

From [REDACTED]

Sent: Monday, September 2, 2019 12:06 PM

To: Carla Schoof <cschoof@smcgov.org>

Subject: Re: Consideration of the Pillar Point Bluff Trail as an Off-leash Dog Recreation Location

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing in opposition to the consideration of the Pillar Point Bluff Trail as an Off-leash Dog Recreation location. I have worked with both wildlife and domestic animals in my 30 year career as a veterinary technician. I am a dog owner and a harbor seal naturalist with Bay Net for the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary. I also run the Facebook page for the Harbor seals of Pacific Grove with over 9300 daily followers. Harbor seals are skittish by nature and because of the way they move on land are frightened easily by people and dogs. During a time of climate change, the seals are having to deal with a lot of natural stresses in the way of food shortages and increased white shark populations. To add dogs to their stress load would be disastrous. We have already witnessed the deaths of seals by dogs up and down the coast. This Trail is not appropriate for off-leash dog use due to unobstructed access to areas of FMR which are harbor seal haul-out and pupping sites. Off-leash dogs along the Trail is incompatible with the mission of the Friends of Fitzgerald Marine Reserve, which is to protect and preserve the unique intertidal environment at the Reserve.

I know many people who travel to the area to see the harbor seals particularly, but if the off-leash dogs are allowed, they would not bother coming anymore because seals would cease to be there from the amount of disturbances that would occur. Dogs chase wildlife and they kill seals and that is something I do not care to witness nor support. I would also not be able to have my mom visit the area because of the potential for injury by a dog jumping on her or tripping her.

Please protect the area for the wildlife and for everyone who enjoy the beauty of nature and enjoy walking the trail in a safe and quiet manner.

Thank you for your time.

[REDACTED]
Pacific Grove, CA

From [REDACTED] >

Sent: Monday, September 2, 2019 3:29 PM

To: Carla Schoof <cschoof@smcgov.org>

Subject: Proposed Pillar Point Bluff Trail as an Off-leash Dog Recreation Location

Dear San Mateo County Parks Dog Management Work Group:

I am writing to you regarding the proposed Off-leash Dog Recreation site at Pillar Point Bluff Trail. The area is a resting place for harbor seals and pups in addition to other wildlife.

The harbor seals are in a particularly difficult period with the shortage in their food supply and shrinking beaches, allowing for additional disturbance would severely impact these already stressed animals. In addition, other wildlife such as birds are undergoing likewise difficulties. As a volunteer for Bay Net and the Black Oystercatcher monitoring project I see first hand the impact of human and pets on the ecosystem.

Since wildlife is protected along our coastline, allowing off leash dogs in nearby areas would be a breach of regulations.

Please do consider these factors in your decision.

Thank you.

[REDACTED]

From [REDACTED]

Sent: Monday, September 2, 2019 6:08 PM

To: Carla Schoof <cschoof@smcgov.org>

Subject: Dog off-leash space is not appropriate at Pillar Point Bluffs

To Carlo Shoof
SM County Parks Dog Management Committee

I would like to register my concern over the consideration of Pillar Point Bluffs as a site for off-leash dog recreation. I am currently a board member of the Friend of the Fitzgerald Marine Reserve (FFMR), and we have followed the developing policy very closely. Here I would like to add my insight as a large dog owner, user of Pillar Point Bluffs, and someone who would enjoy an off-leash space on the coast. However, I do not feel that Pillar Point Bluffs meets even the minimal criteria for creating a space that would be highly attractive for many dog owners. The reasons for this are:

A) The bluffs are dangerous and unstable, and the trails are in flux. It is very easy for a dog to wander along a trail, ahead of its owner, leading both into areas of potential cliff detachment.

B) The low bushes seem to be a home to numerous song birds, and one would assume that there are numerous nesting sites in the area. Even my own dog, who I would like to consider to be highly trained, does wander into the brush, after an animal, if my attention wanders.

C) The biggest benefit of an off-leash area is ample space to allow dogs to run together, or to exercise. Pillar Point is not appropriate for that type of activity. In particular, ball chasing is extremely dangerous. A far better site for off-leash activities would include a flat beach or an adjacent field.

As a member of the FFMR, my concerns are over the general lack of understanding among the public that the beaches in this zone are part of a marine protected area, and should not be accessed from the bluffs. It is to be sure confusing, because the other side of the point, Mavericks Beach, is a well-established, if unofficial, off-leash beach area, and many of the beaches on the coast are used in an off-leash fashion, regardless of posting. The Parks Dept can increase signage and monitoring of the Pillar Point Bluffs area, but the level of monitoring will need to be maintained at high levels in perpetuity; given the popularity of the coast with ever increasing numbers of visitors, it cannot be assumed that everyone will get the message after a short intensive burst of public education by park staff.

It is understandable that the long-time residents are upset. However, this is now public space, and we have to come to terms that now it will be used by people from out of the area, from SF down for a weekend trip, from people coming over from the bay side, to escape the heat. To think that this is still our own backyard is to ignore reality. To allow dogs off-leash in this zone would certainly be highly publicized among various websites that aggregate information for dog owners. There are no standards in place for what constitutes a well-trained dog, that can be allowed off-leash in such an environmentally sensitive area. Recorded events of dogs killing seals, both on Ross Cove Beach and in Pt. Reyes, make this point very dramatically. I could not even be certain that my well-trained

dog would respond to the usual voice commands, if they somehow got into an instinctual frenzy over chasing another animal.

In conclusion, I am a dog owner, I have certainly taken my dogs to Pillar Point Bluffs for walks, and in the past I have let them be off-leash. It was fun. But, it was not right. I am pleased to see the new signage at the Bluffs, and I still enjoy myself immensely there, with my dog on-leash.



From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, September 2, 2019 8:07 PM
To: Carla Schoof <cschoof@smcgov.org>
Subject: I Oppose the Pillar Point Bluff Trail for Off-Leash Dog Recreation

I am writing in opposition to making the Pillar Point Bluff Trail an Off-leash Dog Recreation location. I'm a dog lover and owner but I also understand that dogs do not mix with wildlife - often causing damage as a direct or indirect result. An officially sanctioned off-leash dog use area along the Trail is incompatible with the mission of the Friends of Fitzgerald Marine Reserve. Off-leash dogs would have unobstructed access from the trail to the Ross' Cove and Frenchman's Creek areas of FMR.

One species of wildlife in particular would be in significant danger and stress with the sanction of off-leash dogs. That species is the harbor seal. The Reserve is a special place for seals to haul out and give birth. Dogs off-leash become predators of seals and leave their scent which can scare seals away.

We humans love our dogs and treat them as a part of our family. But an amenity for dog exercise should not come at the expense of the health of a wildlife species. Harbor seals fight to survive every day - finding adequate food and avoiding natural predators. We should be working to preserve places for the seals health; not eroding the quality of the few places that are left for them.

Thank you for the opportunity to express my concern,
[REDACTED], Pacific Grove CA;
NOAA Bay Net and Point Lobos State Reserve Docent

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, September 6, 2019 11:34 AM
To: Carla Schoof <cschoof@smcgov.org>
Subject: Off-leash dogs in SMCo parkland

Dear Ms. Schoof,

I am writing to express my opposition to designating Pillar Point Bluff Trail as an off-leash dog recreation area. I am a 5-year docent at Fitzgerald Marine Reserve, and member of the Friends of Fitzgerald Marine Reserve Board of Directors. The reasons for my opposition include:

- This trail provides unobstructed access down to Ross' Cove and Frenchman's Creek area, both part of the Marine Protected area of FMR. These are harbor seal haul-out and pupping areas; off leash dogs are prohibited in this area, and are incompatible with protection of the marine life there.
- Many incidents of off-leash dogs killing seals within Marine Protected Areas exist, including at FMR in April 2018.
- The presence of dogs, and their lingering scent, alert wildlife to the presence of predators, disrupting their behavior and potential abandonment of pups or negative health effects on the seals.

Pillar Point Bluff trail is currently an on-leash dog recreation area, and should remain so, with enforcement. Off leash dogs are incompatible with the Mission Statement of the Friends of Fitzgerald Marine Reserve, which is to protect and preserve the unique intertidal environment at the Reserve. It allows far too easy access of dogs to the intertidal area of FMR Marine Protected Area; such access is prohibited by law.

The nearby Quarry Park trail, also being considered as an off-leash dog area, provides a great opportunity for an off-leash site, and is not situated in such an environmentally sensitive area.

Thank you very much for your time and attention to this matter.

[REDACTED]
Moss Beach



WRITTEN COMMENT TO THE DOG PILOT WORKGROUP

PLEASE COMPLETE THIS FORM AND HAND IT TO STAFF

DATE: 9-9-19

PLEASE PROVIDE YOUR COMMENTS:

Please consider the Bluffs and the beach as separate entities when weighing in on the off lease areas.

In 40 yrs. I have been walking the bluffs and have been around long enough to watch the houses that were build up in that area to fall into the ocean. Please be progressive in your decisions. Consider the beach the beach no dog access the bluff is the bluff dogs cannot go down to the beach from the bluffs unless your purpose is to do it illegally. No one of us regular people want the two places to be considered as one.

my dog friends and I have been here a long time. Please go forward with deciding to go forward with the bluffs being available to all responsible dog owners.

We have always taken care of the bluff long ago and now we keep it clean and safe for others.

Thank you

Karen



WRITTEN COMMENT TO THE DOG PILOT WORKGROUP

PLEASE COMPLETE THIS FORM AND HAND IT TO STAFF

DATE: Sept 9, 2019

PLEASE PROVIDE YOUR COMMENTS:

I feel that the county parks team is working behind the scenes counter productively to the work group - which just means you are wasting a lot of dedicated peoples time. Also the fact that I have to take a vacation day from work to attend any public meeting you have is more evidence that you truly do not want nor do you listen to public comment and input.

It's simple - why does SMC parks have a FRACTION of the access to trails that every other bay area county affords dog owners? As a cancer survivor ~~and~~ walking my dog is directly tied to staying healthy. Why are you limiting this??



WRITTEN COMMENT TO THE DOG PILOT WORKGROUP

PLEASE COMPLETE THIS FORM AND HAND IT TO STAFF

DATE: Sept 9/2019

PLEASE PROVIDE YOUR COMMENTS:

My dog is my walking companion. We both benefit from our daily walks. As an elderly person (84 yrs) I cannot run with him on the leash, yet I feel that he needs some "free" time to have a run for his health & happiness. Our county is large enough that I have to drive a distance to find a place where I can walk & he can have a run too. Please don't decrease the places we can go for this exercise.



WRITTEN COMMENT TO THE DOG PILOT WORKGROUP

PLEASE COMPLETE THIS FORM AND HAND IT TO STAFF

DATE: 9/9/19

PLEASE PROVIDE YOUR COMMENTS:

We love living on the coast in large part to be able to enjoy the outdoors, enhanced by the company of our dogs. We always feel so fortunate ^{to live here} when we meet people who have to travel great distances to enjoy park areas in our own back yard. My understanding is there are over 40% of the people on the coastside who are dog owners but I feel it important to take into consideration the number of people with dogs who come to the coast. Visitors also bring revenue to the coastside businesses. As I've emailed previously, please consider Carmel as a wonderful example of a community ^{that} has greatly benefited from a dog-friendly approach.

Our concern is that if indeed you do take away our ability to walk our dogs off-leash, a privilege we've considered our right for the 30 years we have lived coastside, that this will just be the beginning and that limitations will continue with time. We fear you will restrict dog access completely.

One thought we hope you will consider would be to allow off-leash Monday - Friday when most people on the bluffs are there to walk their dogs and enforce leashing dogs when more people visit the bluffs.

We personally would not take advantage of Quarry Park
Your comments will be distributed to the Work Group.
as poison oak which we are terribly allergic to is ever present; we
→ over

would be concerned of the threat of other wildlife.

In our own backyard in Montara, we see coyote; fox and even mountain lion on a surprisingly regular basis. We would be fearful of animals in the wild expanse of Quarry Park.

Understanding your proposal also includes a fenced in dog area. The main reason we walk our dogs is for mutual exercise benefit.

Sitting on a bench watching our dogs play does not afford "us" exercise. Being able to get outside, enjoy time with our 4-legged family members is a very real incentive to get outside and exercise with improved health a very real collateral benefit.

Please do not take away one of the greatest reasons we love living on the coastside. Please.

P.S. After hearing the discussion with the concerns to preserve habitat on the Pillar Point Bluff - people have been hiking the trails for 40 plus years and stay on trails. Bulldozers that were commissioned to eradicate the pompass grass caused more damage than any human or dog could match.

foot traffic

September 11, 2019

San Mateo County Parks
RE: Dog Work Group

Thank you for your dedication to identify two pilot sites for sanctioned off-leash dog walking in our county parks. I have attended meetings and participated in the process as much as possible; my recommendation is:

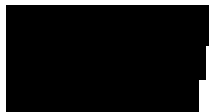
- Pillar Point Bluff as pilot #1 for sanctioned off-leash dog walking,
- Quarry Park as pilot #2 for sanctioned off-leash dog walking.

There should be no restrictions and as a long time resident with a home bordering the bluff I can speak for the majority of county dog owners when I reiterate our pledge to work with County Parks to promote responsible off-leash dog walking, including educating visitors, waste removal and respecting off limit areas such as the beaches which comprise the Fitzgerald Marine Reserve.

I was encouraged at the September 9th meeting in which a non-binding vote was taken and the entire Dog Committee, with the notable exception of the three County Rangers, were for my recommendations. I also note that the committee member representing environmental concerns stated that potential issues can be addressed and adequately mitigated through a cooperative process with the community.

Let's all come together to better our community through compromise.

Sincerely,

A black rectangular redaction box covering the signature of the sender.

Moss Beach, CA. 94038

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, September 20, 2019 9:56 AM
To: PARKS_ParksAndRecreation <ParksAndRecreation@smcgov.org>
Subject: Off leash dog pilot sites

Hi,
I'm requesting that both Quarry Park and Pillar Point Bluffs be the off leash pilot areas for the Dog Work Group.

I live in Montara and without these options, I must drive outside of our county (up to Fort Funston) or over the hill (Pulgas OSP) to get any trails that are off leash. Driving so far to these locations is not only polluting the environment, but it adds to the traffic that is barely manageable on the weekends.

I urge the Dog Working Group to consider folks on the coast who want to give our dogs the ability to socialize and walk along trails. Fenced in dog parks as managed by our cities are great when dogs are puppies, but for our quality of life, we need other options as our dogs get older and want to do more sniffing and walking than wrestling and playing in a small area.

Thank you for your consideration.

- [REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, September 20, 2019 1:37 PM
To: PARKS_ParksAndRecreation <ParksAndRecreation@smcgov.org>
Subject: Comment for Dog Walk Group

Dear San Mateo County Parks Dog Work Group:

I'd like to begin by thanking you for your hard work to select the off-leash pilot locations for San Mateo County Parks. I know this has been a long and somewhat controversial process, and we appreciate your diligence and hard work.

I am writing in support of Pillar Point Bluff and Quarry Park as the two off-leash pilot sites. I urge your group to recommend that **all trails at these sites be open to voice control dog walking** — as they have been for decades.

I moved to Montara in 2001 because it is rural and dog-friendly. We need to keep some spaces available for recreating with dogs off leash, in order to retain what makes the coast such a wonderful place to live.

In my case, I have a service dog who visits hospitals and flies on airplanes. He has to be in a calm state of mind to do that work, and the only way to get him the exercise he needs is through off-leash recreation.

I can assure you, we are great stewards of this land, because we use it every single day and value it. We pick up our own and others' poop, we steer clear of cyclists, we steer clear of horses, and we go on-leash whenever another dog or human approaches.

Having only one off-leash site on the coast would put an unnecessary burden on that site — with so many dog owners who live here — all converging on one location.

So please choose Pillar Point Bluff and Quarry Park for the off-leash pilot sites, and don't remove our right to recreate with our animals in these open spaces.

I also think you might be interested in this NY Times article about the valuable civic discourse that comes from recreating with our dogs. Walking Taylor has helped me meet neighbors and develop a sense of community with those who share my values, and even those with opinions that differ from my own. [Dogs Will Fix Our Broken Democracy.](#)

Thank you again for your time on this most important issue that affects so many people's quality of life.

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]
Montara Resident
San Mateo County

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, September 20, 2019 2:58 PM
To: PARKS_ParksAndRecreation <ParksAndRecreation@smcgov.org>
Subject: Quarry Park and Pillar Point Bluff as Off Leash Pilot Sites

Dear San Mateo County Parks Dog Work Group:

I am writing to voice my strong support for both Quarry Park and Pillar Point as Off Leash Pilot Sites.

I have been a resident of El Granada for five years and live within five (walking) minutes of Quarry Park. I adopted a rescue dog shortly after moving here and we take daily walks in both Quarry Park and at Pillar Point. Each of these walks takes about an hour and is a major highlight of my day--walking with my dog, enjoying the views, chatting with friends and neighbors. This is a huge part of what makes the Coast side so special.

Many of the dog walkers at Quarry Park already walk with their dogs under voice control and I am aware of few if any problems. The dog walkers I observe are diligent about leashing their dogs when they encounter other walkers (with or without dogs) and only unleash their dogs when the other party is well passed or has given express permission. Additionally the dog walkers I see are very good about picking up any dog waste and depositing it in appropriate containers. I have no doubt that a pilot program at QP would be successful, especially since it is very much a neighborhood park where people mostly know one another.

I generally walk the bluffs at Pillar Point in the afternoon. Again there are numerous regular dog walkers here and they seem to do an excellent job keeping things copacetic. As pointed out by Ranger Matt Del Carlo, there have been issues with dogs at PP. With regard to dogs on the beach, all responsible dog owners understand that the beach is part of the marine protected and are willing to help ensure that dogs are never allowed. I suggest that the signs on the top of the bluff be improved to show why dogs are not permitted, to show the consequences of breaking this rule (amount of fine with no second chance), the number to call if dogs are seen on the beach, etc.

I have also found that there is a qualitative difference at PP bluffs on the weekends: there are many more people using the trails, most of whom are not coast side residents. During the week on the other hand, the walkers are almost exclusively local. Therefore, I suggest that off leash be restricted to week days only. On weekends, dogs should be required to be on leash. This would help minimize conflicts and increase the likelihood that people walking their dogs off leash are familiar with the rules and proper off leash etiquette.

I would be happy to help monitor the off leash pilot program at either (or both) locations. Please don't hesitate to contact me.

Thank you for your hard work and consideration,

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
El Granada, CA 94018
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, September 20, 2019 9:19 PM
To: PARKS_ParksAndRecreation <ParksAndRecreation@smcgov.org>
Subject: Attn: dog work group

Dear San Mateo County Parks Dog Work Group:

Thank you for your hard work to select the off-leash pilot locations for San Mateo County Parks. **I am writing in support of Pillar Point Bluff and Quarry Park as the two off-leash pilot sites.**

I urge the Dog Work Group to recommend that all trails at these sites be open to voice control dog walking as they have been for decades.

I walk on Pillar Point Bluff almost every day for the past 2 1/2 years. I've also walked Quarry Park intermittently over the same time frame. My dog is typically off leash as are almost all of the other dogs we come across on our walks. These trails are not highly trafficked and I have not experienced any issues related to having my dog off leash. I am careful to leash my dog when circumstances indicate it might be problematic to have him OFF leash. For example if someone is approaching with the dog on leash I will also leash my own dog. Also when there are small children or runners approaching or people on bicycles and he might be tempted to join them, I also make sure that he is in a sit-stay or on leash. The vast majority of the time there are no problems encountered along these trails. I, along with my friends, make a point to clean up any trash or dog poop that we encounter as we go along the trails. Our dogs have never even attempted to go down the steep bluff face to the beach. They do not chase or otherwise harass the wild animals we infrequently encounter (possibly these animals have been warned away by the noise of our approach) but rarely see more than birds, gophers or rabbits. We enjoy socializing while getting exercise on these walks and also enjoy watching our dogs play together. Throwing a ball for my dog while walking along the trail would be impossible were he on leash. And, more often than not, other park users are also enjoying time with their off leash dogs. Conflict is rare.

Given the long history of dogs off leash at these sites and in the absence of any evidence of damage due to dogs off leash, those of us on the coast side who use these parks are hoping that we can continue to do so in the future.

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]

Moss Beach

From [REDACTED]

Sent: Saturday, September 21, 2019 4:38 PM

To: PARKS_ParksAndRecreation <ParksAndRecreation@smcgov.org>

Subject: allow off leash dog walking in Quarry and Pillar Point

Just take a vote, find out what the people want in their Parks before making your negative impact decisions. Do you know how many people use their dogs to get out in nature for spiritual and mental calmness and appreciation? how many enjoy the physical activity that your dog encourages you to have? how many people, especially women appreciate the safety and security a dog brings when walking in the forest or park by themselves? also in Half Moon Bay most of the dog walkers are the ones cleaning the beaches, picking up garbage that others leave behind.

I just do NOT understand why people have a problem with walking dogs on or off leash.. Oh yes, it's that one owner that lets their dog do something wrong and the rest of society and all dogs need to pay the cost. Very poor argument, and those who use it have no respect for nature or life in general, we are all part of this planet, educate those who have no clue. Basically the good dog owners know to keep their dogs under control any dog owner that doesn't understand their dog should keep their dog on leash-basic rules are good for those who don't care about our (people and dog) environment, safety, etc but for those who do care we shouldn't be penalized. Let dogs off leash, if abuse occurs by all means fine the owner or better yet make them take dog training classes..

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, September 22, 2019 4:58 PM
To: PARKS_ParksAndRecreation <ParksAndRecreation@smcgov.org>
Subject: Support Off Leash

Hi!

I am writing to say that I support off leash & voting for Quarry Park and Pillar Point Bluffs to allow dogs to be off-leash on all trails at these sites. :)

Best,

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, September 22, 2019 5:49 PM
To: PARKS_ParksAndRecreation <ParksAndRecreation@smcgov.org>
Subject: Off leash dog policy at Quarry Park

Hello at SMC Parks and Rec,

I wanted to express my views to support off leash dog trails in both Quarry Park and the Pillar Point Bluffs.

Thank you,

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: Sunday, September 22, 2019 6:11 PM

To: PARKS_ParksAndRecreation <ParksAndRecreation@smcgov.org>

Subject: Off Leash Pilot for Quarry Park & Bluffs

Dear Parks and Recreation,

As a home and dog owner in El Granada, I fully support the off-leash pilots at Quarry Park and Pillar Point bluffs.

I moved out of highly populated San Mateo proper to be able to hike with my dog. These areas would give me the opportunity to do that.

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: Monday, September 23, 2019 6:56 AM

To: PARKS_ParksAndRecreation <ParksAndRecreation@smcgov.org>

Subject: Dog Work Group: Vote for Off Leash Dog Walking at Quarry Park and Pillar Point Bluffs

Hello,

Please register my vote in favor of off-leash dog walking at both Quarry Park and Pillar Point Bluffs, with unrestricted access to all trails at both locations.

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, September 23, 2019 7:35 AM
To: PARKS_ParksAndRecreation <ParksAndRecreation@smcgov.org>
Subject: Off leash Recommendation Vote

Please vote for Quarry Park and Pillar Point Bluffs to be off-leash pilot sites. We need sites on the coast for our dogs to be off-leash!

[REDACTED]
Montara Resident

From [REDACTED]

Sent: Wednesday, September 25, 2019 8:25 AM

To: PARKS_ParksAndRecreation <ParksAndRecreation@smcgov.org>

Subject: Dog work group

Dear San Mateo County Parks Dog Work Group:

Thank you for your hard work to select the off-leash pilot locations for San Mateo County Parks. *I am writing in support of [Pillar Point Bluff](#) and Quarry Park as the two off-leash pilot sites.*

I urge the Dog Work Group to recommend that all trails at these sites be open to voice control dog walking as they have been for decades. I live behind the pillar point bluffs and my dog loves interacting with other well behaved dogs in a natural environment. My dog is well behaved and welltrained to voice control as are most others we encounter.

I often pick up trash along the trails and place it in the trash cans by the trailhead to continue to keep our open space clean.

Thanks

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, September 26, 2019 7:22 AM
To: PARKS_ParksAndRecreation <ParksAndRecreation@smcgov.org>
Subject: San Mateo County Dog Parks

Hello,

As a dog owner (4 rescue dogs of my own, and I foster dogs for rescues) I'm asking you to allow Quarry Park and Pillar Point Bluffs to be off leash areas.

While an on leash walk does allow a dog to get exercise, it's a far cry from allowing a dog to run, play, sniff and explore while off leash. These things are absolutely beneficial to a dogs mental state, as well as giving them the physical exercise they need. Happy, well-adjusted dogs are far less likely to find themselves turned into the shelter for behavior issues. They also gain valuable socialization skills when allowed to play off leash with other dogs.

Being that the Coastside is a rural area, and quite a driving distance to other off leash dog areas in the Bay Area, it's crucial that residents have close access to areas for daily exercise and mental stimulation for the dogs that are a part of their family. It's just not practical to expect residents to spend at least an hour simply driving to a place where their dogs can run. The Half Moon Bay dog park is not even close to the same thing as exploring a trail off leash.

Please reconsider. Off leash areas have been such a valuable part of the coast. It's a shame to lose one of the reasons people live here.

Thank you,
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, September 26, 2019 11:28 AM
To: PARKS_ParksAndRecreation <ParksAndRecreation@smcgov.org>
Subject: San Mateo County Parks Dog Work Group

Dear San Mateo County Parks Dog Work Group:

I am writing in support of Pillar Point Bluff and Quarry Park as the two off-leash pilot sites.

I urge the Dog Work Group to recommend that all trails at these sites be open to voice control dog walking as they have been for decades.

Thank you for time and consideration,

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, September 26, 2019 11:59 AM
To: PARKS_ParksAndRecreation <ParksAndRecreation@smcgov.org>
Subject: Dog walking in Quarry park

Dear San Mateo County Parks Dog Work Group,

I am writing in regards to Dog walking at Quarry Park in El Granada. I live in El Granada and walk in Quarry park with my black lab, Japser, daily. We love our daily walks and runs up there and have been taking our dogs for the last 15 years. My dog has always enjoyed being off leash in Quarry park...he is voice controlled and follows me happily only occasionally stopping to sniff and say hi to other dogs. I meet so many great neighbors doing the same. Please, please, please don't take this away from us!!!

Walking a dog on a leash is no exercise at all and results in unhappy, hyper dogs and their owners. In this world of constant work, politics and other stresses this is one place where everyone is happy as we get to enjoy our beautiful park.

I'd just like to add that I carry a backpack and take all dog waste back out with me. I don't generally see any other bags or waste lying around. We all do our best to keep the park clean for other people.

Please consider us locals and our love for walking with our dogs in the park.

Thanks,

[REDACTED]
Alison Monteith

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: Thursday, September 26, 2019 2:36 PM

To: PARKS_ParksAndRecreation <ParksAndRecreation@smcgov.org>

Subject: Please approve both Quarry Park and Pillar Point Bluffs as off leash sites

I'm writing to ask you to please approve both the Quarry and Pillar Point Bluff sites as off leash sites. My family and I have been walking our dogs under voice control at these sites ever since we moved here in 2000. It has been a lovely experience for all of us. We generally walk our dogs twice a day for an hour or more for each walk. Getting outside is so important for all of our physical health and mental health. It also allows us to fully enjoy and truly appreciate the unbelievable beauty the we are fortunate enough to live within. Please make sure these trails remain off leash.

Thank you,

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, September 26, 2019 4:48 PM
To: PARKS_ParksAndRecreation <ParksAndRecreation@smcgov.org>
Subject: Off leash access to Pillar Point and Quarry Park

Dear San Mateo County Parks Dog Work Group:

Thank you for your hard work to select the off-leash pilot locations for San Mateo County Parks. I am writing in support of Pillar Point Bluff and Quarry Park as the two off-leash pilot sites.

I urge the Dog Work Group to recommend that all trails at these sites be open to voice control dog walking as they have been for decades.

I have lived in San Mateo County for over 30 years and have had 3 dogs during that time. Pillar Point and Quarry Park have been two of my favorite hikes. It is a wonderful experience to share the beauty of the area I live in with my dog and other hikers. I hope that I along with others can continue to enjoy these sites and other ones with my dogs.

Please give long and hard consideration to the many, many people who love hiking with their dogs, it is a terrific health benefit for both. Many of us work and need to combine our exercise time with that of our dogs. Hanging out in fenced in parks or keeping a dog on leash who loves to run and play is not exercise for anyone.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, September 26, 2019 5:22 PM
To: PARKS_ParksAndRecreation <ParksAndRecreation@smcgov.org>
Subject: San Mateo County Parks Dog Work Group

Dear San Mateo County Parks Dog Work Group:

Thank you for your hard work to select the off-leash pilot locations for San Mateo County Parks. I am writing in support of Pillar Point Bluff and Quarry Park as the two off-leash pilot sites.

I urge the Dog Work Group to recommend that all trails at these sites be open to voice control dog walking as they have been for decades.

Thank you for time and consideration,

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, September 26, 2019 8:28 AM
To: PARKS_ParksAndRecreation <ParksAndRecreation@smcgov.org>
Subject: Quarry Park & Pillar Point

Dear Dog Work Group,

We want you to know that we believe both Quarry Park & Pillar Point should be off leash "dog" sites. Dogs need areas to be free to run. It is good for the dogs and their masters.

Kind regards,

[REDACTED]

Foster City, CA 94404

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, September 26, 2019 5:22 PM
To: PARKS_ParksAndRecreation <ParksAndRecreation@smcgov.org>
Subject: San Mateo County Parks Dog Work Group

Dear San Mateo County Parks Dog Work Group:

Thank you for your hard work to select the off-leash pilot locations for San Mateo County Parks. I am writing in support of Pillar Point Bluff and Quarry Park as the two off-leash pilot sites.

I urge the Dog Work Group to recommend that all trails at these sites be open to voice control dog walking as they have been for decades.

Thank you for time and consideration,

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, September 26, 2019 8:19 PM
To: PARKS_ParksAndRecreation <ParksAndRecreation@smcgov.org>
Subject: Dog off-leash areas

As a resident of Moss Beach and dog owner, I support both the Quarry Park and Pillar Point Bluffs for the off-leash pilot program.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Moss Beach, CA

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: Thursday, September 26, 2019 10:54 PM

To: PARKS_ParksAndRecreation <ParksAndRecreation@smcgov.org>; Don Horsley <dhorsley@smcgov.org>

Subject: Off Leash pilot recommendations

Dear San Mateo Dog work group and Supervisor Horsley,

I am writing this letter to ask the dog work group to "vote" yes to off leash for all the trails in Quarry Park and Pillar Point Bluff.

In addition, I am writing this letter in response to the dog management work group meeting on Monday, September 9, 2019 which I attended.

My understanding is that the purpose of this work group is to extend and expand dog access for the communities of San Mateo County because, until county parks took control of The Quarry Park in El Granada and The Pillar Point Bluff in Moss Beach, dogs have not been allowed in any San Mateo County Park (even on leash). It is outrageous that, despite the fact that we live and pay taxes in this county, we don't have access to our county parks with our 4 legged family members. After attending most of these dog management work group meetings, I felt hopeful that this work group (with the exception of park rangers and the interim director Peggy Jensen) really took this cause to heart to find parks and trails that people with their dogs can exercise and enjoy without feeling like we are outlaws.

On the coast, most of us who live here and use Quarry Park trails to exercise ourselves and our dogs would like to see that all the trails remain OFF leash. These trails have been used by many different users for decades with really no issues at all. We all just need to be conscientious of one another... be neighborly so to speak... so most of us dog walkers would leash our dogs, if we see a leashed dog on the trail; we share the path with other users by standing on the side to let cyclists and runners pass, etc.

Now as for Pillar Point Bluff top trails...since the Montara State Marine Reserve/The Fitzgerald Marine Reserve extended their territory to Ross' Cove a few years ago (with signs of the bluff of the extension), dog owners that I know including myself, whether we be surfers, beach comers, open water swimmers who used to enjoyed Ross' Cove beach with our dogs before, ***NO LONGER go down there because we RESPECT the law to protect and preserve precious resources for marine life!***

Just because we want our 4 legged family members to have places to exercise, socialize, and play for their mental and physical well-being, ***DOES NOT MEAN that we don't care about the environment and all the other animals!***

Most of us pro OFF leash dog owners are environmentalists, conservationists, wildlife advocates and animal lovers, we want to protect them all!

I can definitively say that my friends and I ***pick up trash and dog poop every time we walk with our dogs along the coastal trails and beaches.***

Also, if we are talking about environmental impact on the bluff top, county parks should have left the trails as they were before and never have widen and paved the trails with jagged rocks and broken glasses, and hacking trees and plants along both sides the trails to make them wider!

With all the signage along Pillar Point Bluff top toward Ross' Cove stating "Dogs and Other Pets are not allowed" down on the beach, irresponsible dog owners who scoff the warnings and go down to Ross' Cove = breaking the law should be punished and fined to the max!!

I agree with Chris Johnson... we can work together, these different groups, dog people and friends of Fitzgerald can help one another to protect the harbor seals!

We dog walkers on the bluff could help with getting the word out on a daily basis, help police the area and call local rangers on duty when we see blatant acts of defiance by dog owners (which we have done a few times by calling ranger Rob Cala).

So please don't punish all dog owners who only want to enjoy Pillar Point Bluff top trails to exercise and socialize ourselves and our dogs for a few misguided dog owners who blatantly ignore the signs (not knowing the difference between a federal protect area vs other state beaches on the coast?) and make a conscious unlawful decision go down to Ross' Cove and walk their dogs in the Fitzgerald Marine Reserve.

As for most of us who have been walking our dogs off leash on the bluff trails for decades, even though our dogs are off leash on the bluff trails, they don't just crazily run down to the beach without their humans... for the most part our dogs just follow along on the trails exploring all the smell that are left on the daily basis by other dogs, chase balls, and socialize with other dogs and humans they meet on the trails.

For the final point, which is directed at Peggy Jensen and the park rangers in the work group... Please, if you are going to use "data" to prove your point of view, please don't confuse a few anecdotal incidents that fit your argument with actual data and statistics! If you refer to "3 known incidents...regarding to dog confrontations/issues"... I would ask, out of how many hundreds of thousands of interactions? and over how long a period of time? Was the data collection done on a daily basis? At random time or specific time schedule? Or was it done on a weekly or monthly basis? How were the data collected? and where were the data collected on the bluff or on the beach? and what kind of interactions were designated and selected for the data collection...positive interactions, neutral interactions, negative interactions, etc. And between which groups? humans and humans interactions (walkers, bicyclists, runners, horse riders, etc.), on leash dogs interactions (with walkers, runners, bicyclists, horses) and then off leash dogs interactions (with runners, walkers, and bicyclists, and horses). You get the point here, right?

Furthermore, why do the park rangers on the dog committee have a vote to decide whether to recommend off leash places in the county? They are employees of the county (paid by tax payers) and should only be able to give input, because it looks like the county park have an agenda of their own which definitely does not seem to be about expanding access for dogs in county parks that's for sure!!

There is a big demand for more ON leash and OFF leash areas to accommodate dog owners of San Mateo county, so please do the right thing and "vote" for both Quarry Park and Pillar Point Bluff trails to be designated as OFF leash trails.

Thank you for your time and consideration,
[REDACTED]

P.S. thinking with the big picture in mind... to align with the goals and expectations of the San Mateo County Office of Sustainability, one of which is to lessen our carbon footprints by driving less = less harmful greenhouse gas emissions, San Mateo Parks should have ON leash dog walking in all of its community trails and parks (with the exception of the Marine Fitzgerald Reserve beaches), and more OFF leash trails and parks throughout the county so that people don't have to drive miles to walk and exercise themselves along with their dogs on a daily or weekly basis.

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, September 27, 2019 6:57 AM
To: PARKS_ParksAndRecreation <ParksAndRecreation@smcgov.org>
Subject: SMC Parks Off Leash access

Dear San Mateo County Parks Dog Work Group:

Thank you for your hard work to select the off-leash pilot locations for San Mateo County Parks. I am writing in support of Pillar Point Bluff and Quarry Park as the two off-leash pilot sites.

I urge the Dog Work Group to recommend that all trails at these sites be open to voice control dog walking as they have been for decades.

Thank you for time and consideration,

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, September 27, 2019 11:17 AM
To: PARKS_ParksAndRecreation <ParksAndRecreation@smcgov.org>
Subject: dogs

Dear San Mateo County Parks Dog Work Group:

Thank you for your hard work to select the off-leash pilot locations for San Mateo County Parks. **I am writing in support of Pillar Point Bluff and Quarry Park as the two off-leash pilot sites.**

I urge the Dog Work Group to recommend that all trails at these sites be open to voice control dog walking as they have been for decades.

Thank you for time and consideration,

Sascha Ray

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: Friday, September 27, 2019 11:24 AM

To: PARKS_ParksAndRecreation <ParksAndRecreation@smcgov.org>

Subject: Off leash trails...

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am "voting" for Quarry Park and Pillar Point Bluffs to be the two off-leash pilot sites, and asking for off-leash on all trails at these sites.

Best regards,

[REDACTED]

Half Moon Bay

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Saturday, September 28, 2019 9:48 PM
To: PARKS_ParksAndRecreation <ParksAndRecreation@smcgov.org>
Subject: Off leash dog walking

Hello,

My name is [REDACTED], and I live in El Granada. I am writing to you because I strongly support off-leash dog walking in Quarry Park. It is a small park, mostly used by locals, with very few tourists. As such, off-leash dog walking would not bother anyone.

Thank you,

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, September 29, 2019 9:47 AM
To: PARKS_ParksAndRecreation <ParksAndRecreation@smcgov.org>
Subject: Off leash policy

Dear San Mateo County Parks Dog Work Group:

Thank you for your hard work to select the off-leash pilot locations for San Mateo County Parks. **I am writing in support of Pillar Point Bluff and Quarry Park as the two off-leash pilot sites.**

I urge the Dog Work Group to recommend that all trails at these sites be open to voice control dog walking as they have been for decades.

I am a veterinarian and a resident of El Granada for 32 years. I have attended many Dog Work Group meetings and, at the last meeting, was pleased to see general support for these two sites for off leash use. Quarry Park, in particular, seemed to achieve a general consensus. There was also a suggestion of a fenced area to which I am opposed. This would be a significant expense, would be rarely used and I believe it to be a thinly veiled opportunity to limit future off leash access to the fenced area only.

I see that trail bike riding is encouraged at Quarry Park through the installation of bike tools. The discussion of a perceived increased in park liability by access to off leash dogs did not mention liability associated with biking and even a proposed "pump track". These activities are positively guaranteed to result in injuries — which are somehow more acceptable.

Please restore the off-leash access these two sites have had for decades.

[REDACTED]
Former president, San Francisco Veterinary Medical Association
Former president, Peninsula Veterinary Medical Association

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: Sunday, September 29, 2019 3:09 PM

To: PARKS_ParksAndRecreation <ParksAndRecreation@smcgov.org>

Subject: Off-leash pilot sites - Quarry Park and Pillar Point Bluffs

Hello,

As a 30+ year resident of Half Moon Bay, I hope you will consider my request to vote "yes" for Quarry Park and Pillar Point Bluffs to be off-leash pilot sites. What drew me to HMB a long time ago was the open space and the freedom this beautiful community offered and our dogs need space to run freely as well. These 2 pilot sites are important to me and our many resident dog owners so I hope you will consider this request in support of these pilot sites.

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, September 30, 2019 12:41 PM
To: PARKS_ParksAndRecreation <ParksAndRecreation@smcgov.org>
Subject: Pillar Point Bluff & Quarry Park Off-Leash Pilot Sites

Thank you for your hard work to select the off-leash pilot locations for San Mateo County Parks. **I am writing in support of Pillar Point Bluff and Quarry Park as the two off-leash pilot sites.**

I urge the Dog Work Group to recommend that all trails at these sites be open to voice control dog walking as they have been for decades.

I have lived on the Coast for eleven years, and my ten-year-old Border Collie, Quinn, moved in with me at 4 months old.

We love our walks together on the Pillar Point Bluff & Quarry Park, and Quinn has grown up to be a happy, healthy & loving dog thanks to all his time romping around off-leash with me (and his dog walkers) on the trails.

Please help Quinn and the wonderful dogs living on the Coast continue to enjoy their off-leash time at Pillar Point Bluff and Quarry Park.

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]

El Granada Resident

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, September 30, 2019 6:15 PM
To: PARKS_ParksAndRecreation <ParksAndRecreation@smcgov.org>
Subject: Off Leash Trails

Dear SM County Parks Dog Work Group,

I understand you are giving consideration to off leash pilot locations within San Mateo County. As a resident of El Granada I would like to encourage your support of both Pillar Point Bluff and Quarry Park. My husband and I have two six year old Labs that we walk at least once a day. As with so many coastal residents, we do not live on a large parcel and the local off leash options are our only hope of providing a daily exercise routine for our pets. I do believe that as tax paying community members our family deserves the right to be outside and run freely after a hard day's work.

Thank you for your time, [REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: Monday, September 30, 2019 9:09 PM

To: PARKS_ParksAndRecreation <ParksAndRecreation@smcgov.org>

Subject: Off leash support quant park and pillar point

Hello,

I would like to give my support for off-leash dog walking at Quarry Park and [Pillar Point Bluff](#) on week days, and leashes on on weekends and holidays.

Thank you,

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, September 30, 2019 11:17 PM
To: PARKS_ParksAndRecreation <ParksAndRecreation@smcgov.org>
Subject: voting for off-leash

I fully support off-leash dog walking at Quarry Park and Pillar Point Bluff. I realize it's not a simple, black and white issue. But, I have an extremely well-mannered dog with a very reliable recall. She gets twice the amount of exercise when she's off leash. And when trained off-leash, it's a much more natural state for a dog. I also am a pet-sitter. When I'm in Ocean Colony (an area where dogs need to be on leash 100% of the time), over 90% of the dogs I walk and I pass are reactive. Being on leash all the time is not natural for dogs. Studies have been done on societies in Europe where dogs are all off-leash, and the amount of reactive or aggressive dogs is close to zero.

Thanks for considering making Quarry Park and Pillar Point Bluff off-leash, or at least sections or times for it to be off-leash.

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, October 1, 2019 9:53 AM
To: PARKS_ParksAndRecreation <ParksAndRecreation@smcgov.org>
Subject: Pillar Point Bluff and Quarry Park

Dear San Mateo County Parks Dog Work Group:

Thank you for your hard work to select the off-leash pilot locations for San Mateo County Parks. **I am writing in support of Pillar Point Bluff and Quarry Park as the two off-leash pilot sites.**

I urge the Dog Work Group to recommend that all trails at these sites be open to voice control dog walking as they have been for decades.

My 2 year old cattle dog, Ruby, and I walk both sites regularly and have for years. Like other dog walkers we see on our walks, we always have a leash at the ready and leash-up when we see other others until they indicate they are OK with off leash. We always carry waste bags and clean up after ourselves and others who may have missed a spot.

I attended the August 5th Dog Work Group Meeting, but will unfortunately have to miss the October 7 meeting. I thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] El Granada

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, October 1, 2019 10:56 AM
To: PARKS_ParksAndRecreation <ParksAndRecreation@smcgov.org>
Subject: voting for Quarry Park and Pillar Point off leash rights for dogs

Dear San Mateo County Parks Dog Work Group:

Thank you for your hard work to select the off-leash pilot locations for San Mateo County Parks. **I am writing in support of Pillar Point Bluff and Quarry Park as the two off-leash pilot sites.**

I urge the Dog Work Group to recommend that all trails at these sites be open to voice control dog walking as they have been for decades.

I have grown up on the coast and have raised two daughters who are currently in 8th at Cunha and a Junior at the High School and live blocks away from the Quarry. It would be devastating to have this freedom of open space with dogs taken away from us.

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, October 1, 2019 12:06 PM
To: PARKS_ParksAndRecreation <ParksAndRecreation@smcgov.org>
Subject: Comment on the Dog Work Group and Off-Leash Pilot

Dear Parks and Recreation Staff, and Members of the Dog Work Group:

My name is [REDACTED]. I am a resident of El Granada (27 years) and a dog owner.

I first want to thank all involved for the many hours they've spent on developing a comprehensive County-wide "Dogs in parks" policy. I've attended several community meetings on the issue, and saw the committee in action in Pacifica, HMB, El Granada, and in Redwood City. I feel I understand, as a person with dogs in my family for 30+ years, and as a taxpayer & voter, how complex the issue has been. I also have experienced - in Marin, Alameda and San Francisco Counties, for example — many trails, parks, open spaces and even protected watersheds that successfully allow access for dogs and their humans.

Today I specifically want to add my voice for the advocacy of sanctioned off-leash areas, and specifically, I refer to Quarry Park here in El Granada, and the Pillar Point Bluffs Park and open space in Moss Beach, west of Airport Road and north of the Pillar Point AF Station. As local residents and no doubt park staff as well can testify — these 2 areas have been “de facto” off-leash areas for many decades. When I first moved to the Coastside, Quarry Park was still in private hands, but shortly thereafter, it became a community park, with sanctioned dog access and “off-leash” allowed.

I walk my (one) dog both on-leash and off-leash here locally. He has excellent behavior with either (he's a graduate of the San Bruno Dog Club training program), but he is a young Border Collie mix who needs vigorous exercise on a daily basis. This we achieve with a ball and a Chuck-it, usually at Quarry Park. There we encounter hikers, bikers, and folks with and without dogs, (dogs off and on leash). There in Quarry Park, people are attentive to each other, careful to communicate, to greet, to leash dogs when requested (or even before, if the need is noted). We already have a very positive and successful “off leash” Pilot project in action. Please allow us to continue, and to demonstrate its efficacy.

For me, this issue is about my health and my dog's health, but also the mental and physical well-being of our community here in El Granada. I hope decision-makers will observe, monitor and learn from how well, overall, the daily park users here manage shared use.

In summary, I urge the Dog Work Group to recommend that all trails at these two coastsite sites be open to voice control dog walking as they have been for decades.

And again, I thank you all for your work on behalf of San Mateo County citizens and SMC Parks.

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, October 1, 2019 4:27 PM
To: PARKS_ParksAndRecreation <ParksAndRecreation@smcgov.org>
Subject: Dog work group

Hello,

I wanted to vote in favor for off leash on all trails at Pillar Point Bluffs and Quarry Park.

Thank you,

[REDACTED]

Moss Beach, CA 94038

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: Tuesday, October 1, 2019 9:53 PM

To: PARKS_ParksAndRecreation <ParksAndRecreation@smcgov.org>

Subject: off leash dog areas in San Mateo county

Dear San Mateo County Parks Dog Work Group:

Thank you for your hard work to select the off-leash pilot locations for San Mateo County Parks. I am writing in support of Pillar Point Bluff and Quarry Park as the two off-leash pilot sites. I have been walking our dogs off leash on the coast side for more than 20 years and appreciate the quality of life it provides for both dogs and dog owners. I urge the Dog Work Group to recommend that all trails at these sites be open to voice control dog walking as they have been for decades.

Thank you for time and consideration,

John Skerry

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, October 2, 2019 10:10 AM
To: PARKS_ParksAndRecreation <ParksAndRecreation@smcgov.org>
Subject: Off-Leash Pilot Sites

Dear San Mateo County Parks Dog Work Group:

Thank you for your hard work to select the off-leash pilot locations for San Mateo County Parks. **I am writing in support of Pillar Point Bluff and Quarry Park as the two off-leash pilot sites.**

I urge the Dog Work Group to recommend that all trails at these sites be open to voice control dog walking as they have been for decades.

Thank you for time and consideration,

[REDACTED]

San Mateo County Parks and Recreation

I am writing this letter in support of off leash dog walking on the Pillar Point Bluffs.

My husband and I live on the Vallemar Bluffs directly north of the Fitzgerald Marine Reserve. We built a home here over twenty years ago and are well aware of the ecological and environmental issues of this area having built on a coastal blufftop. We also consider ourselves environmentalists and conservationists. We have spent countless hours with our children exploring the tide pools at the marine reserve which is an easy walk from our house. We consider protecting the coast one of our responsibilities as people who live here.

About two and a half years ago I adopted a dog and since then have walked the Pillar Point Bluffs every day and sometimes twice a day. I feel that I know the issues around this property very well from direct daily experience and from talking to people who have lived adjacent to and walk the bluffs regularly. Some of those people have walked their dogs off leash along the bluffs for decades.

First, I would like to say that this is by no means a pristine natural environment. The area was once used as a cow pasture and although it may contain some isolated areas where endangered native plants grow this is hardly true for the vast majority of the plant species found here. Containment of invasive species is an ongoing effort. Recent efforts to “improve” the Jean Lauer trail have led to a scorched earth appearance with vegetation mowed down in a wide swath on either side of what has essentially become a gravel road. Hardly consistent with maintaining a natural environment.

It is also a very dry area. There are no wetlands that would support a red legged frog population. From what I know of amphibians they require a moist environment and with the exception of a watering hole (dug originally for the cattle that grazed there) there is no other fresh water source. This “pond” is also dry the majority of the year so even if it could support frogs they wouldn’t last a season. It mostly is brackish and supports the local mosquito population.

Very few trails allow access to the beach which is over a hundred feet below the blufftop. There is an area accessed from Ocean Boulevard (used mostly by surfers) BEFORE one enters the park area. There is also a trail to Ross’ cove, a fairly difficult descent. It appears the Air Force may be working on an access road at the far southern end of the bluffs. I have never seen any of the “social” trails reported at the recent dog work group meeting. They are certainly a well kept secret if they exist at all.

Finally, the blufftops have been historically off leash for many many years. Given this history of use there have been very few episodes of problems due to off leash dogs and some of these episodes have not been accurately represented at the meetings which I have attended. All of them that I am aware of were caused by irresponsible people and do not represent the vast majority of people who walk with their dogs off leash there. A seal was killed because the dog

owners actually took their dog down to Ross's cove despite the clear prohibition of dogs on the beach. Some of the episodes that I am aware of were caused by people sometimes physically assaulting each other over off leash dogs. The dogs themselves were not involved. Given the high volume of off leash dogs one would expect many more problems than these three vaguely alluded to episodes over a non-defined time frame which have been reported by a ranger at this most recent meeting.

In all the time I have walked Pillar Point Bluff my dog has never been down to these beach below. All of the access trails are marked as no dogs allowed and all of the people I walk with are careful to keep their dogs away from these trails and to let others know that such access is prohibited. Should some choose to ignore these warnings we have contacted the park rangers at the time via cell phone. In the meantime, we do our part as responsible dog owners to keep our dogs near or on the trails, out of the way of other park users and we clean trash and dog poop left by less responsible people.

At the recent meeting of the SMCPR dog group in Redwood City I was surprised to see that off-leash dog walking was considered "high liability" without any explanation of what that "high liability" means. Certainly, the public deserves some evidence of this liability. Have dogs attacked humans? I know that there are people who don't want to see dogs on the bluffs but have they been done harm somehow? Most of our dogs are well behaved and not interested in people other than their owners.

Regarding endangered plant species. It's not enough simply to say that they are there. What is of importance is knowing how off leash dogs affect endangered plant species? Do they dig them up? Eat them? Pee on them? Run over them? Surely truly sensitive plant life would be protected by signage or markers of some kind. And about the "wildlife" of the blufftop? There is clearly not a red legged frog population given the nearly waterless environment. If there were it's hard to see why dogs would pose a threat to frogs. Is there any real evidence that off leash dogs have caused ANY environmental damage? I have seen snakes but they do not seem of any interest to our dogs.

I was further confused that the park rangers at the meeting were against having off leash dogs at Pillar Point Bluffs. Since the dogs are already there it seems as though any real issues with off leash dogs would have been readily apparent by now.

I was even more surprised to see that each of these rangers had a vote in the final round of discussion. Of course, people all working for the same government agency and under the active scrutiny of higher ups within that agency would feel compelled to all vote similarly. No real rationale for their negative votes was ever given. It happens that four park rangers were at the meeting and all voted almost exactly the same. Hardly a surprise. The surprise is to why they were given votes at all, much less one each when it was clear they had decided, without giving any rationale, to vote against legal off leash dogs.

I can see where these rangers would have input into the issue but a vote? They work for the public that pays their salaries and the people that took the effort and time to get to these meetings overwhelmingly want to continue off leash dog walking on the bluffs. These rangers can't or won't adequately explain their reluctance to legalize what is already a reality on the bluff tops. In fact, making this reality (off leash) legal would seem to make their work easier as they would spent less time policing off leash violators and more time doing work that actually protects the parks from real threats.

Regarding the situation of dogs accessing the beach, the dog walkers I know would all be enthusiastically willing to help patrol the beaches and contact rangers should they see violators. We also love and want to protect our environment and will continue to do so as rangers are very infrequently sighted on these blufftops. It is clear that the parks service could use our extra sets of eyes. The idea that stiff fines for dogs off leash on the beach are contrary to the park policy of "educate rather than citate" is just silly. It's obvious: some infractions justify punishment prior to warnings. Are you going to try to educate a murderer after his first homicide? There are plenty of warnings already posted and if the signage included a large fine for violations and a number to contact the park rangers were someone to be in violation we could expect to see far fewer cases of dogs on the beach than we already do.

I would like to add that it is very disappointing that the time for public comment was cut from twenty minutes to fifteen so very few of the public had a chance to speak. Some of us come a long way and take time from jobs to go to these meetings. We should all get a chance to speak. And we had NO ability to ask questions or ask for clarification. Most of those at the table have no direct knowledge of the conditions at our local parks and only by listening to the public who use these parks on a regular basis will they get a good idea of the actual issues involved. Going to an area and talking to the people there would really be the best way to get better informed.

Trying to guess what issues legal off leash might cause when off leash is already an ongoing activity for many years seems foolish. Maps and "data" from people who can't even tell us what the dangers are to the parks from off leash dogs is hardly a substitute for experiencing the reality of what is already an every day occurrence there. It's very frustrating to listen to people give input and make decisions when they have no first-hand experience of the areas involved

Please at least visit these areas and talk to the people who are actually using them rather than making decisions from a conference room in Redwood City. Try to remember that on leash or not there will always be irresponsible owners who will break the rules but if you enlist the aid of the vast majority of dog walkers who are also lovers of outdoor spaces you can have useful allies in your efforts to protect our parks.

Sincerely,

Moss Beach, CA 94038

From [REDACTED]

Sent: Sunday, October 6, 2019 11:05 AM

To: PARKS_ParksAndRecreation <ParksAndRecreation@smcgov.org>

Subject: San Mateo Co off-leash dog areas -- I wholeheartedly support off leash at the Pillar Point bluffs area

Dear Working Group,

I wholeheartedly support off-leash dog recreation at the Pillar Point bluffs.
I've attended the last 3 Monday meetings to show my support.

Off leash recreation is healthy and good for the dogs and humans.
Dogs learn to socialize both at puppy age and older.

Enjoying dogs off leash is a great way for humans to get exercise as well as to know each other and discuss neighborhood issues.
I've met more friends at the Pillar Point bluffs than at work.

I understand there is concern that dogs may run onto the beach and disturb birds and mammals.
I can attest that responsible dog owners do not allow that.
We also never leave trash and do pick up trash left by others (usually people NOT from the coast).

Dog owners are an extremely responsible group.
We will keep the dogs on leash if we see runners, bicyclists and people w/o dogs.
We support efforts to maintain and restore the environment.
We are a large percentage of the coastal and county population.
We are usually home owners and do pay state and county taxes including property taxes.
To that end, I feel the County Parks should give us more areas for off leash recreation.

I feel that the Pillar Point bluffs should be designated off-leash.

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]

Resident of Moss Beach, CA

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, October 6, 2019 12:17 PM
To: PARKS_ParksAndRecreation <ParksAndRecreation@smcgov.org>
Subject: Pillar Point Bluffs

Dear Working Group,

I wholeheartedly support off-leash dog recreation at the Pillar Point bluffs in Half Moon Bay.

Off leash recreation is healthy and good for the dogs and humans.
Dogs learn to socialize both at puppy age and older.

Enjoying dogs off leash is a great way for humans to get exercise as well as to know each other and discuss neighborhood issues.

I understand there is concern that dogs may run onto the beach and disturb birds and mammals.
I can attest that responsible dog owners do not allow that.
We also never leave trash and do pick up trash left by others.

Dog owners are an extremely responsible group.
We will keep the dogs on leash if we see runners, bicyclists and people w/o dogs.
We support efforts to maintain and restore the environment.
Dog owners are a large percentage of the coastal and county population. We pay taxes which support Parks and Recreation.

To that end, I feel the County Parks should give us more areas for off leash recreation.

I feel that the Pillar Point bluffs in Half Moon Bay should be designated off-leash.

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, October 6, 2019 12:26 PM
To: PARKS_ParksAndRecreation <ParksAndRecreation@smcgov.org>
Subject: Pillar Point - Free Dog Leash

Dear Working Group,

I wholeheartedly support off-leash dog recreation at the Pillar Point bluffs in Half Moon Bay.

Off leash recreation is healthy and good for the dogs and humans.
Dogs learn to socialize both at puppy age and older.

Enjoying dogs off leash is a great way for humans to get exercise as well as to know each other and discuss neighborhood issues.

I understand there is concern that dogs may run onto the beach and disturb birds and mammals.
I can attest that responsible dog owners do not allow that.
We also never leave trash and do pick up trash left by others.

Dog owners are an extremely responsible group.
We will keep the dogs on leash if we see runners, bicyclists and people w/o dogs.
We support efforts to maintain and restore the environment.
Dog owners are a large percentage of the coastal and county population. We pay taxes which support Parks and Recreation.

To that end, I feel the County Parks should give us more areas for off leash recreation.

I feel that the Pillar Point bluffs in Half Moon Bay should be designated off-leash.

Dogs are humans too!

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, October 7, 2019 9:15 AM
To: PARKS_ParksAndRecreation <ParksAndRecreation@smcgov.org>
Cc: Coastside DOG <christine@coastsidedog.org>
Subject: Off Leash Vote

Dear Sirs:

I have been in South Africa and returned on October 4 after the targeted date for submitting a vote. I WILL be attending today's meeting and want it on record that we do VERY MUCH **vote for Quarry Park and Pillar Point Bluffs to be the two off-leash pilot sites, and ask for off-leash on all trails at these sites.** The coast is rural and dog-friendly. We need to keep it that way.

After last month's meeting we were also very upset and concerned that simply one vote on the part of the parks can negate the majority vote by the committed. This seems **very wrong** and as a result the committee can never truly represent the wishes of the public. Why have a committee when the park representatives have overriding control?

Regards,

[REDACTED]