

# DOG OWNERS!



Dogs are welcomed guests in MRCA parks, however, the responsible behavior of dog owners plays a crucial role in protecting and preserving our local natural areas.



**Please keep dogs leashed at all times!  
Scoop up, and carry out your dog's waste!**



Have you seen it, smelled it, or even stepped in it? Domestic dog waste left on the trail is not only unsightly, but also extremely dangerous, transmitting disease to wildlife and people. It contains harmful parasites, bacteria, and odors that wild animal waste does not.



Domestic dog waste left on the trail gets washed away, contaminating our storm drains, rivers, lakes, streams, beaches and oceans. This contributes to algae blooms in our waterways, which affect water quality and marine wildlife. Children play in the swash zone where fecal contamination is greatest.



Your dog's curiosity to look under bushes, dig holes, or even chase small animals is natural, however, even when their playful chase is unsuccessful, their potential prey has had to expend a significant amount of energy in order to save their life.



Dogs often brush up against poison oak, or even run through it, causing the toxic oils to get on their fur and paws. This oil can easily be transferred to your skin, producing an irritating skin rash.



Rattlesnakes and other wild animals have been known to strike or bite dogs when they feel threatened. Keep your dog leashed and under your immediate control at all times.

## MORE DOG SAFETY FACTS!

### Scoop up, and carry out your dog's waste!

Here are some good reasons:

- When dog waste has been left on the trail, a scent is marked that is foreign, and unfamiliar. This confuses and disturbs the natural hunting patterns of all the surrounding wildlife.
- Parvovirus affects other canines in the wild, and was the source for wolf pup mortality in Glacier National Park in the early 1990's.
- Children or a person with a weakened immune system can get toxicaris, a disease caused by the eggs of round worms, which can lead to permanent blindness.
- Parasites such as ticks, keds, tapeworms, and fleas are common problems in dogs that can be passed to other wildlife.
- Dog waste left on the trail adds significant amounts of nitrogen to the soil, encouraging the growth of non-native plants.

### Please keep dogs leashed at all times!

Here are some good reasons:

- The CDC estimates that nearly 2% of the U.S. population is bitten by a dog each year. That is more than 4.7 million people per year, most of whom are children. While many of us love dogs, there are a lot of people who are afraid of them. For these people, meeting an unleashed dog on the trail can be stressful, and dangerous for everyone.
- Pregnant and newborn animals do not have the reserves to repeatedly expend in avoiding dogs that are off leash. This could push them to malnutrition, allowing other animals to easily hunt and kill them.
- Even when dogs are well behaved and stay close to their owners, other animals can feel threatened and strike. Rattlesnake venom is extremely potent. One bite can kill your dog due to their small size. If bitten, immediately take your dog to the nearest animal hospital.