

Cherry Creek State Park

Dog Off-Leash Area Management Plan

October 2010



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Appendix A. Cherry Creek State Park: Dog Off-Leash Area Comment Summary Report

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Park Description

Cherry Creek Reservoir lies on Cherry Creek, a major tributary to the South Platte River, in the City of Aurora about 1.5 miles south of Interstate 225. The dam and reservoir are owned and operated by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps). The Corps leases 4,200 land and water acres to the State of Colorado Department of Natural Resources Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation to operate Cherry Creek State Park. Cherry Creek State Park is the largest regional park and recreation area in the southeast Denver area; it was also the first park in the Colorado State Park system.

Cherry Creek State Park attracts about 1.5 million people each year and collected more than \$1.8 million in revenue in 2008. Cherry Creek State Park includes a full-service campground, miles of hiking, biking and equestrian trails, horse stables, dog-off leash and sport dog training areas, and a model airplane field, all of which are located around an 880-acre lake with boating, fishing and a full-service marina. Cherry Creek State Park's diverse ecosystems, expansive trail system, boating, and unique opportunities for resource education and interpretation make it a valuable recreation amenity in the Denver Metropolitan Area.

Cherry Creek State Park Dog Off-Leash Area History

In 1971, a dog trial area at the 12-Mile area was established. Most users were individual trainers using live birds and live ammunition. During the 1970s and 80s use of the dog trial area was limited to about 2,000 visitors annually. By 1985, trends in use changed substantially as off-leash dog exercise gained popularity. Visitor conflicts also began to increase as the area was used for dog training, off-leash exercise, jogging, biking, and equestrian rides. Safety hazards and complaints increased given that live birds and live ammunition were still allowed. In 1988, the use of live ammunition was limited to an area immediately adjacent to the parking area. Cherry Creek State Park staff closed the south part of the area to all use except dog training and horseback riding in 1992. The area was gated and locked, and dog trainers could apply for a permit and the gate combination. Dog exercisers entered the area from the 12-Mile Group Picnic area lot and used only the north end of the area.

History of Use at Cherry Creek State Park

1971—Dog trial area at established 12-Mile area.

1985—Trends in use begin to change as off leash dog exercise gains popularity.

1988—Live ammunition use limited to an area immediately adjacent to the parking area.

1989—Staff works to define area boundaries and separate dog exercisers from dog trainers.

1994—12-Mile area visitation reaches 12,000.

1997—A live bird and live ammunition area established near the park residence. From 1997 to 2002, less than 20 permits are issued for this use.

2002—Live bird and live ammunition area formally abandoned.

2000—Paint Horse Stables moves to the 12-Mile area.

2005—Visitation reaches 200,000.

2009—Visitation grows, reaching 232,000 or 14 percent of park visitation.

Visitation to the dog off-leash area has grown substantially over the years. At the end of in 1994, visitor use numbered about 12,000. In 2005, 200,000 people visited the. In 2009, there were 232,000 dog off-leash area visitors, which accounted for 14 percent of Cherry Creek State Park's visitation. Off-leash dog use, including dog walking, socializing, and playing, continues to be one of the prevalent recreation activities at Cherry Creek State Park.

Purpose of the Plan

The purpose of the Cherry Creek State Park Dog Off-Leash Area Management Plan is to establish a framework for setting priorities and provide specific management direction for the dog off-leash area within Cherry Creek State Park. Implementation of the Dog Off-Leash Area Management Plan will assist Colorado State Parks and in its efforts to manage and enhance this areas for present and future generations. This Dog Off-Leash Area Management Plan supplements numerous studies that have been completed through 2010 on the dog off-leash area at Cherry Creek State Park. Relevant information from these studies and environmental reports has been reviewed and incorporated into this Dog Off-Leash Area Management Plan.



How to Use the Plan

The Dog Off-Leash Area Management Plan is a working document, which should change and evolve with the dog off-leash area and Cherry Creek State Park over time. Future planning and implementation efforts should build on the recommendations set forth in this Dog Off-Leash Area Management Plan. As State Parks implements management actions and monitoring recommendations outlined in the Dog Off-Leash Area Management Plan, and as objectives and goals change, this document should be updated to reflect those changes. This will further ensure that the document provides a foundation for long-term adaptive management of the dog off-leash area. Adaptive management is an incremental approach to management that emphasizes monitoring, evaluation, and feedback. Knowledge of a resource, gained by monitoring management actions, is evaluated and incorporated into future management actions, decisions, and planning.

Planning Process

In 2006, the Parks Board placed a moratorium on new off-leash areas at State Parks, and directed staff to study the two existing areas at Cherry Creek and Chatfield State Parks to establish a sustainable management plan for each area. To complete this study, staff developed a three-phase process including and assessment phase, a planning phase, and an implementation phase.

Assessment Phase – Baseline Research

The assessment phase began in 2006 and was completed in 2009. Park managers hired several consultants to study current conditions and create baseline data. The various studies included:

- A visitor opinion survey to gauge the visitor experience of dog area users.
- A water quality study to analyze the condition of the water and soil in the areas affected by high concentrations of dog use.
- An assessment of impacts on birds and small mammals due to dog off-leash use.
- A review of regional dog parks and associated management.
- A review of historic aerial photographs.

A summary of the studies and key findings is included in the *Relevant Plans and Studies* section.

Planning Phase – Public Involvement

Public input was an important part of the planning phase. Members of the public were encouraged to provide input on the Dog Off-Leash Area Management Plan at two public open house meetings conducted in July 2009. The public also was invited to submit comments online or via mail. Staff received a combined total of 1,045 open house comment cards, emails, and written letters. The primary groups represented in the comments were recreational dog owners, equestrians, and sport-dog trainers. State Parks' planning staff coded 4,005 substantive comments. The top issues from the 2009 comment period included:

- Excessive dog waste due to people not picking up after their dogs
- Access to quality water play areas for dogs
- Perception of limited conflicts between users
- Lack of owner control over their dog(s)
- Unavailability of other quality dog off-leash areas in the metro area

Top suggestions/comments from the 2009 comment period included:

- Keep off-leash areas open to all users
- Maintain off-leash policy as opposed to enforcing on-leash rules
- Majority of users purchase an annual park pass
- Segregate users (e.g., dogs, horses, and bicyclists) to minimize conflict
- Support of additional trash cans and waste bag dispensers

In addition, about 12 percent of commenters supported a fee increase to help manage dog areas. About 10 percent of the commenters expressed a strong interest in volunteering to help manage, maintain, or enforce rules at the dog off-leash area.

In February 2010, the State Parks planning team conducted an initial meeting with agency stakeholders including representatives from the Corps, the Colorado Division of Wildlife, Arapahoe County Animal Control, Douglas County Animal Control, the Chatfield Watershed Authority, South Suburban Parks and Recreation, the Cherry Creek Water Quality Basin Authority, the Audubon Society, and a local veterinarian. The stakeholder group provided valuable insight on managing dog off-leash areas based on experience in land use management and behavioral characteristics of dogs and dog owners.

After analyzing the information gathered, the State Parks planning team developed three draft dog off-leash area alternatives for Cherry Creek State Park. The State Parks planning team also developed preliminary proposals to address fencing options, volunteer management, waste disposal, improved amenities, parking areas, and proposed regulation changes.

The State Parks planning team hosted an open house meeting near Cherry Creek State Park on April 12, 2010 and an open house meeting near Chatfield State Park on April 15, 2010. Information for the dog

off-leash areas for both Cherry Creek and Chatfield State Parks was available at both open houses. A total of 102 participants attended the open house near Cherry Creek State Park, while 65 participants attended the open house near Chatfield State Park. The State Parks planning team collected 85 comment sheets at the Cherry Creek open house, 58 comment sheets at the Chatfield open house, and 557 comments online. The top three concerns listed for Cherry Creek State Park were:

- Water access
- Overall size of the dog off-leash area
- Primary access to the area

After analyzing public comments from the April open houses, the State Parks planning team developed a draft preliminary preferred alternative for Cherry Creek State Park and presented this alternative, along with a preliminary budget estimate, proposed area fees, and regulations to the State Parks Board meeting in May 2010. Thirty-five individuals signed in as meeting attendees; about 30 people provided public testimony to the State Parks Board. At the conclusion of the presentation, the State Parks Board directed the State Parks planning team to continue to work with users, gather additional information, and develop a preferred alternative and recommendation for Cherry Creek State Park for the July 2010 State Parks Board meeting.

Based on the State Parks Board directive, the State Parks planning team met in May 2010 to assemble a list of potential stakeholders. Ultimately, 10 stakeholders (i.e., dog off-leash area users) agreed to participate. The stakeholders included three dog off-leash/dog exercisers, two sport dog trainers, two equestrians, one bicyclist, and one birder. Also in May 2010, the State Parks planning team provided a planning phase update to the agency stakeholders.

In late May 2010, the State Parks planning team met with the user stakeholder group to develop possible changes to the State Parks planning team draft alternatives. The State Parks planning team outlined the list of “givens,” or guiding principles that had been used to develop all alternatives to date. The comprehensive list of guiding principles, developed for both Cherry Creek and Chatfield State Parks, is presented below.

Planning Phase Guiding Principles

1. Colorado State Parks operates Cherry Creek and Chatfield State Parks under a lease agreement with the Corps. Under that agreement, the Corps has stipulated that:
 - Formal plans for the dog off-leash areas at both parks will be developed to ensure responsible and sustainable management.
 - Off-leash dogs will not be allowed in the river channel below the dam outlet structure at Chatfield.
 - The treed area to the southeast of the ponds at Chatfield will not be included in the dog off-leash area to allow for Corps maintenance operations and multiuse recreational opportunities.
2. The dog off-leash areas will be fenced. Fencing is necessary to:
 - Comply with the stipulations from the Corps.
 - Separate the off-leash use area from equestrians, bikers, and vehicular traffic to ensure public safety.
 - Effectively define the area where new regulations will formally allow dog off-leash exercise.

3. There will be a fee for dog off-leash areas to offset the costs of operations, maintenance, enhancement, and restoration. Implementation of a fee is consistent with other park uses such as camping and use of group picnic facilities.
4. Hardened access points will be developed to help restore and manage riparian and wetland vegetation.
5. There will continue to be dog training areas at Cherry Creek and Chatfield. Colorado State Parks is committed to accommodate off-leash recreation, sport dog training and other recreational uses.
6. Facility improvements will include hardened trails, pet waste disposal stations, signs, bathrooms, self-service entrance stations, an attended entrance station at Cherry Creek, and better parking.

In late May 2010, the State Parks planning team, a representative from the Corps, and user stakeholder group conducted a site visit to the dog off-leash area at Cherry Creek State Park to discuss management options. Although there was no consensus on a specific plan for the dog off-leash area, the user stakeholder group proposed two additional options for public consideration.

The State Parks planning team hosted a final round of open house meetings in early June to present the draft preliminary preferred alternatives and user stakeholder options. Again, information for the dog off-leash areas for both Cherry Creek and Chatfield State Parks was available at both open houses.

The State Parks planning team hosted the open house meeting near Cherry Creek State Park on June 2, 2010 and the open house meeting near Chatfield State Park on June 3, 2010. Attendance at the Cherry Creek open house included 307 participants, with 280 submitting comment cards. On June 3, 2010, the Chatfield State Park open house drew 156 participants. The State Parks planning team collected 182 comment cards. For individuals unable to attend the open house, comments were accepted from June 2 through June 11 via an online form and by telephone, mail, and email. An additional 111 comments via the online form and 48 comments from other sources were received. The Cherry Creek Comment Summary Report is included in Appendix A.

The State Parks planning team met with user stakeholders on June 14, 2010 to discuss preliminary findings and the results of the open houses. Based on conversations and interactions with other area users and further analysis of information, the State Parks planning team developed the preferred alternative (see *Preferred Alternative* section) approved by the State Parks Board in July 2010.

The State Parks planning team presented the Dog Off-Leash Area Management Plan at the State Parks Board meeting on September 16, 2010 and discussed the next steps related to implementation phasing.

Implementation Phase

The implementation phase involved the development of the Dog Off-Leash Area Management Plan that protects the resource, maximizes the visitor experience, and minimizes or eliminates conflicts between user groups. The dog off-leash area at Cherry Creek State Park is one of the largest designated dog off-leash areas in the Denver Metropolitan Area. The fenced dog off-leash area at Cherry Creek State Park will be approximately 107 acres. Upland sport dog training will still be available by permit in a 30-acre area south of the shooting center.

The designated off-leash areas respond to the guiding principles, especially the requirement by the Corps (i.e., the lessor) to develop plans for fenced dog exercise areas to ensure responsible and

sustainable use of the land and water. Additional implementation details are provided in the *Implementation Plan* section.

Relationship to the Division Strategic Plan

Using the Division Strategic Plan as an overarching guide, the Cherry Creek State Park Dog Off-Leash Area Management Plan serves as the primary planning document for the dog off-leash area at Cherry Creek State Park. Specifically, the Division Strategic Plan is a useful guide for achieving a broad range of Division-wide goals and objectives, while the Cherry Creek State Park Dog Off-Leash Area Management Plan is the primary guidance document for park-level planning efforts for the dog off-leash area. The Cherry Creek State Park Dog Off-Leash Area Management Plan is consistent with the following Division-wide Mission, Vision, and Goals, which are highlighted below.

Mission

To be leaders in providing outdoor recreation through the stewardship of Colorado's natural resources for the enjoyment, education, and inspiration of present and future generations.

Vision Statement

Colorado State Parks offer exceptional settings for renewal of the human spirit. Residents and visitors enjoy healthy, fun-filled interaction with the natural world, creating rich traditions with family and friends that promote stewardship of our natural resources. Parks employees and their partners work together to provide ongoing and outstanding customer service through recreational programs, amenities, and services.

Division-wide Goals

- **Goal 1:** Connect People to the Outdoors by Providing Quality Outdoor Recreation Opportunities and Settings
- **Goal 2:** Conserve, Enhance, Manage and Interpret Natural, Cultural, and Scenic Resources
- **Goal 3:** Foster and Actively Promote Excellence in our Workforce
- **Goal 4:** Stabilize and Strengthen Colorado State Parks' Financial Condition
- **Goal 5:** Strengthen Outreach and Partnerships

Park Goals

- Provide recreational opportunities at the dog off-leash area that are compatible with the overall management of Cherry Creek State Park.
- Manage visitor access and activities at the dog off-leash areas to minimize impacts to natural resources and other recreation user groups.
- Enhance native plant communities and wildlife habitat through appropriate management of the dog off-leash area.
- Develop community partnerships and educational opportunities to cultivate public appreciation of the dog off-leash area and other resources.

Future Plan Updates

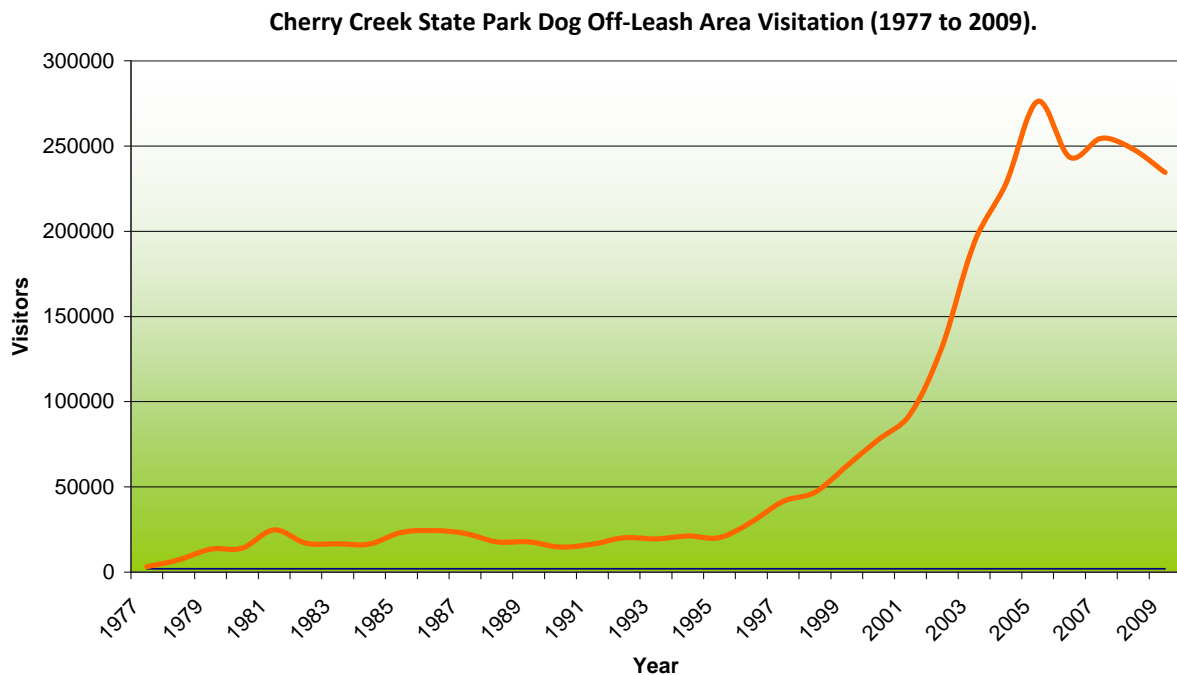
The Dog Off-Leash Area Management Plan should be reviewed annually and updated every five years by Cherry Creek State Park and other Division staff (e.g., Division planning, region, natural resource, and capital development staff). To ensure that the Dog Off-Leash Area Management Plan is a dynamic

document that meets the changing needs of Cherry Creek State Park and visitors over time, the Dog Off-Leash Area Management Plan may be supplemented with updated information as needed, including minor changes to management actions, additional management actions that help Cherry Creek State Park adapt to changes in recreational trends. This may occur during the annual review at the beginning of the calendar year, or whenever relevant information becomes available. In addition, at the five-year mark, the Park Manager should perform a detailed review of the Dog Off-Leash Area Management Plan and determine whether any formal amendments are necessary.

Summary of Key Management Issues

Management considerations include issues and concerns that have been identified by the State Parks planning team based on first-hand experience, knowledge, and/or information gathered from the public during the open house meetings and through survey responses. Some of the specific key management considerations addressed in this plan are:

- **Corps Lease Agreement:** The Corps has directed staff at Cherry Creek State Park to better manage the dog area to meet the criteria outlined in the Corps lease agreement and management plan for the park.
- **Visitor Experience:** Significant growth in popularity has caused sustainability concerns that have and will continue to impact the physical environment and the quality of experience for users. The graph below shows the growth in visitation to the dog off-leash area since the late 1970s.



- **Long-term Operations and Maintenance:** As the areas have continued to grow in size and visitation, staff has been unable to provide adequate presence, resource allocation, and facility maintenance to meet the needs of users.
- **Sustainability:** Soft boundaries established in past years have not worked as intended. Off-leash dog use occurs in areas not designated for this use.
- **Visitor Conflicts:** Over time other user groups have been displaced as the off-leash areas have continued to grow.
- **Regulatory Framework:** The State Parks Board rules do not currently designate an off-leash area at Cherry Creek State Park, creating a regulatory conflict for staff and users.

2.0 RELEVANT PLANS AND STUDIES

Several park plans and additional studies provide planning direction related to dog off-leash areas. A brief description of each of these documents and a summary of relevant information are provided below.

Cherry Creek State Park Management Plan

Based on the 1998 Management Plan, it is Colorado State Parks' responsibility to maximize outdoor recreational opportunities while preserving the integrity of the natural quality and resources of Cherry Creek State Park for future generations.

Cherry Creek State Park Stewardship Plan

The Stewardship Plan is an effort to synthesize existing information about the park's resources and incorporate new data collected during the Baseline Resource Assessment. Resource element descriptions provide current and desired future conditions of Cherry Creek State Park's natural resources. The Stewardship Plan also provides prioritized management recommendations to protect these natural assets. The Stewardship Plan is generally updated every five years to reflect new goals and objectives and to address current issues.

Off-Leash Area User Study

The Business Research Division of the Leeds School of Business at the University of Colorado at Boulder conducted a user study during spring/summer 2008 (Business Research Division 2008). Researchers for the Off-Leash Area User Study: Cherry Creek State Park collected 139 surveys with primarily demographic and area experience data. Surveys were completed only in the dog-off leash area and did not include other recreational users of the areas such as bikers, hikers, boaters and fisherman. About 97 percent of the respondents rated their experience as "very safe" or "safe" for dogs and 93 percent rated their experience "very safe" or "safe" for people. Responses were slightly less positive when respondents were asked how comfortable they would be bringing small children into the dog off-leash area. Nearly 41 percent said they would be "very comfortable" and 21 percent indicated they would be "comfortable."

The survey asked respondents whether they had experienced or witnessed any conflicts in the park on the day they were surveyed, as well as within the past year. Over the course of the year the likelihood that a respondent had experienced or witnessed a conflict increased. In the past year, 48 percent had witnessed conflict between dogs, 20 percent between dogs and horses, 16 percent between dog owners, 11 percent between dogs and people, and 7 percent between dogs and bicyclists. On 3 percent witnessed conflicts between dogs and wildlife.

Finally, respondents were asked what would make their experience at the off-leash area better. Responses were diverse, but a few major trends emerged. Those surveyed indicated that more trash cans and bags for picking up dog waste would be beneficial. Similarly, respondents suggested enforcing rules to pick up after dogs. In addition, respondents expressed interest in

having flush toilets, more sitting areas, cleaner and better maintained water features, and an improved parking lot.

Influence of Pet Recreation Areas on Soil and Water Quality

GEI Consultants, Inc. completed a study in fall 2008 to analyze the influence of pet recreation areas on soil and water quality at Cherry Creek State Park (GEI 2008). The study, *The Influence of Pet Recreation Areas on Soil and Water Quality at Cherry Creek State Park*, used three methods for evaluation: a fecal waste survey, a water microbial analysis, and a soil microbial analysis. The fecal waste survey concluded a significant increase in pet waste in the dog off-leash area compared to the reference areas, especially near the parking lots. The water and soil microbial analysis concluded no significant fecal coliform contamination.

Effects of Dog Off-Leash Areas on Birds and Small Mammals

Ensign Technical Services, Inc. completed a study in spring 2008 to determine the effects of dog off-leash areas on birds and small mammals in Cherry Creek State Park (Ensign Technical Services, Inc. 2008). The study, *The Effects of Off-Leash Dog Areas on Birds and Small Mammals in Cherry Creek and Chatfield State Parks*, established transects for bird and small mammal sampling. The density and diversity of bird species were counted, small mammals were live trapped, and the data were analyzed along each of the transects. The study concluded a significantly lower riparian bird density/diversity in the dog off-leash area, and a lower abundance of small mammals in dog off-leash areas.

Vegetation Evaluation

The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) conducted a visual evaluation of the vegetation at the dog off-leash area (Spence 2008). The evaluation concluded that the high traffic has denuded several areas at the dog off-leash area, particularly along Cherry Creek. In addition, the evaluation stated that it would be difficult for the vegetation to recover without ripping the soil for planting and with continued foot traffic.



Regional Dog Park Analysis

The State Parks planning team visited 35 Front Range dog parks; document the amenities, layout, and management of each area; and inserted the information into a matrix and photo album. A variety of land management agencies were represented. Most “dog parks” were one to two acres with the entire area fenced. Only some areas had posted regulation signs and most had little on-site management.

Historic Photos

A review of historic aerial photos for the dog off-leash area showed a definite change in trail use over the last few decades. Without exception the photos showed a gradual widening of trails and an increase in social trails in recent history. A change in vegetation cover was evident along the riparian corridors, but a change in upland vegetation was difficult to determine. Cherry Creek State Park has acquired these photos for future reference.

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3.0 MANAGEMENT GOALS AND SUGGESTED ACTIONS

Goals

Cherry Creek State Park has a well-established system of campgrounds, picnic areas, trails, boating and fishing access, and natural areas. The real challenge over the next 10 to 20 years will be to balance existing resources and programs with new and changing needs, striking the right balance among a broad range of competing interests. To achieve that, this Dog Off-Leash Area Management Plan recommends that State Parks focus on four specific goals that will drive future decision making for the dog off-leash area at Cherry Creek State Park. In summary, these goals are to:

- Provide recreational opportunities at the dog off-leash area that are compatible with the overall management of Cherry Creek State Park.
- Manage visitor access and activities at the dog off-leash areas to minimize impacts to natural resources and other recreation user groups.
- Enhance native plant communities and wildlife habitat through appropriate management of the dog off-leash area.
- Develop community partnerships and educational opportunities to cultivate public appreciation of the dog off-leash area and other resources.

Management Actions

Implementing the Dog Off-Leash Area Management Plan will require identification and prioritization of management actions to accomplish management objectives and the Dog Off-Leash Area Management Plan goals. The management actions presented here should continue to be reviewed on an annual basis to determine annual work programs given budget and staff constraints. Implementation of the Dog Off-Leash Area Management Plan also needs to be balanced with other resource needs throughout Cherry Creek State Park.

Many of the management actions will be implemented within the first few years of approval of the Dog Off-Leash Area Management Plan, while others will take many years to accomplish. Some management actions are ongoing, some are short-term, and others are long-term, representing considerable investments of time and energy. The list is a compilation of individual objectives and recommended management actions to help promote safety, sanitation, maintenance, rules, and success (i.e., through monitoring) for the dog off-leash area.

Safety

Objective: Help promote the safety of dog off-leash area users and their pets.

- **Action:** Discourage owners of overtly aggressive, assertive, unruly, or under socialized dogs from visiting the dog off-leash area. Dog off-leash area users should be educated in the signs that dogs display when performing these behaviors.
- **Action:** Discourage dog off-leash area users from bringing young puppies or fearful dogs to the dog off-leash area, as they may be made more fearful by highly assertive dogs, highly interactive dogs, or rough play.
- **Action:** Ensure that dog off-leash area users have dogs under voice control.
- **Action:** Promote close supervision of children by a responsible adult.
- **Action:** Ensure owners carry a leash and waste bag for each dog at all times.
- **Action:** Facilitate monitoring interactions between dogs and other dogs and between dogs and people through the use of volunteers.



Sanitation

Objective: Ensure community expectations of a clean dog off-leash area within Cherry Creek State Park.

- **Action:** Plan and budget for an appropriate maintenance and cleaning schedule, completed regularly.
- **Action:** Place signs listing the rules at the entrance(s) to the dog off-leash area, as well as within the dog off-leash area, profiling the rule that owners must pick up the feces of their dogs. Be sure the signs are well maintained.
- **Action:** Provide adequate disposable bags, or other means of removing feces, and refuse cans for feces cleanup.
- **Action:** Work with park volunteers to help monitor the sanitation of the dog off-leash area.

Maintenance

Objective: Promote the successfulness of the dog off-leash area through appropriate and timely maintenance.

- **Action:** Plan and budget for appropriate maintenance and a cleaning schedule, which includes adequate sanitation procedures, filling holes that are dug by dogs, proper maintenance of the trails, and proper maintenance of fencing and amenities.

- **Action:** Work with volunteers to determine the needed resources to maintain the dog off-leash area, and to help monitor its condition.

Rules

Objective: Minimize impacts to natural resources and other recreation user groups through regulatory mechanisms.

- **Action:** Post rules in several visible locations; keep the signs well maintained.
- **Action:** Ensure rules profile user responsibility, especially regarding clean up.
- **Action:** Limit the number of dogs to three per adult in the dog off-leash area.
- **Action:** Ensure that dog off-leash area users have dogs under voice control.
- **Action:** Do not allow dogs that are aggressive to other dogs or people into the dog off-leash area.
- **Action:** Discourage unsupervised children under the age of 14 into the dog off-leash area for safety reasons.
- **Action:** Permit access to the dog off-leash area only at designated access points.
- **Action:** Consult with other agencies as needed to encourage enforcement of leash laws in areas adjacent to Cherry Creek State Park to decrease the number of dogs illegally off-leash going to and from the park.
- **Action:** Require sport dog trainers to obtain a special use permit to access and use the designated upland and flatwater sport dog training areas.

Monitoring

Objective: Evaluate the success of how well management objectives and goals are met.

- **Action:** Conduct a periodic assessment and photo documentation of the dog off-leash area from assorted vantage points.
- **Action:** Periodically inspect the dog off-leash area access points for problems such as social trails, parking along roadsides, capacity at facilities, and vandalism. Take appropriate action to mitigate these problems.
- **Action:** Track visitor conflicts through incident reports.
- **Action:** Continue to monitor visitor use and evaluate recreation impacts to vegetation and wildlife.
- **Action:** Evaluate the dog off-leash area fees on an annual basis.
- **Action:** Track and maintain database of special use permits for sport dog training areas.

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4.0 PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE

Overview of the Preferred Alternative

The Preferred Alternative is an articulation of the vision to effectively manage the Cherry Creek State Park Dog Off-Leash Area to preserve and enhance the natural resource values while providing compatible recreational opportunities. The Preferred Alternative preserves the dog off-leash area as an irreplaceable recreational amenity in the region, yet augments the visitor experience with select improvements in key locations.

The improvements shown in the accompanying figures respond to new uses, new user groups, and overall increased use of the dog off-leash area and Cherry Creek State Park in general. Through feedback sessions with the State Parks Board, a series of open houses, and written public comments, the State Parks planning team gathered input and ideas from members of the community for the dog off-leash area and refined the Preferred Alternative.

Primary Dog Off-Leash Area

The Preferred Alternative maintains the dog off-leash area, equestrian trails, and stables at Cherry Creek State Park in their current location in the 12-Mile area (Figures 1 and 2).

Appropriate fencing, detailed in the following paragraph, will be erected to delineate the dog off-leash area and separate it from other park uses.

Colorado State Parks will build and maintain fencing starting at the old beaver pond area to the 12-Mile North off leash access area. From there, fencing will run parallel to an east-west utility road, then turn south, continuing to parallel the road. Fencing will continue around the stable to the 12-Mile South parking area and continue about 50 yards south past the last trail. Fencing will continue in a southwesterly direction, ending at the current intersection with the trail corridor along the creek.

The only fencing along Cherry Creek will be strategically installed to protect revegetation efforts that are part of a Cherry Creek Water Quality Basin Authority's streambank stabilization project. There will be multiple water access points along Cherry Creek for dog off-leash use. The access points will be determined as part of the design study for the Cherry Creek Water Quality Basin Authority's streambank stabilization project. The State Parks planning team specifically selected the northern and southern fencing boundaries to address the concerns voiced by park neighbors.

There will be at least four access points to the dog off-leash area, including access at the south parking lot, at both the north and south boundaries along the creek, and at the area entrance closest to the 12-Mile North area (Figure 2).

In an attempt to better separate dog and horse use, the State Parks planning team examined the possibility of relocating the stable to its pre-2000 location (i.e., south of the Parker Road park entrance). However, creating another entrance directly to the proposed location would not be possible because Parker Road is designated as a limited access highway in the 2008

master plan completed by the Colorado Department of Transportation and the Federal Highway Administration. In addition, the land between Parker Road and the proposed location is privately owned and the only existing easement across the property is for a City of Aurora sewer line.

Park staff and the stable concessionaire will also implement some operational adjustments as part of the Preferred Alternative for the 12-Mile area. Specifically, the staging area for the stable will be moved to the northeast corner of the site to allow trail access to the north and further to the west. Along the south and west boundary of the concession area, a trail corridor will be maintained and include a buffer area to further separate dogs from horses in the stable area.

Upland Sport Dog Training Area

Upland sport dog training will still be available by permit on a 30-acre parcel south of the shooting center. Cherry Creek State Park staff will work with sport dog trainers to improve the vegetation in this area, since the rolling terrain is potentially suitable for upland training purposes.

Fees

A planning team subcommittee met with field staff from both Cherry Creek and Chatfield State Parks to discuss dog off-leash area fees. The planning team subcommittee researched and analyzed several dog off-leash area fee collection strategies to develop a recommended procedure.

The State Parks planning team proposes that dog off-leash area and sport dog training area users purchase a “rolling” annual pass. The pass would be plastic credit card-type pass that would be valid for a household for up to three dogs. The cost for the annual pass would be \$20. A daily attended and self-service area pass would be available for occasional area users for a \$2 fee.

Both types of passes would need to be carried by the dog owner or handler while in the dog off-leash area and would need to be available for inspection by a ranger. Dog off-leash area users would be required to display the pass on a lanyard or by other visible means. This pass type is the easiest and most cost-effective option to implement.

Cherry Creek State Park staff have estimated the number of annual and daily park passes that are purchased each year that are used specifically to visit the dog off-leash area (Table 1). Assuming visitation remains constant, the total projected revenue generated from dog off-leash area pass sales would be about \$60,648 annually.

Table 1. Projected Annual Revenue from Dog Off-Leash Area Pass Sales at Cherry Creek State Park.

Pass Type	Total Passes	Pass Price	Pass Revenue
Annual	1,518	\$20	\$30,360
Daily	15,144	\$2	\$30,288
ESTIMATE TOTAL			\$60,648

Role of Partners and Volunteers

Volunteers will play a vital role in the successful management of the dog off-leash areas. In addition to special improvement projects and routine area maintenance, volunteer ambassadors will act as Colorado State Parks representatives, educating users on dog off-leash area etiquette and guidelines to safely enjoy their recreational experiences. Like any other Colorado State Parks volunteer, these individuals will have the opportunity to donate time to earn an annual volunteer park pass, valid at all Colorado State Parks. As part of a volunteer involvement strategy dog off-leash area, the State Parks planning team has outline goals, potential partnerships, and potential volunteer opportunities.

Goals

- Leverage resources, including citizen involvement
- Support more effective and sustainable management
- Explore various alternatives of citizen involvement



Potential Partnerships

- Dog Training Clubs
- Pet Businesses
 - Pet Day Care and Boarding
 - Pet Stores
- Volunteers for Outdoor Colorado
- Wildlands Restoration Volunteers
- Audubon Society of Greater Denver
- Cherry Creek Stewardship Partners
- Backcountry Horseman’s Association
- Local Nurseries



Potential Volunteer Opportunities

- Roam the dog off-leash area
- Model excellent behavior with personal dogs
- Educate visitors about the dog off-leash area



- Assist with area clean up and possible repairs
- Report non-compliance

Dog Area Projects

- Group or individual projects
- Initial development and construction of the dog off-leash areas
- Habitat restoration
- Clean up, maintenance, and repair

5.0 IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Suggested Phasing

The proposed management recommendations and Preferred Alternative will require a phased approach for implementation. This section is structured to assist State Parks with capital expense budgeting, grant applications, and internal capacity. The five principal elements of the first phase for the dog off-leash area at Cherry Creek State Park are presented below.

1. **Fencing:** Erect wood post alternated with t-type posts with goat wire and two smooth strands on top for the majority of the dog off-leash area. Parking areas and restrooms will be outside of the fenced area.
2. **Access Points:** Construct bullpen-type entrance (10 feet x 20 feet) at 12-Mile South, the 12-Mile north access point, and the two access points along the creek. Each bullpen will be divided in two for an entrance section and an exit section.
3. **Trails:** Complete minor trail reroutes where dictated by fence installation.
4. **Waste Collection Stations:** Strategic placement and addition of waste collection stations.
5. **Informational and Regulatory Signage:** Install signs in key locations that present existing regulations and guidelines for the dog-off leash area.

Funding and Investment Needs

Based on estimates, dog off-leash area maintenance is about \$31,000 annually. This includes staff time (i.e., maintenance and ranger staff), natural resource protection, trash service, port-a-let service, and general maintenance supplies and services. In fiscal year (FY) 2011-12, the State Parks planning team will propose increasing the dog off-leash area budget to \$71,500 to include additional staff and vehicle time, trash and utility service, and maintenance supplies and services. This total includes the purchase of an all-terrain vehicle or golf cart (with an estimated 10-year replacement cycle) dedicated to dog off-leash area maintenance. For FY 2012-13 and the next three years, the State Parks planning team estimates operating costs to be about \$61,500. The State Parks planning team has calculated that the estimated net operating increase to effectively manage the dog off-leash area is \$15,900 per year. The operations and maintenance costs to effectively manage the dog off-leash area at both Cherry Creek and Chatfield State Parks will be at least \$108,000. The capital construction budget to improve the 12-Mile area at Cherry Creek State Park is presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Cherry Creek State Park Off-Leash Area Improvements – Cost Estimate

Item	Bid Items	Quantity	Unit	Unit Price	Total
1	Mobilization and site staking-surveying	1	LS	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 5,000.00
2	Site demolition (removal of vault restroom, existing fencing, existing entrance station, surplus soil)	1	LS	\$ 7,500.00	\$ 7,500.00
3	Provide geotechnical engineer services to perform material testing as specified	1	LS	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 2,500.00
4	Water, sediment, and erosion control	1	LS	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 2,500.00
5	Earthwork	1	LS	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 5,000.00
6	Imported fill	500	CY	\$ 30.00	\$ 15,000.00
7	Imported topsoil	100	CY	\$ 40.00	\$ 4,000.00
8	Re-grade to widen and compact existing road (parking lots as shown on plans and as directed by the project manager.	1	LS	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 5,000.00
9	CDOT class 6 road base (road)	557	CY	\$ 30.00	\$ 16,710.00
10	CDOT class 6 road base (parking lot)	641	CY	\$ 30.00	\$ 19,230.00
11	Asphalt paving	100,000	SF	\$ 3.50	\$ 350,000.00
12	Pavement markings (including painting wheel stops and curbs for ADA spaces).	1	LS	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 5,000.00
14	6' long precast integral colored concrete tire stop (includes anchoring with rebar).	80	EA	\$ 50.00	\$ 4,000.00
15	4" concrete flatwork (includes thickened edges)	2,000	SF	\$ 4.25	\$ 8,500.00
16	Chase drain	2	EA	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 2,000.00
17	Concrete curb	1,000	LF	\$ 30.00	\$ 30,000.00
18	Sidewalk ramp type 3A	1	EA	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 2,500.00
19	Concrete curb ramp	1	LF	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 2,500.00
20	18" HDPE culvert	5	EA	\$ 40.00	\$ 200.00
21	18" flared end sections for HDPE culverts	2	SF	\$ 500.00	\$ 1,000.00
22	¾" minus 4" depth gravel setting bed and d-12" (mean size) riprap at culvert inlet & outfall (16" depth riprap on average)	250	EA	\$ 2.00	\$ 500.00
23	Dog waste bag dispenser and sign	10	EA	\$ 200.00	\$ 2,000.00
24	Trash can	10	EA	\$ 200.00	\$ 2,000.00
25	Accessible picnic table	1	EA	\$ 800.00	\$ 800.00
26	Bench	2	EA	\$ 600.00	\$ 1,200.00
27	Single post sign	16	EA	\$ 100.00	\$ 1,600.00
28	Double 4x4 post sign	5	EA	\$ 200.00	\$ 1,000.00
29	Double 6x6 post sign	1	EA	\$ 300.00	\$ 300.00
30	Double 4x4 post sign w/ 2 steel sleeves in thickened concrete	1	EA	\$ 400.00	\$ 400.00
31	Install signs on kiosk	3	EA	\$ 50.00	\$ 150.00
32	Restrictive access bollard	3	EA	\$ 500.00	\$ 1,500.00
33	Access gate	1	EA	\$ 3,500.00	\$ 3,500.00
34	Self-service kiosk	1	EA	\$ 8,000.00	\$ 8,000.00
35	Precast concrete double vault restroom (per specification)	1	EA	\$ 32,000.00	\$ 32,000.00
36	Entrance sign	1	EA	\$ 20,000.00	\$ 20,000.00
37	Precast concrete entrance station	1	EA	\$ 40,000.00	\$ 40,000.00
38	Flag pole	1	EA	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 2,500.00
39	8' wide gravel trail with sections of geotextile fabric	14,000	LF	\$ 7.00	\$ 98,000.00
40	Wire fence with wood posts	12,000	LF	\$ 6.00	\$ 72,000.00
41	Split 2-rail fence with 8' "jumbo" rail sections	800	LF	\$ 8.00	\$ 6,400.00
42	Underground utilities	1	LS	\$ 25,000.00	\$ 25,000.00
43	Vegetative rehabilitation	1	LS	\$ 20,000.00	\$ 20,000.00
44	Contingency	1	LS	\$ 50,000.00	\$ 50,000.00
ESTIMATE TOTAL				\$	876,990.00

6.0 REFERENCES

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- Business Research Division. 2008. Off-Leash Area User Study: Cherry Creek State Park. Unpublished Study completed by Leeds School of Business, University of Colorado at Boulder for Colorado State Parks.
- Ensign Technical Services, Inc. 2008. The Effects of Off-Leash Dog Areas on Birds and Small Mammals in Cherry Creek and Chatfield State Parks. Unpublished Study completed for Colorado State Parks.
- GEI Consultants. 2008. The Influence of Pet Recreation Areas on Soil and Water Quality at Cherry Creek State Park. Unpublished Study completed for Colorado State Parks.
- Spence, Edward. 2008. District Conservationist, Natural Resources Conservation Service. Letter to Joe Brand, Assistant Park Manager, Cherry Creek State Park.

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Figures

Dog Off-Leash Area Management Plan



Appendix A

Dog Off-Leash Area Management Plan



**Cherry Creek
State Park: Dog
Off-leash Area –
Comment
Summary Report**

Public Meeting and
Other comments

June 2 through 11, 2010

BACKGROUND

Cherry Creek State Park is a reservoir-based state park located in the central Metro-Denver area. The park is made up of 3,346 land acres and 880 water acres. Colorado State Parks owns one percent of the area, with the other 99 percent owned by other entities such as the Army Corp of Engineers.

In 2009 the park's visitation was 1,673,516 and of those approximately 232,435¹ visitors can be attributed to the off-leash dog area. Also for 2009, the park's total revenue generated was \$2,160,038² and of that approximately \$186,274³ can be attributed to off-leash dog area users.

Methodology

In order to gather additional public feedback regarding the proposed State Park's draft alternative and the proposed draft Stakeholder options, Colorado State Parks held a public open house meeting on June 2, 2010 at Cherry Creek High School that was attended by 307 members of the public who submitted 280 comment cards (sample comment card, Appendix A). Comment cards asked individuals specify any additional changes/elements they would like State Parks consider in developing a Final Draft Alternative to present to the State Parks Board. However, many commenters chose not to respond to this question and listed other general comments or concerns.

Comment cards were read by Parks staff and each substantive comment was categorized so that key themes, issues and concerns could be quantified and analyzed. Each comment card may have contained multiple substantive comments. Thus, the number of substantive comments may be greater than the actual number of comment cards received.

Individuals submitting comments were also asked to specify the type of user group they most identify themselves with. Some respondents checked more than one user type, therefore, the raw totals of user group responses be more than the total number of comment cards submitted.

For members of the public who were not able to attend the open house meeting, comments were officially accepted from June 2 through June 11, 2010 via an online form provided on the Cherry Creek website, as well as by telephone, mail, and/or email. An additional 115 comments were received via the online form and 54 comments were received via all other sources.

PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE COMMENT SUMMARY

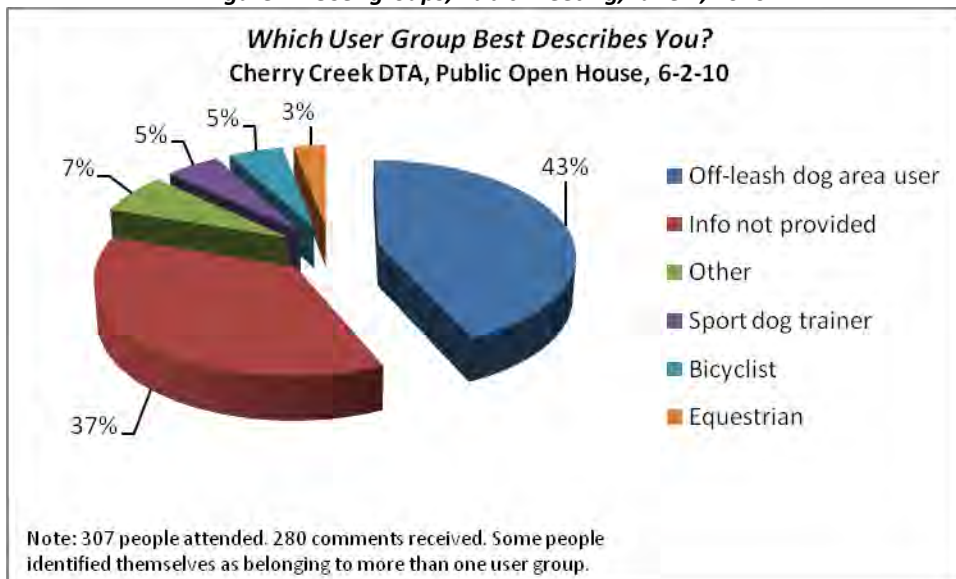
The group was asked via a comment card to select (from a list of six categories) the type of user group that they belonged to. The largest group in attendance was off-leash dog area users (43 percent). The next largest group (37 percent) did not specify their type of usage. See Figure 1 below for a breakdown of user groups and Appendix B for full details.

¹ Personal communication from Tim Metzger, June 18, 2010.

² PARKS Park Manager report for 2009 calendar year, as accessed June 18, 2010.

³ Personal communication from Tim Metzger, June 18, 2010.

Figure 1. User groups, Pubic Meeting, June 2, 2010



Contained within the 280 comment cards were at least 566⁴ individual substantive comments. Public meeting participants submitted a variety of positive and negative responses and of the 566 comments, the top five categories are discussed in more detail below and are labeled on Figure 2 (and in detail in Appendix C).

Perceived Negative

About 54 percent of the comments received indicated that respondents perceive aspects or elements of Cherry Creek’s draft preferred alternative and/or the stakeholder options in a negative light. The top five negative comment categories or themes included:

- Opposed to fencing
- No desirable elements and/or leave the park alone
- Opposed to the reduction in acreage and/or want more acreage
- Don’t want water access to be cut off
- Should provide more waste bags and trash cans and/or need more waste clean up

Favor Stakeholder Option 2

About 11 percent of the comments indicated general support of Stakeholder Option #2. However, most comments suggest additional modifications to this option and do not support it “as is.” Most of those suggested modifications are in regards to providing additional water access, limit fencing, or strategically using fencing near equestrian areas.

Support Elements of Draft Preferred Alternative

The third largest category (nine percent) includes comments that view aspects or elements of the draft preferred alternative and/or the stakeholder options in a positive light such as:

⁴ Totals do not add up to the number of people in attendance or the number of comment cards. Most people supplied more than one comment or suggestion per card, and each one was taken into account individual, when possible, to accurately represent public sentiment. Additionally, many people identified themselves as belonging to more than one user type.

- Supportive of a modest fee
- Supportive of new/improved bathrooms, roads, entrance, etc.
- Supports environmental protection/restoration measures

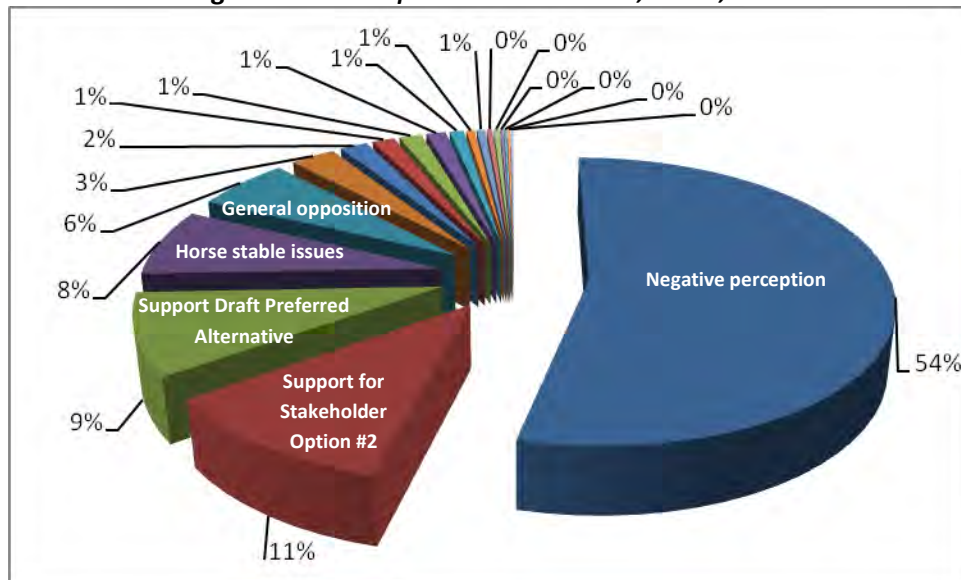
Horse Stable Issues

About eight percent of the comments question or indicate concerns about the Cherry Creek Horse Stables. This category also includes comments that suggest moving the horses to another part of the park or eliminating this use all together.

General Opposition

The fifth largest comment category includes comments that indicate general opposition to the entire off-leash planning process and/or to the rationale for change (six percent).

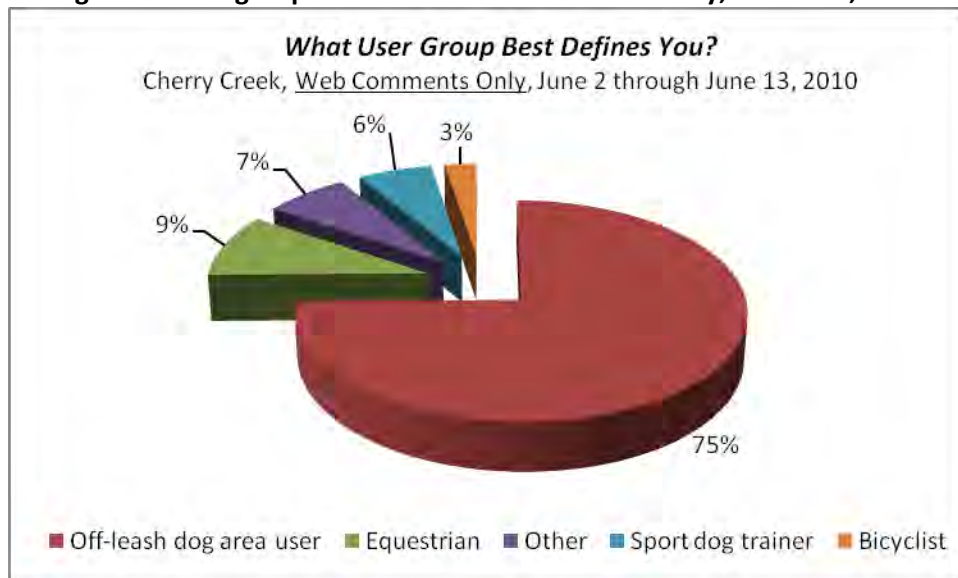
Figure 2. Public Open House Comments, June 2, 2010



WEB-BASED COMMENTS USING ONLINE FORM

Of the 115 people that submitted an online form, 75 percent self-identified themselves as being an off-leash dog area user; equestrians were the next largest group representing nine percent. Sport dog trainers included about six percent of all the online comments received (Figure 3). Contained within the 115 online forms were at least 228 individual substantive comments (Figure 4).

Figure 3. User groups from web-based comments only, June 2-13, 2010



Negative Perception

Online comments reveal that nearly half (48 percent) perceive aspects or elements of the draft preferred alternative and/or the stakeholder options in a negative light. The top five negative comment categories or themes included:

- Opposed to fencing
- Oppose the reduction in acreage or want more acreage added
- No desirable elements; leave park alone
- Opposed to all proposed alternatives that were submitted by multi-user group
- Need more waste disposal containers and bags; need additional waste clean-up

Support Elements of Draft Preferred Alternative

About 15 percent of online comments (slightly more than the percent of Public Open House comments) indicated support for one or more elements in the Draft Preferred Alternative, but not necessarily the Draft Preferred Alternative in its entirety or as presented:

- Understands or supports the need for changes
- Supports environmental protection/restoration measures
- Supportive of a modest fee
- Supports a sports dog training area

General or Neighborhood Concerns

About seven percent have general neighborhood concerns such as traffic and safety concerns within the surrounding neighborhoods.

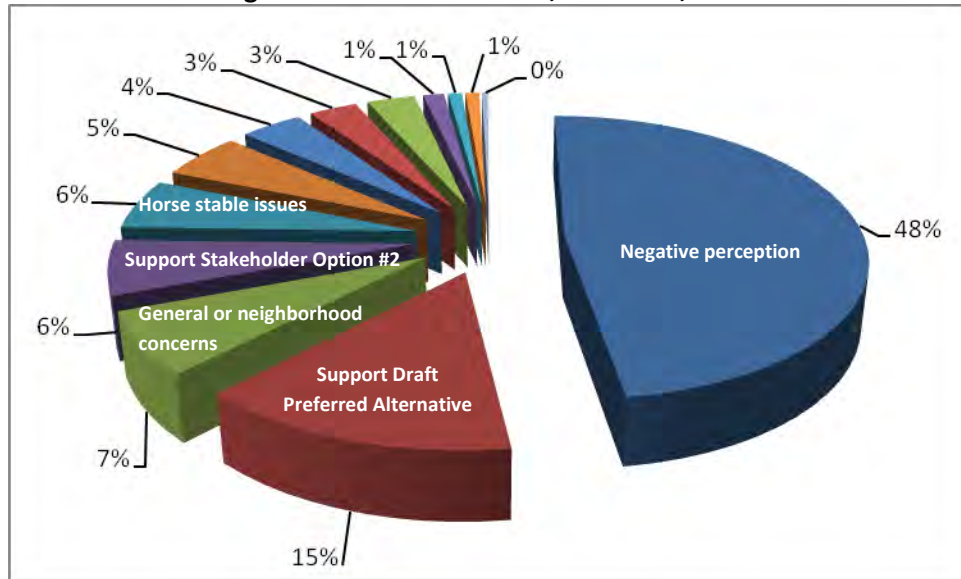
Support Stakeholder Option 2

About six percent prefer Stakeholder Option #2, but just as the Open House participants, generally do not favor this option “as is” and often propose additional modifications.

Horse Stable Issues

Another six percent of comments question or indicate concerns about the Cherry Creek Horse Stables. Likewise, this category includes comments that suggest moving the horses to another part of the park or eliminating this use all together.

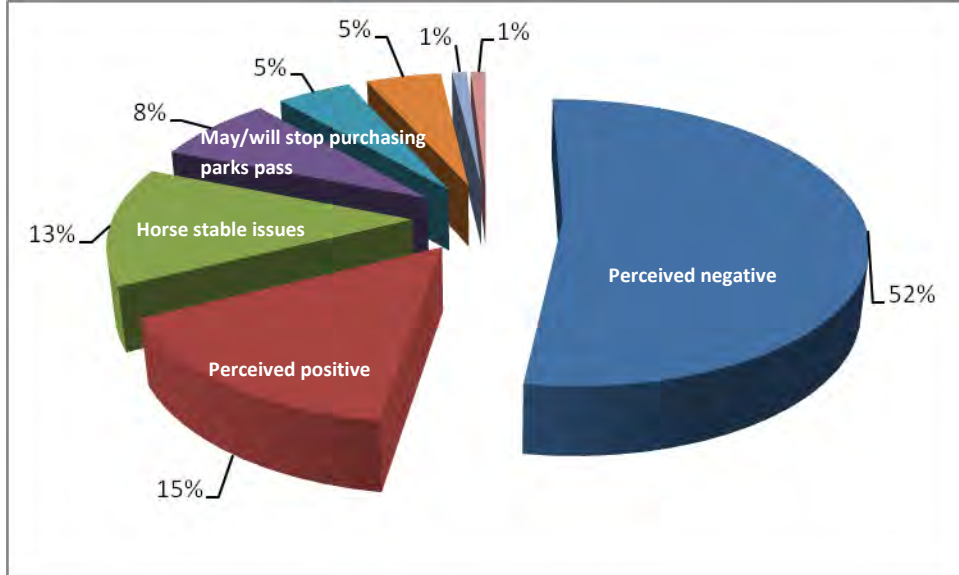
Figure 4. Online comments, June 2-17, 2010



Other Comments

The 54 comments received from other sources (such as email, telephone, and written letters) indicate that just over half (52 percent) also perceive aspects or elements of the draft preferred alternative and/or the stakeholder options in a negative light. And, like the other online form comments, 15 percent view the changes positively. Thirteen percent indicated that they may or will discontinue purchasing annual parks passes if these changes are implemented. An additional eight percent also reveal concerns about the Cherry Creek Horse Stables including comments that suggest moving the horses to another part of the park or eliminating this use all together (Figure 5).

Figure 5. Comments from all other sources, June 2-17, 2010



CONCLUSION

Most people that commented between June 2 and June 11 included off-leash dog area users. Over half of the substantive comments that were analyzed following the comment period indicated a negative perception of proposed changes to the Cherry Creek off-leash area. Nine to 15 percent of comments were supportive of one or more elements of the State Parks Preliminary Draft Alternative. Additionally, a smaller percentage were understanding of the need for changes in general and indicated support for the proposed volunteer program, environmental protection measures, and the need for a modest fee (see Appendices C, E, F for details).

Some other recurring themes occur within the comments, but didn't necessarily make the "top five" categories described earlier in this report. Some of these other recurring comments included:

- Opposition to the "Givens" or that the "Givens" are not fair and need further modifications.
- General opposition to entire planning process and/or rationale used for the changes
- Perception that public process has been flawed and that elements included in the alternatives do not represent public opinion or scientific data presented in reports
- Belief there is a "conspiracy" of some sort.
- Some stated they would contact their local political leaders or vote the current leaders out of office in order to prevent any changes.
- A small number of people expressed concern over management of the area in that if more waste containers or other low-cost programs were put in place years ago, these changes would not be needed today.

APPENDIX A – SAMPLE COMMENT CARD

Front:

Cherry Creek Comment Card

Dog Off-leash Training Area

After reviewing the “List of Givens,” State Parks Preliminary Draft Alternative, and Stakeholder Options 1 and 2 for **Cherry Creek State Park**, please specify any additional changes/elements you would like State Parks to consider in developing a Final Draft Alternative to present to the State Parks Board. For example, what elements of the Stakeholder Options and Preliminary Draft Alternative are most desirable from your perspective?

Back:

Which user group best describes you?

Off leash dog area user Sport dog trainer Equestrian Bicyclist Other _____

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME!!!

APPENDIX B – OPEN HOUSE, USER GROUPS

Which user group best describes you?	Count
Info not provided	124
Off-leash dog area user	146
Sport dog trainer	17
Equestrian	10
Bicyclist	17
Other	23
<i>not specified</i>	3
<i>runner</i>	2
<i>walker / hiker</i>	6
<i>boater</i>	1
<i>general visitor / observer</i>	2
<i>birder / wildlife watcher</i>	6
<i>sportsman</i>	1
<i>Volunteer coord.</i>	1
<i>tax payer & pass holder</i>	1

***NOTES:**

Total adds up to more than the number of actual comment cards received, as many people checked more than one user group type.

APPENDIX C – OPEN HOUSE COMMENT THEMES

Comments Summarized by "theme"	Count
Perceived NEGATIVE aspects / elements of draft preferred alternative/stakeholder option	305
Prefer Stakeholder #2 option (or with modifications) - 87+ acres	64
Perceived POSITIVE aspects / elements of draft preferred alternative/stakeholder option	52
Questions and/or concerns of Horse Stable owner business operations / Move the horses / Get rid of the horses	43
General opposition to entire planning process and/or rationale for change	34
May/will stop coming to park (or stop buying a pass) if these changes are made (may include decrease area, fences, charge fee, etc.)	16
Fence an equestrian trail and leave dog area (including water access) as is.	10
Flawed public process / Elements included in alternatives do not represent public opinion	8
Prefer Stakeholder #1 option (or with modifications) - 53 acres	8
Use moveable fencing to revegetate damage areas, then re-open the areas	7
Additional user fees should be spent at same park's DTA facilities only.	5
Prefer State Parks Draft Alternative (or with modifications)	3
Undecided about all plans / all plans need modifications.	3
Why weren't any Parks Board members at this meeting?	2
Move dog park to another part of park, and leave horses in current area	2
Privatize the area and lease to a private operation that can fund the options that the public wants	1
Restrict number of dogs on weekends to control crowding; weekdays no restriction	1
Equestrians should announce themselves so people have time to leash their dog(s)	1
Add solar lights for park use after sundown	1
	566
Perceived NEGATIVE aspects / elements of draft preferred alternative/stakeholder option:	
Oppose fence	78
No desirable elements / leave things alone	60
Oppose the reduction in acreage / want more acreage	40
Allow more access to water sources (non-specific) / Don't fence off the water	40
Provide more waste disposal containers and/or bags and appropriate signage / Pick up waste	27
Need better enforcement, charge fines, paying entrance fees, etc	13
Oppose fees / Why pay more for less? / All user groups should pay additional fee.	10
Maintain what we have / don't build more	8
Oppose "Givens" / "Givens" are not fair and/or need further modifications	8
Allow more than two dogs per person	6
Restrict bike users from area / keep them designated bike paths / charge bikes a fee / why aren't they asked to make concessions to other users?	5
Require dogs to pass an obedience test for entry to park. / Require vaccinations.	3
Not enough shaded areas	2
ADA concerns	1
Sport dog training area is too large	1

Concern for wildlife and unauthorized parking along Orchard Rd and Orchard Valley neighborhood	1
Bad or not enough maps	1
Do not gate access points	1
	305

Perceived POSITIVE aspects / elements of draft preferred alternative/stakeholder option:

Supports a modest fee / supports a daily fee	26
Supports new/improved bathrooms, roads, entrance, gate attendant, etc	6
Supports environmental protection/restoration measures	6
Supports fencing	4
Supports a sport dog training area	4
Understands/supports need for changes (general)	3
Waive additional fees for volunteers	2
Supports restriction of number of dogs to 3 per person	1
	52

APPENDIX D – ONLINE FORM, USER GROUPS

Which user group best describes you?	<i>Count</i>
Info not provided	0
Off-leash dog area user	86
Sport dog trainer	7
Equestrian	11
Bicyclist	3
Other	8

APPENDIX E – ONLINE FORM, COMMENT THEMES

Comments Summarized by "theme"	Count
Perceived NEGATIVE aspects / elements of draft preferred alternative/stakeholder option	109
Perceived POSITIVE aspects / elements of draft preferred alternative/stakeholder option	33
General comment or suggestion / Nearby neighborhood concerns	16
Prefer Stakeholder #2 option (or with modifications) - 87+ acres	14
Questions and/or concerns of Horse Stable owner business operations / Move the horses / Get rid of the horses May/will stop coming to park (or stop buying a pass) if these changes are made (may include decrease area, fences, charge fee, etc.)	13
General opposition to entire planning process and/or rationale for change	9
Prefer Stakeholder #1 option (or with modifications) - 53 acres	7
Flawed public process / Elements included in alternatives do not represent public opinion	7
Fence an equestrian trail and leave dog area (including water access) as is / Keep horse trail separate	3
Additional user fees should be spent at same park's DTA facilities only.	2
Restrict number of dogs on weekends to control crowding; weekdays no restriction	2
Prefer State Parks Draft Alternative (or with modifications)	1
	228
Perceived NEGATIVE aspects / elements of draft preferred alternative/stakeholder option:	
Oppose fence	25
Oppose the reduction in acreage / want more acreage	16
No desirable elements / leave things alone	14
Oppose all proposed alternatives submitted by multi-user groups	11
Provide more waste disposal containers and/or bags and appropriate signage / Pick up waste	9
Oppose "Givens" / "Givens" are not fair and/or need further modifications	8
Limit sport dog training area to certain days/times (or by reservation) so general public has access to all areas	5
Allow more access to water sources (non-specific) / Don't fence off the water	4
Need better enforcement, charge fines, paying entrance fees, etc	4
Oppose fees / Why pay more for less? / All user groups should pay additional fee.	4
Maintain what we have / don't build more / Don't need facility upgrades	3
Allow more than two dogs per person	3
Mgmt concerns / Park currently not acceptable	3
	109
Perceived POSITIVE aspects / elements of draft preferred alternative/stakeholder option:	
Understands/supports need for changes (general)	8
Supports environmental protection/restoration measures	6
Supports a modest fee / supports a daily fee	5
Supports a sport dog training area	4
Volunteers: good idea, interested in helping, give free pass for volunteering, etc	3
Supports fencing	3
Supports restriction of number of dogs to 3 per person	3
Supports new/improved bathrooms, roads, entrance, gate attendant, etc	1
	33

APPENDIX F – COMMENTS FROM ALL OTHER SOURCES

Comments Summarized by "theme" <i>Comments from other sources (phone, mail, email)</i>	Count
Perceived NEGATIVE aspects / elements of draft preferred alternative/stakeholder option	55
Perceived POSITIVE aspects / elements of draft preferred alternative/stakeholder option	16
May/will stop coming to park (or stop buying a pass) if these changes are made (may include decrease area, fences, charge fee, etc.)	14
Questions and/or concerns of Horse Stable owner business operations / Move the horses / Get rid of the horses	8
General comment or suggestion / Nearby neighborhood concerns	5
General opposition to entire planning process and/or rationale for change	5
Prefer Stakeholder #1 option (or with modifications) - 53 acres	1
Flawed public process / Elements included in alternatives do not represent public opinion	1
Perceived POSITIVE aspects / elements of draft preferred alternative/stakeholder option:	
Supports a modest fee / supports a daily fee	9
Supports environmental protection/restoration measures	4
Understands/supports need for changes (general)	2
Supports new/improved bathrooms, roads, entrance, gate attendant, etc	1
	16
Perceived NEGATIVE aspects / elements of draft preferred alternative/stakeholder option:	
Oppose all proposed alternatives submitted by multi-user groups	14
No desirable elements / leave things alone	9
Oppose the reduction in acreage / want more acreage	7
Oppose fence	6
Oppose fees / Why pay more for less? / All user groups should pay additional fee.	6
Need more waste cans and bags	5
Need better enforcement, charge fines, paying entrance fees, etc	4
Mgmt concerns / Park currently not acceptable	2
Oppose "Givens" / "Givens" are not fair and/or need further modifications	1
Oppose sport dog training area	1
	55