounter dogs off-leash like many of the trails at Chataqua is terrific. Because I have Mt Sanitas and Coot lake, I never need to go to those restricted trails, and everyone is happy! Please keep this program just exactly as it is!

Susan **Douglass**

Comment: comment: What is your best estimate of the increase in the number of dog visits to OSMP since the VMP approval in 2005?

Does the urgent need to "Improve" the voice and sight program indicate that the system carrying capacity has already been exceeded for that use?

Amy **Dreger**

Comment: For a long time, I refused to participate in the Voice & Sight Program. I felt it was another "revenue generator" for the City of Boulder. The funds didn't go to anything but making nice signs and a little metal tag. Additionally, watching a video online and paying for it does NOT mean that your dog is under voice & sight control. IF you truly need to keep this program, I strongly believe the funds would be better used to support the Humane Society, and that folks interested should have to pay for actually taking their dog to a training class. This provides not only proof that the dog/owner are under control, but provides profit and draws awareness to the Humane Society, as well. I only have a tag now because a ranger cited me for not having one. Ultimately, I'm really not sure this program is effective.

Kyla **Duffy**

Comment: I'm writing to share feedback on the proposed voice and sight program changes. As a taxpayer, I'm concerned about unnecessary extra paperwork and the costs associated with it. My dogs have been green tag licensed for four years now. We spend almost every day out on the trails (Mt. Sanitas, Cottonwood, Bobolink, and Dry Creek are among our favorites). I have never experienced issues with other people's dogs to make me think changes need to be made to the program. The off-leash dogs in these areas are wonderfully friendly and well-behaved. I've had discussions about this with both green tag holders and non-holders, and the consensus is that people take the green tag program seriously as is, and they make sure their dogs comply with the online video.

Please don't complicate things more than they need to be. The suggestion of these added regulations honestly makes me want to leave Boulder, and I've been a resident and homeowner here for more than a decade.
Thank you,
Kyla Duffy

Mike **Duggan**

Comment: OSMP Correspondence:
Dear OSPM,

I would like to express my opinion on the subject.

My family and I walk our dog off leash several times per week in open space and would not want to see any changes to the current Green Tag Program other than more education efforts and maybe higher fines to reinforce adheance to the rules.

We (5 voters) have and will continue to vote in support off lease privileges for our dog.

Thanks,

Mike Duggan
Boulder

Lieko **Earle**

Comment: The Green Tag Program is working well in terms of making dog guardians more aware and accountable to how we manage our dogs while in open space. The problem here is not the Green Tag Program, but the criteria used to evaluate it. Dogs are dogs, not human, and should not be held to the same expectations any more than we would expect humans to act like dogs. A well-behaved dog is still a dog, but OSMP would rather them not run, play, bark, chase one another, go say hi to other dogs, etc. Many, many people in Boulder have dogs, and we pay extra to live in Boulder because of the access it affords to open space for both us and our dogs. If off-leash trails keep dwindling in number we will begin to feel different about voting in favor of future taxes to acquire and maintain more open space. Also, the One-Strike rule is terrible because it does not allow dogs and their guardians with good intentions to work toward modifying their behaviors. Again, why are dogs held to higher standards of obedience than, say, children?

Karuna **Eberl**

Comment: OSMP Correspondence:
Dogs need off-leash opportunities to run, to sniff and to explore . Are there really all these problems with our dogs in Open Space? Please try to remember why most people moved to Boulder in the first place -- because it was a place where we could live and let live. Why do we have to become worse at allowing our citizens freedoms than nearly every other city in the country? Is it because the inconvenience of a few outweigh the happiness of the many? Is it because intolerance is a better policy than letting life be a little messy and unpredicatble? Whatever your reasons are for wanting to take away the greatest part of every day that I have with my family (our daily walk through open space), I will probably never know. Why you want to make Boulder so uptight, I will never know. But please, at least give it some inner contemplation, some real thought, so you can at least be sure you know your own motives for ruining the lives of so many others.

Regina **Ebert**

Comment: I find the Evaluation results lacking in critical information and am disappointed in the consequent reaction to the study. Given the information presented, 85% of all subjects in the observation area had no incidence with other users of the trails.
The subsequent recommondations result in allowing the 15% to control the use for the 85% of users that have taken the time to ensure compliance. Of that 15%, it is even more unclear how many are Boulder City residents (which pay for the open space that is being ""observed""), which residents are county residents, and how many are out of County. It is disappointing at best that the response is to have the 15% determine the future program. The question should be is the 15% non compliant group a big enough concern to change the program. If so, how will the 15% be controlled and how will the 15% pay for the control required? The narrow perspective of the many paying for the few that don't participate in the established guidelines is a tired and ineffective approach. As a business owner, and over 20 year voting resident, I have enjoyed the open space that my taxes have paid for. My continued support of the program will be dependent upon the actions the that the program and council take moving forward. The option of having all green tag participants complete some type of testing is a good start, however the cost is bound to be impactful. Should testing be a requirement moving forward, I do believe then that for those of us that have taken the time to train our dogs to be part of our homes and the community, we should have the right to walk the dogs off leash in all areas, as it is clear we have as much control of our dogs off leash as we do on leash, and should not limit owners who have more than two dogs. I certainly would be willing to pay for this privelege (even though it used to be our right that was taken away, as usual, to deal with the smaller percentage of dog owners that didn't have control). Having owners pay for the testing, PROVIDED it increases our off leash priveleges, may be an excellent way to cover the costs of the program moving forward. I'm hoping that with so much talent and creativity available in our community, the old tired approach of the many paying the price for the few will no longer be the ineffective, narrow minded, solution that is adopted moving forward.

Mary **Eldred**

Comment: OSMP Correspondence:
Tens of thousands of people who pay taxes in Boulder and Boulder County have dogs. Those dogs are well cared-for and well-behaved as a group. The intolerance that the "Star Chamber of OSMP" has exhibited harkens to a fascistic approach to government, even to the extent of something like where and how we walk our dogs.
Are there problems? Very occasionally, yes. Do those problems represent the majority? NO!

Part of the reason I got dogs for the first time in my life, when I moved to Boulder 5 years ago, was because of the Green Tag program- I thought "Wow - finally a local government that represents the people and their need for humane treatment of pets". Finally, a place that understands the needs of dogs to run, play, sniff and lead good lives as family members.

Silly me for letting go of my cynicism, believing that this supposed liberal, progressive open local government actually listens to the tax payers who fund it. After working for 20 years in the nation's capital I had become cynical and jaded. I guess I should have stayed that way, given the intransigent unfairness applied to dog owners and their dogs recently here.

The Coot Lake issue is a perfect example of what is wrong with the way OSMP/Parks and Rec are going about the Green Tag program unraveling. When I spoke in February with Matt Claussen in the parking lot there, about the fact that there are signs indicating no people, but NO signs indicating "NO DOGS ALLOWED BEYOND SIGN", he shrugged and said people should know it means dogs, too. Unless something is stated out right, how are people to know what the parameters are for their use of the parks?
I suggested also that the wire fencing that had recently been placed in between the buck and rail, had barely been in place when the City Council had its meeting about 'violations' of dogs going into the wetlands there and considered completely closing off the north/east shore of the pond. Really? Come on people! Let's be pragmatic and open and help people understand the limitations they're up against (AND the reasons for them) before condemning them and their dogs for not obeying invisible and un-posted rules.
(An Aside: I respect the Audubon Society's concern for the harrier and other nesting species that used to use Coot Lake. Clearly, dogs off-leash are not the cause of the absence of the birds, and there was never any science behind their claim that it was dogs scaring off the birds in the first place. At the same time, why on Earth are so many Russian olives still allowed to grow there? This is NOT a rhetorical question!
The time, money and attention spent on the one or two renegade dogs violating the SVprogram there, would be much better spent on removing invasive non-native species, and replacing them with native welcoming species helping to improve the native ecosystem for those birds. Then maybe we'd get somewhere with seeing bird species return to these open spaces.)

I also suggested to Matt Claussen that signage be posted about WHY certain areas have closures, and about the interesting species those closures are protecting. Matt didn't embrace that idea, either. I've noticed people reading the pretty little poetry signs, so obviously they're ripe for more substantive information to read on their walks around that pond. Americans on the whole as a culture, are consensus-builders and value teamwork and tolerance. If you tell people why something is closed off, people will generally go "Oh, I see!" and comply. If you imperiously state a closure with no reason, people will feel belittled and unimportant in the decision and be more likely to violate that law. It's psychology put to good use. The National Park Service understands this, as do many other municipalities. Let's help educate the people of Boulder in their use of public spaces.

Most dog owners are compliant with the laws of this county and city. I have only seen one dog in the thousands of trips we've made to Coot Lake, without a green tag and behaving badly. I stopped and talked to the owners, and told them about the necessity of the program and the benefits of having it for dogs, people and wildlife. They were from Denver, and had only stopped on their way home from a trip up

north. The vast majority of open space users with dogs are compliant, and actually appreciate and care about the privilege of having the Site and Voice program available. Please don't change that!!!

When you, as a government, educate your residents, and actively include them in decisionmaking processes, you create a stronger, more informed, thinking electorate (oh, oh, can't have that, can we?) Only good things can come of that. When you are complicit with ignorance, are imperious in your actions, and refuse to work with the will and needs the people; when you pointedly ignore the voices of the people, the wellbeing of the greater living community suffers, and people revolt. Many of you reading this are privileged Boulder employees, with good jobs, good benefits and a sense of security, so, why take to heart the opinions and thoughts of the taxpayers and other users of these special, and valued, places? Because it's your JOB and your DUTY to heed the voices of those who pay you. No ivory towers here, please.

I respectfully request that you reconsider the draconian changes proposed to the GT program. With more input and more interaction, not less, we'll create an even better community with understanding, tolerance and acceptance. Isn't that what Boulder is supposedly about?

Jeannene **Ems**

Comment: Great Program. Our dog loves it!

Ann **Endicott**

Comment: In favor of the Tag Program staying as is. Not happy with the way dog encounters are being counted. I have not experienced any problems.

Tracey **English**

Comment: Can you please clarify what is going on between the South Shanahan Trail and the Shanahan Ranch in terms of trails and/or can you direct me to a map on line that helps identify this? I am a green tag holder and have been since its inception. It seems to me that all that has happened in the time since you started that program is that you have closed more trails than ever before to dogs. AND the closures are confusing. I think there should be maps readily available both on line and in print (with all of the fees generated by the tags) which help those of us with dogs know where we can and can't go -- and to track how many closures you are making. Where, by the way, are there NEW trails for dogs off leash?

Thank you for your time and help on this, Tracey English

Margaret **Estabrooks**

Comment: OSMP Correspondence:
Dear OSMP,
I am very proud of the OSMP Green Tag program as it exists today, and view it as highly successful at educating owners on how off-leash dogs are to behave. I have observed huge positive strides in the dog behaviors since this program has come into effect. I've been walking my dogs in Boulder county for more than 10 years, in a combination of on and off-leash areas. I walk my dogs off-leash only in approved areas after ample training to assure compliance with the recall and other commands. I gently confront other dog walkers when they are not in compliance (like more than 2 dogs off-leash at once). I'm concerned that rules/current changes are being considered that are quite restrictive and unrealistic. Examples include the trail corridor (dogs required to be within 10 to 20 feet of owner at all times), or the no dog-to-dog contact (such as sniffing, play/chase or greetings). As a registered voter in Boulder county, please consider my input in your future decisions. I am available as a volunteer to help monitor/assist in training/enforcement.

Sincerely,
Margaret Estabrooks

Susan B **Evans**

Comment: OSMP Correspondence:
I first walked up the Shanahan Ridge trail - if you could call it a trail back then - in 1971, and have seen many changes since then. One I see extremely rarely is any dog acting aggressively or out of control. I walk three dogs, so keep one on leash. He would usually be on leash anyway because he is afraid of other dogs, so can act aggressively if another dog comes running up to him. I let owners with off-leash dogs know this. and find that without exception they are understanding and call their dogs back. The handlers I see up here are amazingly conscientious.

The I can count on one hand the number of times I have seen a dog running loose through the woods or have seen an owner with three dogs off-leash.

Susan Evans

Jim **Fairbairn**

Comment: I think your voice and sight program is a huge succes and a excellent program.

Thanks

jim

Ashley **Farrington**

Comment: comment: I'm writing in regard to the possible Green tag program changes and the survey report you posted on your website namely the section on your recommended objectives to decrease conflict involving dogs. Conflict is defined as a serious disagreement or argument a clash collision fight strife battle struggle and is generally accepted as having negative connotations.

I use the OSMP Valley trail at Sanitas every day (I live at the base of the trail) and have never once seen an interaction between dogs that could be considered a conflict so your use of the term is an absurd overstatement. I am grateful that the Green Tag program exists and my dog and I adhere to the rules as do almost all other folks I see out on the trail.

I have witnessed a few human conflicts so I don't know if you have any suggestions for keeping the humans under control?

I have also witnessed quite a few wildlife incidents and actually had a coyote brazenly approach me and my dog ON the trail (not slightly off the trail or near the trail but ON the trail) it was much too close for comfort. In general this year i've noticed that the coyote's have become much more aggressive so I don't know if you have any suggestions for keeping the wildlife under better control?

Listen I understand that it is a privilege to utilize the OSMP properties but don't punish those of us who adhere to the rules and don't use terms like conflict that absolutely don't apply to the situation.

Anne and Mich Fenerty

Comment: The green tag program is ineffective in keeping dogs from jumping on you She is only friendly is not what it was meant to accomplish. It is also disgusting to see packages of dog droppings packages on our lovely the trails.

Anne **Fenerty**

Comment: Thanks for keeping me informed about the OSMP meeting. We appreciate the trails you maintain and for which we paid over our 41 years in Boulder. We hike at least 2 or 3 times a week. The green tag program doesn't work because it makes owners feel that they can keep dogs off leash on all the trails and leave the poop for others to pick up. Some of the trails we hike on in other jurisdictions impose fines for violations and enforce them. I think it would help if you had Rangers enforce our regulations at least on popular trails on the weekends. Anne Fenerty

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Jamie **Ferguson**

Comment: I find dog owners on trails near Boulder to be FAR more considerate than anywhere else. I usually hike with one of my dogs leashed, and I'm constantly being asked if the other person should leash their dog. I pull my dogs to the side of the trail when people pass us. I constantly see good, responsible dog and guardian behavior.

I'm against the proposed dog restrictions, and in favor of the existing program which is working exceedingly well.

Carolyn Foster

Comment: To Whom it May Concern,

I have been a dedicated member of this community, a passionate outdoorswoman and have been walking my dogs in open space since the day I was born. My dogs are cherished members of my family and deserve the right to sniff and run rather than being chained to my pace. They are well trained, well-behaved animals and members of this community, as are so many others. Over the years, I have been astounded by the degree to which my and their freedoms have been slashed. I plead with you to listen to the perspective of the loving dog owners of this community as you consider new policies. This is what I have heard over the years.

The whisper campaign started almost a year ago. "The green tag program is not working. We have looked at the green tag monitoring data and the 'experimental' green tag (GT) program is just not working." Open Space staff spent months last fall talking about just how bad they thought the GT program was and how the small improvement in 2007 evaporated in 2010. They kept repeating over and over that the GT Program had no effect on dog or dog guardian behavior.

Finally, staff released the monitoring data and the secret monitoring protocol in December. For the first time, FIDOS had access to what staff had been recording since 2006 and the source of the whisper campaign.

The protocol document and results were stunning on two levels. On one level, the sheer breadth of the criteria staff chose to call a problem or conflict is simply amazing. Not only are dogs held to a higher standard, but dogs cannot be dogs and they can't touch anything, including each other.

On another level, the way staff chose to summarize and present the results is downright creative. Staff utilized the smallest sample size possible. The smaller the sample the higher the percent of non-compliance. Staff then extrapolated the results for all green tag dogs. In my opinion, it appears that this analysis method was chosen to build the case to support the pre-release buzz of, "The green tag program is not working".

In 1996, Open Space staff unilaterally banned all off-leash dogs on open space. The citizens of Boulder rejected that ban at the polls. OSMP was foiled in their attempt to eliminate off-leash dogs. Tactics changed and we are now in the 16th year of constant, incremental off-leash dog limitations, restrictions and bans. I consider this process as death by a thousand small cuts.

Despite buying thousands of acres in the past 10 years, I can't remember a new voice and sight trail, can you? The culture of the open space department has evolved into one of closing land, restricting access and punitive measures. The management direction has evolved to one of the fewer the number of visitors, the better. Given this change, would you vote for an open space tax now?

Be aware, this Green tag review, the attempt to create a 10' rule, aka the trail corridor, and the overall 'carrying capacity' of open space are aimed directly at dog guardians. The Open Space department wants to gut the green tag Voice and Sight program and significantly reduce the number of off-leash dogs.

I have discussed the green tag monitoring items at length with some staff. They believe that 50% of the

Voice and Sight dogs do not belong on open space. It's an astounding number. Are half of the dogs that you see each and every day a problem? I don't think so.

How can our open space department come to such a conclusion? Easy, they see 'problems' everywhere. Open space staff have created this fantasy dog behavior ideal where everywhere they look, they see violations. Here are a few examples of the secret monitoring protocol.

- See those dogs over there? They are (play) chasing each other in a circle. Behavior Problem! (conflict)

- In the parking lot, a border collie was barking. (more than 2 barks) . . while his owners carried a Frisbee. (conflict)

- Another dog 'touched' me with their nose while sniffing. (conflict)

And there's more:

- A dog brushed me. Problem!

-I saw a guardian say the dog's name to get his attention, and while the dog looked back, he didn't come. Obviously the guardian has no recall ability. Violation!

(Had the guardian given a recall command, the dog likely would have come.)

- A dog shook off water and the water touched me (or my dog). Problem!

That's right. Staff are calling items such as these 'Green Tag Violations' and are offering this study as proof that the GT program is not working. When FIDOS questions these so-called green tag behaviors and way the results are reported, staff seem to be offended by our questions. Is it really surprising that people are following the actual rules they know about vs. the staff preferred behaviors that are not public?

I can only conclude that as people work to improve their dogs, there are more well behaved dogs, and so the standards are raised. Our Open Space department is set on defining a fantasy dog behavior ideal as the standard for the green tag program. Oh, and one of the proposed program improvement is one strike and you're out. You could lose your green tag for not carrying a leash.

We can only lose more access in the future with this unreachable behavior standard.

Our dogs will not be able to run with a 10 or 20 foot trail corridor restriction because it's a defacto leash.
No sniffing, no running, no play-chasing, no barking, no touching
The upcoming carrying capacity 'discussion' will continue the practice of restricting more visitors who hike on open space.

I believe in this community. We are by far, the largest group on open space. The large majority of us consider our dogs to be cherished members of our families. And, just as we want what's best for the health and wellbeing of the people in our families and communities, we want the same for our canine companions. Dogs need off-leash opportunities to run, to sniff and to explore their surroundings.

Take this into account!

Sincerely,

Carolyn Foster

Kathryn Foster

Comment: OSMP Correspondence:
OSMP Directors, Staff, and Concerned Citizens:

I am writing regarding the Green Tag program and the criteria used for assessing dog behavior "problems" on open space. It has come to my attention that the following natural dog behaviors have been classified as "problems" or "conflicts":

* dogs touching each other
* dogs chasing each other in a circle
* dogs barking
* dogs sniffing other dogs or people

Dog guardians in Boulder are held to a very high standard as "guardians" rather than "owners" (which is what they would be called most anywhere else in the country). Most dog "guardians" assume the mantle happily, as our dogs are cherished members of our families. I find it ironic that while Boulder holds us legally responsible,as "guardians", to provide a high standard of care for our dogs, Boulder OSMP is slowly but surely chipping away at our ability to provide this high standard of care. Catch 22. The reality is that dogs NEED to run off leash. They NEED to run, sniff, explore, and run some more. A small minority of dogs misbehave. Shall we punish the entire community of dogs and dog guardians for the transgressions of a few? Is it not perhaps time, finally, to have a discussion about TOLERANCE on open space?

Minor interactions which some might find less than optimal or slightly unpleasant are being labelled incorrectly as "conflicts." Is it reasonable for non-dog people to expect an experience free from dogs on open space? What about people who walk and don't like to see people running because it disturbs the tranquility of their walk? Or bird watchers who want complete stillness and silence? Or mountain bikers who just want some access to the trails? And horse owners- why don't they have to pick up their horse poop? It is just as unpleasant for dog guardians to encounter dog haters on open space as it is for dog haters to encounter dogs. OSMP has unfairly targeted and maligned dogs. OSMP should spend more time managing expectations and less time creating unreasonable, unenforceable restrictions.

Our open space is a shared resource and the members of this community need to learn to share it. Inevitably, each and every one of us will encounter something we consider less than ideal during our forays into open space. We each have preferences, biases, priorities. But we must never forget that we own this land together. We have paid for it with our tax dollars. I can assure you those tax burdens were not approved solely for the purpose of purchasing land to look at. The majority of this community agreed to burden themselves with this tax because they love the outdoors and want to use and enjoy it. Sustainably, yes. But access is essential. And this means access for all. The solution is not to increasingly restrict use and access, but to expand awareness and tolerance for all types of uses, and for sustainable use behaviors. And where uses are incompatible, perhaps to have specific days for certain types of uses, from mountain biking to bird watching.

Respectfully,

Kathryn Randolph Foster

Lili **Francklyn**

Comment: I think people should be able to have tag protector pouches on their dogs. My tags get lost if they are dangling. If the ranger asks, it only takes an instant to get it out. Requiring that the tag be "visible"is unnecessary.

Lili **Francklyn**

Comment: I read the evaluation report and there is one surprisingly illogical and incorrect conclusion involving dog excrement. It's the statistic about people not picking up bags of dog doo. Many people will leave a bag at the beginning of the trail if there is no waste bin - and pick it up on the way back 45 minutes later. The OSMP report implies that leaving a bag on the trail means it is left forever. This is ridiculous because if it were true, the trails would be lined with plastic bags full of dog doo. This is obviously not the case, and I believe the OSMP did nothing to correct for this behavior, the DELAYED pickup. Sorry if I missed something, I just skimmed this long report. I am slightly aghast at the money we are spending on this trivial topic, considering areas of real human need in the city and county. To me this obsession with the negative impact of dogs really seems like overkill and I personally am going to advocate for reduced funding for OSMP because of it.

Michelle **Fredson**

Comment: OSMP Correspondence:
Dogs need off-leash opportunities to run, to sniff and to explore . Are there really all these problems with our dogs in Open Space?

I hope you will reconsider your position on dog regulation in open space. I have walked my dogs daily in open space, sometimes twice daily, for the last thirty-three years and I have never encountered a problem. I don't understand why OSMP devotes so much time to a non-existent problem when there are so many other issues that could be addressed.

Tony **gannaway**

Comment: Green Tag tests.

The feeling is that these are expensive to administer but I propose a GOLD
tag which could be tested for and people would prove they have really trained dogs. In return the dogs would be allowed in other parts of the OS that are now banned to dogs. If the dog and owner are ""Gold Standard"" there would be no probability of them interfering with wildlife. I believe people would be willing to pay extra for the extra access.

Elizabeth **Garfield**

Comment: OSMP Correspondence:
I support keeping open space OPEN to off-leash dogs. I love to walk with my dogs in the early morning when it's still cool enough to get out there. It's a great way to start the day. We all (my two dogs and I) enjoy the freedom that comes with nothing tied to us, and nothing jerking at us. We can walk unfettered, notice nature, hear the sounds like this morning -- young hawks leaving the nest for probably the first time -- and they had a lot to say about that!

I am a 120 poun, 56 year old woman. I would not be comfortable walking without my dogs alone on open space, and I would not be happy if I had to have them on a hand-held leash. It's just too hard and too distracting to have two 90 pound dogs on leashes, when all I want to do is enjoy a walk in the quiet morning. Please, please, no more restrictions.

I never met an open space tax I didn't like; I've voted for all of them. I've never run into problems with my dogs or with other dogs. The worst hike I ever had was one where some little children were screaming and shreiking and running all over the place. I put up with it. It's why we keep open space OPEN. For all.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Garfield

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jill **gelbspan**

Comment: I am opposed to many of the suggestions for modifying v/s tag program. I feel a test to acquire a green tag puts an undue burden on the osmp staff when budget cuts abound. I am also opposed to residency requirements because other counties don't charge us to use their dog-friendly land. I see so few problems with the green tag program that i am very saddened osmp staff is waiting their time and attention on this matter while the burdens of our wildfires and the cycling race seem much more important and relevant in keeping osmp lands safe.

Selwyn **Goldstein**

Comment: OSMP Correspondence:
Please do not change your green tag voice & sight control program in Boulders open space. It is great and I use it almost every day. 99% of users use the program in complete compliance. What a wonderful service.

Selwyn Goldstein

Kristi **Graham**

Comment: Very thorough evaluation, thank you. Both of my dogs are tagged and we hike in open space (usually mesa trail south, marshall mesa, or dry creek) twice a week. Two things to consider:
1) folks walking leashed dogs (especially dogs on a retractable lead) need to do a better job of not allowing their dog to approach my dogs when they are heeling or in a sit. this is often where conflict occurs- dogs can be more aggressive when they're leashed.
2) lots of places in boulder county to hike without dogs or with leashed dogs. it always baffles me as to why people who want nothing to do with dogs hike on 'voice and sight' control trails. it's like going to chuckie cheese when you don't have kids.

thanks for the 'voice and sight' program- it's one of my favorite things about living in boulder county (i've been here for 24 years!)

James **Graves**

Comment: I am opposed to items:

2) Modify consequences for violations (Lose Your Tag after one violation and require testing to reinstate privileges; increased fines; community service)

3) Require testing/demonstration of dog and guardian to comply with Tag Program requirements

4) Only allow voice and sight control in trail corridors
(V/S dogs must be within 10'-20' of you at all times)

I have a Green Tag but have only used the trails a few times in 5 years because I walk with a cane and it is physically difficult for me but I can't tell you how ticked off I am by some of these proposals.

I have been a real estate owner and tax payer since 1988. I always vote yes on Green Space issues.

But it seems to me you want all dogs off the trails and one way of doing this is to make the experience either impossible or unpleasant since Numbers 2 & 4 seem designed to drive dogs off. Two is draconian and four is just an absurd requirement. Most of us keep our dogs close for safety reasons but the 10 to 20 foot requirement is just silly.

I also note that if you drive dogs off the trail it will dramatically increase use of the few dog parks in the city and they are poorly maintained and in terrible shape.

For example two of the three dog parks at Foothills have no source of drinking water, they have no grass, no shade in the summer, no wind or rain protection and maintenance is so poor that holes are developing all over the park that become swamps when it rains or snow melts. East Boulder is virtually unusable since the improvements over there include that horrible gravel which gets in the dogs fur and in summer retains heat so well it is like going into an oven. Then the beach area in front of the water has this large rocks which is dangerous for the dogs and the slope is such that you can not see your dogs from the seating areas.

I promise you if you over reach and pass 2-3-4 the next time a money issue comes up for Green Space I will automatically be voting no and encouraging every person I can reach to vote no.

If the problem is human complaints then why don't you go with a system where some trails on some days are set out for dogs and their guardians only.

If this is just bureaucratic busy body work I think you folks need to rethink your purpose and place in the system.

Jim **Graves**

Comment: OSMP Correspondence:
Dogs need off-leash opportunities to run, to sniff and to explore. Are there really all these problems with our dogs in Open Space?

I read Sue DeRoses editorial and I agree with it almost all aspects and find your rather draconian concepts of proper dog behavior to be something straight out of Franz Kafka. Dogs are no more perfect than humans. From time to time they get a bit rambunctious but as long as they are in general under control and not mean or aggressive, I just dont see the problem. Shaking water? Sniffing? Wandering a few yards off the trail? Barking?

Give me a break!

I have been a Boulder resident since 1979 and a property-tax payer since 1987. Since 2007 I have had a dog and a green tag but because I am handicapped dont use the open space trails much; maybe three or four times per year. I did use Coot Lake because it was flat enough for me to negotiate but quit using it because of the restrictions this year.

I use the city Bark Parks, all of which are in dreadful shape with inadequate water, grass, landscaping, shelter and shade.

In effect I pay one heck of a lot in taxesproperty taxes and the high sales taxes which include the Green Space provisions which I have voted for every single timebut I get precious little back in the way of facilities or consideration.

For years I have watched as the OSMP has gone further and further into the tank for those people who want to restrict Open Space use and I find the whole thing appalling.

Pass the ridiculous regulations you are considering to drive the dogs off the open space and I guarantee you I will work my tail out off to get a ballot measure passed overturning your decision, and work really hard to get some sort of citizen controlincluding dog ownersover the OSMP and until that is done will work my tail off to defeat every single Green Space tax provision until it is done.

Jim Graves

Crystal **Gray**

Comment: Only City of Boulder residents should be able to get a green tag.
Dogs should be required to have proof of a rabies shot if they are on Open Space and it should be mandatory if a dog gets a green tag.
If the Council wants to expand the green tag program to non-city residents their town should have a 'voice and sight' program for their trails to qualify.
Only Boulder County residents should qualify for exemptions to the city only green tags.
In the 42 years I have had dogs in Boulder I have seen more non-residents use Boulder Open Space and this, in my opinion, has led to more restrictions on resident's dogs.
We should remove restrictions on dogs off leash, for city residents only, going up to Green Mountain, Bear Peak etc.
Thanks for doing this evaluation.

Allison **Gray**

Comment: OSMP Correspondence:
Dogs need off-leash opportunities to run, to sniff and to explore. Are there really all these problems with our dogs in Open Space?

Dear OSMP,

Since the 1970s, I've enjoyed Open Space - most often with a dog - first a Collie, then a Brittany and now a Labrador. They have all been 80-lb. working breeds with ranging instincts. For the past several years it's been obvious that people who dislike dogs are creating OSMP policy. I would like to suggest that OSMP canine policy makers open discussions with Humane Society of Boulder Valley (HSBV) management and /or professional dog trainers. Perhaps dialogue between HSBV and OSMP could produce a better result than the Green Tag program. HSBV has excellent puppy training classes that could possibly be part of a revised Green Tag program. Perhaps there could be brief, voluntary training classes at trailheads on weekends. Dogs love to learn, it's people who need the education. Perhaps people could be encouraged to use silent whistles. Let's use more creativity and less law to solve perceived problems.

I've always supported Open Space at the polls. I may have to reconsider further tax increases or extensions.

Allison Gray,
for Rufie, Chico and Santo

Kris **Green**

Comment: OSMP Correspondence:
Greetings!

Thank you for all you do to keep Boulder County beautiful. We have something very special here. As a 17 year resident, I never knew how much beauty there is until I got my dog 6 short years ago. Together he and I have discovered wonderful places with beauty beyond imagining. While he sniffs around where the other dogs have been I have gotten to see deer and fox and other amazing creatures. What a blessing my dog has been to open my eyes to open space and the beauty all around us.

Before my dog I was housebound and depressed. Since my dog I am now out and about, engaged with the world (and other dog lovers) and getting rave reviews of my photography as I always carry a camera when I walk. I am so much healthier and happier thanks to the opportunity to explore with my dog! There is so much diversity and beauty right here in Boulder County. So much I would never have seen without my dog to get me out of the house. Nor would I have felt safe walking those trails alone, a single woman in the wilderness alone. But with my dog I feel safe! Hes there for me showing me the way sharing his enthusiasm and joy alerting me to others on the trails and being one of Gods creatures enjoying Gods natural beauty. Wow.

Please do not legislate rules that take away my freedom to walk with my dog on open space trails paid for with my tax dollars! Please do not legislate behaviors that go against the very nature of dogs (sniffing, shaking water off, looking at sounds, people, other animals, and sniffing the ground or others to name a few). Most dogs on the trails are good dogs. MOST. There are always a few bad HUMANS who do not train their dogs appropriately. Go ahead and make examples of those dogs but dont penalize those of us who are following the laws with our dogs and enjoying our open space. Someone wise once said that if you pass enough laws you make everyone a criminal. We are pretty darn close to that right now. Penalizing dogs for being dogs is not right. Please stop.

Thank you for taking time to read this. Thank you for serving our community. Please remember that community includes a lot of law-abiding dog lovers and women who want to continue to enjoy the beauty Boulder County has to offer and feel safe, too.

Sincerely,

- Kris (an avid dog walker and frequent poop fairy-because I WANT my dog to be welcome so I pick up after the inconsiderate ones. Again, the HUMANS, not the dogs.)

Barbara **Greenwald**

Comment: Only City of Boulder residents should be able to get a green tag.
Dogs should be required to have proof of a rabies shot if they are on Open Space and it should be mandatory if a dog gets a green tag.
If the Council wants to expand the green tag program to non-city residents their town should have a 'voice and sight' program for their trails to qualify.
Only Boulder County residents should qualify for exemptions to the city only green tags.
In the 20 years I have had dogs in Boulder I have seen more non-residents use Boulder Open Space and this, in my opinion, has led to more restrictions on resident's dogs.
We should remove restrictions on dogs off leash, for city residents only, going up to Green Mountain, Bear Peak etc.

Jonathan **Greenwald**

Comment: I am a dog ""guardian"" and I think the program is great. I mostly walk on one of the Sanitas trails and almost 100% of time have a good experience with my dog as well as encounters with other dogs. Most folks pay attention to their dog and seem to manage them well.

I do have some concerns:
1. I strongly believe that if a person does not live in Boulder City they should pay much more for the green tag. I think $60.00 per year or two is not unreasonable. We have no idea what these folks are contributing to our open space tax. In any case they should be paying 3-4 times more than Boulder residents.
2. I have no issue with a more stringent but reasonable testing/training for dogs.
3. I have no issue with a periodic renewal of the green tag.
4. Again, my biggest concern is that many folks our using our open space off leach trails without paying their fair share.

Megan **Greising**

Comment: comment: To Whom It May Concern:
I am a Denver resident currently participating in the Boulder OSMP Voice and Sight program with my dog Kaaya. I wanted to address my concerns regarding the recent email I received regarding the concerns about this program and possible modifications to this program.
1) I would fully support a more stringent screening/testing for dogs/handlers prior to being issued a Voice and Sight tag. I support dog-handler physical testing/training and/or online testing. I also support renewal testing to ensure those enrolled continue to be compliant with the program.

2) As a Denver resident I am adamently opposed to restricting Voice and Sight tags to only Boulder county residents. This puts a limit on the interaction between surrounding counties/cities and also puts a dividing line between Boulder and surrounding areas. I would be willing to pay more for a non-resident tag but do not feel that restricting Boulder OSMP Voice and Sight to Boulder residents is a necessary nor appropriate restriction. Your Voice and Sight regulations are one of the main reasons I choose to hike frequently in Boulder with my dog. I also contribute to the local economy with meals and other retail expenses upon my trips to the Boulder area when I use OSMP land.

I will attempt to make the Open House to participate further in this discussion. I would like the city and county of Boulder to know how much Kaaya and I value and enjoy OSMP as well as this particular program and would be so sad to have it unavailable due to my city of residency.
website-comment:
city: Denver

Mary **Griffin**

Comment: It would be nice if the link to order an additional tag actually worked!

Al **Gunter**

Comment: make it simpler. OS is clearly biased against dogs. I don't have a dog and have no plans to get one but I resent your use of your values to restrict a significant portion of our citizens for no good reasons. Eco totalitarian management is still totalitarian and against the principles and laws that have made our country successful.
The problems with dogs are small and best handled with enforcement. We don't close hwy 36 because some people drive drunk. We enforce the law to deal with the people who break it we don't punish those who obey it. You are penalizing well trained dogs and their guardians.
People have a choice where to spend there dollars which is where you get your funds. I am aware of several dog owners who go over the hill to spend there money. Don't turn it in to a movement by your biased management.

Elizabeth Guthrie

Comment: I was shocked and saddened when I found out that there was a possibility that green tag rules would be changing. I do not agree with most of the new rules that would be implemented. I have been a green tag owner for 4 years now and have used OSMP trails for nearly 12 years. Not once, and I am being truthful here, have I encountered a problem with dogs on the trails.

OSMP is meant to be managed....not a taker away of rights. We as a community own this land and use this land on a regular basis, when managing land, you need to adhere to what the people want. The people DO NOT want changes to be made to green tag use. I head about the surveyed and I heard that he was very push to get the results for the survey that he wanted. Why not ask all OSMP and green tag users what they want, I guarantee it won't be the rules that you are trying to implement. I don't think your surveyed was fair with his pushy ways. You should have sent a postcard to green tag owners and gotten responses that way... Not by the way you did.

OSMP is land to be used by all... Do you think it is realistic to have a dog 10 feet in front of you at all times? This is their land too! When can a dog be a dog and sniff the air and ground. Dogs might as well be leashed with the rules that you are trying to Inforce, as every dog out there will be breaking the new rules... They just aren't realistic!

I am sure there are a ""select few"" who have problems with dogs on the trails, but there are a select few people who have a problem with everything in life. You will never be able to make those people happy. Why punish all the great dog and dog owners out there who are doing just fine with things they way they are?

Changing rules won't make a difference... You need a different approach.... What about limiting certain trails? Some can be just for everyone, including dogs, and some, as they are now, should be leash only, or no dogs. Then people who don't want to be around dogs can go to those tells, and people who want to have dogs can go to other trails.

Do the right thing when making the decision about the new green tag rules, be fair, and truthful... Read peoples comments and take them seriously... This is our land, and we do not want changes to be made. We are happy with things the way they are!,,,

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Ryan **Guthrie**

Comment: I do not agree with they green tag changes that are being suggested. They are unrealistic, and not what the people who use the lad want. I have never whitenessed problems out on the trails and I have lived here my entire life. I got a dog 4 years ago, and I still never run into any problems on the trails. If they do occur, they must rare.

Your job is to manage our land... Not take our land rights away from us, the people who pay for the land. The land needs to be used fairly, and the rules you are trying to implement is not making the land use fair for dog owners. This is our land and we should be able to use it at will and how we want to use it.

Being out in open space with my dog is a joyous time for myself and my dog, we can walk, run, and bike together... Never do we encounter problems.. Most people with dogs are kind and courteous of others with and without dogs... This is a community we live in and people are actually polite and think of one another... There is always the exception, but those people are not the majority.

Keep our open space useable for all! Your new rules just won't work and I disagree with them!

Elizabeth Guthrie

Comment: OSMP Correspondence:
Dogs need off-leash opportunities to run, to sniff and to explore . Are there really all these problems with our dogs in Open Space?

I am outraged at "finding out" Green Tag changes are in the works. Had I known about this earlier, I would have been at every meeting I possibly could to have fought against this idea in the hopes to stop what is going on.

Why was the survey kept a secret for so long? That sounds fishy to me...

These are considered problems?

-A dog brushed me? That is a problem? Hello, you are out in nature, what do you expect? Anything can brush you from plants, snakes, bugs, lots of things. If you are afraid to be touched by something in nature, you probably should be out there. Also, most dogs do not just rub up on people who are hiking... I have never been rubbed up against by another dog on the trail.

-A dog shook and water sprayed me. That is a problem? Dogs shake, it is uncontrollable. What if it starts to rain? Should we stop all rain because someone might get wet? Also, it is so hot... a little water feels good. That is what people say to me if my dog shakes and water gets on them... of course I always apologize if it happens... and it rarely does, but again it is a dog and dogs shake.

-A dog barks more than twice - Problem? It's a dog! That is how they communicate. Are we going to fine people for having loud kids out in open space for repeating the same word more than twice? No because they are people and people communicate by talking... so do dogs. This is not a problem and can not be controlled. A dog is going to bark and their is nothing you can do about it. They bark when they are happy... my dog barks excitedly when I hold a stick for him to fetch. There is nothing wrong with this... he is just telling me he is excited. This is an unrealistic expectation.

-A dog chases another dog for play - Problem? Seriously? As long as people aren't around or being bothered this is not a problem. We are outdoors were people and animals are having fun together. If my dog wants to chase his friend, I let him... again as long as it isn't around people. If it is around people, I would not let it happen.

Let's be realistic and fair when it comes to the expectations that you are wanting dog owners to comply by. The above that are seen as "problems" are not problems at all. They are life. If you want to make changes, find something that works for everyone and doesn't just affect dog any dogs owners... please be fair and just.

Elizabeth Guthrie

Nils W **Halverson**

Comment: The green tag program is working. The proposed changes treat dogs and their owners as if they are convicts on probation. For example, the one-strike-you're-out provision leaves no flexibility for owners and dogs with good intentions to modify their behavior. Second, only allowing voice and sight control within trail corridors and requiring dogs to be within 10-20 ft of owners is effectively an invisible tight leash. Dogs and their owners need places where the dogs have freedom to exercise and socialize with other dogs and owners. Third, the purported ""violations"" reported by the green tag study program are ridiculous. Are dogs really not allowed to touch one another (i.e. behave like dogs)? And where is this list of 'violations' and expected behavior communicated effectively to the public?

Open space is intended to be enjoyed by the public, including dogs and their owners. These new restrictions will have the effect of curtailing Boulder residents from enjoying the open space they love. Why do you consider dogs and their owners effectively unwelcome in open space? We are not the enemy, we are tax-paying constituents that fund this open space, and one of the largest groups that use open space. Please do not impose further restriction/regulation on the already successful green tag program.

Kim **Haroche**

Comment: OSMP Correspondence:
Dogs need off-leash opportunities to run, to sniff and to explore . Are there really all these problems with our dogs in Open Space?

I think OSMP is exaggerating a non existent problem Look for the real issues Consult a real dog trainer such as Nana Will who originally instituted BVHumane society training program and helps many doggie day care facilities with behavior management Boulder needs great trails for dogs to be free and well behaved DOGS not robot dogs

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Scott **Harper**

Comment: The program is effective and does not need additional bureaucracy. Testing for VS tags would be an administrative nightmare. With 30,000 dogs in the city, the potential delays and costs would be prohibitive. And for what?

Back in the sixties when the Open Space program went to te voters there was a wonderful poster showing silhouettes holding hands before the Flatirons, a man, a woman, and two children. In the foreground was a dog, running free. What happened to that dream? When did dogs become the enemy?

Scott Harper

David **Hawes**

Comment: A high proportion of dog owners believe they are exercising voice control, when the fact of the matter is that their attempts at meaningful control are completely ineffective.

Is there some way to create a training and certification process? Or to have two types of voice control areas?

Cathy **Hazouri**

Comment: OSMP Correspondence:
I am appalled at the conduct of the poll used to eliminate or restrict dogs in the few open space area in which they are allowed. It appears to me that the poll was done in a way to prove the conclusion OSMP wanted.

My older dog, now deceased, loved going off leash and meeting other dogs. It was delightful for him and for me. Moreover, I was happy that the open space taxes I have paid gave this benefit to me and my pal.

I am not much of a hiker, so this benefit allows me to get some exercise and appreciate the open space bought with my taxes.

The dog I have adopted recently is not ready for a green tag. He isn't great at walking on leash and needs obedience training. I am hopeful that when he is ready to go off leash in open space, that there will still be open space that is open for me and him.

If you haven't already guessed, I oppose the OSMP's attempts to restrict off leash access to open space.

BTW, I think bicycles do much more damage to trails and behave more offensively than the dogs and their owners I have encountered.

Cathryn L. Hazouri, Boulder resident for 35 years

Michelle **Heath**

Comment: OSMP Correspondence:
I am completely disheartened by the potential that I may not be able to let my dog run free on open space land, that MY tax dollars support. The conflicts that you say are outrageous and have NO MERIT. Lets be serious and fair. There are way TOO many GOOD, HONEST, RESPONSIBLE Dog owners/guardians to have this taken away because of your lack of understanding and judgement. This is America the land of the FREE!! Let our dogs run free and be happy. I ask you how would you always like to be on a leash and never allowed to enjoy the freedom you deserve. There are plenty of non dog areas where those that do not like dogs can go. This is about being equal. There are plenty of trails/openspace that we should be able to share. So I highly urge you to rethink your consideration and give Dogs and their owners a place to be where happiness and freedom exist!

Sincerely,
Michelle Heath

Rosemary **Hegarty**

Comment: I oppose the changes that OSMP is suggestion for voice and sight. The evaluation actually showed that current compliance was in the high 90%. What other program is that successful. I
What other group is being required to get tested to use the trails? Are the equistrian groups being tested for safety with their horses around people or dogs or other horses? Are the bicyclist being tested on their safety skills with people, children, dogs? I have had numerous negative encounters with mountain bikers. Those incidents far outway any incident I have had with dog owners. Are these groups being required to pay for thier use of the trails?

I have paid my taxes, voted for this open space and do not agree with these policy changes. OSMP needs to stop their antidog policies when no dog problems exsist. Do not waste my tax dollars. Do not create problems that don't exsist and ignore problems like mountain bikers on single track trails that make the trail experience truely miserable for everyone on foot.

Beth **Heller**

Comment: I am a huge fan of the OSMP Tag Program. My dog and I hike 3-4 times per week in Boulder, particularly at Senitas. It is our favorite, mostly because of our ability to have him off leash. I usually make a day out of it, at least having lunch and doing a little shopping on Pearl Street. I have never seen a problem with OSMP, and would be deeply saddened at the thought of it being changed.

Thanks for listening!

Regina **Hendrickson-E**

Comment: I am writing in response to the City of Boulder Open Space Voice and Sight Control Study and subsequent program review. The results of the study are lacking in critical information. I am disappointed in the reaction to the study, given that the information presented indicates that 85% of all subjects in the observation area had no incidence with other users on the trails.

The Open Space recommendations basically allow the 15% non compliant users to control open space enjoyment for the 85% of users that have taken the time to ensure compliance. Of that 15%, it is even more unclear how many are Boulder City residents (which pay for the open space that is being ""observed""), which residents are county residents, and how many are out of County.

Allowing the 15% of non compliant users to determine the future voice and sight program, is a tragedy at best, and shows a complete lack of common sense. The question should be is the 15% non compliant group a big enough concern to change the program? If so, how will the 15% be controlled and how will the 15% pay for the control required? Will we treat non compliant Boulder residents the same as non residents?

The option of having all green tag participants complete some type of testing is a good option. Should testing be a requirement moving forward, I believe we should have the right to walk our dogs off leash within all areas, as the majority of us have taken the time to train our dogs to be part of our homes and the community. Successful testing, or some type of additional testing at an additional cost, would make it clear that we have as much control of our dogs off leash as we do on leash.
I certainly would be willing to pay for this privilege (even though this was yet another basic right that was taken away by a small percentage of irresponsible dog owners). Having dog owners pay for the testing and testing levels, PROVIDED it increases our off leash privileges, may be an excellent way to cover the costs of the program moving forward.

The narrow perspective, of the overwhelming majority of responsible residents paying for the minority that donât adhere to established guidelines, is a tired and ineffective approach. As a business owner, and over 20 year voting resident, I have enjoyed the open space that my taxes have paid for. I sincerely hope that I am able to continue to enjoy open space for years to come. My continued support of the program will be dependent upon the actions that the Open Space program and City Council take moving forward.

Elynne **Hering**

Comment: There will always be people who could benefit others by being more courteous. Fotunately, they are in the minority....but as the saying goes...""One bad apple can spoil the entire bushel."" In my 30 plus years of living and hiking in Boulder (with and without dogs) I have encountered very few of them. (Some of them have been speeding bike riders).

Please do not overregulate us. Please so not turn us into a punitive police state. I oppose these reccomendations"" "" Losing tags after one violation."" Everyone has bad days. ""Require testing."" Are we grown ups? And we are already dealing with limitations....parking lot leash laws, the loss of favorite hiking trails...so please don't impose a limitation to trail corridors and distance regulations.

We are a society. We are a community. Please treat those of us who live here with repect for having good judgement and regard for our fellow man (and dog).

Judy **Hetkowski**

Comment: dogs on open space

To the City Council:

I am writing this letter to urge you to keep open space rules as they are, and to not limit our access with dogs. We do not mind having to take a physical test with our dogs (to continue with the green tag) to prove they are able to come when called, not approach other dogs and people without permission, and not chase wildlife.

We have lived in Boulder since 1995. One BIG consideration for moving here was the opportunity to enjoy open space. The ONLY way we enjoy open space is to share it with our canine companions -- running or walking. We are responsible, picking up (each and every time) and we follow the other "Green Tag" rules. Our dogs are trained to an electronic collar and although we rarely have to employ the collars, they do give us 100% control of our dogs -- especially in situations where there are other dogs, wildlife and people.

Please do not punish those of us who follow the rules by limiting our open space and the enjoyment we share there with our dogs. We pay our taxes for open space and vote for money for open space each and every time it comes up on the ballot. We only want to enjoy it with our dogs, giving them the opportunity to run and swim.

Thank you for your consideration.

Judy

Mary **Hiatt**

Comment: OSMP Correspondence:
Dear OSMP member,

Please keep the green tag program as is. If you need to raise the fees some, okay. Please don't just make up violations so that you can fine dog owners who are enjoying being out with their dogs. I have always voted for more open space on the assumption that this will increase places I can walk with my dog. I am beginning to reconsider this view.

Below is a copy of an email I sent to two of the trustees after a board meetings in March of this year. Two dogs sniffing each other while their owners chat is a violation?!? Please . . .

Sincerely,
--Mary Hiatt, D.V.M.

_____

Dear (Trustee),

I am a veterinarian who attended your Boulder meeting last night. I would like to recommend that you contact the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment before deciding on OSMP statutes regarding rabies.

A good contact would be the director of the Division of Disease Control and Environmental Epidemiology, at (303) 692-2700 or http://www.cdphe.state.co.us/dc/ . I believe the director is now Lisa Miller, M.D., M.S.P.H., as John Pape retired last year.

Educating open space users, with leashed or unleashed dogs, as to existing rabies inoculation and identification laws would be an important and viable goal.

As a taxpayer, it does NOT seem reasonable for the City of Boulder to spend tens of thousands of dollars attempting to duplicate data sets regarding proof of rabies vaccine. It also appears to me to set the city up for tremendous legal liability if we make any attempt to say that we certify any dogs, green-tagged or otherwise, as currently vaccinated. Even city tags, while evidence that the dog was vaccinated at least once, are not proof that the vaccine is current.

The responsibility for certifying that the dog's vaccine is current needs to stay with the guardian. A check box requiring the owner to attest that the dog is currently vaccinated for rabies should be sufficient and reasonably cost effective. Education as to existing state and local law, with a mention of potential consequences if misrepresentation occurs, could be included in a scroll-down box that has to be checked before the application can proceed. If a bite does happen, a ranger can and should get as much identifying information as possible on the dog, the guardian, and the legal owner(s). This should then be provided to the Department of Public Health, and, if necessary, to the police.

This is Boulder. There will be leashed and unleashed dogs, many with responsible owners, and some without, no matter what the law is. Let us encourage and educate! Please do not let us attempt to micro-manage and harass the majority of people who are attempting to simultaneously exercise themselves, their dogs, their responsibilities as dog guardians, and their responsibilities as citizens. Undercover plain-clothes rangers being required to determine the actual distance the dog was from its person? Please, no. Let the police do police work. Even Boulder still has human-on-human murders.

Let us let the average Boulderite enjoy their time outdoors, with their buddies, two-legged or four. We all

know we can never placate everyone. Some people are only happy when they are offended. Let us have "dog ambassadors" who will help educate the public. I have personally seen a great improvement in the ability and willingness of the average person to keep their dog from approaching when I am walking my small dog on a leash, since the inception of the wonderful green tag program.

I applaud you for serving as a Trustee of Open Space, and thank you for working to keep the outstanding green-tag program. One of my dogs has represented the state of Colorado at the AKC National Agility Championships on three occasions, and I love to be able to brag about Boulder.

Please do not institute a 10' rule. This would abolish: ball playing; training a new or young dog to come from a distance; and would prevent two people from calling a dog between them for exercise and/or training. If anyone has witnessed my son and I doing this, it is possible that they think they have seen a dog chasing a child. We do stop and have the dog sit if anyone approaches, and we do only do it where there is good visibility.

To return to the rabies inoculation issue; if the City of Boulder, in our collective wisdom, does decide to micro-manage, then you do also need to be aware of the differences between anti-rabies inoculation deferments and rabies titers, such as the OIE-FAVN blood test. Not to mention what to do about all those visitors from other jurisdictions. I hope we avoid getting too deep in this one. The mechanisms are all in place elsewhere.

Best of wishes to you and the other Trustees. If I my be of any further assistance, or if you do make a list of potential dog ambassadors, please count me in.

Sincerely,
Mary Hiatt, D.V.M.

Tim **Hogan**

Comment: I am writing to offer some comments to the Voice and Sight Tag Program Evaluation process. Companion dogs and their owners have various impacts on Open Space and Mountain Parks, extending the radius of human recreational influence across the landscape, and accounting for the greatest source of visitor conflict on OSMP lands, with more than twice as many enforcement actions than for all other infractions combined.

The first of these tends to emphasize the ecological impacts of domestic dogs, while the second stresses conflicts with other users. The two overlap on the ground and over time, but in general the greatest visitor conflict occurs in more ecologically compromised habitats, and the greater ecological impacts take place in areas such as HCAs that maintain a higher degree of ecological integrity. These latter impacts range from obvious things like chasing animals and trampling stream banks, to less obvious effects that occur with the marking and scenting of domestic dogs across an olfactory landscape inhabited by a range of wild animals.

While some of us tend to focus our concern on the ecological impacts, the greater concern for most users is visitor conflict. It has become commonplace for dog advocates to cite the low percentage of negligent dog owners, insinuating that most guardians are responsible. Even if this were true, given the many hundreds of thousands of dog-use-days that occur on OSMP lands, the absolute number of infractions is enormous.

As one who has logged thousands of miles upon these public lands, I can only offer the observations that in my experience voice-and-sight control is largely ignored by a significant percentage of dog owners. In most instances people are talking with a friend, running, listening to their headphones, and doing what people do. For them it is a pleasant experience, and an opportunity to get out with their dog(s) for some exercise. These are the very situations where their animals defecate sight-unseen, confronts other users, chase animals, and do what dogs do. To be frank, voice-and-sight control is a charade, and only the most conscientious of guardians abide by its strictures. These impacts are exacerbated because most visitor use occurs relatively close to trailheads and parking lots, so the occasion for encounters is concentrated within relatively short distances from access points. Conflict and the glut of feces, bagged and otherwise, has increased dramatically in recent year as population growth has spread across OSMP lands.

The administration and costs of the current canine regulations are significant, and the implementation of many of the proposed revisions is likely to be even more so. We are faced with a plethora of dogs from across the metro area, but mostly from Boulder, due to our history of leniency on this particular use. The city â council, city manager, board, and department â should implement a mandatory leash law for all dog owners on OSMP lands just as they do throughout the rest of town.

Such a change would be controversial and an untold hue-and-cry would arise, but the result, over time, would be a straightforward rule absent of ambiguity, and with considerable economic savings for the city. Like other changes in regulations that have sparked controversy â recycling, smoking in public places, bike lanes on city streets â we will come to ask, âwhat took us so long?â. Such a rule would be consistent with most other public lands in the Front Range. It would immediately nudge the management of these lands toward a more natural situation, and away from the carnival gymnasiums they are in danger of becoming.

Finally, it would begin to restore some of the qualities these public lands should hold as part of our local and national heritage: places where citizens can go for some quiet and a measure of solitude, places where the comings and goings of the season can be witnessed in peace, places where some of natureâs

Tim **Hogan**

Comment: City Council,

During the past two weeks I have witnessed dogs on the upper Greenman Trail (a “no dogs trail”), unleashed dogs in Fern Canyon (a “dogs on leash trail”), and owners watching their dogs defecate near the top of Sanitas and along the Enchanted Mesa trails without picking it up. My wife who is more regular in her morning walks than the sunrise, and regularly witnesses wildlife being chased by dogs in the Sanitas Valley, is currently laid up with a wrenched knee after being forced off a trail by a runner and her dog a week ago. I note these incidents not because they are extraordinary, but because they are all too common.

About thirty percent of the five million annual visitors to the Boulder Open Space and Mountain Parks come with one or more dogs, resulting in hundreds of thousands of dog visits per year. Such behavior as cited above is chronic and its impacts are cumulative. Visitor conflict and ecological insults result.

My wife and I have lived in Boulder for over thirty years. Having worked through most of the Compendium of Voice and Sight Tag Program Evaluation Comments, reading innumerable comments from dog owners stating they have never seen any problem whatsoever with dogs and wildlife or other visitors, it’s as if we live in alternative worlds. Reading other comments from owners who claim they moved to Boulder so they can run their unleashed dogs confirm my worse fears.

I sincerely hope council will honor its statutory responsibility to uphold the city charter, and strengthen ordinances protecting these public lands in perpetuity for the reasons they were preserved in the first place.

Thank you for your consideration …

Tim Hogan

Karen Hollweg

Comment: Steve, et. al.,
I believe this Evaluation needs to be an objective report based on evidence. Evidence grounds claims/assertions and prevents the perception that statements are subjective or arbitrary.

My recommendations below identify places in which I encourage OSMP to more clearly state the evidence or to enhance the text by providing evidence or clearly state what is known or not known.
I hope you will find them helpful in revising this April Draft.

1. At the outset of this report, it is very important to accurately describe the OSMP visitor population with regard to dog use – and to state clearly what the evidence shows.

p. 8 states – "Recent surveys suggest that many OSMP visitors… take advantage of the off-leash dog walking opportunities on OSMP lands."
Suggested revision based on the evidence: Recent surveys suggest that a miniority of OSMP visitors… take advantage of the off-leash dog walking opportunities on OSMP lands. And most of those are non-Boulder residents (57% of tags are registered to addresses outside of Boulder city limits, p.8).
Here's my math work: 33% with dogs(Vaske) X 59% have walked a dog off-leash (2010 survey) = 19% OR even if the Vaske number is now significantly higher 50% X 59% = 30%

p.9 evidence: "44 percent [of all users] felt off leash dogs made their experience less pleasant."
Suggested addition based on the evidence: What the evidence tells us is that a minority (somewhere between 19 and 30%) of OSMP users with off-leash dogs are detracting from the enjoyment of OSMP lands for 44% of the users (2010 survey data).
Additional data on page 9 shows that: A strong majority of Boulder residents think three things should be done about this situation:
* enforce existing regulations more vigorously (66 %),
* certify dog obedience before allowing voice and sight control (65%), and
* establish more dogs on-leash areas (59%) (National Research Center 2010).

NOTE: Several statements on p 7-8 are extremely biased and focus on dog owners at the exclusion of the majority of Boulder OSMP users who choose to enjoy OSMP visits without dogs off-leash. For example, Benefits of V&S for the minority of OSMP users should be balanced with a parallel list of Detriments of V&S to the majority of Boulder residents who do not participate in the Tag Program and state that it makes their OSMP visits less pleasant, who gain health benefits by walking/active exercise, etc.

2. The data provided in the Evaluation shows that over 7,500 hours (~3.5 FTEs) and $117,800 was spent to implement the Tag Program and that compliance objectives for voice control and incidences of conflicts involving dogs were not achieved. In fact, approximately 73% of all violations issued by rangers were dog-related (with the most issued for V&S and off-leash violations and lack of V&S tag).
Based on this evidence, the following statements are inconceivable:
p.26 (and the corresponding entries in the chart on p.23) – 1st bullet claims that info session, skills demo, &/or skills class "improves conditions for a majority of the objectives … and may translate to improved compliance and reduction of conflict." Since increased awareness and knowledge from 2006 – 10 did NOT translate to achievement of conflict goals and voice control compliance, either evidence to bolster this claim is needed OR the claims need to be appropriately reduced to "a few of the objectives" and "may improve". Also, see 3rd bullet from the last: "Increased awareness of V&S requirements may improve compliance" is certainly not supported by the 2006-10 evidence. What is the basis for this claim?
p. 27 – 4th bullets claims "improved awareness" – but with 90%+ awareness, what is the chance of a benefit – i.e. improved awareness? Also, 5th bullet: "unless this strategy is implemented with others"… claims it is "less likely" however, the data and the next sentence indicate that it is "unlikely" to change

current conditions. And further, in the 5th bullet: Since the "lack of change in current conditions may concern community members seeking improved compliance and less conflict [AND THAT IS 44% OF USERS] why is the community acceptability not red?
p.28 – Evidence from 2006-10 does not support the claims in the 2nd bullets: that "education, by creating greater awareness, may modestly reduce undesirable dog behavior" and what evidence supports the claim re managing dog behaviors in the 3rd bullet? These 2 bulleted statements seem to be at odds with the statement in the 4th, 6th, 8th and 10th bullets – which are supported by the data (i.e., past staff-intensive efforts have not proven successful in improving compliance and reducing conflict). In addition, given the statement describing the majority of the Boulder community in the 10th bullet (based on 2010 survey), it seems that the green indication for Community Acceptability is incorrect.
p.34 – "…likely to have the most effective benefit to improve conditions for … compliance… * education and outreach" (is listed in the third bullet – there is no evidence to support this claim)

3. Claims re costs fail to state or show that some costs will/can be off-set by income. Revenue/income statements need to be added. For example:
p. 24 – add an approximation of additional income from dog registrations for ### dogs that are not now registered.
p. 25 – Add Costs may be offset by a fee collected from applicants (based on some estimated fee level)
p. 26 – Costs may be offset by a fee (does the city offer any classes that are free of fees? … I'm thinking of rec center classes with fees.)
p. 28 – Add: Cost will depend on the degree to which program is staff-intensive vs. volunteer/peer-intensive.
p. 31 – Needs to be made clear that if there's a decrease in participation, there is BOTH a decrease in revenue and a decrease in the administrative costs.
p. 32 – How about a reality check/comparables in the 6th bullet: what is the likely cost of registration fee renewal in comparison with other costs of dog ownership (e.g., dog food, vet bills, vaccination, dog license, etc)?

4. On page 4 – an explanation is needed re Which of the strategies called for in the VMP have been implemented and, if not, why in the last 7 years some of the strategies have not been implemented.

5. On page 16 -- #9. Revise to make clear which segments of the community are being referred to. For example: Maintain a program that Is effective and appreciated by the 19 to 30% of users who take dogs off-leash (see my source for these #s above) AND by the majority of OSMP users who do not walk dogs off-leash.

6. On p. 20, Evaluation of options, two important considerations have been overlooked and are not included in the evaluation factors:
a. Under Feasibility: * Have the strategies been shown to work with dog-visitors over the last 6 years? … or been proven to work elsewhere, as cited in the literature? [We need to know whether there is any evidence to indicate a likely chance of success or whether there is no basis for assuming the strategies will lead to a difference.]
b. Under Community Acceptability: * Strategies preferred by Boulder residents (in 2010 survey or other data sources): enforce vigorously, certify for V&S, more on-leash areas.

7. On p. 25, For this option, I don't see a statement that it "contributes to multiple objectives & addresses multiple problem areas," but I certainly believe that statement is as valid for this option as it is for others where it is listed. Also, the 2010 survey needs to be cited as the source of evidence provided here.

8. On p. 29, references need to be cited to support the 1st and 2nd bullets – or are those just someone's subjective opinion? Also, 6th bullet: based on what evidence; where? And when? Also, 7th bullet: Increasing consequences for violations… HAS BEEN supported broadly by BOULDER RESIDENTS… AND GIVE

EVIDENCE – e.g. cite the 2010 survey &/or others that are relevant. Also, what is the evidence for the statement: "Community support (?what part of the community?) would be more favorable if combined…"?

9. On p. 31, 2nd bullet instead of "communities, I think you are referring to GOVERNMENTAL ENTITIES, aren't you? Also, to make the 4th bullet parallel to previous references to this issue (e.g. in the parking doc), revise to state: Rangers will need access to e-databases in the field (as with databases with vehicle license plates) to be able to validate if a guardian is a City of Boulder or Boulder County resident. And finally, 6th bullet, describe the scale of the problem: e.g. … will cause significant concerns to the XX% of current participants who are not residents" [is it 19%?]

Karen S. Hollweg

Michael Horwith

Comment: First, thank you OSMP for your efforts and for providing this comment forum. Please add my name to the list of Boulder residents who want all Open Space trails available for the V&S program. While I am a dog owner, I understand this is a privilege, not a right. As such, I would also encourage much stricter and more active enforcement of the V&S rules. Annoying pet owners should lose the privileges. However, many of us have dogs whose behavior far surpass the V&S rules, and we take seriously the regulations regarding controlling and cleaning up after our pets. Instead of adding more regulations (which will probably be broken by the same pet owners who break the current regulations) please focus on enforcement of the current regulations. Please do not punish the responsible dog owners!

Michael Horwith

Comment: comment: Enforcement. Especially of cleanup laws!!!

Heather Hosterman

Comment: Thanks for holding the open house on the voice and sight tag evaluation. One of the outcomes of the evaluation is that not all dog owner's properly dispose of their dog's excrement. I would like to recommend that the city put dog poop bags at trail heads. This would be similar to many other towns in the state (i.e. Lyons, Aspen, etc.). There are receptacles for residents to recycle their bags (i.e. newpaper bags, bread bags, etc.). But these bags often have holes in them. I think the percentage of people that do not pick up their dog's excrement would be greatly reduced if the city provided good bags at the trail heads. Given the concern expressed by the community, the benefits associated with providing these bags far outweights the cost.

Richard Howard

Comment: I left you a message about out of control dogs with green tag and Steve Armstead called me back to acknowledge my concerns.
The Green Tag is a failure! There is no testing by you of dogs. -Last Sunday (1/29) I had a dog with a green tag try to attack my dog (on lead) then almost knocked over my wife. When we asked the owners to please put your dog on lead they answered we don't have to put our dog on lead he has a green tag.
You cave in to the fido's crowd. We are dog lovers and owners but you desperately need a leash law in OSPM to make the trails/walks safe for all residents.

Jennifer **Hudson**

Comment: The thoroughness of the evaluation conducted by the staff is admirable. I really think you need to include in the evaluation a look at if the program itself, which allowed off leash dogs on so many of the trails within the system, and determine if that has had a positive impact on those parks. Without the analysis to determine if the program itself has negatively impacted open space, the analysis of the program is not complete. One impact is the affect of off leash dogs on wildlife. Another impact is the affect of off leash dogs on other visitors to the park. There are a large number of our parks that have now been given over completely to those with dogs and that seems to be against the point of open space. As a non dog person, I agree with the scenarios that were used to determine conflict and I can personally say that my conflicts have not been reduced during the time of the program. Since so many parks now allow off leash dogs, my conflicts have actually increased. Although we have an 86% compliance with a dog having a green tag, if the dog still causing a conflict with other visitors and wildlife, that is not a success. I believe that addition compliance could be achieved with more impact for non compliance. The program could pay for itself with a fine for one strike and a loss of privilege. A class could be attended with the guardian and dog to prove ability and regain privilege.

Priya **Huffman**

Comment: I have and still do love the program. it provides some extra income to the city as well as providing some assurances for those of us with green tagged dogs that others who bear the same tag can be expected to be well enough behaved and not a nuisance .

The only other improvement might be occasional on site testing by the rangers, and so discourage those who buy the tags but don't train their dogs

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Jim **Illg**

Comment: See attached FIDOS position paper

Steve and Dean,

Our position paper addressing the nine Program Enhancement Options included in the April 2012 Voice and Sight Tag Program Evaluation report is attached.

Best Regards,

-Jim

Mimi **Ito**

Comment: OSMP Correspondence:
Dogs need off-leash opportunities to run, to sniff and to explore . Are there really all these problems with our dogs in Open Space?

I'm writing to give my experience with dogs in Open Space. In 24 years of walking and hiking on trails with and without dogs, I've encountered almost no problems with dogs. The only two I can remember were two instances of aggressive dogs who probably would have been a problem to me or my dogs, but they were both leashed and therefore did not present a problem. When I've had a dog, we participated in the green tag program and I trained my dog. No one ever complained to me about my dog, and I never had any problem with any unleashed dog. My husband who often used the trails without me has had the same experience. The only problem he ever had was threatening coyotes once. It seems we've had no real problems for 24 years and we've used quite a few trails around Boulder, mostly the ones where dogs are allowed off leash. Please do not limit the experience people and dogs can have. Dogs, like any other animals, like to be able to run free. There are no major problems, it would seem. Please allow us to enjoy what Boulder is known for.

Mimi Ito

Andrea **Jason**

Comment: OSMP Correspondence:
To Whom it May Concern - My dog, Juni, and the other members of our household have been a green tag family for several years. Prior to applying for our green tag, we enrolled Juni and ourselves in a trail training class with Gigi Moss, a local dog trainer so that we would all be properly respectful of the rules on open space trails. We take our commitment to the green tag program very seriously. As Juni ages, she is less willing to walk after dark or even during the day while on leash. But she still frolics like a happy (and well behaved) puppy when she is off leash. We often walk on the Bobolink trail, the Dry Creek trail and at Coot Lake, all places where dogs have access to water so that they can still be out on these hot days.

We took Juni to some dog parks when she was younger. These experiences were not always wonderful. Juni is extremely submissive and often spent the whole time on her back rolling over for more aggressive dogs who rarely listened when their owners called to them. But on the trails, our experience has been much different. I have rarely, if ever, encountered a dog or dog guardian on the trails who was not well behaved and conscientious about their dog's behavior. Does a puppy occasionally jump up on me with muddy paws? Yes, rarely, but it does happen. But what a small price to pay for the opportunity for our dogs to be joyful members of the Boulder community. Do our children occasionally misbehave and have a conflict at the playground with another child? Yes, and these are teaching and learning opportunities for them. Please don't whittle away the thing that makes our dogs (and us) the most happy - the opportunity to be together in nature!

Sincerely,

Andrea Jason (Andi)
Juniper Simon's guardian

Jennifer Johnson

Comment: I believe that the survey itself is a sham, and its results are worse. Anyone with even passing knowledge of statistics would tell you that a 7% response rate to a survey provides utterly insignificant results. The responses of the silent 93% are unknown and unknowable and surely unrepresentative. It is irrational (and politically irresponsible) to base any actions on such a survey.

Then there's the survey design and the definitions of conflict. When I asked a trainer at the Humane Society about getting my dog to meet the green tag requirements, they said that they were unattainable except by professional trainers who spent at least two years training their dogs--and even then 100% compliance wasn't realistic.

This leads me to conclude that the real purpose of the survey design was to ""prove"" that dogs and dog guardians are bad citizens and shouldn't be allowed on our trails.

The criteria for ""conflict""used in the survey, which included the sight of a ""poop bag"" defy common sense. Poop bags might qualify as eyesores but they don't constitute conflict; in many localities, in fact, they would be seen as a marker of good citizenship compared to not picking up poop at all. In Boulder I see people leave poop bags in order not to carry them on the entire hike, and then pick them up as they leave. Personally I think this is okay, but I can see both sides. But it's not conflict.

Similarly, the idea that unleashed dogs greeting each other by sniffing butts constitutes conflict is equivalent to saying that humans making eye contact on the trail is conflict. It's different when it comes to leashed dogs. When I see a leashed dog I call mine to my side just as I do when I see young children, older people, or anyone who doesn't want contact.

I think that a 10-20 foot requirement is unnecessarily burdensome. I go to Coot Lake in order to let my dog exercise and swim by retrieving on the dock side of the lake, and throw his toy much farther than that.

On the other hand, I fully support testing dogs' basic obedience to a ""return"" command, with testing at the dog guardian's expense, in order to earn green tags. That's a great idea.

I hope that the deck isn't as stacked against dogs and dog lovers as it seems to be, and that you don't use absurdly bad data in making your decisions.

Jennifer Johnson

Comment: OSMP Correspondence:
Lets be honest. The debate about whether dogs belong Open Space has no basis in science or data. The conflict is between the influence and values of the OS staff and their supporters and those of us who love to walk the trails with well-trained dogs. So please, lets throw out the junk science data OS has presented as evidence that the Green Tag program isn't working.
Id guess that many of the Open Space staff have science degrees, or are at least familiar with the scientific method. Surely they know that they have created and presented a survey of dog behavior on Open Space that is wildly unsound.
Im trained to use evidence-based medicine standards to analyze the validity of studies. But it doesn't take training to see the obvious bias in the survey design.

Confirmation bias in study design: The survey was designed to have a desired outcome. The criteria for "conflict behavior" were not based on reasonable expectations of dog behavior. As one Humane Society trainer told me when I asked how to train my dog to avoid the Open Space definition of conflict, "it's impossible--dogs do not behave and cannot be trained to behave to meet their criteria. Surely at least some of the OS staff are skilled at understanding and even measuring animal behavior in order to decide when to close trails to protect other species. The conclusion that this bias was intentional is hard to avoid.

Inadequate sample size: In order to have valid data you have to have a baseline of the incidence of the outcome youre measuring and then design the study to have a sample size large enough to create statistically significant results.
Selection bias in choice of raters: If the monitors were either volunteers or staff they were not proper raters. Unless they were hired and trained by an independent entity that had no interest in the outcome, the data they collected is invalid. You see what you look for. Were the raters equally interested in counting the number of times no conflict occurred?
Potentially biased sponsorship of the survey: When a drug company pays for, designs and executes a study we look more closely at it. Its not proof that the study isnt valid. But we know that OS has been trying to ban dogs on OS since at least 1996, when their efforts were defeated by a vote of citizens. This is a major red flag.
Boulder and its government and staff are far too scientifically savvy to accept the results of this junk science "survey" as evidence. So lets forget the bogus survey. The decision will be based on the power, influence and values. I think the people spoke in 1996. Power to the people.
My bias: What's my dog in this fight? The only thing that motivates my autistic child to get outside and exercise is the chance to take our dog on OS trails, to throw the ball into the open side of the Coot Lake, and to share his water bottle and the view at the top of the Sanitas Valley road. The longest hike he ever does is the Tenderfoot Trail from Realization Point, where he loves to cross the cattle grate. Keeping the dog on leash is far too tedious for such distances. The ability to take our dog on the few OS trails available to us is a potent motivation to get moving outside and an important health benefit. I hope that's of some value to you as it is to me.
Jennifer Peters Johnson

Robert **Jordan**

Comment: I have been walking in open space areas almost every day for the last 17 years. I go with a dog and in all of this time I have witnessed no conflicts involving dogs. A dog sniffing or playing is not a conflict. Play and conflict are, in fact, opposite things. My dog brings beauty and joy to people, not conflict. As I walk along, strangers come up to me and say things like ""what a beautiful dog, what kind is it?"" Or ""I've never seen markings like that, where did you get her?"" Dogs are mans best friend and a lot of fun. Everyone is picking up the poop, just check out the stinky trash bins. Leave well enough alone.

Linda Jourgensen

Comment: FOBOSâ mission is to protect the open space resource and enhance the visitor experience. Our comments are written with these overriding goals in mind.

Management of dogs on open space is one of our greatest challenges. The Charter purposes for open space do not include walking of dogs. They do provide for passive recreation by visitors, and OSMP policy has been to allow visitors to be accompanied by dogs so long as they comply with specified rules. These rules require that dogs be on leash on certain trails, exclude dogs from a few especially high value habitat areas, and allow dogs off leash under âvoice and sightâ control on the great majority of trails. Voice and sight control was instituted as a compromise so that dogs could continue to be on most of open space without leashes so long as they were under control. Voice and sight control

means the dogs you are responsible for must be within your sight and under your verbal command at all times, regardless of distractions which can occur during a walk. If your dog cannot immediately obey verbal command, your dog must remain on-leash. Also, keep in mind that dogs under voice and sight control are not allowed to charge, chase or display aggression towards other people or dogs or chase, harass, or disturb wildlife and livestock.

Dogs on open space under voice and sight control must have a green tag signifying that the guardian can manage the dog to meet these requirements.

Now, with more than 15 years of experience it is clear the program is not working as intended. People are obtaining green tags despite the lack of adequate training of their dogs to be able to maintain adequate control of the dogâs behavior. They are disregarding the requirement to keep their dog in sight. They are unable to manage their dog to avoid the dog sometimes chasing wildlife. They are unable to manage their dogs to ensure that other hikers are not uncontrollably approached by the dog.

Users of City of Boulder Open Space are extremely fortunate to be able to be accompanied by their dogs and exceptionally fortunate to be allowed to have their dogs off leash on most of the trails. Dog guardians have a responsibility to manage their dogs to maintain this unique privilege. Many have not met this responsibility, raising the question whether the voice and sight program should be continued and, if so, in what form.

FOBOS believes that the voice and sight program should continue only if dog guardians meet its requirements. Dogs that are not adequately trained to meet the requirements of the program should either be kept on leash or should stay at home. The documented adverse effects on habitat and wildlife caused by misbehaving dogs demand that the voice and sight standard be maintained as do the documented instances in which hikers have been approached by out-of-control dogs in a manner causing apprehension for safety or even harm.
Ideally, dog guardians would be required to demonstrate to OSMP personnel that their dog is in fact under voice and sight control before they would obtain a green tag. The practical problems with such an approach force us to accept the current system in which the dog guardian simply attests to this control. Because of the substantial degree to which this program is being abused however, we urge an active program of enforcement. Not only should the guardians of offending dogs be penalized, the green tag should be removed. The guardian should be required to demonstrate to OSMP staff that his dog has been sufficiently trained to warrant a tag before it will be reissued.

Moreover, we favor adding the requirement that dogs on voice and sight control stay within the trail corridor. We believe this is a reasonable requirement that will significantly reduce adverse effects on habitat and wildlife.

Finally we support requiring all dogs to have a rabies vaccination and a license.

Many Boulder residents love to walk their dogs on open space. It is one of

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Alison **Kadans**

Comment: Dear OSMP, I cannot figure out why OSMP is considering going to extremes by limitings a dogs access to Open Space, or by having a ridiculous interpretation of conflict on open space. Testing dogs, seriously? You have time and money for this? OSMP is defining conflict as playing and barking. Why? What is the problem? We don't test our drivers on the roads as rigorously as we are scrutinizing dogs and their Guardians. And bad drivers can kill people and destroy lives. But Boulder, and OSMP is going to test dogs to see if they have the right to be on a trail without being confined to a least. Instead of making more and more restrictions how about governing more with the rules that are already in play. It is beginning to feel incredibly restrictive and militant in our beautiful City. It's interesting to me that us "Green Tag holders" didn't show up in better numbers to support our freedom on open space. Perhaps we were all out enjoying the open space, while the uptight and afraid are in meeting halls trying to restrict the freedom of others. They are trying to control their environment to make their world conform into their ideas. We can not control wild fires, we can not control the deer, we can not control coyotes or foxes or bears or mountains lions, but let's control the dogs and their Guardians. What is the impact except for on few people who don't understand canine behavior. People can not enjoy their walk because they might be approached by a dog. Me and the 26,000 other green tag holders will not be enjoying our walks and hikes because of the restrictions that are put on our canine companions. It's sad to me because most of us came to Boulder from other places in the Country. I have been here since 1987 and have enjoyed my life here which is incredibly enhanced by my ability to hike with my dogs. I have one dog who can hike off leash and the other who can not. I know their limitations and can live in Boulder and abide by the Green Tag rules knowing the limitations of each animal. Patrol and control based on the laws that are already in play. Until you have done that you haven't served any of us.

Dawn **Kairns**

Comment: OSMP Correspondence:
I am writing to encourage you to keep the green tag program for dogs on Boulder Open Space, to keep voice and sight command trails and to not impose further restrictions on dogs or on trails that will limit their exercise and exploration needs. Please realize that behaviors like sniffing, running, and play-chasing are normal dog behaviors and not conflict situations. Dogs need off-leash opportunities to run, sniff and explore . Are there really all these problems with our dogs in Open Space? I hike on the Mount Sanitas trails often. I love it when I see dogs chase each other playfully, greet each other (and me) by sniffing, or chase balls and frisbees.

Please send me your list and research of the behavior problems you have encountered with the green tag program. Send me how many problem dogs you have encountered and the total number of green tags you have issued to date.

Thank you,
Dawn Kairns

Jeremiah Kaplan

Comment: OSMP Correspondence:
I've been a resident of Boulder since 1981, and a dog owner since 2000. In that time I've voted for every open space tax proposal, and I pay the tax happily. Boulder's open space is one of our best assets, and the off-leash dog policy has greatly enhanced the lives of me, my family and our dogs.

I've hiked and run most of the open space trails habitually as long as I've lived here. I cannot recall a single serious dog interaction in the years before I became a dog owner. Though my dogs may not stay within a 10 - 20 foot trail corridor, they have not initiated any unwanted interactions with people or other dogs. They come when I call them. I can only remember one interaction in which another dog approached one of my dogs in an aggressive manner. The dogs worked it out, as dogs usually do, and there was no harm done.

I'm sure I have spent more than 200 hours a year for more than 30 years on Boulder's open space trails. Have your dog monitors observed dogs for 6000 hours? I have registered a complaint about dog behavior only once in those 6000 hours.

If the behavioral standard proposed were applied to humans, we would be banned from the Pearl Street Mall, and all the bars in town would be closed. I've observed worse behavior in the supermarket checkout line, and far worse behavior by drivers on highway 36, than I've seen by dogs on the open space trails.

You are also going to create an enforcement nightmare. Do you really propose to hire staff to patrol all of the trails in Boulder open space 365 days a year? Compared to many other pressing environmental and law enforcement needs in Boulder, that would be an enormous waste of money and resources.

Rather than embarking on an expensive and punitive rule-making and enforcement program for a problem which is minimal if it exists at all, why don't you engage all sides of the debate, off-leash advocates as well as cynophobes, in a program of dialogue and education? Recruit and train volunteers to patrol trails similar to what the mountain bike advocates do, and educate users about appropriate control of dogs, training resources, poop clean up, etc. Have volunteer presence at dog parks, pet stores and adoption events as well as at popular trailheads and dog parks. Such an approach would be far more positiver and cost-effective, and would preserve what I'm sure is one of the most popular program of the Open Space and Mountain Parks department. Do it for a year or two, and then reassess if there is actually a problem.

I'd be happy to write or talk more to any of you who might want to listen. Please feel free to reply by email, US mail or telephone.

Sincerely,

Jeremiah Kaplan, MD

Fran **Katnik**

Comment: 1. Glad you have off-leash program- terrific!
2. Require basic vaccination to participate- rabies, etc- the basics;
3. In the training, make sure to include a bit about not leaving dog poop in a bag on the trail, and that any dog owner who sees that could be proactive and pick it up themselves in a good will gesture;
4. Report is way too long. I am not going to read a 30+ report unless it was part of my job. Maybe issue a highlights page for those who want to stay informed and active but need the condensed version;
5. Key Point: MAKE THE GREEN TAG EXPIRE AFTER ONE OR AT MOST TWO YEARS. DON'T CHARGE FOR A RENEWAL, NOR GO TO THE EXPENSE OF MAILING OUT A NEW TAG, BUT DO KEEP ACCESSIBLE RECORDS WHICH SHOW THAT THE LICENSE IS CURRENT OR EXPIRED. YOU CAN THEN HAVE PEOPLE RENEW ONLINE EVERY ONE/TWO YEARS, SO THEY REFRESH THE RULES, ETC., AND SEND A REMINDER TO THE PEOPLE VIA THE EMAIL ON FILE THAT THEY HAVE TO RENEW.

Michael Katz

Comment: See attached document for complete comment: I have comments in two parts:

PART ONE
In May I attended the OSMP open house re. ways of improving the Voice and Sight âgreen tagâ program. A number of ideas are being consideredâsome of which are good. But one proposal would be terrible for dog guardians, and has the potential to deprive many of us of the privilege of recreating with dogs off leash. I refer to the proposal that off leash dogs must remain on a trail âcorridorâ at all times--something not required under current V&S rules except on a couple of off-leash trails that pass through âHabitat Conservation Areasâ (HCAs). (In HCAs humans are also prohibited from off trail travel without a special permit.)

The proposed change might restrict the corridor to as little as 10 feet--or perhaps a more generous 20 feet--from trailâs edge. It would mean that a dog behaving itself and sniffing around a tree within plain view of its guardian only a few yards away would be in violation of the law…period! Nothing moreâno âharassmentâ of wildlife, no failure to come, no offensive behavior of any typeâwould be needed for there to be a violation of the law. Clearly, this proposal alters the literal meaning of the lawâVoice and Sightâand makes it into something very different. And if that were not bad enough, there is talk that only one such âviolationâ would be sufficient to cause the guardianâs loss of the green tag. (The current rule is âthree strikes.â)

From September 2009 to February 2011, I represented the dog community on the Community Collaborative Group (CCG). We spent many hours discussing what areas should be closed to dogs, which trails should allow dogs on-leash only, and where dogs should be allowed off leash under Voice and Sight control. We considered seasonal leashing for benefit of wildlife, and even weekend leashing on one trail. We ultimately came up with a consensus plan that was subsequently adopted unanimously by the City Council, with only minor changes. Adding restricted âcorridorsâ for off leash dogs received very littleâif anyâconsideration within the CCG; and was not one of our recommendations.

There is a complete impracticality to the idea of keeping an off leash dog on a narrow trail corridor at all times. Even Lassie would disappoint. Short of requiring all dogs to be on a leashâwhich a cynic might say is the true goal of OSMP--a guardian would have to constantly give commands to the point where the experience of taking a hike with your dog on open space would be ruined for the dog, the guardian, and probably for many of the visitors who encounter people yelling âCome fella, get away from that tree! I mean, NOW!â Given that three (or even six and a half) yards is not much distance, plus the chance that at any moment you might encounter a ranger who judges that distance differently than you, would create constant uncertainty and anxiety.

I am not a cynic, and believe that OSMPâs proposal stems mainly from a lack of understanding of dog-guardian interaction and why we hike with dogs off leash. And Staff fails to recognize that dogsâno less than oneâs spouse or childâcannot be constantly chided and commanded without them tuning you out! Please drop this unnecessary and misguided restriction!

PART TWO:
On another matter, I believe that the Green Tag program could be VASTLY improved--and conflict GREATLY reduced--by simply changing the manner in which one gets a green tag. Rather than simply allowing anyone/anywhere to watch a video on line and certifying they can/will comply with the law, EVERYONE seeking a green tag should have to attend a one hour session--in person--in which the video is shown and discussed. The video presentation could be made as few as one or two times a month, at a convenient time (perhaps one evening and one weekend day), at OSMP HQ, or the Humane Society, or perhaps the East Boulder Senior Center. (Venues could change.) An

Michael **Katz**

Comment: board-comment: Folks--I left before meeting ended and am unclear whether you had decided to include failure to pick up/remove dog poop as a predicate offense for the new two strikes and out policy. I was also unsure whether you finally decided to exempt a person from the two strike provision if they were actually registered in the Green Tag program but simply failed to have the tag on the dog through inadvertance. I.e. there was talk of a person being able to get that ticket dismissed by showing proof of enrollment. During the discussion I believe you were all under the erroneous impression that a judge had some discretion under the current three strike law (B.R.C. 6-13-5) re. revocation of Green Tag privilege. In fact the current law allows no such discretion as it states in part (a) that upon conviction the right to display any Voice and Sight Control Evidence Tag shall be revoked automatically...
I wanted to bring this to your attention as it may have some bearing on your decision about what to recommend to City Council.
city: Boulder

Eileen **Kay**

Comment: OSMP Correspondence:
Despite buying thousands of acres in the past 10 years, I can't remember a new voice and sight trail, can you? The culture of the open space department has evolved into one of closing land, restricting access and punitive measures. The management direction has evolved to one of the fewer the number of visitors, the better. Given this change, would you vote for an open space tax now? No!!

Be aware, this Green tag review, the attempt to create a 10' rule, aka the trail corridor, and the overall 'carrying capacity' of open space are aimed directly at dog guardians. The Open Space department wants to gut the green tag Voice and Sight program and significantly reduce the number of off-leash dogs.

I have discussed the green tag monitoring items at length with some staff. They believe that 50% of the Voice and Sight dogs do not belong on open space. It's an astounding number. Are half of the dogs that you see each and every day a problem? I don't think so.

How can our open space department come to such a conclusion? Easy, they see 'problems' everywhere. Open space staff have created this fantasy dog behavior ideal where everywhere they look, they see violations. Here are a few examples of the secret monitoring protocol.

- See those dogs over there? They are (play) chasing each other in a circle. Behavior Problem! (conflict)

- In the parking lot, a border collie was barking. (more than 2 barks) . . while his owners carried a Frisbee. (conflict)

- Another dog 'touched' me with their nose while sniffing. (conflict)

And there's more:

- A dog brushed me. Problem!

-I saw a guardian say the dog's name to get his attention, and while the dog looked back, he didn't come. Obviously the guardian has no recall ability. Violation!

(Had the guardian given a recall command, the dog likely would have come.)

- A dog shook off water and the water touched me (or my dog). Problem!

That's right. Staff are calling items such as these 'Green Tag Violations' and are offering this study as proof that the GT program is not working. When FIDOS questions these so-called green tag behaviors and way the results are reported, staff seem to be offended by our questions. Is it really surprising that people are following the actual rules they know about vs. the staff preferred behaviors that are not public?

I can only conclude that as people work to improve their dogs, there are more well behaved dogs, and so the standards are raised. Our Open Space department is set on defining a fantasy dog behavior ideal as the standard for the green tag program. Oh, and one of the proposed program improvement is one strike and you're out. You could lose your green tag for not carrying a leash.

We can only lose more access in the future with this unreachable behavior standard.

* Our dogs will not be able to run with a 10 or 20 foot trail corridor restriction because it's a defacto leash.
* No sniffing, no running, no play-chasing, no barking, no touching

* The upcoming carrying capacity 'discussion' will continue the practice of restricting more visitors who hike on open space.

I believe in this community. We are by far, the largest group on open space. It's up to us as dog guardians to show good stewardship, good manners and to help others. It's up to our community to advocate for off-leash dogs and to be responsible guardians. It's up to us to speak out about the Green Tag program and to make it a model for the county and for the country.<mailto:OSMPcorrespondence@bouldercolorado.gov,info@FIDOS.org>

The large majority of us consider our dogs to be cherished members of our families. And, just as we want what's best for the health and wellbeing of the people in our families and communities, we want the same for our canine companions. Dogs need off-leash opportunities to run, to sniff and to explore their surroundings.

Are there really all these problems with our dogs in Open Space? Have we in Boulder become so intolerant that we can't share our Open Space with dogs, hikers, runners and bird watchers?

Pamela Keel

Comment: I am very discouraged by the negative reports I am hearing regarding dogs on the trails.
I am on the trails almost every day and I have never had a negative experience because of a dog nor their owner. From my experience and the people I talk to, there is a disconnect between what your surveys report and what I and others have experienced.
I believe a few loud voices are drowning out the majority.

Pamela Keel

Comment: OSMP Correspondence:
Dogs need off-leash opportunities to run, to sniff and to explore . Are there really all these problems with our dogs in Open Space?

I have lived here for 13 years and I will not vote for Open Space tax if you continue to whittle down the Green Tag program in the direction of this current proposal.

Dogs are not a problem. BE OPEN with your data gathering techniques, including your sample sizes. I am really upset about this and will do whatever is required to expose your agenda.

Sincerely,

Pamela Keel

Carol **Keeley**

Comment: We're happy to comply with the program as is. Our dog is extremely well-trained and responsive and we cherish our hikes. We also believe it's irresponsible as a dog owner and a nature lover to have a dog who isn't well-trained. But it seems obvious that OSMP has set a goal of restricting off-leash dogs and harassing dog owners disproportionately. We bought a home in Boulder precisely so we could enjoy OS with our dog and support OSMP through considerable taxes. The majority of hikers we see have dogs and I've never had a negative encounter with a dog in OS (unlike dog parks). As a woman, I feel much safer hiking or running alone with my dog and you are consistently eroding my choices. Many of the proposed changes seem punitive, as does most of this program. Obviously, you'll do as you please. But don't be surprised if people like us stop voting to support OSMP with taxes or otherwise. Dog owners are the majority of OSMP users and Boulder County tax payers. We're just less strident and activist than those who are anti-dog.

Erica **Kennon**

Comment: OSMP Correspondence:
Dogs need off-leash opportunities to run, to sniff and to explore . Are there really all these problems with our dogs in Open Space?

Thank you,

Erica Kennon

Erica **Kennon**

Comment: please don't change the current rules.

Terrie **Kirkpatrick**

Comment: I just read the monitoring report from 12/16/11. I think the best way to help change the deplorably low percentage of dog owners who clean up after their pet is to add more trash cans. Most people I have talked to do not mind cleaning up after their pet, but carrying that "little baggie" for a mile or 2 while you're walking or running is uncomfortable and inconvenient. There is always the risk that the bag will break open or end up having a small hole and making a mess. When you go to put your dogs back on leash because some crazy dogs are coming or something, it is difficult to manage 2 dogs and a full bag or 2. I realize it would be more cost up front and an ongoing cost to keep up, but I think the trails and the environment would be much cleaner. Maybe you could do a trial of this in one area and see if there is improvement.

Susie **Kirlin**

Comment: OSMP Correspondence:
Dogs need off-leash opportunities to run, to sniff and to explore . Are there really all these problems with our dogs in Open Space?

We have lived and hiked these trails for over thirty years, always with our dog or dogs and have never had a problem. Please reconsider these unrealistic expectations of how a dog is suppose to behave. I feel OSMP is listening to a few people who have an anti-dog agenda, as well as anti-bike and anti-people. There have never been problems in our opinion and we are on open space, several days a week for over 33 years. By the way, NO ONE from Open Space has ever asked for my opinion. They never offered to hand a survey form out to me. Although, twice now, I have had to go up to the person with the forms and personally request one to fill out. It appeared they only wanted to talk to the folks who came without their dog.

Best regards,

Susie Kirlin

Steve **Kirschner**

Comment: I thoroughly support a revision of the Voice and Sight Tag Program to include a requirement that tag recipients be able to actually demonstrate voice and sight control of the dog. My wife has been bitten by an off-leash dog with a Voice and Sight tag. Too many people currently abuse the lax requirements of the tag program. In an ideal world, dog owners would be able to more accurately assess their own capability to control their dogs and their dogs' ability to respond to commands off leash. In that world, the current tag program would work well. Unfortunately, as they say, this is why we can't have nice things.

Gretchen **Kondylis**

Comment: I agree with Fido's opposition to the points stated. While living alone and working, it is such a pleasure to be able to walk and hike on the designated trails in company of my dog. She looks after me and I her. I know if something should happen to me, she would never leave my side. We're a team! Please do not shortchange the freedoms we now experience by unnecessary and expensive laws. In the ten or more years I have lived in Boulder, I have only incurred one mild confrontation with another dog. Not a bad record.

Michael **Kracauer**

Comment: OSMP Correspondence:
Dogs need off-leash opportunities to run, to sniff and to explore . Are there really all these problems with our dogs in Open Space?

Our dog, Ivy, is a certified therapy dog who does her work at Boulder Community Hospital. We visit the hospital once a week to visit patients and staff. The staff that have seen Ivy regularly really love her and cherish her visits. Many patients are overwhelmed with emotion and are incredibly grateful for Ivy's visits.

I really believe that Ivy would not be this incredible dog who is calming and healing to so many people if we did not let her just be a dog and enjoy Boulder's open space off-leash. And I believe that dogs that are confined too much and not allowed to sniff and explore often become the dogs that are neurotic and problematic.

Please let dogs be dogs and preserve the green tag program.

Michael Kracauer,

Holly **KRivjansky**

Comment: This is not where myself and my husband want to our taxpayer funds to support. We have used the trails for years and have never had an issue or seen other individuals with a problem between dogs and people. I do understand that they exist but I do not think the costs of increased enforcement are justified.

Cosima **Krueger-Cunni**

Comment: The Voice and Sight Tag Program has been a failure that no amount of tweaking will fix. The program should be ended and a uniformly-applied leash law should cover all City of Boulder Open Space lands. Dogs should be required to be on a hand-held leash less than 10-feet in length and remain within established trails on all OSMP land at all times with no exceptions. Dog guardians should be required to remove dog excrement the moment it is deposited and should not be allowed to leave it on Open Space trails or anywhere else on Open Space land whether bagged or not. Dogs should not be allowed to jump on people or intimidate people in any manner. The City of Boulder has wasted too much valuable staff time and taxpayer money on this program and should now redirect OSMP resources to pay for consistent enforcement of this fair, uniform, and more-easily-comprehensible-to-the-public leash law.

Katie **Lage**

Comment: I have used Boulder city, Lafayette and Louisville cities, and Boulder County open space for over 10 years, about half as a dog owner and half not. I have only seen one or two problems in that whole time. I feel like the focus on dogs is because of a vocal minority who do not like dogs, not because of actual incidents. Some of the possible changes are really expensive and do not address the problems called out in the evaluation. One thing I notice as I use the trails is that it is very common for dog poop to not be picked up in the first 50 yards or so of any trail--the closest section to the trash can! Perhaps additional signage 25 and 50 yards into the trail reminding people that it's a very short walk back to the trash cans (in a numerous way) would help or you could have occasional rangers/volunteers monitoring/reminding/educating trail users.

Marcia **Lamb**

Comment: Last May 26th, I was hiking with two friends, one who had an Alaskan Malamute, on a leash, because he felt his dog was too big and possibly rambunctious. This dog is 13 years old! We were hiking up Sanitas Valley trail, when an older couple was hiking down the trail, with the same kind of dog. The dog got excited to see our friend's dog, and jumped, out of control, being on no leash. It knocked me into the east side ditch. I was quite hurt, bleeding on my chin, and right hand, and couldn't raise my right arm, as it was so bruised. I was very upset, and the couple just said sorry, and walked on. After numerous physical therapy appts., and acupuncture appts., I am finally healed. All the doctors said I should've gotten their names, and they should've paid for my injuries, which were in the hundreds of dollars. I think large dogs must be leashed, as no one knows what they may do, but they do know how powerful these dogs are, and how dangerous they can be.

Peter **Lapidus**

Comment: I am a dog owner and I am not in favor of the off leash program. My dog has been attacked twice by off leash dogs while he was on a leash. Once while on mt sanitas two weeks ago that required him to have 5 stitches and the other time while we were standing in our front yard and an off leash dog ran up and got in a fight with him (while he was on his leash) He had to have many stitches that time as well as a drainage tube inserted into his neck.

Having an owner watch a video does not prove that the dog is under sight and sound control. Off leash dogs cause user conflicts among the various user groups that share our trail systems and in general give dog owners a bad reputation when the off leash dogs misbehave.

Thank you,
Peter

Sandra **Laursen**

Comment: In addition to my recreational use of Boulder OSMP trails, I volunteer as an ecosystem steward to monitor birds and wildlife in Open Space. I am tired of plastic baggies of poop and tired of dogs that jump on me while the owner protests irrelevantly, 'It's OK, he's friendly.' More seriously, however, I have often observed green-tagged, off-leash dogs chasing and harassing deer, Abert's squirrels, and small mammals... sometimes well off the trail. Sometimes, this is the fault of a badly trained dog that does not respond to calls. Such a dog should not be issued a green tag. More often, the problem is badly behaved people: people who are too busy chatting or jogging or listening to their iPod to pay attention to their dog and who do not even know what their dog is doing. Therefore I support efforts to improve training of both people and dogs that raise the bar to acquiring a green tag and improve compliance with the Visitor Master Plan.

After reading both the full study report for the Voice and Sight program and the staff analysis of program options, I am persuaded that the current program is not effective. I do not believe that online training will be effective at all. I do not believe that a class or ""outreach"" will be effective without some teeth: an actual assessment of the dog-owner behavior, in realistic settings, that can be used to deny a green tag or require further training before a tag is issued. Therefore I support the use of a skills test in combination with other education/information/training efforts that emphasize the owner's responsibility to remain alert. I especially support any efforts that will raise consciousness that dog off-leash access is a privilege, not an entitlement, that contrasts with less permissive practices in other local communities and in local national forests, and that can be withdrawn if not treated as a privilege.

Barbara Leaf

Comment: OSMP Correspondence:
Hello,

I attended one of the meetings hosted by Open Space at the East Boulder Recreation Center and wanted to send you some feedback regarding the dog concerns of the OSMP staff.

First, the vast majority of dog owners on OSMP trails are responsible and considerate. Whenever possible, they move to the side of the trail to allow other hikers without pets to pass by easily and they remove all excrement left by their pets. Additionally, many remove excrement left by others' pets and litter left by other hikers.

Second, I was dismayed to learn of the secret monitoring that was occurring in Open Space and the unrealistic expectations of OSMP staff regarding dog behavior. This activity reinforces the notion that OSMP staff has a bias against allowing dogs on OSMP land without leashes. Monitoring for violations of unrealistic expectations illustrate this bias. Additionally, how much open space has been added in the past ten years? How many new trails allow dogs under the voice/sight control? This is further demonstration of the anti-dog bias and creates concern in dog owners that the OSMP staff will not be satisfied until dogs are restricted to leashes in the OSMP and completed banned in much of the OSMP. This is an unacceptable prospect.

Finally, the Green Tag system is working. Dog owners are more aware of the expectations of their dogs and are meeting those expectations. It would be encouraging if OSMP would not only hold the meetings for input from citizens but also act upon their suggestions. For example, at a minimum, the money raised from the green tag program should be made public and used to further the goals of the OSMP staff concerning dogs. For example, trash receptacles should placed strategically in OSMP for the disposal of dog excrement. Surely, economical positions could be created to have these receptacles emptied regularly which would decrease the dog excrement problem.

The lack of trust between dog owners and OSMP staff keeps us from making more progress with dog concerns. Please work with FIDOS and other dog owners to make OSMP a better place for all.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter,

Barbara Leaf

Rob **Lewis**

Comment: Are you kidding? You can't be serious. Is this really a program that requires the input of a multitude of people, study sessions, evaluations, discussions, etc? Certainly, Boulder deserves better. It's no wonder Boulder is the brunt of jokes nationwide.

Regards,

Rob Lewis
Allenspark

Trushnina **Lidia**

Comment: OSMP Correspondence:
Dogs need off-leash opportunities to run, to sniff and to explore . Are there really all these problems with our dogs in Open Space?

To Whom It May Concern:

I have not experienced problems with dogs in open space. If the dog is off leash and is wearing a green tag, it is well-behaved dog in my experience. If the dog is on a leash on the trail, I always leash my dog. There is a difference between well-behaved and perfectly behaved. The first is attainable, the second is not realistic.

As far as dogs sniffing or shaking themselves near people - seriously, if you are on a hike, you will get dirty. Deal. It sounds like people who are annoyed about dogs on trails are annoyed that they have to share the trails with anyone.

I believe that right now a citation results in a fine (i.e. revenue generation for the county) and in court summons automatically - it would be best to leave it at that, it is punitive enough.

I have met children who are more out of control on trails than dogs - should we start banning access to families with children too? Or put them on a leash?

Regards,

Lidia A. Trushnina

Robles **Mark**

Comment: OSMP Correspondence:
Dogs need off-leash opportunities to run, to sniff and to explore . Are there really all these problems with our dogs in Open Space?

Driving though Ward the other day I was shocked to see dogs off leash roaming the town -- AND NOBODY CARED. AND THERE WERE NO PROBLEMS! How do they do it? According to you people it's some sort of anomaly, some freakish mistake. They should all be on leash to have such a state of peace.

This is Earth where people and dogs have lived freely for thousands of years.

Open Google Maps and take a look from the satellite view. Look at the proportion of unoccupied acres to the areas you have imposed severe restrictions on using your key word "critical". The Open Space areas that the people of this town want to use with their dogs are very small in comparison.

Everything is "critical" for you. Critical bird nesting. Critical this, critical that. It's "fanatical" not "critical. You hide with binoculars watching people with their dogs? That's just plain creepy.

If anything IS critical, is "man's relationship with dogs". That means man's health is tied "critically" to his relationship with dogs, and thus his dog's health. Anybody who has ever owned a dog knows that they need to run. They need the outdoors. They need reasonable freedom to be normal and non-neurotic. They need people, and people need them. Please wake up to this fact. It's part of the "nature" that you think you are defending.

Things are not "critical" with dogs on Open Space. Put your focus and attention on important things like getting more open space and allowing the citizens of Boulder to enjoy open space rather than look at it from afar.

Mark Robles

Sherry & Mark **Marshall**

Comment: OSMP Correspondence:
Dogs need off-leash opportunities to run, to sniff and to explore. Are there really all these problems with our dogs in Open Space?
The Green Tag Program IS working - your problem criteria is totally unfair and biased.
Thanks,
Sherry

Kevin **McCarthy**

Comment: Nice job on the report. Restricting dogs to trail corridors is the least feasible option by far, considering the difficulty of education and enforcement. As the ""gods of frolic,"" dogs are essentially joy dispensers. This is done most effectively while running towards guardians -- under voice and sight control.

Sarah **McClain**

Comment: voice-sight-comment: In your Voice and Site Tag Program Monitoring Report, for comparison purposes in your evaluation, were the data collection methods the same for 2006, 2007 and 2010? Also, you only show the N's on some charts, do you have a data table you can send with the actual survey information?

Thanks for your hard work, Sarah

Ann **McCormick**

Comment: Members of OSBT:

During the West Trail Study Area approval process City Council asked OSMP to review the Voice and Sight Program. I have read The Voice and Sight TAG Program Monitoring Report and OSMP's recommendations. It was disappointing to read that several of the proposals would completely change the current law by attempting to remove dogs from some established Voice and Sight Trails. This is not what City Council was asking OSMP to do. City Council asked OSMP to review and make suggestions for improving the TAG program not to un-do all of the work that has just been accomplished by the CCG.

I agree that we need to review TAG requirements and make some changes but OSMP's proposals regarding changes to trail use and access fall outside the bounds of the TAG directive from City Council. I love our open space and have been volunteering for the Raptor program with OSMP for three years. I am also a dog owner and I hike daily on open space. I am very frustrated with OSMP's re-occurring goal of removing dogs from open space. Please stick to the directive given to OSMP by City Council: review the TAG program and make suggestions to improve it.

Thank you for your time.

Ann McCormick

Gordon **McCurry**

Comment: (1) Are the Evaluations Complete?
The evaluations appear to be too limited in terms of what changes can be made to the Voice and Sight (VS) program. As the monitoring data clearly show, dog-related citations continue to represent the majority of all OSMP citations and compliance with the VS program has resulted in no overall improvement in dog-related conflicts nor in better control of off-leash dogs. These findings point to a fundamental failure of the VS program to meet the Visitor Master Plan (VMP) objectives regarding dogs, and suggest the need for a significant restructuring of the program. The VMP emphasized use of the Precautionary Principle in its recommendations; the VS program has failed in key areas and so it is time to limit the VS program to comply with this principle.

(2) Analysis of the Alternatives
The discussion of alternatives, including evaluation factors and scoring described in the April 2012 White Paper, is clear and well done. One suggestion for improvement is to consider using a more quantitative approach to describing attainment of the various evaluation factors. In this regard, the evaluation factors could be separated out into their individual components or sub-factors as defined on pages 20-21 of the White Paper and each sub-factor scored on its own merit. Second on perhaps more important, each sub-factor should be assigned a relative ranking or weighting factor, with the more important sub-factors given a higher weighting factor. This process is used extensively in my field of watershed management, with stakeholder groups used to help define the relative importance of sub-factors. Each sub-factor is then assigned a numeric value (from 1-5 or 1-10) based on how well the alternative achieves the sub-factor. The sub-factor scores are then multiplied by the sub-factor weighting to get a total score for a given alternative. This process results in a more quantitative assessment of a given alternative and may help prioritize or rank the alternatives more clearly than does the current method.

(3) Additional Alternatives
I suggest the following:
(a) An 'enforcement' alternativethat emphasizes on-trail observation and ticketing for non-compliance. This could be done by volunteer rangers or other appointed individuals, Suggested patrol points include trail intersections or trail segments where leash-only rules exist, followed by trail intersections where leash rules change. This alternative also serves as a key education initiative.
(b) An alternative for converting trail segments from VS to leash-only. Low-cost signage and web-based maps showing revised trail rules could serve as the basis. Would result in high scores for protecting the natural environment and reducing conflicts. Suggest using the West TSA CCG recommendations along with the trail survey results on dog conflicts for selecting which trails to eliminate VS rules.

Thank you for considering my thoughts on this matter.

Stacy **McDonald**

Comment: I think the program works perfectly. My dog is well behaved and we have a great time, even with people that don't have dogs. Thanks for all you do.

Mark **McIntyre**

Comment: OSMP Correspondence:
Hello,

I want to begin my comments by stating that I am a dog guardian but do not own a Green tag for my current dog. I use our open space daily, many times with our dog on leash. We are frequently on the trails west of Wonderland Lake (the almost conflict free multi-use trail).

The single biggest point that needs to be made is this: The department and staff have a deep and pervasive problem - they are anti... Anti-user, anti-dog, anti-bike, anti-nighttime use, anti-recreation. Yes, I know you will say that this overstatement. It is not. As I have reflected on the experience with the CCG and the results of this process for dogs and bikes I have finally realized that staff has a quiet but fiercely anti-user bias that alienates the very people that pay for our open spaces. The adversarial nature of this relationship with users is both unnecessary and unproductive and will ultimately mean the end of the funding that the department enjoys.

Specifically, in regards to dogs, better enforcement, and better education are needed to help the existing program - not more restrictive rules that will go unenforced. Get staff out from behind their desks and get them out on the trail - enforcing current regulation, educating the public, and performing maintenance (the 10-20 years of deferred maintenance that department acknowledges exists).

Regards,
Mark

Mark McIntyre

Kellie **Mendelow**

Comment: I am all for maintaining some control and oversight for all the many dogs using all the trails, but it is just not reasonable to expect people to do even more. Is there truly that many horrific incidents within the system that owners are to do more to comply so that their dogs can have a chance to run a bit? I have lived here for over 20 years, having a dog, or two, every one. I have never had major issues and have never understood why the restrictions have been getting tighter and tighter and everyone is just becoming more and more worked up over dogs on the trails. They have always been there. Every dog owner I know understands that dogs are dogs just as kids are kids. Most all of the time there are no problems but rarely there are. That is just how it is.
Making it nearly impossible for people to let their pets out to run seems insane. We might as well live in the city and walk them on the sidewalks.
I guess I do not understand where all this additional money and manpower is coming from and why it is needed. I would appreciate seeing some statistics on the actual number of dog related incidents on trails compared to the actual number of dogs that use them. I would bet the numbers are very low and would not support such efforts, money and time by the city.
Thank you,

John **Michalakes**

Comment: OSMP Correspondence:
I am writing to express my support for the current green tag program and for dogs on Open Space in general. My experience from many years enjoying Boulder's open space areas, particularly the Cottonwood Trail and Coot Lake, is overwhelming positive. I urge the OSMP to back off from its cryptic anti-user agenda and keep in mind who you work for, the people who paid for and enjoy the Open Space. The green tag program is working just fine and, if anything, more space should be opened up for the green tag program. I'm attaching an open letter from Sue DeRose, the president of FIDOs, the contents of which I whole heartedly support.

--
John Michalakes
4738 Quail Creek Lane
Boulder, CO 80301
303 442 3584

>>>>> FIDOS-Prez <info@fidos.org> 07/02/2012 09:40 PM >>>>>
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Opinion Editorial - The Green Tag Program

Sue DeRose, FIDOS President

[https://imgssl.constantcontact.com/ui/stock1/doggie-beacon-header.jpg]

The Future of Dogs on Open Space

[http://img.constantcontact.com/letters/images/1101093164665/whims-div-2.gif]
[http://img.constantcontact.com/letters/images/1101093164665/whims-div-2.gif]

Opinion Editorial by Sue DeRose
<http://r20.rs6.net/tn.jsp?e=001UD4HGA9PjU6nkPnAzZ9N1lJRJdun2Z6exX_QSy303ptpP4X45X6j3-ckFRyBf-2q2k9NEaxtImeLd9JEb6gBo6ZLoHcP7TB888wyuxHpuRQ=> Write to Open Space<mailto:OSMPcorrespondence@bouldercolorado.gov,info@FIDOS.org>

The whisper campaign started almost a year ago. "The green tag program is not working. We have looked at the green tag monitoring data and the 'experimental' green tag (GT) program is just not working." Open Space staff spent months last fall talking about just how bad they thought the GT program was and how the small improvement in 2007 evaporated in 2010. They kept repeating over and over that the GT Program had no effect on dog or dog guardian behavior.

Finally, staff released the monitoring data and the secret monitoring protocol in December. For the first time, FIDOS had access to what staff had been recording since 2006 and the source of the whisper campaign.

The protocol document and results were stunning on two levels. On one level, the sheer breadth of the criteria staff chose to call a problem or conflict is simply amazing. Not only are dogs held to a higher standard, but dogs cannot be dogs and they can't touch anything, including each other.

On another level, the way staff chose to summarize and present the results is downright creative. Staff utilized the smallest sample size possible. The smaller the sample the higher the percent of non-compliance. Staff then extrapolated the results for all green tag dogs. In my opinion, it appears that this analysis method was chosen to build the case to support the pre-release buzz of, "The green tag program is not working".

In 1996, Open Space staff unilaterally banned all off-leash dogs on open space. The citizens of Boulder rejected that ban at the polls. OSMP was foiled in their attempt to eliminate off-leash dogs. Tactics changed and we are now in the 16th year of constant, incremental off-leash dog limitations, restrictions and bans. I consider this process as death by a thousand small cuts.

Despite buying thousands of acres in the past 10 years, I can't remember a new voice and sight trail, can you? The culture of the open space department has evolved into one of closing land, restricting access and punitive measures. The management direction has evolved to one of the fewer the number of visitors, the better. Given this change, would you vote for an open space tax now?

Be aware, this Green tag review, the attempt to create a 10' rule, aka the trail corridor, and the overall 'carrying capacity' of open space are aimed directly at dog guardians. The Open Space department wants to gut the green tag Voice and Sight program and significantly reduce the number of off-leash dogs.

I have discussed the green tag monitoring items at length with some staff. They believe that 50% of the Voice and Sight dogs do not belong on open space. It's an astounding number. Are half of the dogs that you see each and every day a problem? I don't think so.

How can our open space department come to such a conclusion? Easy, they see 'problems' everywhere. Open space staff have created this fantasy dog behavior ideal where everywhere they look, they see violations. Here are a few examples of the secret monitoring protocol.

- See those dogs over there? They are (play) chasing each other in a circle. Behavior Problem! (conflict)

- In the parking lot, a border collie was barking. (more than 2 barks) . . while his owners carried a Frisbee. (conflict)

- Another dog 'touched' me with their nose while sniffing. (conflict)

And there's more:

- A dog brushed me. Problem!

-I saw a guardian say the dog's name to get his attention, and while the dog looked back, he didn't come. Obviously the guardian has no recall ability. Violation!

(Had the guardian given a recall command, the dog likely would have come.)

- A dog shook off water and the water touched me (or my dog). Problem!

That's right. Staff are calling items such as these 'Green Tag Violations' and are offering this study as proof that the GT program is not working. When FIDOS questions these so-called green tag behaviors and way the results are reported, staff seem to be offended by our questions. Is it really surprising that people are following the actual rules they know about vs. the staff preferred behaviors that are not public?

I can only conclude that as people work to improve their dogs, there are more well behaved dogs, and so the standards are raised. Our Open Space department is set on defining a fantasy dog behavior ideal as the standard for the green tag program. Oh, and one of the proposed program improvement is one strike and you're out. You could lose your green tag for not carrying a leash.

We can only lose more access in the future with this unreachable behavior standard.

* Our dogs will not be able to run with a 10 or 20 foot trail corridor restriction because it's a defacto leash.
* No sniffing, no running, no play-chasing, no barking, no touching
* The upcoming carrying capacity 'discussion' will continue the practice of restricting more visitors who hike on open space.

I believe in this community. We are by far, the largest group on open space. It's up to us as dog guardians to show good stewardship, good manners and to help others. It's up to our community to advocate for off-leash dogs and to be responsible guardians. It's up to us to speak out about the Green Tag program and to make it a model for the county and for the country.<mailto:OSMPcorrespondence@bouldercolorado.gov,info@FIDOS.org>

The large majority of us consider our dogs to be cherished members of our families. And, just as we want what's best for the health and wellbeing of the people in our families and communities, we want the same for our canine companions. Dogs need off-leash opportunities to run, to sniff and to explore their surroundings.

Are there really all these problems with our dogs in Open Space? Have we in Boulder become so intolerant that we can't share our Open Space with dogs, hikers, runners and bird watchers? Contact OSMP by email.<mailto:OSMPcorrespondence@bouldercolorado.gov,info@fidos.org?subject=Green%20Tag%20Program%20review&body=Dogs%20need%20off-leash%20opportunities%20to%20run%2C%20to%20sniff%20and%20to%20explore%20.%20Are%20there%20really%20all%20these%20problems%20with%20our%20dogs%20in%20Open%20Space%3F>

The last day for input is Thursday, July 5.
<mailto:OSMPcorrespondence@bouldercolorado.gov,info@FIDOS.org>

Friends Interested in Dogs and Open Space

PO Box 17181
Boulder, Colorado 80305

Info@FIDOS.org<mailto:Info@FIDOS.org>

Alicia **Miers**

Comment: I think more dogs and their guardians need to be tested on Voice Commands, specifically recall. I see many dogs off leash who wear the tag but are either out of sight or several yards away from their owner and when I ask their owners to call their dog, they either respond "he is friendly" or they call the dog and the dog doesnt come. I think the Voice & sight program is fantastic but I think alot of dog owners are lax about the following the rules. Perhaps a one time test out and then a yearly refresher quiz.

Phil **Mislinski**

Comment: Do not close open space at night. This will have severe impact on many users and as your paper shows there is little evidence to suggest that nighttime use affects wildlife.

Eileen **Monyok**

Comment: Here are my thoughts on your proposals. Thank you for this opportunity and for your consideration of my input

1) 1) Require proof of vaccinations for dogs participating in
the Tag Program - OPPOSE. This will require a great deal of taxpayer money to fund a solution to a problem that does not exist. This proposal to the green tag program also sets OSMP up for liability issues if you are going to claim that dogs with green tags are up to date on their rabies vaccinations. I would rather see taxpayer dollars going toward the building of new trails than the bureaucracy of managing a vaccination program. Thank you.

2) Require testing/demonstration of dog and guardian to
comply with Tag Program requirements - STRONGLY OPPOSE. This is another costly and onerous proposal. There is too much subjectivity in dog testing. Many people would likely complain about how the test was administered, particularly if their dog did not pass the test. OSMP staff members are not experts in dog behavior, and they are not qualified to set up a testing program. Again, let's put our tax dollars toward Open Space improvements, not restrictions and a costly testing program.

3) Require attendance at an information session, skills
demonstration, and/or skill class --????? Is this really going to be an information session, or is it a thinly guised test (""skills demonstration""), again with a great deal of subjectivity among staff members who are not well versed in dog behavior issues?

4) Require successful completion of an online voice and
sight control test - ACCEPT An online test would be a good check for information retention and understanding. It would also be convenient for working people.

5) Provide education, outreach, training and/or support
peer to peer outreach (a range of options to be
considered) - EXCELLENT - Positive means of communicating the message are the best.

6) Modify consequences for violations (a range
of options to be considered) - AGAINST the proposal of one strike and you lose your green tag. Too draconian. People do not lose their drivers licenses for 1 speeding ticket. People are not banned from Open Space for a single infraction such as walking in an area closed for re-vegetation. Consistency with consequences is important among all species.

7) Only allow voice and sight control in trail
corridors - STRONGLY OPPOSE This is another draconian idea. I do not bring a tape measure with me when I walk my dog. The worry of keeping my dog inside some imaginary corridor would completely ruin my walk. This proposal also violates the essence of voice and sight control. Voice & Sight control is not tape measure control. This proposal is also quite discriminatory against dogs. People are not required to stay within a trail corridor in Recreation and Natural Areas. Why must you constantly put dogs under a microscope, examine everything they do, dwell on the negatives, and then strive to restrict dogs? If you put people under this same microscope, people would be banned from Open Space long before dogs. It is cowardly and hypocritical of you to always hold dogs to a much higher standard than people, working hard to restrict or exclude dogs while ignoring the infractions of people.

8) Establish residency requirements for
participation in the Tag Program - AGAINST. This is an exclusionary and snobbish policy.

9) Administrative changes (a range of options to be considered)

Tom **Moore**

Comment: 1) I rarely see problems in the open space areas. More dog poop than there should be but I and others pick up after the negligent folks. we provide bags and reminders. Close trails temporarily where ground nesting birds are a problem. Human traffic is stress as well as dogs.

2) Both dog owners and others seem generally tolerant of one another. It strikes me that the guru form CSU is pushing intolerance when folks get along pretty well.

3) If OSMP tightens the rules wrt ,trail corridors and playlets of people will become scofflaws. Forks are ok with reasonable regulations but not overly restrictive ones e.g.. speed limits of 25 in clearly open road where 40 would be appropriate. Drivers travel near 40 and pay no attention to 25.

4) Technical problem--- Access to the web sites relevant to V&S program n red short aliases. Most people I meet on the trails are unaware that changes may take place. It is hard to point to a web sight 20-25 characters in the address.

Robert **Motta**

Comment: I think the ""voice and sight control"" program is ineffective and needs drastic changes - not just more ""education"". On numerous occasions my wife and I have been walking and seen dogs chasing wildlife while their guardians call their name over and over to no effect. When the dogs did finally come under control we saw the green City of Boulder tags.

We wondered why the program was so ineffective, so I investigated what it took to get a tag. I was amazed that all you had to do is watch an on-line video. Are you serious? When you go to get a drivers license, do they just make you watch an on-line video about driving cars or do they make you demonstrate your ability to drive?

At a minimum, guardians should have to demonstrate their ability to control their dogs in a real-world environment - like on an open space with other dogs and prairie dogs in eyesight of the dog.

The guardians don't need more ""education"". I certainly think the people living in Boulder are well educated and intelligent. But nobody thinks THEIR dog is a problem.

What we need is a REAL test of voice and sight control, and enforcement of the rules.

We all live hear to enjoy the wildlife. Let's protect it.

Thanks

Jim **Mullett**

Comment: OSMP Correspondence:
Hi,

As a dog owner and green tag member, I am appalled at the so called 'Secret Monitoring Protocol'! The standards by which you are measuring bad dog behavior are absurd and extremely biased. We love the Green Tag program and will work to keep it in place.

Thanks,
Jim Mullett
Boulder, CO

Betty **Naughton**

Comment: One thing that annoys me the most about dogs while hiking is the dog guardians who have a green tag and say things like ""it's OK, he's friendly"" when their dog runs up to someone who doesn't want a dog coming up to them, or who gets annoyed if I or someone asks them to call their dog or leash their dog when it is approaching uninvited. That's why I think Option 4 is a good idea (the online test). And have it be in the form of what will you do.
Example: Someone with a dog on a leash is approaching, and my dog is running up to greet the other dog. My dog is friendly and likes to play with other dogs. The other person says ""would you call your dog"".
I will:
A) Tell them its OK, my dog is friendly
B) Tell them my dog only wants to play
c) Immediatly and happily call my dog, put a leash on him, and make sure he doesn't get close to the other dog or the person.

Example 2: I think that:
A) if someone doesn't like dogs they shouldn't hike on a voice and sight trail.
B) No one who doesn't want a dog approaching them should ever be approached by a dog on voice and sight trails. OSMP is not a dog park, people who don't want a dog experience should be able to hike on V&S trails without having dog encounters.

I think that people should have to get 100% on the test. This way at least they will have said they will follow the specific rules, and hopefully not get out on the trail and say those things in the wrong answers.

Gary **Neil**

Comment: The tag is too big. Do we have to have the Flatirons picture at the top?

I had to drill the hole larger and file the tag down. Thank you. Gary Neil.

Katharine **Nejkauf**

Comment: I appreciate teh Voice and Sight Program and whish that it continues, and is adopted by other cites, like Denver. I would be happy to pay an annual fee fot the reneval of the green tag (voice and sigt permit tag). As a homeowner and a tex payer, I contribute to support our city parks and schools. To many city dwellers, like myself, dogs are primary companions. I have no children and do not use public schools, playgrounds, tennis courts, or swimming pools; instead I would like to enjoy parks and open spaces with my dog. (One can not play fetch on an 6ft. leash). Plese, continue and expand this terrific program. I follow leash/off leash rules on the trails and pick up waste after my dog.

Diana **Noriega**

Comment: topic: Open Space Trails
other_topic: DOGS OFF LEASH ON TRAILS - DANGER & NUISANCE
comments: Dogs Off-Leash/Green Tag in Open Space:

Within the last nine (9) months of hiking Mt. Sanitas trails I have been (1) jumped on by a large dog while I was on an icy path and its inattentive owner just looked on in amazement at her dog; (2) six (6) separate dog owners gathered in an area with about 8-9 dogs. One of these dogs runs up past me on the trail while I am descending; then it suddenly turns back down the trail and zips past me. I am surprised and slip on the sandy slope. In a slight whisper, the owner calls the dog and whispers an apology to me.

I submit that you change the color of the tag so that ALL owners and dogs are required to re-enter the training program and re-issued a tag. It is VERY CLEAR that many owners DO NOT have command of their dogs and that the dogs are NOT fully trained on the trails. ALSO, it seems that the trails are consistently speckled with dog-waste bags, enough!!!!

MY PERSONAL SAFETY IS THE PRIORITY. MY TAX DOLLARS FUND THE MAINTENANCE OF THESE TRAILS, the dogs do not fund anything.

Thank you.

Kathy **Nunemaker**

Comment: I have not witnessed altercations with other dogs, pedestrians, bicycles or horses that would merit changing the green tag program that now exists. I have lived in the city limits of Boulder since 1977, paying taxes. I like the green tag program but feel the proposed changes are looking for a way to stop the off leash program in Boulder. I oppose the changes.

Karen **Nutley**

Comment: OSMP Correspondence:
Green Tags - Proposed Changes

In response to the following brief summary of 9 issues provided by FIDOS based on the proposed changes to the Green Tags portion of the Voice and Sight Program Evaluation report PDF, pages 19-24:<http://r20.rs6.net/tn.jsp?e=001wyXkSJjM6nvjL_Gksbvf_SjuzykcJU_B_0oX2D4zACGUSQjY_vkxhXTBHM16xj5riqtBHK4TFcVgdBBIcfAVIku0JxqmCbzhc647XCXogrHJekVrNINI80sY9oUSr4-h_w0byOtpXoRITuELUkb1TQ6OaVSjHJLLHmoHfDdtCdUkkxzrPGP87Q8d5CargGnq7aPOYiW_Lg1JoJBkNW0yMdmVRHRa190lYI20MGmbhK1JCfFcO0VNsA==>

1) Require proof of vaccinations; track each dog

2) Modify consequences for violations (Lose Your Tag after one violation and require testing to reinstate privileges; increased fines; community service)

3) Require testing/demonstration of dog and guardian to comply with Tag Program requirements

4) Only allow voice and sight control in trail corridors

(V/S dogs must be within 10'-20' of you at all times)

5) Require attendance at an information session, skills demonstration, and/or skill class

6) Establish city or county residency requirements

7) Require successful completion of an online voice and sight control test

8) Tag renewals every few years; increase tag cost

9) Provide education, outreach, training and/or support peer to peer outreach

to which FIDOS opposed recommendations #2, 3, 4, and 6,

I have concerns regarding FIDOS position on items 2 violation penalty (no), 3 require testing (no) and 7 require video (yes) which concerns I communicated to FIDOS and now to you.

Item 7: This is similar to whats been done before, which is to watch a video and then to indicate you and your dog would comply, but apparently added a test. I have always had a problem with that because a lot of dog owners think their dogs are better behaved than they actually are and excuse any lapses as theyre just being friendly or something similar. I have always thought watching a video with or without an online or paper test afterwards is a good but that some form of an actual physical test was also needed to prove compliance .

Item 3: If it means testing obedience to the level of professional dog trials or instance obedience to all commands, Im not in favor of that either. I am in favor of testing the ability of the dog to immediately stop

any bad behavior affecting people, pets, wildlife or the environment and then with reasonable speed to comply with the remainder of the command. By reasonable I mean its ok for my 13-year-old corgi to come at a walk rather than a bounding run that might be expected of a 3-year-old Doberman.

Item 2, Getting a warning for a first minor violation and tag loss after a second or any other significant violation seems more reasonable. I do believe that tag loss appears to be the best form of enforcement, since fines have a limited impact on some people.

_____
Karen Utley

Joanne **Odden**

Comment: I love the Voice and Sight Tag Program! It has been one of the best things that's enhanced my lifestyle, and my dog's :) since moving to Colorado. I utilize this programs 2-4 times per month year round -- it's hands down the best ""dog park"" in driving distance. Overall I think it's working very well, and I haven't encountered any ""problem"" dogs (or owners). I very much hope you continue to support this program for none Boulder county residents; I would end up driving substantially farther to find off leash dog hiking areas.

Marti **Oetzel**

Comment: Last Sunday around 11 AM I walked from my home through Skunk Canyon which is 0.4 mile from my house. While I was on City Open Space property, I saw four dogs off leash with three owners. There were also two dogs with one owner on the dirt road on NIST property going up from Skunk Canyon. When I called the owners' attention to the leash requirement, they sounded annoyed and entitled to do whatever they pleased. Sounds like more enforcement is needed.

Also, I love the proposal in the suggested changes to the Voice and Sight regulations that privileges will end upon a first offense. I dearly hope that includes any dog-related offense such as the situation I describe above, where owners have dogs off leash where it is not allowed, such as on city streets and open space or parks where leashes are required.

Thanks! I value walking from my home to Skunk Canyon and would like to enjoy walking there without dogs running everywhere, chasing wildlife or possibly jumping on me.

Sherry **Olson**

Comment: Dogs that are able to demonstrate abilities to come to their master when called should have off-leash access to open space.

Hilary **Oppermann**

Comment: I totally approve of it - but it should be policed: I think dog owners should pay an annual fee to pay for better staffing so that off-leash areas and on-leash areas for that matter are kept clean. I have NEVER seen dogs disturbing wild birds: I have seen coyotes and foxes hunting in the wetlands. And by the way your own folk let cows in to graze in wetlands where ground nesting birds have been destroyed and displaced by COWS~!! (Check out Boulder Reservoir where for 20 years I have taken my dogs.

Jane **Ormsby**

Comment: Mr.Armstead,

I have participated in your program for the last five years and mostly agree with the changes you would like to implement. I moved less than two miles from Boulder County in Broomfield, at Highway # 287 and Miramante, and still very much want to be able to be in the program. I have lived in Boulder County for 40 years of my life, and have had a service dog for the past 5.5 years. There is no off leash area in Broomfield, and my dog is much safer, and need the off leash retreat, bonding and exercise from the Tag Program. Would you possibly consider a higher cost for Broomfield County, and a discount for service dogs?! Broomfield and Boulder Counties work together on many programs where the needs are determined in both areas. I highly encourage you to consider an alternative to this new restriction.
Thank you for your time

The fees for the parking lots is also a concern for a person on disability with a service dog. There are not many places to take your service dog without the dog getting harassed by other dogs. You have a wonderful program, with many new suggested features that I believe would enhance the program, but the $5 a day is quite expensive, the $25 a year is better. There is also the option that was mentioned regarding renewing the Tag fees yearly. I am sure there are many alternatives that can still produce the needed revenue and give equal access to all, including Broomfield County.

Thank you,
Jane Ormsby

Laura **Osborn**

Comment: Dogs should be leashed. The Voice and Sight Tag Program is not working. Dogs are jumping on me many times and wildlife is still being chased. There needs to be more rules to preserve habitat.

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susan **osborne**

Comment: I was on council when we asked staff to look at changes to the green tag program. I am certain the direction was to tighten some requirements for green tags (require rabies tag and dog license, make the tags renew every couple of years, charge more to raise revenue to fund dog-related improvements and clean-ups, charge substantially more for tags of folks' dogs from out of the city and possibly limit tags to in-county users). Emphatically, we did not expect a whole new raft of dog training rules and restrictions.

It concerns me that instead of focusing on making a sustainable, funded program, dog/anti-dog politics are being stirred up for no good reason. It really is counter to the direction from council and is an unnecessary ""can of worms"" that osmp staff has decided to open.

Becky **Palmer**

Comment: Please do not make it any more restrictive than it already is. Several of the trails in SoBo that we formerly used all the time, but use only occasionally now are nearly deserted because people with dogs have been forced onto fewer and fewer trails elsewhere. The people we meet with dogs are in full compliance. When you solicit all this information from us it feels as though it's just another way of controlling "the dog people" who seem to be perceived by Parks and Open Space as extremely destructive and bent on destroying the experience of any other users of the trails. Is this just one more step to try eliminate dogs from open space?

Becky **Palmer**

Comment: OSMP Correspondence:
The negativity toward dogs on Open Space continues. I am still in total disagreement about the secret data-gathering results recently disclosed by OSMP. Dogs sniff. They run and cavort and enjoy the open space for which we paid. Closing it all down to dogs is not acceptable. Your tactics are extreme and unprofessional. Who has decided this master plan for dog exclusion which you seem bent on implementing? It is not dog-loving tax payers. The data does not support your draconian manuevering.

Becky Palmer

Becky **Palmer**

Comment: How I wish we had known that dogs sniffing dogs running and dogs chasing each other in play were being observed as negatives by OSMP for years! We have been to almost all the public meetings and have paid close attention to the concerns voiced throughout the long laborious process which we thought would end the controversy over dogs on open space. Apparently we were wrong.
We hike with our dog in south Boulder almost every day and have met many many well-behaved and friendly dogs (and people!). We have found people to be very respectful of each other's dogs and on the rare occasion when we meet someone whose dog is leashed or appears uncomfortable we leash our dog and others do the same. There is no need to add further restrictions to the Green Tag Program!
What is OSMP thinking? Is their ultimate goal to eliminate dogs from open space? Please don't allow this to happen. This is BOULDER! The statistics do not back up the need for further restrictions on dogs! We are the people who voted for and have paid for this wonderful space we should share with our dogs. Thank you for your time.

Elizabeth **Paranhos**

Comment: I have heard that the City or County is considering changes to the green tag off-leash policy. As a Boulder city resident and dog owner, I place a very high value on the ability to walk, run and hike with my dogs off leash. The ability to exercise with my dogs in open space off leash is one of the reasons my husband and I moved here. I strongly oppose any restrictions on the ability of good dogs to be off-leash in places currently allowed. In my hundreds of times walking with my dogs off leash I have never seen a dog attack a person or another dog and rarely seen incidents where dogs are behaving badly.

Arlo **Paranhos**

Comment: Current program seems to provide both off leash and on leash spaces for boulder residents and dogs. I would really like to see the off leash program continue in the Sanitas area as it's a great place to trail run, take in the mountains, and work off some doggy energy. Losing that would be a disappointment to me and many of my Boulder friends.

Letty **Perkins**

Comment: I personally have 2 golden retrievers with whom I hike daily ,thus I find your ongoing attempts to see problems that I truly do not witness or experience aggravating at best. I keep asking myself where is all this happening,I'm out here everyday so how can i not be aware of these problems. Of course, it is the nature of humans to make their discontent known and i bet none of the people who i meet at least daily ,if not multiple times per hike, who say to me ""lovely dogs,so well behaved"" ever contact open space to report a positive encounter.
I would like to officially protest your new proposals #6 and #7 as both being unfair and clearly biased against the canine nature. My goodness, we give drunk drivers and drug users more forgiveness for violations than we are willing to give dog walkers, who probably contribute more to the general public well being by at least staying healthy and not costing the public for health care. Rethink your one strike and you're out attitude!! AND as to the on corridor requirement ,if you consider how canines operate, benignly sniffing along certainly not in a straight line, you realize the"" on corridor ""is equivalent to"" on leash""; as i suspect is your intent anyway.Was not this issue settled with the sight requirement of the present TAG program??
IF the current program cannot be manned to be effectively enforced ,what does tightening the restrictions accomplish except to create negativity for ALL of us open space users???
Most sincerely,Letty Perkins

Letty **Perkins**

Comment: There are several recommendations that seem unreasonable and punitive and would be costly to implement if they are to be fair to the dog community. The 1st objection is the one strike rule,especially since the perception of immediate recall is somewhat objective and the requirement of testing to be reinstated can only be done fairly by an experienced dog trainer in order not to be arbitrary.Of course, this would require several trained people in order to service the large dog community in a timely fashion
Also I object to the on corridor proposal as being punitive and impossible to adequately judge and enforce.It is essentially an"" on lease"" mandate since no dog walks by its owner's side consistently..the point of off leash is so that the dog can exercise at a normal pace,normal to dogs.As my dog trainer said to me,""you'll never be able to walk fast enough or long enough to tire your dog, thus train him.""
It feels that open space is determined to make people uncomfortable and tense while hiking in the space they paid for with their dog!! Letty Perkins

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Pamela **Peters**

Comment: Upon reading the Public Review Draft dated April 2012, I am struck by how many punitive measures were considered as changes to the Voice and Sight Tag Program. The rangers, upon observing an infraction, have never, in my experience, taken the opportunity to educate and inform. Instead they seem angry, condescending, and aloof. Perhaps they encounter many infractions and an uncooperative public all day. However, dealing positively with the community should be a priority for the rangers and the administration of the program. Furthermore it seems as if they never bend toward the side of the dog guardian/ dog. They are all on ""the other side"" and it is the US vs THEM problem that causes so much conflict.

Pamela **Peters**

Comment: It has been brought to my attention and to that of many other dog owners that OSMP is considering sweeping changes to the Voice and Sight control regulations. I have been handed a blurb on the proposed changes which, according to the paper, include design

Steve:

Thank you for returning my email and clarifying some of the issues I addressed. Admittedly, my information was third-hand at best and therefore not completely reliable. I wrote OSMP because, in my experience, most of the regulations imposed by OSMP have been punitive and not founded in any kind of real research and/or dialogue. As well, these regulations have increased the conflict on the trails between dog owners and non-dog owners, with the non-dog people continuously having the upper hand. Honestly, if a dog looks sideways at some people, they complain. It seems to me that some, not all, of the non-dog owners just plain don't want dogs on the trail. Some have admitted to me that they use the power which the city has given them to try and rid the more popular areas of dogs altogether. Unfortunately the adage " the squeaky wheel gets the grease" seems to hold true in this instance.

Furthermore, your rangers are notoriously "trigger-happy" when issuing tickets. There is usually no attempt to educate, explain, or even warn. Your phrase "that rangers believe were in clear violation of the voice and sight control regulation" does little to alleviate my concerns or those of many other dog owners. Perhaps rangers, through OSMP, are urged to write a certain number of tickets to generate revenue. In fact, i suspect that because your department is so well-funded, these tickets help justify its size and scope.

I could continue with instances which I have experienced that illustrate these concerns, however, this letter isn't about me, personally, but rather one in which I would like to have my voice heard in what, it seems like to me, is an increasingly unfair fight. Of course, many of the dog behaviors you describe are odious and indeed deserve to be squelched(and ticketed.) I only wish that there was a strong advocate within your department who would fairly consider the dog guardians' point of view, as well.

Thanks for listening and responding. I will look at the studies and projects on the website in an effort to further inform myself.

Best
Pamela Peters

Eric **Pfosi**

Comment: OSMP Correspondence:
Some people seem to really dislike dogs. I have to assume these people are behind the criticisms of the green tag program. Why do they choose to hike on trails that are on the green tag list? There are so many place to hike in this city yet they insist on hiking in the few where I can run my dog with no fear of a ticket. There are lots of places where my dog needs to be on a leash or isn't allowed at all.

Please don't take away this great program that contributes to the quality of life we all enjoy in this city.

Thanks,
Eric

Linda **Pierce**

Comment: comment: I do not think that the current Voice and Sight tag regulations are strict enough. Just because someone has watched a video does not mean that they have actually trained their dogs. Most dog owners that I meet on OSMP trails do NOT have their dogs under voice control. I am a dog owner and a trail runner. I sometimes bring my dog with me on-leash while I run OSMP trails. When I am out in this manner I am there to exercise NOT to have a doggy play date. It is extremely annoying and frustrating to be approached by off-leash dogs who are greeting my dog (who is on-leash) in the midst of a run. Sometimes this happens even when I am running without my dog--an off-leash dog approaches me getting in my way causing me to stop or jump aside to avoid collision. These owners seem oblivious that I am not interested in petting or being greeted by their dog.

I think these regulations need to be stricter. I do actually favor having places where dogs can run off-leash. But owners should be required to demonstrate that they can actually recall their dog by voice command before they are granted the privilege of letting their dogs off-leash. Yes I know this would require a LOT of resources by OSMP to enforce but it would be worth it to make the trails safer and happier for all.

Alternately can you give the users of trails the ability to write citations for dogs that they see who are not under control? Any dog that receives multiple complaints/citations from other trail users can have their license revoked.

Vic **Pizzo**

Comment: I very strongly oppose the bulk of the changes to the tag program proposed by the open space program. The vaccination and city/county residence requirements make sense to me, but the rest range from unnecessary to impractical to just plain bureaucratic. In all the years I have walked dogs on Sanitas, Chatauqua, and other trails I have never seen any incident worth a ranger's time. This sounds more like a make-work program than a real effort to ""improve"" conditions on these trails. Your efforts to ""help"" us are unnecessary and unwelcome, thank you!

Lydia **Pottoff**

Comment: OSMP Correspondence:
Hello,
Dogs need off-leash opportunities to run, to sniff and to explore .
Are there really all these problems with our dogs in Open Space?

I have continued to vote for open space believing that it allows access for all. But with so many restrictions it appears that the open space should be available not to all but to a select few. I have found many runners to be pushy and inconsiderate too. Should we restrict them to certain trails too? (I also used to be a runner so I get it).

I have lived in Boulder since 1973 and use the trails on a regular basis.

Thanks,
Lydia

Don **Price**

Comment: I do not favor any of the proposed changes. I believe the system as it currently exists is excellent. If funding is available to implement any of the proposed changes, I would, instead, use these funds to increase monitoring of compliance with the existing regulations.

I think, in general, that most dog owners make a good effort to control their pets. I think all trail users need to be more tolerant of others. I do not like when dogs come up to me unbidden on a trail, I do not like when bikes whiz past me on a trail, I do not like when people use their cell phones while hiking, I do not like when people talk too loudly in a group when hiking... however, there are many things in life I do not like and it would be a sorry place if we each enforced our own vision of perfection. So what I am in favor of is more tolerance by everyone to the actions of others.

Kristan **Pritz**

Comment: I am hoping that the program will continue to remain relatively easy to administer and to abide by. I would hate to see an extremely strict regime for what a dog can and cannot do on open space trails that allow for dogs to be off leash. I read in the paper today about a series of tests for off-leash access that seemed over the top in the amount of regulation and in the amount of time and money the city of Boulder is spending on this issue. I prefer to see my tax dollars spent on other open space enhancements. I rarely have any issues with other dogs on the trails so do not wish to see regulation expanded. I also don't want to see the staff spending inordinate amounts of time reseraching and debating this issue with the public. I get great joy and positive energy from walking my two dogs off leash. Our city has vast amounts of open space. Let's maintain a measured approach and perspective regarding this project.

Linda **Rasmussen**

Comment: OSMP Correspondence:
Dogs need off-leash opportunities to run, to sniff and to explore . Are there really all these problems with our dogs in Open Space?

It lays so heavy and sad on my heart that people say the green tag program is not working. Being able to hike on our trails with my dog off leash is huge in so many ways. I feel it is mind clearing, sensory stimulating, healing and exercising for the body and then to watch the sheer joy of my dog as she/he is able to run, sniff, play without the constraints of leash brings such HUGE joy! Wrap all this together, I think it is the most outstanding thing that we are able to do living here in Boulder. The thought that people want to take this away is as equally disturbing as the greed that I feel is ruining our great country. I feel very passionate about the green tag program, and as I would love (and strive) to have that 'perfect' canine according to the 'CONFLICT' guidelines, We- my dog and I, would most likely fail miserably!

If you were to implement such a 'study' directed at humans with similar guidelines as your 'conflicts' suggest...I think we should all fail--after all we are only 'human'!

Sincerely,
Linda Rasmussen

David **Rea**

Comment: I totally support all the suggested changes, as long as children under 16 are also required to wear green tags and comply with the same rules. As an added bonus, a "maximum of two dogs/children off-leash" rule may also help avoid a Malthusian apocalypse.

Kim **Regan**

Comment: OSMP Correspondence:
Hello,

I am a dog owner who has purchased a green tag. In addition, I pay taxes for open space.

I live in Boulder County specifically because of the beautiful trails where I can walk my dog. To help Open Space staff, I suggest specific trails be open for people walking/running with their dog(s). No-one without a dog may use these trails. This would be similar to all of the trails that are only open to walkers/runners and/or dogs on leashes.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions.

Thank you for your consideration,

Kim Regan

Joanne **Reynolds**

Comment: OSMP Correspondence:
I'm definitely getting sick and tired of reading and writing about this issue, particularly because it's pretty clear to me that OSMP has has long since made up its mind about abolishing the GT program.

So just go ahead and refund me the money I forked over to receive those stupid green tags and be done with it, already. And speaking of refunds, wouldn't it be nice if I could get back my tax dollars that went toward purchasing open space land over the past 20+ years? Given that I don't have kids (although my tax dollars help fund our seriously flawed public education system) and I no longer cycle, I won't be walking "our" open space trails if I can't walk them with my dogs off leash.

Sherry **Richards**

Comment: I have to confess the proposed changes to the Voice and Sight regulations seem surprisingly severe. Labeling dog play and barking as violations is rather stunning.
Given that, I do feel that a more frequent renewal of the V and S tag along with increased education would be helpful for everyone. I know that those of us who are gaga for dogs can forget that others do not share our enthusiasm. A thoughtful reminder of trail courtesy and consideration would be an important step towards easing tensions on the trail. I think most dog owners would readily buy into this...the more severe regulations are not only unreasonable but do not serve to promote co-operation. If we can share our trails with hikers, bikers and horses it seems that our dogs should also be welcomed. Let's not go off the deep end here and create unnecessary animosities and lines in the sand.

Jennifer **Roach**

Comment: OSMP Correspondence:
It is unthinkable to me that the Open Space Committee would ban Boulder dogs and trash the Green Tag Program.
Boulder is a unique and vibrant city partly because we have been so pro dog . If you take away the Green TG priests, we might as well all go live in Aurora and just keep dogs on the leash 24/7. Ridiculous! I can't believe a small group of people like yourselves can mandate such a decision. It is completely unfair and unwarranted.
If you ask me(and none of you OSMP people ever did of ANY person in the community) we should get rid of your Committee and "re-hire" some real dog lovers who are dedicated to the dogs in Boulder and their owners.

J. Roach

Steve **Roche**

Comment: I believe that the voice sight tag is a good idea. I would like to see a test/certification. The majority of the dogs I see with the tag are only responsive to commands when they are called to the dinner bowl. I have spent a great deal of time training my dog, and utilize an e-collar when he is off-leash to ensure that I have control.

I would suggest that the fee is increase to $50/dog. That there is a test/certifcation required to get the license. This could be done through a number of local agencies, or utlizing volunteers as examiners. Once the program change is instituted, an education/enforcement program by park rangers could began.

I believe this enhancment will result in fewer issues between dogs/humans/other animals. The ultimate goal would be the opening of more trails to "off-leash trained" dogs.

Steve **Roche**

Comment: I do not see any mention of the e-collar. As mentioned before, I would submit that my dog is under better control with the e-collar than the majority of leash controlled dogs. I again respectfully submit that e-collars be considered as an alternative to lease control. I and others are willing to deomonstrate the level of control a e-collar provides.

tks,
Steve

Steve **Roche**

Comment: Steve,

Because of family commitments, I will not be able to attend the meeting tonight. I would like to provide the following input.

1.I am all for a test. You could subcontract this to one of the local training organizations – Humane Society, etc.
2.I would like multiple levels of testing. Dogs that demonstrate higher control would be allowed off leash at areas that require leash control. Needless to say there would be an additional cost for the license.
3.I would like e-collars to be accepted as a leash. I am more than willing to provide a demonstration of my dog and the use of same. I also propose waist/running leashes as an acceptable method of control.
4.Many dogs only respond to voice command when they are called to dinner.

Tks much,

Steve Roche

Kate **Roeske-Zumm**

Comment: I think that this is ridiculous. I have been on the trails and out and about in Boulder and have not seen one issue over the last three years. These types of restrictions will only limit the enjoyment of the trails and increase tax payers costs associated with this program. One of the key reasons that I even got a dog was because Boulder is so ""dog friendly"" - I really think this is being driven by a few people and it will affect the lives of many of our beloved four-legged friends - who simply want to sniff and run and enjoy the beautiful outdoor space that we are all so luckily to have around us. Don't do this to us or them.

Pam **Rogers**

Comment: Very sad that the city is taking away the freedom to enjoy nature that drew us to Boulder in the first place. The squeaky wheel of fearful dog haters gets the grease, while we who love dogs, and the dogs themselves, must suffer the consequences.

Where is the ""COEXIST"" spirit so prevalent on Boulder bumper stickers? Marginalizing a huge chunk of the population does not usually work well.

Claudia **Romans**

Comment: I live in Heatherwood with my backyard 20 feet from a social trail on the Open Space called Gunbarrel Hill or Gunbarrel Farm, 1988-present.

I agree that the tag program has NOT decreased conflicts and the problem of guardians not picking up the poo. From conversations I have had with people walking on the Open Space, it seem common thought that purchasing a tag is all they need to do. There is little understanding that the tag represents an agreement/commitment to Voice and Sight which means:
-dog is under control, will come on first call
-does not charge at other dogs (I hope and I assume this includes not charging at dogs fenced in their yards of the backyards that border the social trails) this happens all the time!

I also very often see that:
-dog is 100 yards away while guardian is busy talking on the cell phone.
-folks who walk dogs off leash and let the dog run out to the center of the field, are very unlikely to walk into the field from the trail and pick-up after the dog.

Thank you for all the effort that went into this study and for the opportunity to comment.

Johannes **Rudolph**

Comment: I think the biggest problem with dogs is people not following existing regulations, mostly regarding picking up of dog waste and dogs on leash. More new rules is not the solution. I think more Rangers on the trails would be good. Also, I think peer enforcement would be good: can you get dog guardians to serve as volunteer ""encouragers"" of rules by using their daily ""poopy-walk"" as a way of interacting with other dog people and helping to get them to also adhere to the rules.

Donna **Salemink**

Comment: Boulder does a fabulous job with the tag program. We regularly drive to Boulder so our dogs can enjoy a walk without a leash. I wish Longmont would provide off leash walk/jog/hike/dog swim space. Boulder businesses gain our support as we often shop when we're out of town. I'd like to support Longmont businesses and keeping us in town for dog walks would be a great way to help me in that endeavor. Currently Longmont only offers dog parks and Union Resevoir as off leash spaces for dogs. I wish Longmont had a space with water that did not require admission fees, as does Union. It seems like with Golden Ponds, the St. Vrain, and Pella Crossing, some space could be delineated and the tag program could be as wonderful in Longmont as it is in Boulder.

Matt **Samet**

Comment: OSMP Correspondence:
Dogs need off-leash opportunities to run, to sniff and to explore . Are there really all these problems with our dogs in Open Space? I would love to see common-sense enforcement of the existing rules on so-called "problem" dogs before all dog owners are penalized for the aberrant behavior of the few. No further restrictions, please. Many, many of us live and choose to remain in Boulder because of the great outdoor opportunities we can share with our dogs, and from what I've seen out in the field in the Flatirons dozens of days a year, the Green Tag program is working great as is.

Sincerely,
Matt Samet
Boulder, CO

Matt **Samet**

Comment: Please leave the program as is; no further regulations and restrictions on dogs are needed. If there are issues, then better enforcement of the existing rules seems to be a less severe measure and is more equitable to all users.

Peter **Sanders**

Comment: It's good.

Jack **Sasson**

Comment: OSMP Correspondence:
Hi,
As a resident of Boulder since 1976, I am concerned about what looks like a crack down on dogs on open space. I don't believe that they are misbehaving to the degree that your statistics make them out to be. There is always going to be some people whose use of the trail varies from the desired perameters of usage whether it be hikers off trail, bikers speeding down hills into other users, horse droppings littering the trails, etc. To single out people with dogs is a bit over the top and if confirmed as policy will certainly affect my vote as to new tax initiatives regarding more open space purchasing. So far I've supported open space since I moved here and believe in our continued policy of buying more but not if it is to be so restrictive as to not allow dog owners the opportunity to bring their cherished family memebers with them. Thanks for your consideration. Jack Sasson

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Jack **Sasson**

Comment: Dear Steve,

I want to voice my opinion that the proposed measures are too draconian! The current standards in place work well enough. I've lived in Boulder since 1976 and have been paying taxes to support open space and have voted consistently to support its purchases and maintenance but would Not like to see it harder for the dog owning citizens of Boulder to enjoy our trails. If you're concerned about the number of dogs on trails, perhaps you could put higher costs of VS licensing on out of town users. This would generate more income for open space and maybe limit overall use. Thanks for your consideration.

Kimberly **Schafer**

Comment: OSMP Correspondence:
Dogs need off-leash opportunities to run, to sniff and to explore . Are there really all these problems with our dogs in Open Space?

I am a runner and a hiker and have NEVER had a problem with any dog while out on open space. I feel this issue is getting totally blown out of proportion when a few incidents occur and someone is overlu sensitive to dogs or particularly venomous & overly zealous in their pressure to make changes. It's disappointing my city officials are reacting this way and wasting money!

I am not a dog owner but I do love animals and I do not believe further, more restrive dog control laws are needed & in fact believe they will cause anger and for some people to move from Boulder. Dogs should be allowed off leash in more places than they currently are. There are MANY places people can go to walk, run or hike that do not allow dogs and there are very few places people can do with their dogs off leash. Do not make this issue worse. This is ridiculous.

Kimberly Schafer
North Boulder

William **Schroeder**

Comment: Your survey was significantly flawed and contained many irrelevant measurements. It seems to me that you have a pronounced bias towards implementing a very costly and unmanageable strategy of implementing testing of all dogs to get an off leash Green Tag.

Bonnie **Schwahn**

Comment: I just wanted to say that I love the program. Thank you! I keep my dog on leash almost all the time, but still, I appreciate the opportunity to be able to let my dog offleash in the designated places.

The ONLY times I EVER let go of my big dog's leash, otherwise, a ranger or animal control person comes by, it happens like clockwork, so if I need an animal control officer or a ranger..... I know what to do! :) thanks for an awesome program (seriously!!!!) What a great way to manage a town with a LOT of dogs. Seems to be working well.....

Barry **Schwartz**

Comment: OSMP Correspondence:
To who this concerns

I am not going to be nice because nice does not work. It is simple, the group at OSMP simply is run by people who have a bug.... about dogs- with their power, they will do what is in THEIR (not the population as a whole) best interests. All I can do is VOTE NO on any additional tax to fund OSMP. And, I can illegally bring my dogs to open space in the evenings and early mornings when the "enforcement" is not out. All I can say to OSMP is that unless they have Rangers out 24/7/360 my dogs will get what they need. My dogs are trained and better behaved than OSMP's children. We will be out. Beating dog owners over the head does NOT encourage owners to do the RESPONSIBLE thing (clean up after their dogs).
I will not longer remind others to do the right thing. Why should I when OSMP beats me over the head for trying? Punish those who REALLY violate, leave the rest of us alone. Here's an idea- require green tags for the Coyotes that I see on OSMP land- after all, it seems control of 100% of everything that goes on on OSMP property seems to be OSMP's desire.
Oh yes, if you want to
turn Coot Lake into a wildlife refuge, may I suggest banning PEOPLE as well?

Sheila **Schwartz**

Comment: OSMP Correspondence:
July 2, 2012
Sheila Schwartz

My name is Sheila Schwartz and I have lived in Boulder for the past 14 years. I am the guardian of two well behaved dogs who are upstanding "citizens" of Boulder as well, and as such, should have a voice. We choose to live her in Boulder for the many recreational opportunities this great city affords our dogs. I responsibly hike with my dogs off-leash at least 2-3 times per day throughout Boulders vast trail system. I encounter nothing but kind people and their exceptionally well behaved and friendly dogs on every trail I visit.
I understand that dog users make up the vast majority of visitors to OSMP so the problems may seem over exaggerated to you, when in reality when you really take a step back and examine the large numbers collectively there are very few infractions and only minor violations at best. We understand there is a dog waste problem, and while we cant change overnight, we are making great strides and improvements. FIDOS and other groups have done a wonderful job of stepping up to help control this issue. While I am not affiliated with any group, I have currently logged in more than 150 hours of poop/trash clean up throughout Boulder. I have met Ranger Pete Taylor on the Bobalink trail who kindly offered me a smile and handshake for my help. I know many others who volunteer in the same fashion as well. In the 14 years since living here. I have noticed a significant change in peoples reaction to someone not picking up their dogs poop. Today, it is not accepted and frowned upon. We kindly offer a spare bag to this person who is usually embarrassed and thankful for the offer as they have accidentally run out of bags themselves. The point being, the attitudes have shifted here in Boulder to being more responsible and respectful of each other.

We all know the dangers of how statistics can be significantly modified, manipulated and falsified to achieve the desired goalin this case reducing or eliminating the GT program, so my anger and resentment runs very deep at your supposed list of GT violations. As an avid and frequent user of these trails I want to be clear that I have very rarely been offended by another dog (leashed or unleashed) or usermaybe once a year at best so I believe it is prudent that the City of Boulder Open Space Council members seriously need to take a breath and show a bit of leniency when it comes to off-leash dogs. Ive seen way more obnoxious young children screaming their heads off, littering, and generally disturbing other trail users than I ever do dogs being unruly!

In the past few years, I have seen OSMP buy more open space land only to place more restrictions, and a ridiculous zero tolerance attitude towards users, usually dog owners. I want you to know that I WILL NOT be voting for you in the next election and WILL NOT be voting Yes when it asks if I want to buy more open space. Beware: much like the 1996 vote on banning off-leash dogs, the city WILL have a voice and will be heard loud and clearly!!!

John **Seaborn**

Comment: OSMP Correspondence:
First thank you for your service to local government. It can be a hard and often thankless task but a critical one to our society, so again, thank you.

I am writing on a topic I have become increasingly alarmed over and this is dog access to open space. It seems that reasonable off leash access to trails is under pressure and this pressure is coming from the OSMP staff. In 1996 Staff banned all dogs in open space resulting subsequent voter push back in the polls. Since then the rights of dog owners have been steadily curtailed over time. My take is that OSMP staff has an axe to grind in this area.
Let me illustrate the point.

I have been walking the Coot Lake area nearly twice a day for seven years. I likely have more foot time in this area than any of the OSMP staff. In all these years I have never observed a dangerous or even threatening dog interaction with people or wildlife. I have never observed a dog crossing into the already restricted wetlands area to the west of Coot. Unfortunately there are now new seasonal leash restrictions in this area to support nesting birds even though there is no evidence suggesting that off leash dogs threaten nesting birds in this area. The result? No nesting birds of the correct species were found this year a decline over prior years in which dogs have been allowed off leash on the Coot trail. Can the conclusion be that off leash dogs on this trail encourage nesting birds?

My point is that these infringements on dog owners access to open space are based on unrealistic criteria used to accomplish what can be seen as the long term goal of restricting all off leash access to all open space just as was attempted in 1996. The drum beat of the Green Tag programs demise is already starting with staff calling the program ineffectual and in need of much stronger measures backed by a highly suspect study. The message here is that we want dogs out of open space and we need to come up with a way to do that including the establishment of unrealistic behavior requirements.

It now appears that Density of Use will be another tool used to restrict both people and dogs from the use of their open space. One thing that would help the density of use is if additional open space could be accessed off leash. This would reduce the already minimal impact on the resource by spreading the density of use. Boulder County is wrapping up a huge land/open space plan for 63rd north of Boulder. In the master plan for the many sites there is not one mention of off leash access.

My thought to you is this.

Sharing resources is a critical aspect of our society. As managers of public policy make it clear to the people who work for you that further restrictions to the off leash access to open trails runs contra to the desires of many members of society and does not serve the public. Suggest that instead of managing the resource to further restrict access encourage them toward responsible sharing of the resources they manage for the public. Their jobs are to improve the opportunities for sharing these public owned resources responsibly and this includes off leash access for dogs and their owners.

Respectfully,

W. John Seaborn

Kristen Seldon

Comment: OSMP Correspondence:
Dogs need off-leash opportunities to run, to sniff and to explore . Are there really all these problems with our dogs in Open Space?

I support the green tag program and a rational way to let dogs off leash.

Sincerely,

Kristen Seldon

Rebecca Shannon

Comment: OSMP Correspondence:
I am writing to say that OSMP doesnt have a clear sense of normal dog behavior and has unreasonable expectations of how dogs act, how families recreate and how to create equal opportunities for all citizens to enjoy our shared open space.

We pay taxes every time we buy dog food, poo bags, leashes, collars etc.
We support local jobs which contribute to our economy by using veterinary services, hiring dog walkers, using kennels, buying dog toys, etc.
By enjoying open space with our dogs and our families, with friends and children we stay healthy and active in our communities and neighborhoods.
On our daily walks, we meet our neighbors and form relationships. We bring joy to people who cant or choose not to have dogs.
When our dogs get regular exercise and positive interactions with other dogs, we reduce conflict and bad behaviorbored dogs are bad dogs.

Reading about the very small sample studies OSMP is basing decisions on is so upsetting. Its like you had a goal to get rid of dogs and set out to find a way to prove your point rather than fairly and accurately study the issue with an open mind. Boulder represents itself to the country as a liberal city, OSMP disproves that with every decision to reduce access rather than promote it. Let me tell you that when I have a chance to vote with my dollars, I will say NO MORE OPEN space until I have access to it with my dog or with my bike. And dont even get me started on the issue of bikes.

Recently, I have been driving up to Nederland and Eldora and Summit County for recreational activities because my dog and I are welcome on Forest Service trails. That means were taking our dollars elsewhere. And oh by the way, were driving (creating a bigger carbon footprint) than if I could hike with my dog right here in Boulder. So think about thatyou are driving money out of the city and you are contributing to negative environmental impact when you isolate a community of users.

Our natural resources will be protected when people feel invested in them. Looking at a pretty mountain or field doesnt inspire me to protect it but the places where I walk/ride on a regular basis (Coot Lake, Twin Lakes, Eagle-Sage)those places are special to me and I will fight for my right to enjoy them. There are so many trails in Boulder that Ive never been on b/c dogs either arent allowed or are required to be on leashtry hiking up a steep mountain or mountain biking with a dog on leashits either impossible or stupid.

Bottom line is, our open space belongs to all of us. You simply have to share it among the user groups and that includes dog owners.

Best regards,

Rebecca Shannon

Adam **Shapiro**

Comment: Hello, I have lived in and around Boulder county for 8 years now. I am a dog trainer and have always used the trails and dog parks around Boulder and think it is an amazing resource. I think many of the changes to the off leash program will be constructive if still difficult to enforce. However, there are still plenty of bad and aggressive dogs that people don't really have control over so I don't have a problem with this sort of review. The only possible change that I find truly baffling and somewhat moronic is the 20' corridor rule. Perhaps this would make sense if it was only applied to certain trails. But take for instance someplace like Dry Creek which has huge wide open spaces. How can this rule possibly apply or make sense when what a dog needs to be balanced is the ability to blow off steam, and have a good run. If you begin to to enforce limitations on this type of behavior you will not doubt have more difficult dogs that are more prone to act out.
Also revoking the off leash tag for a single violation seems a tad severe, 2-3 strikes and you're out seems reasonable to me!

Bill **Shirley**

Comment: This program allows our dogs to enjoy a freedom not available within leash laws. With all freedoms comes responsibilities. In this instance it is the responsibility of the dog's master (not ""owner"") to demonstrate the ability to appropriately control the animal's behavior off lead.
It is very reasonable for us to actually demonstrate that we have invested the time and effort to train our companion dogs to exceed specific minimum requirement for the privilege of having a Green Tag.
Such requirement would produce community benefits beyond the open space program. We would love to see a community ""norm"" where more dogs are well behaved (on or off lead.)
I'm sure the various dog training organizations in the community would provide training programs designed to help people meet a ""we believe it when we see it"" behavior standard for the privilege of having a Green Tag.
My German Shepherd, ""Bodhi,"" is now 5 years old. He is very manageable under voice control and has been so since he was about 10 months old. He has known nothing else all of his happy life!
HOWEVER, instincts take over when he spots a rabbit when we are at Boulder Ranch. So he wears an electric collar. All I have to do is ""buzz"" (no shock)him to remind him when he fails to respond to a voice command. He immediately responds to the ""reminder.""
I would be glad to use Bodhi to demonstrate how happy and joyful a dog can be when he has freedom within consistent limits and structure. (He is really no different than a happy, secure child.)
We will do what we can to help you strengthen the Green Tap program. It would be a real loss to the community to abandon the program because too many people have said their dogs meet the requirement for a Green Tag when, in fact, they do not.

Marta **Shoman**

Comment: I am concerned that despite all good intention by OSMP staff, there is a built in bias with this evaulation - based on the how ""conflict"" is defined and the parameters set around what ""conflict"" means.

I walk a green-tag dog almost every day in the designated green tag areas (mostly along S. Bo. creek, east of rec.center) and I encounter 90% of the other dog owners/their dog on the paths as being mindful of their animals, sensitive to the required trail etiquitte and the green-tag culture.

As an educationally tool to assist green-tag holders - a review of the video on an annual basis seems like a useful idea for dog owners. Mandatory on-site testing seems over-the top, nerve wracking to all concerned, and expensive to administer.

I thought all dogs had to have rabies vaccine...so am surprised that vaccines are being considered as part of the green tag program. I don't think a vaccine will ease the non-dog person's view. I feel a ""one strike"" rule is much too harsh. I do see that the poop bags and unbagged poop on the trails is bad PR for dog people, I wish people would pick up poop and carry the bag until a recepticle is found. I do pick up other's bags as I find the trash annoying and undiplomatic for the community as a whole.

Thank you for the work...may it serve to benefit both two leggeds and four leggeds.

Aldona **Siczek**

Comment: board-comment: Dear Trustees
'And here we go again
I am convinced that the Green Tag program works very well and does not need to be tempered with every few months. It is costly and non-productive. In all of mine 39 years of walking on the trails in Boulder I have never heard of nor witnessed a dog conflict. Yes I have found trash broken bottles aluminum cans.
I suggest that we leave the GT program alone. There must be more pressing issues to work on.
Boulder City encourages dog adoption and at the same time OSMP closes trails to dogs. We need to decide whether we are a friend or a foe.
Thank you.
Aldona A Siczek

Aldona **Siczek**

Comment: comment: This note is to Steve Armstead: I am writing on behalf of FIDOS - we would like to note how many tickets were written on the OSMP lands and how many were for GT program violations. Is there a file that we can sort through to get the information ? we would greatly appreciate your help in this matter. Thank you. Aldona

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Aldona **Siczek**

Comment: Program really works - the % of compliance is of 90 % which is higher than required to pass the medical exam (75%).
There is no compelling reason to put further restrictions on V&S . There was a long and expensive CCG process to eliminate a lot of VS trails to appease no-dogs groups.
There are great HEALTH BENEFITS of everyday walking and hiking with a dog. A large percentage of us walks only because of the dog.
Please no ""in corridor trails"" - that is equivalent to eliminating V&S entirely.
And finally, REACH TO THE COMMUNITY and START VOLUNTEERING PROGRAMS !!!!!
THANK YOU.

Harry **Silver**

Comment: comment: Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed Green Tag Program Proposed Regulations. I have been walking dogs on Open Space almost every day since I moved here 10 years ago. My general feeling is that the new regulations are âmuch ado about nothingâ. Based on my personal experiences I have yet to witness dog misbehavior that would warrant the new regulations. Of course if asked a few may complain about a dog or two. Let us direct our attention those few dogs. Thus I see no need to complicate the issue of walking your dog off lease on open space with testing all dogs. Let those dog guardians and those dogs deemed displaying inappropriate behavior be the ones who need to comply with any new regulations. The 20 feet corridor seems a regulation that would be difficult to enforce. How many of us walk our dogs with a tape measure? Iâm sure at times my dogs may be passed the propose 20â foot corridor but if they are not bothering anybody or causing any problems for others whatâs the issue? In this case I would propose again dealing with those dogs who are misbehaving and are passed the 20âfoot corridor.

Nonna **Skumanich**

Comment: I live in Durham, NC but I grew up in Boulder and lived there from when I was an infant until my late 20s. I go back every year to spend time at my parents house which is close to Chautauqua. I can say I've spent my whole life in OSMP and seen all the changes over the years.

Most of the people with dogs are conscientious. However, there are a number that are not. Every time I've been hiking on the trails, I've had one encounter with a dog. Just this past April on the Enchanted Mesa trail, a runner was out with his dog. They were behind me and coming up to me, the dog was way ahead of the runner, and the dog ran smack into my back leg. If I had been an elderly person, I would have been knocked over. AS it was I was getting over an injury to my hip joints and the dog hit me hard enough to cause some pain. The runner is white haired gentleman who lives in the Bluebell/Mariposa neighborhood. His dog was a large white poodle looking dog. The man did not acknowledge the misbehavior of his dog. Another time, I was descending the Mt. Sanitas valley trail and there was a dog running wild and chasing deer. His owner was completely clueless about keeping his dog under control and thought the whole situation was funny.

You need to either put in stricter tests for granting people tags for their dogs, or perhaps set up some type of reporting method for dog misbehavior. I usually carry a camera when walking in Chautauqua, You could set up a web based reporting process to allow people to submit photos of the offending Human and their dog. Public exposure of the people who fail to control their dogs might shame them.

The other problem is the dog droppings. People who have their dogs off leash don't always see when their dog craps. But what's worse is the way the trails are littered with plastic bags with dog droppings in them. The signs at the trail heads give the wrong message, they say ""bag you dogs droppings *and dispose of it immediately* "" How are they supposed to dispose of it immediately when they are out on a trail? other than to drop it right there. You neeed to change the signs to tell people to keep it until they can dispose of it into a trash can. And perhaps it should be their trash at home. Perhaps OSMP could get a local entrepreneur to design a doggie back pack so the dogs can carry out their own waste and start requiring the dogs to pack it out.

Finally my last concern about dogs not being on leash is for the ground nesting birds. On Kohler mesa and Shanahan ridge, I heard meadowlarks singing this past April and this month. Dogs running around on the grassy meadows can potentially disturb those nests. Meadow larks are in decline, so we need to do what we can to protect them.
Thanks for taking the time to read my comments. If you have time to confirm receipt of these comments I would appreciate that: nonnasku@gmail.com

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Adam **St.Pierre**

Comment: I think it would be great if dogs had to pass a minimum obedience test prior to being issued a green tag, but think that the cost to implement this plan would be too high. I think better enforcement of the green tag program and ticketing of owners who's dogs are not behaving appropriately is a better solution.

Tricia **Stahr**

Comment: OSMP Correspondence:
Hi,

I am writing to you to let you know that as a dog owner and green tag participant, I take the green tag program seriously. I invested in lots of training for my dog so that I could earn the right to walk him off leash on the cherished open space that I vote for and support with every election.

Please do not take this privilege away from me or further constrict it. Fine the dogs that are showing the problem behavior and don't penalize the majority of us who are responsible dog owners.

Best regards,

Tricia Stahr

Mile **Stallman**

Comment: We need more open space that allows our dogs off leash and off trail, like at the CherryVale area south of the OSMP office. Also need more areas that our dogs can train and swim, in areas where bikes are not allowed.

I believe there is about 99,000 acreas or open space. Can we get ten thousand acres (10 percent) similar to the Cherryvale area South of the OSMP office.

FYI, I got the updated information and meeting notification email Feb 27th, 2012. Looks like there were three meetings about Open Space that have already occured with the last one on Feb 6th.

Would have been nice to find out about the meetings before they happened.

Mike **Stallman**

Comment: Hi Steve:

I can't make the meeting tonight due to my parenting responsibilities.

What a nice job you did on putting together the research.

My two cents:

1.Would like to make sure the agricultural open space remains open to all Boulder County Resident.
2.I wouldn't be opposed to adding a component where tag holders have to demonstrate control of their dogs. As an amatuer trainer, I realize this takes awhile to teach dogs... sometimes until dogs are a year old, but the puppies need to be off leash to train correctly...
3.I would like to note that some of the early training of dogs off leash is really critical to voice control (which you have included in your assessment). Meaning we need to have open space where dogs under one year of age can "Walk" with their custodian.
4.Julie Knutson, a professional dog trainer and formally of Boulder, highly recommends solo walks with puppies to help them become more responsive to the handlers..I can get you her contact information if we need it as a reference. A big part of "the daily walk" is that it needs to be free of other dogs and people, so the dog parks don't work.
5.I would like to see improved signage along more of the Agricultural Open Space and slightly improved parking.
6.Would like to see less padalocks on the gates to open space OR add a gate (like you have on the Hogan's area off of Cherryvale.
Thanks for responding to all my questions over the past year and helping me find agricultrual open space I can use with my dogs!

Mike Stallman

Sally Curtis **Starr**

Comment: OSMP Correspondence:
Gooo Fidos. you are doing a great job and much needed service for all of us.

Sally Curtis Starr

John **Steele**

Comment: Having been an OSMP volunteer trail guide for the past 3 years, I have been keenly aware of compliance issues with the Voice and Sight Tag program. I have seen that about 30% of the people with dogs ignore the regulations and allow their dogs off leash without V&S tags. Even those dogs with tags are often left unsupervised and interfere with dogs on leash and potentially with wild-life. Since there is no test associated with the V&S tags, but only reading something and paying for the tag, I recommend discontinuing this ineffective program. Why waste money administering a program that doesn't pay for itself and has no demonstrated effect on dogs and their handlers?

I recommend that leashes be required on almost all trails. A few carefully selected trails where off-leash dogs would cause minimal problems to wildlife and other visitors could be set aside for off-leash dogs.

Eli **Stein**

Comment: This program could have more signs, including penalty reminders, as I see it as a low cost way to remind dog hikers to have better control of their on and off leash dogs. Still way too many dogs off leash off trail and sometimes harrassing wildlife.

Dan **Steuer**

Comment: OSMP Correspondence:
Hello,

I am continually surprised when I read of all the significant problems with off-leash dogs on open space. Are the people recording these problems living in a different world than me? Are they viewing all dogs through an anti-dog lens? I can only conclude it is one of those 2 choices. I hike on the open space with my two well-behaved older dogs and see very very few of the conflicts that OSMP appears to think are running rampant.

If I sound angry in this email, it's because I am. I am tired of my tax dollars going to support land acquisition and programs for a department that has its own agenda and doesn't care about my interests. I have voted for every single tax increase in the past 12 years because I feel strongly about protecting our open space. But I'm done. Because it appears that the people in charge of our open space seek at every turn to limit my peaceful enjoyment of the open space in furtherance of their restrictive agenda. All I have seen in the past 12 years are more and more restrictions and closures and fees, even though the conflicts are very few.

I expect the worst, because quite frankly I don't think you care about my opinion. But because I still have some shred of idealistic belief in good government, I hope that you do the right thing, and look not be swayed by a hidden agenda.

Sincerely
Dan Steuer

Gary **Stevens**

Comment: FIDO is simply blind to the issues of off leash dogs. I travel to city, state and national parks all over the USA. The most pleasant parks to be in are the ones with dogs on leash. The best solution here in Boulder is all dogs on leash all the time!

Gary **Stevens**

Comment: ALL DOGS ON LEASH, ALL THE TIME is the only workable, long term solution for OSMP. Very high fines for non-compliance of leash and poop regulations.

OSMP time and money currently used to manage dogs could be better used elsewhere.

Edie **Stevens**

Comment: Based on my experience as a property owner at the entrance to Open Space off Hardscrabble Drive and a frequent hiker on Open Space, i believe that the voice and sight control program has been a paper tiger.

I have seen dog owners ineffectually shouting at their dogs, who race off trail to investigate a sound or scent. I have seen dog owners ignoring that their dogs are wandering yards ahead or behind them, and even out of sight, while they talk with companions or on their cellphones. I have seen and experienced dog owners allowing their dogs to approach other hikers on the trails without any concern for whether the dogs are welcome, or, at best, a sheepish grin or apology. (I welcome those approaches, but others do not.) I have seen dog owners allowing their dogs to engage in fights with other dogs. I have watched dog owners allowing their dogs to go off trail to eliminate their waste without picking it up and discarding it in the containers Open Space has provided. Finally, i have watched dog owners leaving Open Space and re-entering the City, allowing their dogs to race onto my property and even my deck, again shouting ineffectually for their return.

It is beyond common sense that the "test" for voice and control is nothing but an on-line whitewash. Training dogs to respond to verbal commands is a difficult process that must be repeated on a regular basis. While I sympathize with dog owners who want to give their pets some freedom to roam on Boulder's Open Space trails (I would want my dog to have that freedom, were I a dog owner), I believe that freedom must be acquired through responsibility.

Therefore, I propose that green tags be issued only to dogs that (1) are licensed by the City or County of Boulder: (2) have successfully completed a training program by a certified animal trainer; (3) have been certified as having successfully completed that program; (3) whose owners renew their licenses as required by ordinances; (4) whose owners renew their certifications on a periodic basis, to be determined by the City.

I realize that this proposal would require a significant investment by each dog owner, but the dog owners I know accept the costs of keeping their dogs healthy and comfortable. I believe that, if the City, with the assistance of FIDOS, were to emphasize the advantages of owning a truly well-trained dog, including the pride in a dog that really responds to commands, Boulder's dog owners would accept that cost as well.

Edie Stevens
2059 Hardscrabble Drive
Boulder

Kathy **Strathearn**

Comment: OSMP Correspondence:
I, Kathy Strathearn, oppose the proposed changes in the Sight and Voice Tag Program. I am not a resident of Boulder County, but I do pay for the pass on my vehicle to use the trails. If you limit trail use to only Boulder residents, wouldn't that seem rather unfriendly of your county? How would we all like it if all counties in Colorado had a rule that you may only use the trails if you are a resident of that county? Not too much, I'd say.

I walk two dogs in the Boulder Park system and have the appropriate tags. In all of my hikes, I have never seen a dog that was in any way a threat to other hikers or dogs. If you approve these changes, costs will skyrocket because it will require additional personnel to enforce the new rules. The enforcers would rarely find people breaking the rules. These costs will then be passed on to all hikers (adding to the cost of the vehicle tag) and licensed dog owners (who pay for the privilege by obtaining the green tag), making the park trails less affordable therefore having fewer users to enjoy them.

I believe that there are very few people who would complain about the dogs on the trails. They are most likely people who do not like dogs anyway and will do whatever they can to have more stringent rules in place regarding dogs. You are likely hearing complaints from a very few people who actually use the trail system. It is my hope that you will listen to the majority of the trail users rather than the minority!!

Kathy Strathearn

Michelle **Sullivan**

Comment: I moved here from Santa Fe NM 3 years ago.
Just read all of the papers posted on your site, including the evaluation of what needs to be regulated and measures of success.
I just want to say that from my perspective, coming from another city that had no regulation when I left, wading through dog poop at the bottom of every trail (it has gotten better recently), Boulder's current program is incredibly good. People are considerate, do their best to make sure I am dog friendly before letting their dog come up to me, the poop is there sometimes, but it could be horrendous.
You are 80% there. I think that may be good enough!

Nancy **Sullo**

Comment: I think the city is making too much of this. I've seen very few problems, even before I had dogs. Many of the proposals would be a burocratic and financial nightmare, and have the potential of backfiring. Most tag holders now are very responsible and constantly trying to improve. If things get too tight and people are forced out of the system, they will not care anymore.

I am in favor of some changes. An on-line test to be sure people watch the video is a good idea. Perhaps participation in one educational session would be helpful. Also, I think proof of rabies is important. Perhaps this could be addressed by having an immediate losing of your tag if you are caught without a rabies tag. Proof could be required for getting your tag, perhaps by emailing a copy of the rabies tag if you are applying online. (Keeping up to date would be more difficult, but most people who comply with rabies requirements keep them up to date.

Connie **Szeflinski**

Comment: OSMP Correspondence:
I just read the most recent email from FIDOs and I cannot believe that two dogs playing is considered "conflict". My husband and I often take out two dogs out and they chase each other around - I sure hope that someone observing that did not come to the conclusion that there was any conflict
- those dogs love each other more than life itself. They play constantly
- and yes, that means chasing and perhaps even some barking and every now and then actual rolling around on the ground wrestling. But it is so far from "conflict" that it is almost laughable that you would have observers that don't know dogs well enough to know what is play and what isn't.

If you're going to monitor dogs on the trails please at least get some monitors that actually know and love dogs rather than folks who just want to be rid of them. Or, hire some of the dog people to observe children and see what kinds of behaviour we think should be outlawed...

later,
connie

Kathy **Tegtmeyer**

Comment: As a dog owner/walker I am pleased that the City is reviewing the V+S green-tag program with the intention of improving the program for long-term use in managing open space for various users.

I am in favor of several of the proposed changes, including: requiring proof of vaccinations, testing to demonstrate voice control, online testing of V+S rules, and improving awareness and understanding of the expectations for V+S control. If the green-tag fee needs to be raised to support these changes, then I will be in favor of that fee increase (within reason).

I am not in favor of requiring off-leash dogs to remain within 20 feet of trail corridors or establishing residency requirements for green tags. On the trail-corridor issue, I believe that requiring dogs to remain on trail could potentially result in more dog-dog and dog-person conflicts and may only negligibly reduce impacts to off-trail areas. I see no net benefit to non-dog trail users or to the environment.

On the residency-requirement issue, I would prefer that additional outreach and education efforts be implemented before changing the green-tag program to residents only. There is little educational information for out-of-town open space users to refer to when they hit the trails with their dog. Many are not fully aware of the green-tag program and have little knowledge of the expectations for V+S control. However, out-of-town users will certainly want to comply with the program when they understand that it allows them to enjoy open space more freely in the company of their dogs. Better compliance from out of town users will result in a better experience for all trail users.

Thank you for considering my input. The V+S control program is extremely valuable to me. I take walks on open space several times a week with my dogs. I was very happy to spend the time needed to train my dogs so that we would have the privilege of walking together, unleashed, in such beautiful surroundings. Please do not punish the dog-walking community with unwarranted restrictions due to compliance issues caused by a small number of users, mainly those who remain uninformed regarding both the substance and the benefits of the V+S rules.

Rich **Testardi**

Comment: comment: I received a small flyer telling me to comment here to protect dog owner rights in Boulder -- as a responsible dog owner for the last 15 years I'm doing the opposite.

Unfortunately I think dog owners in Boulder largely ignore the current green tag rules and regulations... Not only do I continually see dogs off leash in the non-off-leash areas (West End of Pearl St Eben G. Fine Park etc.) when I do encounter dogs off leash in off-leash areas NEVER *ONCE* HAVE I HAD THE DOG OWNER ASK IF THEIR OFF-LEASH DOG MAY APPROACH MY ON-LEASH DOG LIKE THEY ARE SUPPOSED TO. The dogs just run and charge and start to play usually (or growl occasionally) -- they have knocked down my young daughter with their play and once one of Eric Gertler's three off-leash Golden Retrievers from Pearl St ran right into our open front door chasing our dog and broke a piece of pottery in the house (after pooping in our yard).

The flyer says that There is no problem and Since when is 'play' conflict? -- I think that's the attitude of the majority of the dog owners in Boulder and I'd like to ask a much simpler question -- WHY CAN'T DOG OWNERS FOLLOW THE SIMPLE GREEN TAG ETIQUITE RULES? I mean we have a *ton* of privileges here in Boulder and yet we break the existing rules and instead try and get more privileges -- that's just irresponsible.

Katherine **Thibault**

Comment: The Voice and Sight Tag Program is hands-down the best part of living in Boulder. It increases my quality of life significantly. I have never had a bad trail experience as a result of the program.

Carol **Turner**

Comment: I use the trails quite a bit with my two dogs and always follow the rules. I am deeply concerned that the off-leash dog trails available to us dog lovers is going to shrink even further. The Dowdy Draw trail has already become too over-run with bikes (it's too dangerous now to hike there because of reckless bikers). Please don't take away the Mesa Trail from us! Don't punish those of us who follow the rules for the bad behavior of the ten to fifteen percent who are too immature and irresponsible to follow rules. I read the evaluation online and was left with an uneasy feeling that the anti-dog folks are winning this ongoing fight. Please keep Mesa Trail off-leash.

Doris **Turner**

Comment: OSMP Correspondence:
Dear Open Space folks,

I have been a dog owner in Boulder most of the 35 years I've lived in Boulder. Our last dog used open space far more than the others and we enjoyed exploring the trails all around boulder. I found that walking the dog on a leash in no way was comparable to allowing the dog to go off leash. He was happier, got more exercise and it reduced his desire to 'protect' me. We had a green tag and for the most part he was obedient and polite.

No person or animal is going to be perfect 100% of the time. Given that fact, I hope that the 'conflicts' that were documented on your survey can be put into context. If there is sniffing by a dog, I don't consider that a conflict. Interestingly when I attended an introduction to the Green tag program at the library yard, the dog used to demonstrate how a dog should come on command got distracted and didn't obey. Should he have gotten a ticket?
I would be interested in seeing how many tickets are written for tourists & college students vs. for residents. I ask because I think there is a learning curve for everyone.

I think that OSMP has done some good things in terms of teaching folks & their pets good behavior. Posting signs and having the leash restrictions at trail heads is good. Having dog doo bags and trash cans at trail heads is good.

I voted to purchase open space and expect that it will be available for use by me and any dog I own.

I hope that any new restrictions will be minimal and that OSMP can find ways to keep open space open to hikers, bikers and their pets.

Respectfully,
Doris Turner

Carolyn **Usher**

Comment: comment: Green Tag Program Proposed Regulations

Testing. In school a passing grade of C is considered average. Will then the average dog receive a green tag with average compliance (70%)? Even professional trainers will allow the dog to prove himself off leash from time to time when they have demonstrated good behavior understanding that there will be set backs which will require them to go back on leash for a period of time. It's a process not an absolute destination.

Revocation. How is it then that all green tag dogs who have passed with a C or better can be expected to perform at 100% at all times or risk having their green tag revoked? There needs to be a distinction between generally well behaved dogs and completely out of control dogs. Even a well behaved dog may lose it from time to time but doesnât deserve to have its tag revoked. Let's look at the big picture.

20' corridor. As a rule a 20' radius (not corridor) in the course of a walk is not entirely unreasonable but during those moments when we want to allow our dogs to stop and play either during a playful meet or in the case of my dog when he was a pup and used to do wide racing circles in the field to burn up some energy I think that 20â is unreasonable.

Proof of vaccination. I have a 15 year old dog. To vaccinate her at this point in her life would put her more at risk than prevention. How will proof of vaccination mitigate concerns of poop on the trail or negative encounters?

Anne **Vickery**

Comment: The real problem, which you all know, is the guardians not the dogs. The process needs to shift to identifying the guardian who is supposed to train the dog. Instead of an unreadable green dog tag, each guardian who takes a dog into the open space should wear on his or her outside garment an elastic or velcro band with a large visible number on it so the guardian and thus the trainer of the dogs can be identified.

When dogs run at you down a steep trail and scare you followed by some distance by the guardian (McClintock trail) or when two big dogs charge down the Saddle rock trail and circle around you followed by an unconcerned runner, or a dog runs way ahead of its guardian out of sight into the area where deer are - you can not see the green tag or identify the dogs. If guardians can be easily identified, they would be very careful and aware of how their dogs behave and the quality of training would greatly increase. This is not a radical move. RMNP does not allow dogs on its trails. There is a leash law in the Indian Peaks and James Peak Wilderness areas with hefty fines for ignoring the regulation. Boulder Parks and Open Space would be much more lenient, alowing dogs off leash, but the guardians could easily be identified if their dogs were not properly trained.

You have a choice - keeping the "feel good" but unworkable system of today, or changing to a system where the dogs are under control, don't charge other hikers or chase wildlife or run off trail through the woods. I request that you seriously consider these comments. Thank you, Anne Vickery

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Guy **Vigers**

Comment: Dear City Council and OSBT

I have read the recent Voice and Sight Tag Program Evaluation (April 2012) and would like to thank the OSMP staff for doing such a great job on the report. I have lived in Boulder for 25 years and been a dog owner for two years, and I have three comments on the report:

1) At no point does the report even define âtrail corridorâ (option 7). Does this mean only on the trail itself? Within 6 feet of the trail? 25 feet? How would you enforce this? Put up extra fences on all trails? Option 7 as currently presented is a non-starter.

2) I I think that staff have correctly identified the two biggest problems: A small fraction of dogs not under control and a much larger number of owners who donât pick up poop, or who leave it fermenting in plastic bags by the trail.

3) The biggest problems, then, are already covered by current regulations. But unless you have staff enforcing them, they do no good. I walk my dog in Boulder open space about 300 times a year, but I have only seen rangers on trail twice in that time. There is not much point in tweaking the regulations if you canât afford to enforce the current ones.

Thank you for reading this.

Guy Vigers

Sarah **Washburn**

Comment: Thanks for the opportunity to review the current White Paper.
I disagree that limiting the program to City or County of Boulder will ""decrease conflict involving dogs on OSMP"" and ""decrease natural resource impacts"" (page 23). This implies the out of town disobedient dogs are proportionally frequenting osmp more than resident dogs. Untrue. You would do more good having steeper fines than alienating your non-residents who already have purchased tags and play by the rules. Please take the residency requirement off the table. It doesnt assist in your goals and it is a highly-needed amenity people are more than willing to pay for.

Marcia **Weaks**

Comment: the staff did a great job with the analysis and data. as a dog owner, i am in favor of maximizing the amount of trails open to dogs and reducing violations of the rules. its too easy now for dog owners to claim they have voice and sight control and to just leave dog poop and/or bags on the trails. several suggestions include having more places to deposit waste on the trails (know this will increase costs) and also to provide incentives for picking up poop bags and keeping dogs on leash where they are supposed to be. perhaps for the former the City could have a contest for the most poop bags picked up and deposited (on the honor system) in a year or other time frame. not sure how to ensure compliance with leashes on trails other than to encourage other dog owners to ""help"" one another with compliance. also think that spot checks of voice and sight control could be implemented by Rangers on their regular patrols and/or have checks of compliance on the trail by selecting a small percentage of owners to be checked each year.

Lindsay **Weber**

Comment: OSMP Correspondence:
Hello: Please see the attached letter describing an attack on my dog near the Flatirons Vista trailhead and my concern about Boulder's current voice and sight tag program. I would appreciate a response.

Thank you,
Lindsay Weber

Letter Attached

Susan **Weeks**

Comment: OSMP Correspondence:
To Whom It May Concern,

I have hiked on Dakota Ridge in the early morning for the past 45 years. I have seen a dramatic improvement in the behavior of dogs and their owners since the Green Tag program was implemented. Before the program I would pick up poop (from other dogs) on a daily basisI figured that was my karma for all the years I ran on Dakota Ridge in the 70s and 80s and never picked up my dogs poop. Now I rarely see dog poop on the trailalthough I often see bags filled with poop left by the owners and sometimes that same bag is there the next day at which time I pick it up. I also pick up trash left by humans which I have seen a lot more of in the past few years.

Although I would be fine with meeting a ranger and showing him/her that my dog is well-behaved in order to be able to continue to use the Open Space, I know that it is not logistically possible for rangers to test everyone and their dog.

As someone who loves walking my well-behaved dogs on the Open Space I hope that the Open Space Board will continue to allow and fine tune the Green Tag program.

Thank you for reading my letter. Please feel free to call me if you have any questions.

Best,
Susan

Susan Weeks

Tim **Welker**

Comment: I have had good experiences walking my dog as part of your program. I have found other dogs to be well behaved and only occasionally see dog waste left behind and usually it is in a bag someone forgot to pick up. You might want to remind dog owners in this program of the rules associated with having their dog loose. This could be done via an annual email to each of us and perhaps signs at trail heads.

Debra **Welsh**

Comment: OSMP Correspondence:
I have written to express my opinions on the increasing number of restrictions for dogs on open space before. I feel as if my voice is never heard. I go with my dog on the Bobolink trail several times per week. I see many, many hundreds of dogs and their owners and dog encounters. Rarely, almost never, are there inappropriate non-responsive, aggressive or threatening dogs. Dogs are generally playful, friendly and curious. They are a joy for most of us to be around and they bring smiles to many non-dog owners, as well as to other dog owners. My dog carrying large logs around always brings smiles, chuckles and comments. Do not change the green tag rules. Do not add any more restrictions. They are unnecessary and punitive. When will this campaign against dogs on open space, even as restricted as it is, ever end? Stop! Stop it now! Show that you can make some reasoned, versus extremist, decisions.

If you have received the comments from Sue DeRose, please know that I support them fully. She was much more articulate than I am being.

Debbe Welsh

Steve **Westra**

Comment: board-comment: I am very discouraged at the direction of the green tag program proposed by OSMP staff. While I agree that changes should be made I have no experienced the kinds of conflicts between dogs and/or owners that seem to be cited. I have been walking dogs on open space for twenty five years and rarely experience agression conflict or bad owner judgement (except for poop). The citizens of Boulder are conscientious and sensitive to the needs of nature and other dogs. Testing adds another expense to the OSMP budget which is already working at max capacity. Please tread slowly and carefully into changing this program. Steve Westra

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Myra **Wilensky**

Comment: OSMP Correspondence:
I am e-mailing today to express my concerns regarding the Green Tag program. For the majority of dog guardians, it is working and it's working well. I greatly appreciate the opportunity to live in Boulder County and with the green tags, to allow my dogs to do what they love to do: run off-leash while hiking with me. I am a conscientious guardian and most of the other dog guardians I encounter are the same way. Sure, there are a few that let their dogs run wild and don't pick up their dog's excrement, but those few should not ruin it for the rest of us who do follow the green tag requirements. Dogs need off-leash opportunities to run, to sniff and to explore their surroundings.

As a wildlife enthusiast, I do support closing some trails to off-leash dogs to protect nesting birds and other wildlife. However, I don't support a proposal to establish a 10 foot trail corridor on all trails. That's no different than keeping my dogs on leash.

Have we in Boulder become so intolerant that we can't share our Open Space with dogs, hikers, runners and bird watchers?

I encourage the Open Space staff to leave the Green Tag program alone. It's working and it's what makes living in Boulder County with dogs so enjoyable.

Thank you,

Myra Wilensky
Superior, CO

Dylan **Williams**

Comment: Dear Board Members

My pricipal concern with the dog licensing program is that it reinforce the city leash law and clean-up laws. As it is many seem to extend voice and sight control to anywhere within the city limits not just open space. The only response I have ever gotten when I try to bring this up with dog owners is Why don't you get a life or responses in that vein.

A great help I think would be to revise the training to further emphasize that these licenses do not apply to spaces within the city limits. Another really positive step would be to up enforcement within the city limits but I do understand that is not your purview. The nice thing about these changes is that they would not be controversial but would have a very positive impact.

Thank you

Dylan

Claudia **Williams**

Comment: I would happily pay a 25-50 dollar fee to cover the cost for my 2 dogs exhibit their recall skills. I think 5 minutes at the Dry creek trail would convince even the most stringent observer that my dogs are in control off leash. This was NOT an easy task- I have 2 Jack russell terriers with strong hunting drives. I spent $ 1,000 dollars and many hours working with a private trainer using e-collars to achieve this goal. Having been a homeowner, hiker and taxpayer in Boulder for 20 yrs, and I would hate to lose the priviledge of being able to hike with my best buds on the land that I have helped to purchase. By the way- you can teach an old dog new tricks-- my older dog was 8 yrs old when I finally bite the bullet and hired a trainer after many yrs of unsuccessful Humane Society classes, including outdoor trail classes. PLease, please, please hold dog owners accountable- make a on site obedience exam manditory before taling away off leash hiking.

Stewart **Williams**

Comment: I've been interested in possible Green Tag program changes and several days ago was handed a pamphlet re this and would like to add my comments. If some of what is rumored is true, it would appear you're ultimate aim is to eliminate off leash dog use as I see there are complaints about things like dogs chasing and smelling each other, barking even in limited amounts, shaking off water after getting wet and running more than a few yards off trails. We're talking about dogs here and this sort of activity is their normal behavior. Access to the open space in the green tag areas is one of the pleasures of living in Boulder county and you may end up denying access to excersise for both us owners and the dogs. I'm sure the complaints come from non dog owners who have the use of miles of trails where there are no dogs and must be mostly just mean spirited. I hope this gets my voice heard and would welcome the chance to make it more so. Sincerely, Stewart Williams.

Nan **Wilson**

Comment: Amazing white paper, but sad that so much time and energy and money must be put into this program. As an OSMP volunteer who is often out in the field, it is common to witness multiple Voice and Sight Tag Program violations each hour I am on a trail that allows it. I have been personally jumped on by dogs after asking their owners to control their dogs (including covered with mud), I have been snarled at and felt threatened by dogs off leash, and I have witnessed time and time again dogs chasing wildlife off trail. I have witnessed an attitude that is all about entitlement, and heard the words ""My dog NEVER does this,"" more times than I can count. I have given up calling rangers as there are too few rangers to handle these problems. The majority of incidents go unreported and thus likely do not show up in your white paper statistics. Boulder has created an ""entitlement"" issue with regards to dogs - what other towns call dog owners ""guardians"", and what other public lands allow dogs to be off leash? Having traveled throughout the US and visited many parks (national, state, county and local), refuges (national and state), I have never seen anything like Boulder. The norm out in the rest of America is ALL DOGS ON LEASE, ALL THE TIME in a public arena. Period. It's the only answer to the problems on OSMP lands. Obviously due to the history set by this program and entitlement issues that are part of the norm here in Boulder, this would cause an uproar. But in the end it solves all of the problems once dog owners get used to it. Give them lots of dog parks, let them know where their dogs can run free in the county in space not dedicated to protecting wildlife and humans, and certainly educate them on what the purpose of protected land is. At minimum, I would like to see all of the proposed changes implemented, even if it is run by volunteers due to lack of budget. As a citizen of Boulder, and a lover of OSMP, I have quit my volunteer work as a Trail Guide due to dog issues, and I have quit using most of the trails that allow dogs off leash. Dogs have a major negative impact on my enjoyment of these lands. And no, I do not hate dogs - LOVE them. I do dislike dog owners who do not abide by the rules. All dogs on leash, all the time. It's the only way!

Bart **Windrum**

Comment: My wife and I, alone and together, take our puggle on the Shanahan subsystem under the green tag program. Because I'm a dog lover I've been very aware of dog behavior on OSMP trails even before getting Rumple 2 years ago; I'm the one who typically initiates dog-human contact. So I'm an interested observer of dog behavior.

I think that FIDOS president Sue DeRose is correct in her assessment of what is really going on now in your department about dogs.

Are you guys nuts? What impossible definitions of normal and appropriate dog behavior are you aspiring to? Your proposed definitions of conflict behavior are so right wing as to lead me to believe you want to effectively close the system to dogs. I experience ZERO problems with dogs on the entire Shanahan subsystem over which we hike, whether with Rumple or sans-dog.

I will vote to withhold my tax dollars from the system if you proceed down this path. As the author of the ""B470"" op-ed during the WTSA bike trail situation, please know I will speak up to council and through the media in this regard. To put this in context, I would not have voted against more OS taxation had bikes been allowed in the WTSA. As much as I detest the idea of bike-SUV's on hiking trails, I dislike where you're going about dogs even more.

You're barking up the wrong trees on this one.

Bart **Windrum**

Comment: the no strike rule (1 violation and you lose priviledges) is a very bad, unfair, unrealistic idea. Draconian harsh. I think someone who doesn't want this dog program is trying to make a mtn of a molehill; I have not observed *any* of this sort of bad behavior on my many walks on the Shanahan subsystem, my backyard.

Bart **Windrum**

Comment: board-comment: My wife and I alone and together take our puggle on the Shanahan subsystem under the green tag program. Because I'm a dog lover I've been very aware of dog behavior on OSMP trails even before getting Rumple 2 years ago' I'm the one who typically initiates dog-human contact. So I'm an interested observer of dog behavior.

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You're barking up the wrong trees on this one.
city: Boulder

Gary **Wing**

Comment: I attended your presentation meeting on 5/24 at E. Bldr rec center and as I have thought more about that meeting I have thought how unfortunate it is that such a huge issue is being made of a substantially positive program. I have participated in the green tag program since its inception in 2005 when I got a Border Collie puppy. Since then I have visited the S. Boulder Creek trail almost every day, rain or shine. I start at the Bobolink trail head, hike to S. Bldr Rd and back. Since 2005 I would estimate that I've spend well over 2600 hours on that trail and a few others with my dogs (I got a 2nd one in 2007). Over that time I would guess I have encountered maybe 3-4 conflicts which in most cases involved bicyclists frustrated that there are actually other people on the trails slowing them down. On an average visit I run into maybe 15-20 people, so that accounts for about 40000 encounters.. that calculates to one conflict in every 10000 encounters. I see dog owners with their pockets stuffed with bags to pick up poop, and routinely see 1 or 2 bags along the path which I and other dog owners pick up lest they be forgotten by those who left them there. This program is a raging success.. people are getting out with their dogs and their kids, meeting one another, forging relationships, enjoying the resources they have supported on ballot issues, just as one would have hoped. The trails look identical to the way they did when this program started - they are still beautiful with no material discernible degradation caused since this program started. So what exactly is the real issue? Are you responding to a small number of ""squeaky wheels?"" Does someone have an ax to grind because they don't like to see dogs on the trails? I mean, this is really a non-issue.. come and join me any day and share the experience I have and tell me I'm wrong. I attended the meeting I mentioned and also the trustee meeting downtown, and I have to tell you I am extremely frustrated that in something that works so well so much of the time we can only focus on the few negative aspects of the program when so much of it is positive. If we expected the dogs to behave like robots we should have never started the program and I fear that that where you're headed with this initiative. How about we support the program by adding more trash cans and more poop bag dispensers and maybe some porta-potties? How about we celebrate a successful program instead of striving for some level of perfection that was never attainable (nor desirable). This whole exercise is endemic of government constantly trying to manage and control, rather than to provide services and resources to those who fund them. This is what out political debate is too freqeuntly about in this country and I'm afraid that it is not the dog program that has a problem but the government that is charged with administering it (and FYI I'm a Democrat). I have voted for every open space ballot issue there has been since I moved here in 1979, and this is what you're doing with the money we approve for the purpose of managing these resources?... red herrings, and Powerpoint presentations to keep us all in line. There must be something else of real value that could be done with that money. Maybe we've funded too much, and too many park rangers if all we can do is this. I think you're wasting my money and my time on issues that don't really exist except in some extreme tails of the bell curve. So I vote for laying of some rangers who have nothing to do but prepare PowerPoint slides for unnecessary trumped up issues, and I don't vote for any more open space funding ballot initiatives - maybe we should spend the money on feeding the homeless.

Gary **WIng**

Comment: It sounds like conflict issues come substantially from visitor surveys. Do the visitor surveys include green tag dog owners? AS someone who uses the trails everyday with my green tag dogs it appears to me that conflict is, 1st of all minimal.. There's really not a lot going on out there and I observe about 400 hours a year. 2nd conflict frequently is instigated by people who don't understand the rights and expectations of the dog owners, and clearly don't understand the rules for themselves as it relates to dogs and their owners. I think perhaps other trail users especially cyclists should also have to view a video and perhaps take a test to qualify to ride their bikes on the trails.. maybe a blue tag for cyclists.

Charlie **Winn**

Comment: The green tag system work better than I could have imagined. In the years I have walked the trails there have been very few encounters and the trails are remarkably clean. The program may need some tweaking but very little

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Rich **Wolf**

Comment: Thanks for the public meeting. I am concerned that linking ""Proof of Vaccination"" to the Tag Program implies that off leash dogs are more likely to bite someone. Perhaps all dogs on OSMP should have proof of vaccination?

Sally **Wulffe**

Comment: To the Open Space Trustees

My favorite thing in the world is being able to take my dog for a walk everyday in the beautiful foothills. If I have to leash my dog the walk isnât pleasant at all. She and my dogs before her have been raised to hike near me and to keep out of the way of other hikers. On a leash she pulls and trips me stopping and starting to enjoy the variety of outdoor smells. I have metal bars in my back weak ankles a new hip and lots of arthritis that doesnât do well with inconsistent movements. Off leash my dog is happy sniffing at her own pace not bothering anyone around her. I get such joy from watching her frolic and enjoy friendly encounters with other dogs. When I see deer or a coyote I leash her because she is likely to take off to check them out. She would never attack any animal but likes to check it out and then gets scared and runs back to me. My understanding is that Green Tagged dogs have not injured any animals (100% compliance) and have rarely chased animals(99% compliance). If I had been observed the time or two she has gotten away from me I would accept a fine as a reasonable consequence. I always clean up after my dog and am irritated by those who donât. In the last 30 years I have never had a dog come at me aggressively.
Please donât penalize all dog walkers for the invasion of irresponsible weekend visitors. Most of us know one another from years of passing on our daily walks and remind one another at times to be responsible. We take care of our open space every day. Please listen to us!!!
Sally Wulffe

Anna **Zummer**

Comment: The proposed changes to the Voice and Sight Tag Program are unnecessary and should not be made to the guidelines previously set up. Although many of the changes seem to fit in with previous rules (i.e. regulating vaccinations and required renewals), others are far too restrictive and take away from the seemingly previous goals of the Voice and Sight Tag Program. Requiring dogs to be within 10'-20' of their owners is limiting in various hiking situations and unreasonable in many cases. Also, requiring attendance to a specific class and/or information meeting will significantly reduce those able to apply for the programs thus limiting the amount of people able to enjoy the true beauty of Colorado. This program should be here to help keep people and the animals safe, rather than cut off a huge majority from participating in this program at all.

From: <lori@boulderfuller.com>
Date: Mon, Jan 28, 2013 at 10:12 AM
Subject: Vaske & Conflict
To: John Putnam <jputnam@kaplankirsch.com>, Tom Isaacson <Isaacson16@comcast.net>, Shelley Dunbar <Shelley@seatosummit.com>, Frances Hartogh <frances.hartogh@gmail.com>, Feinberga@comcast.net

Dear OSBT,

I would like to clarify some statements made in Attachment E, from the V&S Tag Memo OSMP prepared for Thursday's study session. I'm not sure what has been discussed behind the scenes regarding OSMP's Conflict Study, but at the risk of exhausting this issue, I would like to take this opportunity to clarify a couple of things stated in this memo.

The last sentence of the 2nd paragraph in Attachment E states, "Staff used the results from this (Vaske) study to define conflictive behaviors for monitoring the effectiveness of the Tag and Trailhead Leash Programs." This statement is incorrect. Vaske studied 11 specific behaviors, none of which include barking, getting things muddy, shaking water on people, growling, dogs stopping abruptly and running into people. In fact, OSMP's Conflict Study even included "conflicts" when the dog was leashed, which aren't relevant to a GT study.

In Vaske's below report, he talks a great deal about PCI (Potential for Conflict Index) and which behaviors are considered "acceptable," and which ones are "unacceptable." If you look at page 15 of this report, you will see that "Dogs Off Trail," and "Dogs Play Chasing" fall clearly into the "acceptable" range. Therefore including these behaviors in a definition of "conflict" is inconsistent with the results of the Vaske's study. Considering, that play chasing, was observed (at least one time by a single dog) over twice as much as the next dog behavior conflict (barking), the inclusion of this behavior significantly skews results.

http://www.bouldercolorado.gov/files/openspace/pdf_research/Norm-dog.pdf

It is also important to know that the Vaske study was also not well received--most notably by OSBT member, and University of Colorado math professor, Bill Briggs. The argument of justifying the "conflict" study with results from the Vaske is not only misconstrued, it shows a fundamental lack of understanding. Nothing helpful will be gained by lumping serious offenses (dogs attacking) with harmless behaviors (dogs playing) as a single metric "conflict." Continuing to defend this approach does not bode well for the department.

Thanks for your time,
Lori Fuller

Section III

Written Comments/Open House Comments

4/9/12

To whom it may concern:

I was hiking with my boyfriend Bryan Schiffner and dog Smooch from the Doudy Draw trail to Flatirons Vista Trailhead and back this Saturday 4/7/12. My dog, a female 4 year old coonhound, was attacked near the Flatirons Vista Trailhead around 1:45 pm. The dog that attacked her was a male black and white spotted medium-sized dog, possibly a cattle dog–pointer mix, wearing a yellow harness with a handle. His owner was an older Caucasian woman, about 50 to 60 years old, with short gray hair, glasses, and a slightly overweight build.

This other dog was off-leash, not under voice and sight control, and not displaying a green tag. He was running all over the hillside, and then he spotted my dog and charged her. The woman owner was about 30 feet away from him. We tried to keep the dog away from Smooch using our legs, yelling at it, and using a "Dog Dazer" that emits a high-pitched noise to deter dogs (which we carry because we don't like our dog being approached by strange off-leash dogs). The other dog was intent on getting at our dog and his owner did not have the control to get him to come back to her. My dog was on leash, heeling next to me, and was fearful of this other dog that was so focused on her.

The other dog latched on to my dog's back leg and gave her a puncture wound. Bryan grabbed the dog and threw him off twice and I kicked him once, but the dog kept coming back and going after my dog. Bryan and I were both knocked to the ground. Eventually the woman caught up, picked up her dog, said our dog "started it," turned her back, and walked quickly away. She did not help during the attack. She did not apologize. She did not tell us her contact info or tell us if her dog was current on vaccinations. Then we had to hike the 3 miles back to our car at the Doudy Draw trailhead before we could take our dog to get medical attention.

We took Smooch to urgent care, and we ended up with a $373 bill.

This woman broke most of the tag rules – the dog was not under her voice and sight control at all times, the dog did not have a green tag, the dog did not come and stay with the guardian immediately upon command, and the dog charged and showed aggression toward my dog, me, and Bryan.

I am very disappointed in and upset with the Voice and Sight dog tag program. Of all the dogs we passed on our hike that day, only <u>one</u> was truly under voice and sight control.

Not all people or dogs like dogs running up to them. It seems like many dog owners think that just because their dog is friendly they can run loose and run right up to other dogs and people. I don't care if other dogs are friendly, I do not want them approaching me or my dog. It is absolutely unacceptable for a person to run up to another person, get in their face, and jump on their back. It is also unacceptable for a dog to do that to another dog and to other people.

I feel violated, angry, and upset. I am upset that this woman caused us harm and will not face any consequences. I am upset that my dog got hurt, physically and psychologically, because someone else was completely irresponsible.

I am hoping that this letter will serve the following purposes:

1) I hope Boulder officers and park rangers will keep an eye out for the woman and dog described above, in case the dog attacks again.
2) More importantly, I hope what happened will influence stricter tag program policy.
    a. Currently, the program is a joke. Most dog owners do not take the program as the serious responsibility that it is. There is no certification or testing process to prove that an owner has voice and sight control at all times. I feel that true voice and sight control over a dog is extremely rare, and people should not be allowed to have their dog off leash until they can prove they deserve it. As it is now, any idiot can pay $15 and have their dog off leash on open space land. Dog owners should have to earn this privilege, not buy it.
    b. This program is not enforced. As I previously stated, only one dog that we passed on our hike was truly under voice and sight control. On most hikes, we only have to step onto the trail before we see someone violating the voice and sight control rules. We have never seen anybody patrolling the trails or handing out tickets.
    c. The fines for violating voice and sight control rules are inadequate and should be increased to actually serve as a deterrent.

Hiking trails are not dog parks. I hope to see major changes to, or possibly the elimination of, Boulder's voice and sight tag program. It is irresponsible for the program to continue as is.

I would be happy to talk with someone further if there are questions or follow-up. Thank you for your time and attention.

Lindsay Weber

Lindsayweber14@gmail.com

314-650-4319

City of Boulder
Voice and Sight Tag Evaluation
Open House, May 24, 2012

I live within the city limits of Longmont (e.g., Boulder, Louisville, Superior, Longmont, etc.)
OR
I Live in Unincorporated _____ County (e.g., Boulder, Jefferson, Broomfield, etc.)

Name (optional): Tiffany Beechy
E-mail (optional, you will be added to mailing list regarding this issue): _____

Comments:

I only wish to urge an analogy. In conducting a survey and basing a conclusion that there exist major "conflicts" due to dogs off leash on a random phone survey, what you are getting is an idea of people's perceptions. Not reality. In the South in the 1940's and 1950's, if you took a random survey, you would have had perceptions of conflicts due to "those non-white people." See what I mean? Perception drives what people see as conflict, and regulating dogs and their people according to perception is not just. It is prejudicial.

Comments can also be submitted online at www.osmp.org

City of Boulder
Voice and Sight Tag Evaluation
Open House, May 24, 2012

I live within the city limits of Boulder (e.g., Boulder, Louisville, Superior, Longmont, etc.)
OR
I Live in Unincorporated _____ County (e.g., Boulder, Jefferson, Broomfield, etc.)

Name (optional): Liz Petersen
E-mail (optional, you will be added to mailing list regarding this issue): A-L-PETERSEN@msn.com

Comments:

Thank you for hosting the open house. I really think the way the data was collected is absolutely not representative of the reality. Please consider taking the comments this evening seriously.

Comments can also be submitted online at www.osmp.org

City of Boulder
Voice and Sight Tag Evaluation
Open House, May 24, 2012

I live within the city limits of _____ (e.g., Boulder, Louisville, Superior, Longmont, etc.)
OR
I Live in Unincorporated _____County (e.g., Boulder, Jefferson, Broomfield, etc.)

Name (optional):_____
E-mail (optional, you will be added to mailing list regarding this issue):_____

Comments:
I had to do less testing to renew my driver's license after 12 yrs. These suggestions are way overboard! Before anything is implemented, I would like to know how many tax dollars are being spent to test, regulate, and control me and my dog. This should be front and center in your analysis!

P.S. I live in Boulder. However, I have a real problem with residency requirements. Boulder benefits from the tax dollars our visitors contribute to our economy. Let's not create ill will with our neighbors.

Comments can also be submitted online at www.osmp.org

City of Boulder
Voice and Sight Tag Evaluation
Open House, May 24, 2012

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OR
I Live in Unincorporated _____ County (e.g., Boulder, Jefferson, Broomfield, etc.)

Name (optional):_____
E-mail (optional, you will be added to mailing list regarding this issue):_____

Comments:

86% compliance is actually quite wonderful. I think some educational program enhancements may be helpful such as a refresher course every 6 yrs but I think we are over-thinking this issue. I would like to see my $5 dollars used for more meaningful work such as habitat restoration, new trails, etc.

Comments can also be submitted online at www.osmp.org

City of Boulder
Voice and Sight Tag Evaluation
Open House, May 24, 2012

I live within the city limits of BOULDER (e.g., Boulder, Louisville, Superior, Longmont, etc.)
OR
I Live in Unincorporated _____ County (e.g., Boulder, Jefferson, Broomfield, etc.)

Name (optional):_____
E-mail (optional, you will be added to mailing list regarding this issue):_____

Comments:

PEOPLE WITH DOGS AT VIBLE LAKE THINK THE TAGS ARE OK THERE & NO LEASH IS REQUIRED.

Comments can also be submitted online at www.osmp.org

City of Boulder
Voice and Sight Tag Evaluation
Open House, May 24, 2012

I live within the city limits of Boulder (e.g., Boulder, Louisville, Superior, Longmont, etc.)
OR
I Live in Unincorporated _____ County (e.g., Boulder, Jefferson, Broomfield, etc.)

Name (optional): Peter Mutnic
E-mail (optional, you will be added to mailing list regarding this issue): pmutnic@yahoo.com

Comments:

When I examine the data provided regarding dog conflicts on Open Space, it is very clear that the ~~on~~ amount of problems with dogs is overblown. Because of the few conflicts that occur, I see no reason to change the green tag program. In addition, I suspect the only motivation to change the program is to further decrease access to OSMP for dogs and their owners, as has been the case for the last several years.

Comments can also be submitted online at www.osmp.org

City of Boulder
Voice and Sight Tag Evaluation
Open House, May 24, 2012

I live within the city limits of Boulder **(e.g., Boulder, Louisville, Superior, Longmont, etc.)**
OR
I Live in Unincorporated _____ **County (e.g., Boulder, Jefferson, Broomfield, etc.)**

Name (optional):_____
E-mail (optional, you will be added to mailing list regarding this issue):_____

Comments:

I walk the Shanahan Trails every day with my dog. A day doesn't go by that I don't see a major infraction of the Green Tag rules. My dog has been attacked on several occasions by dogs bearing Green Tags. Mostly, my dog is off leash, but when she gets behind me or ahead of me, I leash her - after all, unless you're walking backwards, a dog behind you is not under Voice and Sight control. What bothers me most is the number of dogs chasing wild life. I used to see wild life, and now don't. Please pass an on-trail-corridor requirement to protect wildlife.

Comments can also be submitted online at www.osmp.org

City of Boulder
Voice and Sight Tag Evaluation
Open House, May 24, 2012

I live within the city limits of Boulder (e.g., Boulder, Louisville, Superior, Longmont, etc.)

OR

I Live in Unincorporated _____ County (e.g., Boulder, Jefferson, Broomfield, etc.)

Name (optional): Bart Windrum

E-mail (optional, you will be added to mailing list regarding this issue): Bart@AxiomAction.com

Comments:

Comments can also be submitted online at www.osmp.org

City of Boulder
Voice and Sight Tag Evaluation
Open House, May 24, 2012

I live within the city limits of Boulder (e.g., Boulder, Louisville, Superior, Longmont, etc.)
OR
I Live in Unincorporated _____ County (e.g., Boulder, Jefferson, Broomfield, etc.)

Name (optional): Jerry Palmer
E-mail (optional, you will be added to mailing list regarding this issue): _____

Comments:

I have hiked daily on open space trails, mainly the WTSA. I hike with a dog during this hikes and my dog & I say hi to numerous fellow dog hikes every day. I have had two bad expriences during these last 40 years. just two. I pick up poop, my dogs and others, I don't understand what OSMP is talking about people having bad experiences. My dog (Ellie) enjoys herself, other dogs, other people, and adds to the experience of enjoying nature. She and I are part of it. Hiking with a dog on leash is a totally different experience. Please don't expand the leashing on trails, expand voice & sight to more trails.

Comments can also be submitted online at www.osmp.org

Thank you for this information. I have a couple of recommendations if you are interested, because this is something that is very important to me.

1. If dogs must be on leash for a particular reason (i.e. - the Denver Water Board requires it on a certain section so dogs don't go in the water), post that reason. Oftentimes on-leash/off-leash rules seem capricious and arbitrary. Knowing the reasoning behind the rule makes people more likely to follow.

2. If you are monitoring the trail to the extent that you know the precise percentage of leash-compliance violators, why not revoke that person's green tag for a month on first offense, three months on 2nd offense and a year on 3rd offense. If 84% of people are following the rules, it hardly seems fair to punish those people by taking away their dog walking rights. You should target the 16%.

Just my two cents.

Thanks,
Scott Troetel

If the water board wants dogs on leash then they should communicate LEGITIMATE reasons to encourage compliance. Dogs off leash are only a problem on weekends - during the week the trails are very under used!

Will Edgington

Quick question - are mountain bikers and horses allowed on those trails? Also, was there a study on the environmental impact of allowing the area to be off leash? I just wonder how many on-leash rule breakers are responsible owners who own well behaved dogs. Please reply.

JG

Lease or an Easement?? - Out of curiosity, can we get a copy of said lease?... Being public entity and all; freedom of information etc.

... " In this area, OSMP operates under a lease agreement with the Denver Water Board where the trail crosses their property."

Diane Shepard

Thank you for the update. I suppose that the noncompliance numbers on Spring Brook Loop included dogs that weren't in the voice and sight tag program? What is meant by "peer to peer" outreach?

Being a regular hiker who has taken her dog with her for years, I'm disappointed by these results. Personally, I don't take the dog on Spring Brook because he isn't welcome all the way through the trail and on connecting trails. This trail has become one of my favorites, though!

Keep up the good work. Many of us continue to review the dog regulations before starting out and abide by them. I hope our efforts keep us viewed as responsible trail users in the future.