



LBK-9 COALITION

A Share the Beach Initiative
A Dog Beach Advocacy Group

THE CASE FOR SPACE

There is overwhelming and persuasive evidence that all around our nation, dog owners have strong and growing needs for recreational opportunities. These needs are currently underserved in many communities, including Longboat Key. It is more about the owners than it is about their dogs. A designated dog beach will provide responsible dog owners with an appropriate place to take their pet and enjoy the beach at the same time. Dog beaches create community as they bring people together, stimulate social interaction while improving psychological and physical health.

Our request is based on a simple principle of fairness: Dog owners should have access to recreational opportunities just as golfers, tennis players, sunbathers, surfers, hikers, bicyclists and all of the other residents who use our town's recreational amenities. While we are all certainly able to exercise our pets by walking them on GMD, the opportunity to actually recreate with them on the beach would be optimal. Dog owners pay their taxes to support our wonderful beaches but cannot share them with their dogs. Dog owners are asking for access to an already existing resource which belongs to the people.

Both the National Institute of Health and the Centers for Disease Control have done extensive studies on the relationship between pets and their owners. The results have overwhelmingly confirmed that pet ownership is healthy, particularly for an aging population.

In 2006 the Governor of Florida, signed a bill, a pilot program effective for three years, to allow restaurants in Florida to apply for a permit to allow for dogs to accompany their families at outdoor dining areas. Several counties rushed to pass dining ordinances in their municipalities. In 2009

the bill was signed into law permanently. Bradenton and Sarasota Counties quickly passed their own legislation allowing for restaurants to apply for outdoor doggie dining permits.

In the past 6 months, the Sarasota Herald Tribune has run articles regarding increasing access for pets to places where they have previously been banned. One such article reveals growing access for pets at independent living facilities, assisted living complexes and memory centers for Alzheimer's patients. Also reported was increased access to the workplace as well as acceptance for pets in college dormitories. Another article touts the positive effects dogs have on health issues ranging from detecting a rise in blood pressure, to drops in blood sugar, the onset of heart attacks and even cancer. Dogs are now used for therapy in hospitals.

Dog beaches are good business. Pet friendly hotels and restaurants boast of increased revenue because of their pet friendly policies. Increasing numbers of tourists' travel with their pets. They look for pet friendly destinations when they choose where to spend their travel dollars. Restaurants, real estate brokers and resorts agree that dog friendly amenities increase business. Revenue to the Town could also increase with the existing local licensing fees. Canine recreation is an economic investment.

There are 34 dog beaches in the State of Florida. If you talk to the people in those towns who maintain those beaches you will mostly hear that they are a wonderful addition to their towns. On November 15, 2012 the Santa Rosa Island Authority voted 6-0 to move a dog beach proposal forward in Pensacola, Escambia County, Florida. Attached is a study on 15 of the 34 dog beaches done by the Brevard County Planning and Zoning Department. The study was requested by the Brevard County Commission to assist them in their decision to authorize their new dog beach. Brevard County's information has been added at the bottom of the study. ([Attachment 1](#)) Also, see attached letter from Sarasota County Parks and Recreation Supervisor once responsible for Brohard Dog Beach in Venice. We tried to contact Mr. Demarest, however he has retired and was unavailable for more recent comment. His letter is dated 2003. ([Attachment 2](#))

The shape of American families has been radically changing. While pet ownership in the U.S. has stabilized, people today are choosing to be dog owners. A progressive, responsive government should recognize these trends and work to support them.

THE CONCERNS

Our wildlife are of great concern, particularly the turtles and the nesting and migrating birds. Health concerns include, but may not be limited to diseases transmitted from dog to human, particularly through feces. Also concerns about the quality of the water.

Our entire first meeting was spent on environmental issues. We had a representative from Mote and an advocate from the Audubon Society at the meeting. We had on conference call, two representatives from Florida Fish and Wildlife and one from the US Fish and Wildlife. They expressed concerns over the possible impact on the environment. We listened to their concerns and requested that they share with us studies that they referenced in voicing those concerns. Most of those studies are available to you in the letter sent to you by Florida Fish and Wildlife before the October 2011 workshop. We do not want to minimize the importance of any of the studies or of their concerns but we want to use a common sense approach to find common ground. Many environmentalists that were interviewed concurred that dog friendly beaches can be achievable using compromise and that same common sense approach.

Many studies report that dogs cause decreasing wildlife population. Other studies conclude the contrary. Studies need to reflect reproduction cycles to be accurate. Takes without tracks (nest disturbances without identifiable animal tracks) may be erroneously attributed to dogs. Well fed domestic leashed dogs will not likely be predators of these nests. Some of the studies were done only on humans and one cited study was done on *feral* dogs. Many of the studies do not address the central issue of dogs. So we must look at our individual situation and formulate an individualized plan that minimizes the impact on LBK wildlife. A representative from the US Fish and Wildlife suggested that we can work together to accomplish this goal.

We asked one Florida aquatic ecologist and Ph.D to evaluate the studies that the Florida Fish and Wildlife shared with us regarding dogs on the beach. While he was obligated to not be quoted by name for this position paper, he did read the studies and his comments are below.

"I read the e-mails, the abstracts of all the papers, and a few of the papers in their entirety. A couple of things do seem to jump out:

1) Some of the papers only dealt with human disturbance, so it is very important to separate out the human disturbance issue from the dog disturbance issue. If the issue at your beach is disturbance of migratory shore birds, the only way to insure the absence of disturbance is to close the beach to people – which I suspect is not what folks are trying to do. Also, you should not let them try to "sell" the idea that humans alone have no impact. In other words, those against dog access because of shore birds should also be against human access.

2) From reading the studies that do include the examination of disturbance from dogs, it seems clear (and intuitive) that unleashed dogs cause more disturbance than leashed dogs. It was not clear from talking to you whether the issue at your beach was only the presence/absence of dogs, or leashes or no leashes. My impression is that the impact from dogs can be greatly reduced by requiring leashes.

3) A number of the studies suggest buffer zones to minimize disturbance by both humans and dogs, so the discussion about your beach needs to include the entire beach area. If there are some areas that could be set aside as buffers from humans and dogs, the science seems to suggest that birds will respond well."

Also note, in the reference section, the article from the Boston Globe that does study plover populations on the beach where, while the beach allows dogs and all terrain vehicles and of course, human activity, *"the generally accepted one (theory) is that the biggest threat to plovers these days comes not from humans but from nature itself: predators such as crows and foxes, storms that wash away nests, and unseasonably hot or cold weather that kills them."* Quoted from the Boston Globe article

Another study we found was conducted on the interactions of people and wildlife and was published by Berg Publishers. (This study was not specific to the beach but did study the effect of dogs on wildlife) One conclusion of the study was that people were more disruptive to the environment than dogs and that unruly people were more problematic than unruly dogs. That study can be reviewed at:

<http://www.ingentaconnect.com/content/berg/anthroz/1997/00000010/00000001/art00005?token=005216d896c50467232d45232b4624416a5e3b6b795d23703568293c6c567e504f58762f46ea034fc>

4

A note in fairness, the above study is not conducted on a beach and is observational, as are many of the published studies done on the subject. These observational studies draw *inferences* about *possible* effects. Conclusions assume implied results and strict scientific evidence seems to be lacking. One US Fish and Wildlife biologist was quoted as saying, in regards to anxiety over reduced numbers of Black Skimmers, "the truth is, we don't have the good science that backs up that anxiety." ***So we must depend on common sense.***

There are also health concerns regarding the transmittal of disease from dogs to humans. The City of Los Angeles compiled a list of 20 diseases that could be transmitted by dogs. While all dogs are subject to gastrointestinal and external parasitism, the city reports that only humans with particularly weak immune systems stand any significant chance of contracting diseases from such dog-borne parasites.

Conversations with the Sarasota County Health Department, the Manatee Health Department's assistant epidemiologist and the head veterinarian in the Department of Health for the State of Florida reveal that while there are ever present concerns when new elements are introduced, there have been no reported cases of disease attributed to either Florida's or the county's dog beaches.

Moreover, Dr. Ellie Goldstein, a leading public health expert and infectious disease physician at the University of Southern California, analyzed the list and held it to be highly misleading. Many of the diseases are very rare. In his words, "It is as likely that people will get any of these diseases from their pet dog as their chance of getting hit by lightning." Based on Dr. Goldstein's analysis, it is concluded that the creation of a recreational dog beach poses minimal risk from a public health perspective. (See note below)

Then there is the question of water quality. Former Rand Scientist and California resident Dr. Sandy Geschwind, Environmental Epidemiologist, studied the adverse health effects associated with environmental pollutants. After reviewing the scientific data, she assessed that "while it is critically important to ensure that the dog beach is maintained properly and the waste dealt with responsibly, it is NOT a significant source of pollution or health risk and the focus of concern should be directed towards the true sources of pollution, storm drains." And again Dr. Goldstein, whose specialty is infectious diseases, wrote, "To date there have been no infectious diseases in general, or individual cases in specific that would limit in any way or pose a risk to the public safety from a dog beach." (See note below) Review of water testing on Florida's dog beaches show normal levels of the bacteria of concern.

Attached is a letter from September 2010 from an Environmental Specialist with the Florida Department of Health regarding dogs. While clean up is key, we are confident that with self enforcement and education, the LBK dog beach will be kept clean. Also attached is a letter from a MD,MPH, a doctor who also specializes in public health. While the subject beach is in Massachusetts, the public health information translates to all beaches. ([Attachments 3 & 4](#))

The Ambassador Program through the Tampa Bay Estuary Program is willing to work with the Town and its dog loving, beach going residents to start a program of clean beach education. Yvette Little, who was a fellow with the Audubon Society started this program at Robinson Preserve. "Pooches for the Planet" has been very successful and she is willing to work with LBK to develop a similar Ambassador program.

There have been recent accusations that Brohard Dog Beach has been closed due to contamination from dog residue. This spring the Sarasota Herald Tribune reported that both storm water run-off in old drainage systems as well as rats that were living in the storm drainage system were the cause of the poor water quality.

Note: The quotes from Dr. Goldstein and Dr. Geschwind were direct quotes from a position paper titled "Unleash the Beach", a paper that also studied the feasibility of dog friendly beaches. Dr. Goldstein and Dr .Geschwind were both contacted for confirmation of the studies before using their quotes in this context.

ENFORCEMENT

Many of the dog beach officials we talked to have told us that their dog beaches are cleaner than their people only beaches, incidents of dog violence are very rare. (The State of Florida's dog bite statute imposes strict liability upon dog owners for a bite that causes injury to a human being. That statute can be found in [Section 767.04.](#)) The officials feel the reason for the clean beaches is because the dog owners know that using the beach with their dogs is a privilege that can be taken away. They find also that regular users self enforce by asking visitors and new users to abide by the rules. Many of the Florida dog beaches operate with reactive enforcement. Most of the dog beach communities confirm that enforcement has not been an issue. The late Chief Al Hogle met with several committee members and concluded that enforcement would not be a burden on his department. Citizen initiative plus our regular beach patrol will ensure that our rules and regulations are followed.

COST/ MAINTENANCE

While start up costs should not be too high, we realize that proper signage, waste stations, possible water stations and waste bag stations will be needed. Checking with Tom Kelly, we found that the waste bags at Durante Park cost the Town about \$900.00 a year. Waste stations would be located in the same location as other waste receptacles making removal of waste convenient. We could also produce brochures to educate and inform the dog beach users. There are many people on our list of supporters who have offered to help offset the costs of setting up the dog beach. We have supporters who have agreed to patrol the beach. These types of citizens' initiatives will help to mitigate the upstart cost and maintenance concerns. Fees from the registration requirement that is already in place can be designated to offset costs. Sandi Henley has indicated that the Town's current insurance policies cover the Town against any animal attach litigation via a sovereign immunity cap. Proper signage would probably be required.

PLACE

The Town's Public Works Director, Juan Florensa has worked with us to help identify workable beach access areas. We looked at parking, ADA accessibility and availability of water. Our limited beach parking will automatically limit dog beach use. While the recommendation would ideally be to allow access at all beach access points, there are existing access points that would accommodate adequate access for a designated dog beach.

ESTABLISHMENT MEASURES

Some suggested rules.

- Use dog friendly designated area at your own risk and obey all rules and regulations
- Owners are responsible and liable for the actions and behavior of their dogs
- Turtle nests and nesting birds are federally protected. Stiff Federal fines apply to those disturbing these nests
- Owners must clean up after their dog(s) by placing waste in the proper disposal station
- Dogs must be leashed
- Access sunrise to sunset
- No more that 2 dogs per adult

The information within frames our request, addresses most of the issues and offers some solutions and compromises. Please give your dog owning citizens the opportunity to ***SHARE THE BEACH responsibly.***

Most of the town ordinances regulating animals in Chapter 91 of the Municipal Code were drafted in 1969. Aside from this recommendation, the committee would like to request review of this section and respectfully request that the penalty of possible death for unregistered dogs and cats be removed from our code.

Resources

The State Veterinarian- Dr. Blackmore - summary of phone interview concludes that there have been no cases of outbreaks of disease on Florida dog beaches. Highly encourages clean up and use of common sense. Contact number 850-528-1595 Cell

Sarasota County Department of health – Michael Drennon –Summary of phone interview- In 10 years no reportable cases of disease. Though parasites and bacterial infection is always a concern, it is not likely. Raccoons are a bigger problem. Contact number 861-2873

Paul Tritak – Refuge Manager Ding Darling (239) 472-1100. Summary of phone interview- The risk to Public health is low; having rules and enforcing them are key to success. Canine presence has shown little risk to wildlife.

Jeff Colligan – Sarasota County Parks and Recreation responsible for beach maintenance. Summary of phone interview - Comments on Brohard – few problems – beach never closed due to poor water quality attributed to dogs – Occasional non compliance of dog residue removal – overall a good idea – Rules and boundaries should be clearly posted.

Panama City Beach Florida’s signage. (Attachment 5, 6, and 7)

Pat Johnson – City of Venice, via phone interview, only from a marketing point of view. She has had very positive feedback from beachgoers. Dog owners as well as non dog owners love to visit the beach. Beach is mostly clean and safe for all. There have been no human health issues. She finds off leash better. Turtle nests marked and have had no incidents. Raccoons are a bigger problem. Clean up is paramount.

Dale Colby-Panama City Parks Resource Officer 850-258-4413 Summary of phone interview – Beach closed only once and was not attributed to dog residue – have had no dog to dog or dog to human incidents – have had no human illnesses attributed to the dog beach – Dog users seem very careful to keep the beach clean – Dog beach often cleaner than the human only beach – brings tourists to area – Source of entertainment and recreation for dog owners and non dog owners alike – good for business

Yvette Little – Pooches for the Planet – Tampa Bay Estuary Program –Via Phone interview- We spoke about the importance of education regarding waste removal, not just on beaches but everywhere. She offered educational material and programs to get us kick started with a healthy dog beach.

Heath Rauschenberger, PhD US Fish and Wildlife Service via phone interview and e mail. He suggested that few activities are risk free and that there are monumental concerns about the impact of human activity on wildlife, which would include humans with dogs. Having said that, he said that there is an initiative in the US to “Get America Moving” and to enjoy “America’s Great Outdoors”. While the ideal situation for our wildlife in our parks and on our beaches would be for there to be NO intrusion by humans or natural disturbances, i.e. hurricanes or storms, that is just not practical and is not going to happen. The best we can do is to work to minimize the impact. Dog beaches can work with proper regulation.

Brevard County Planning and Zoning Department – Study conducted by staff at the Brevard County Planning department regarding all aspects of many of the 34 Florida dog beaches. This study information has been reformatted and included as Attachment 1 to this paper.

City of Jupiter Department of Business Development – 561-741-2334 – The Town Council of Jupiter has supported dog access for their beaches for many years. Dogs are allowed access to all unguarded beach areas. The enforcement there is reactive and they find the dog beach to be a mostly positive experience.

Brevard County Parks and Recreation – Jack Masson – 321-633-2046 –Via Phone Interview – Beach is 8 months old and is on a 1 year pilot program. Dog beach has been well received by most. Beach is very clean – very few incidents – No turtle nest disturbances- Overall a good addition.

Boston Globe Article, The Curious Case of the Piping Plover – August 14, 2011 by Kris Frieswick – This article follows the plight of the piping plovers on a Massachusetts beach. This case actually shows that the birds, humans and humans with dogs have found a way to share space achieving the needs of both the humans and the plovers. The link to the article is

articles.boston.com/2011-08-14/lifestyle/29887156_1_pairs-of-piping-plovers-beaches-chicks

Dale Gawlik – Associate Professor and Director of Environmental Sciences Program – Florida Atlantic University – researcher in Avian ecology and wetland ecosystems –Via Phone Interview on 10-16-2012 Professor Gawlik provided that while all birds should be considered he also provided encouragement that dog access to the beach can be accomplished without severe impact on the birds. He stressed that when assessing impact on the birds that it is important to distinguish between nesting colonies and migrating birds. Nesting colonies need to be identified and protected. He indicated that there is little difference in the impact humans with dogs have vs. the impact of humans alone on migrating birds. Attached you will find a chart listing Florida’s Colonially Nesting and Beach Nesting Birds as well as their Nesting Schedules. (Attachment 8 and 9)

Attachment 1 County/City	Page 1 (view pgs 1 & 2 side by side) Permitted Hours/Fees	Amenities Provided	Length of Beach	Enforcement	Turtle nest
Atlantic Beach Duval County	Unlimited Access No fees	Rinsing Station, Water Trough Bag Dispenser Trash Bins	2 miles	Proactive/Town	Yes
Escambia	Unlimited Access No Fees	Rinsing Station, Water Trough Bag dispensers, Trash Bins	400 yards	Reactive	no
Flagler	Unlimited Access No Fees	Trach bins	2 miles	Proactive Town	Yes
City of Ft. Lauderdale			150 Yards	Yes, Ranger enforce.	yes
City of Tampa	Sunrise to Sunset No Fees	Fencing to keep dogs off pier Trash Bins	300 yards	Yes, Reactive	No
Town Of Jupiter	Unlimited Access No Fees	Rinsing Station, Doggie Bags (Provided by Volunteers)	2.5 miles	Reactive	Yes
Lee County	Sunrise to Sunset No fees	Doggie bags/trash bins	1/2 mile	Proactive	Yes
Martin	Unlimited Access No Fees	Doggie Bags donated/Trash	"Many Miles"	Reactive	Yes
Nassau	Unlimited Access No Fees	Trash Bins	3 miles	Reactive	Yes
Pinellas	Sunrise to Sunset	Trash Bins	350 yards	Proactive	Yes
Sarasota	Unlimited Access No Fees	Rinsing Station, Doggie Bags Trash bins	400 yards	Reactive	Yes
St Lucie	Regular Park Hours	Rinsing Statio, bags, Trash	1 mile	Reactive	Yes

Start up Costs	Approved by Referendum ?	Leash requirement	Incident Reports	Staff Comments
City Funded Amenities	No Referendum Council Approved	Yes on beach no when at water	N/A	N/A
City Funded Amenities	No Referendum Council Approved	No	No Reports	Typical pick up issues dog vs dog skirmishes
City Funded Amenities	No Ref- Commissionl Approved	Yes	No Reports	It's popular
City Funded Amenities	No Referendum Commission Approved	Yes except when dogs enter water	No Reports	Nothing to report
City Funded Amenities	No Referendum Council Approved	No as long as in Designated area	No Reports	Complaints down with addition of fence
City funded initial amenities/Volunteer funded amenities now	No Referendym Council Approved	No	5 reports (dogs on wrong portion of beach)	No reports of complaints in 17 years of interviewee's involvement
City Funded Amenities	No Referendum Commission Approved	No	1 report since 2005	Volunteer assistance lagging/ some poop complaints
County Funded Amenities	No Referendum Commission Approved	Yes	No Reports 3 yrs	Successful and relatively incident-free track record
County Funded Amenities	No Ref- Commission approved	Yes	No Reports	Nothing to Report
County Funded Amenities	Parks and Recreation Policy	No	6 reports in 3 yrs	Poop Complaints/ 1 civil issue per year
County Funded Amenities	No Ref. Commission Approved	No	No Reports 3 years	Popular Spot
County Funded Amenities	No Referendum Commission Approved	No	No Reports	Complaints are few and far between

Attachment 1 County/City	Page 3 (View pgs 3 and 4 side by side) Permitted Hours/Fees	Amenities Provided	Length of Beach	Enforcement	Turtle nest
St. Johns	Unlimited Access No Fees	Doggie bags, Trish Bins	All unincorporated beaches	Yes Sheriff Patrol	Yes
Hollywood	Fri-Sat-Sun Nov-Mar 3-7 April -October 4-8	Trash Bins	100 yards	Proactive	Yes
Miami Dade	Wednesday Only	Rinsing Station bags, trash	100 yards	Proactive	Yes
Brevard County	Sunrise to Sunset	Rinsing Station, Bags, Bins	700 yards	Reactive	Yes

County Funded Amenities	City Funded Amenities	City Funded Amenities	City and Volunteer Funded
<p>Approved by Referendum No Referendum Commission Approved</p>	<p>Approved by Referendum No Referendum Council Approved</p>	<p>Approved by Referendum No Referendum Commission Approved</p>	<p>Approved by Referendum No Referendum Commission Approved</p>
<p>Leash requirement Yes</p>	<p>Leash requirement N/A</p>	<p>Leash requirement NO</p>	<p>Leash requirement Yes</p>
<p>Incident Reports Verbal Warnings only No Reports</p>	<p>Incident Reports No Reports</p>	<p>Incident Reports Verbal Warnings Only No Reports</p>	<p>Incident Reports 1 dog/dog incident 1 dog/human caused by above intervention</p>
<p>Staff Comments Poop Complaints</p>	<p>Staff Comments No Complaints on Record</p>	<p>Staff Comments Bites have occurred</p>	<p>Staff Comments Beach is clean/biggest Complaint NOT BIG ENOUGH</p>

SARASOTA COUNTY

"Dedicated to Quality Service"

April 4, 2003

Mrs. Fran Gorecki
1628 Sun-Gazer Drive
Viera, Fl. 32955

Mrs. Gorecki

First let me introduce myself. I am Dave Demarex and I designed and constructed the Four Paw parks for Sarasota County. I am an employee of the Parks and Recreation Division of Community Services. I hope I can give you the correct answers to your questions.

1. Brohard Dog Beach was dedicated on May 12, 2001. This was built in cooperation with the City of Venice. It was done on a trial basis for one year and as far as I know has been approved for a permanent installation.
2. The Dog beach is 300 feet long and we are now making plans to expand this by at least another 200 feet.
3. I have not heard of any problems with aggressive dogs. The people who frequent the beach act as the police and pretty much tell people with aggressive dogs to leave. We have the same groups who go all the time and they police themselves.
4. We have not had the first lawsuit or problem with the dog beach or paw parks. The rules speak for themselves.
5. Every now and then, we do get a dog leaving the area and running the full length of the beach area, but their owners usually have no problems rounding them up. We do not allow dogs on other parts of any beach in the County so the cross over from other areas has not been a problem.
6. There has not been any impact on insurance because of either the dog beach or any of our dog parks. We are self-insured. We only have paid one claim where a person stepped on a piece of glass at the 17th st dog park. There have been instances of dogs getting hurt in fights, but everyone takes responsibility for that and the County is not libel for these problems. We have signs to that effect.
7. This stretch of beach is probably the cleanest of any in the County. The patrons who use it do a tremendous job in picking up after their dogs. The County provides the Mutt Mitts, which I believe, helps a great deal.
8. The County Health Department has checked this area after the beach dog park came open and found no contamination of any kind. Also there has been no contamination of people or other dogs.

9. We have had some inquiries into cleanups being considered, but no one has acted on it. I believe that there are national cleanup days coming sometime this month or next month but I really do not see it happening at the dog park because of the cleanliness of the beach now. Everyone is doing a great job.
10. Judging by the comments we have received, it is a huge success. People want to see one in the Sarasota area, but we just do not have the room at this time.

I believe the dog beach is probably the best venture I have ever been associated with in my 27 years in Government. This holds true for the dog parks also. It is so great seeing the dogs romp in the Gulf and everyone seems to be having a great time. I know of several dog parks in Florida that are building water amenities for the dogs to use. We tried here in Sarasota County but were stopped by the County Health Department for fear of dog diseases being spread to humans.

I am going to send you a packet we have made which has some information that might prove helpful to you and your presentation. I also would be willing to talk to the commission if you feel it would help. I hope I have given you information that will help in your presentation. Don't hesitate to call or E-mail me if you need more information. My address is 6700 Clark Road, Sarasota, Fla. 34241 and my telephone number is 941-316-1269 Ex. 274. My E-mail address is ddemarest@co.sarasota.fl.us

Sincerely,


David Demarest, Operations Supervisor
Sarasota County Parks and Recreation
Community Services

September 20, 2010
Louis Gosson (louis_gosson@doh.state.fl.us)

Ms. Arnold,

It is difficult to report if the dogs present a health hazard on our Florida beaches, when all canines are closely tied to their owners.

Warm blooded animals, mammals and birds, which are free roaming, produce through their excrement bacteria which can be related to people getting sick, or a health hazard. For example, whales, dolphins, raccoons, mice, humans, etc.

All USA coastal counties test for bacteria weekly, to meet federal guidelines for coastal monitoring. I have sampled, weekly, for the last 6 years, 23 miles of Flagler County beaches. Criteria includes lab analysis for two bacteria which are endemic to warm blooded animals digestive tract (Enterococcus and fecal coliform).

The counties of the state of Florida can be reviewed @
<http://esetapps.doh.state.fl.us/irm00beachwater/default.aspx>.

I reviewed Honeymoon Island results in Pinellas county. There is a portion of the beach designated as DOG BEACH. I can report it has been that way since I have been in Florida, over 30 years now. There were a few bad samples over the last 6 years, but nothing significant.

I would agree with your statement " I have seen no evidence that dogs who are cleaned up after pose any health risk."

Louis Gosson MHE, RS
Environmental Specialist II
208 S. Lemon ST.
P.O. Box 847 C
Bunnell, Fl. 32110
386-437-8260 OFFICE: 386-437-7358 FAX: 386 437 8287

Attachment 4

Letter: The medical case vs. changing dog beach laws
The Gloucester Daily Times
Tue Mar 15, 2011, 11:46 PM EDT

To the editor:

The Manchester Board of Health proposes limiting the access of dogs to Singing Beach by two additional months, and raises the possibility of hookworm as a public health risk.

Five letters (Feb. 14, 28; March 3, 8, 11) on the subject have appeared in the Gloucester Daily Times. The purpose of this letter is to explain why I believe that hookworm is not a public hazard on Singing Beach.

For many years, I was a member of the Department of Tropical Public Health at Harvard, which gave courses on parasitic infections.

Hookworm is due to two parasitic nematodes for which humans are the natural host; *Ancylostomaduodenale* and *Necator americanus*, which are about 10mm in length, live attached to the small intestine, and infect more than a quarter of the world's population, causing much debility.

Infections occur in most non-arid warm regions and are prevalent in rural tropical areas where there is inadequate sanitation and where people do not wear shoes.

Outbreaks have occurred in tunnels and mines in temperate climates. Most hookworm infections in the United States are caused by *Necator americanus*, and occur in southeastern states.

If feces are deposited in shady, warm and moist soil, eggs will hatch within 24 hours. Infective larvae develop within a week and migrate to the surface of the soil where, with constant moisture, they remain viable for a number of weeks.

These larvae enter usually through the skin of the feet or hands and may cause dermatitis or "ground itch." They travel in veins to the lungs where in two weeks they break through the capillaries and are coughed up and swallowed (pulmonary symptoms are usually mild and transitory).

In the small intestine, they become adult worms and within two months, females may produce 20,000 eggs a day. Disease occurs when the worm burden is large enough to cause symptoms, particularly those of anemia. Three-quarters of the worms die within a year, and some may remain for many years in untreated individuals.

The hookworm of dogs and cats (*Ancylostoma caninum*) does not cause human infection. Infective larvae may penetrate skin causing a red linear creeping eruption, which can last for weeks if untreated, but larvae die in the skin without entering the circulatory system.

This dermatitis, occasionally reported in Massachusetts, is usually called cutaneous larva migrans, but is also known by other names such as "plumber's itch" when it occurs in people repairing plumbing under beach houses.

The Singing Beach environment, without shade and constant moisture, open with salt water, is not conducive to hookworm infection. The continuous conditions necessary to establish the life cycle are lacking.

Dog hookworm is abortive to the human host. I am doubtful that hookworm could be a public problem on the beach.

Catherine C. Lastavica, MD, MPH

Manchester

Welcome to Panama City's Beach's *first* **PET-FRIENDLY BEACH**

*designated by the Panama City Beach City Council
and monitored by*

Help us make
this beach
successful by
following all
rules, and
helping others
do the same.



Take one of the
pamphlets below
to learn the dog
beach rules and
responsibilities.





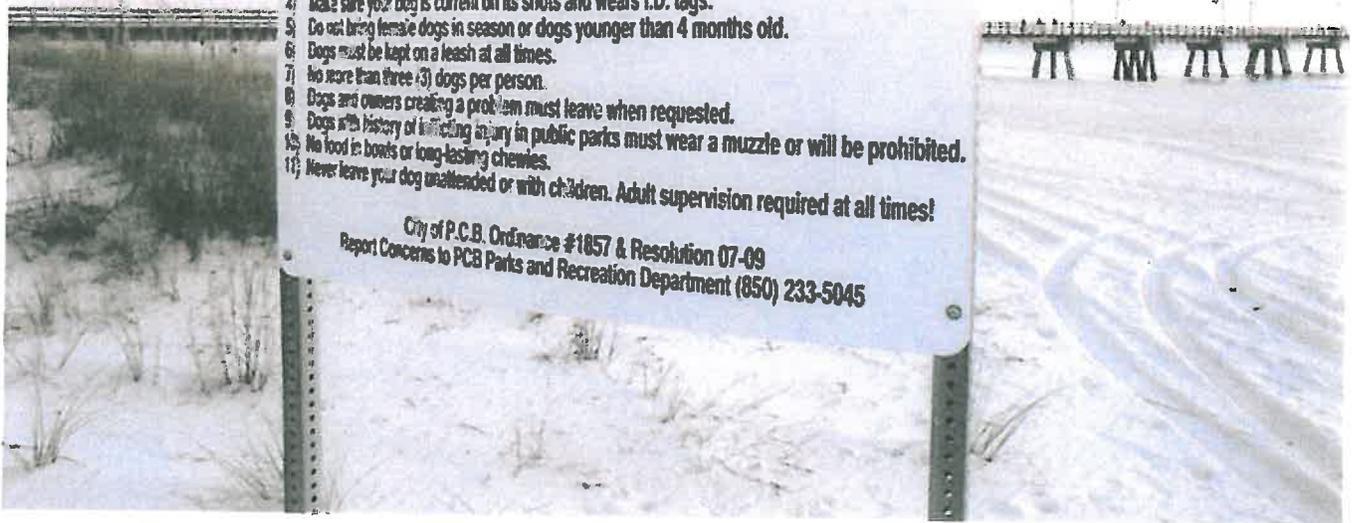
 **City of Panama City Beach**
Designated "Pet Friendly" Areas
Sunrise to Sunset



- Pier Park Beachfront (West side of City Pier)
- Aaron Bessant Park (Amphitheatre & greenways and trails)
- Frank Brown Park (Dog Play Area & greenways and trails)

- 1) Please use these designated areas at your own risk and obey all rules and regulations.
- 2) Owners are responsible and liable for the actions and behavior of their dogs.
- 3) Owners must clean up after their dog(s) by placing waste in the proper disposal stations.
- 4) Make sure your dog is current on its shots and wears I.D. tags.
- 5) Do not bring female dogs in season or dogs younger than 4 months old.
- 6) Dogs must be kept on a leash at all times.
- 7) No more than three (3) dogs per person.
- 8) Dogs and owners creating a problem must leave when requested.
- 9) Dogs with history of inflicting injury in public parks must wear a muzzle or will be prohibited.
- 10) No food in bowls or long-lasting chews.
- 11) Never leave your dog unattended or with children. Adult supervision required at all times!

City of P.C.B. Ordinance #1857 & Resolution 07-09
 Report Concerns to PCB Parks and Recreation Department (850) 233-5045



Florida's Colonially Nesting and Beach-nesting Species

Species	FWC Listing*	WatchList^	Species	FWC Listing*	WatchList^
Brown Pelican	SSC		White Ibis	SSC	
Double-crested Cormorant			Glossy Ibis		
Anhinga			Roseate Spoonbill	SSC	
Least Bittern			Wood Stork	E	
Great Blue Heron			Snowy Plover	T	WL
Great Egret			Wilson's Plover		
Snowy Egret	SSC		American Oystercatcher	SSC	
Little Blue Heron	SSC		Willet		WL
Tricolored Heron	SSC		Laughing Gull		
Reddish Egret	SSC	WL	Gull-billed Tern		
Cattle Egret			Caspian Tern		
Green Heron			Royal Tern		
Black-crowned Night-Heron			Sandwich Tern		
Yellow-crowned Night-Heron			Least Tern	T	
			Black Skimmer	SSC	

*Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission: E = Endangered, T = Threatened, SSC = Species of Special Concern; ^Partners in Flight "WatchList" species

Beach-nesting Birds Nesting Schedule for the Tampa Bay Region

Species	State Listing Status	Onset Of Nesting	Incubation Days	Hatch Date	Age At First Flight Days	Fledge Date
Snowy Plover	T	April 1-May 30	26-32	April 27-July 2	28-32	May 25-Aug 4
Wilson's Plover		April 1-May 30	23-25	April 24-June 25	21	May 15-July 16
American Oystercatcher	SSC	March 20-May 30	24-28	April 13-June 27	35	May 18-Aug 2
Willet		March 25-May 30	22-29	April 16-June 28	28	May 14-Aug 3
Laughing Gull		May 7-May 30	20	May 27-June 20	35	July 1-July 25
Caspian Tern		May 7-May 30	20-22	May 27-June 22	30-35	June 26-July 27
Royal Tern		May 1-May 15	28-35	May 29-June 19	28-35	June 26-July 24
Sandwich Tern		May 5-May 15	21-29	May 26-June 13	28-32	May 23-July 15
Gull-billed Tern		May 7-May 30	22-23	May 29-June 22	28-35	June 26-July 26
Least Tern	T	May 1-May 30	20-25	May 21-June 24	19-20	June 9-July 14
Black Skimmer	SSC	May 10 to June 30	21-23	May 31-July 23	23-25	June 23-Aug 17

Snowy Plovers – early nesting in February supports protection from February 15.