

Dogs on OSMP



Open Space and Mountain Parks offers dog guardians and their dogs many opportunities to enjoy the nature that's right in our backyards.

OSMP lands have approximately 145 miles of trails, almost 90 percent of which are open to dogs. It is your responsibility as a dog guardian to read and understand the regulations so that everyone can enjoy their visit to OSMP!

New email list: If you would like to receive information about dog hikes and events offered by OSMP, please sign up for our email list.

Dog Regulations

Dog regulations vary on OSMP lands. In some areas, dogs must be leashed. In other areas, dogs may be allowed off-leash if they wear a voice and sight tag and are under voice and sight control. Dogs are prohibited on a few trails.

- Please check the Dog Regulations by Area page for updated information.
- Dogs must be on-leash at trailheads under the Trailhead Leash Program.
- Seasonal Leash restrictions are in place May 1 - July 31 & August 15 - November 1 on some trails.

Dogs must not be aggressive towards other people or dogs. It is illegal for dogs to chase or disturb wildlife or livestock.

You must pick up after your dog on OSMP land. Don't leave it by the trail to be picked up later. Watch the Scoop a Doop Poop Video. OSMP is participating in a dog waste composting program at several trailheads and access points. Learn more about the dog waste composting program and why it is important to pick up after your dog.

City of Boulder Ordinance requires all Boulder residents to license dogs that are four months or older.

Voice and Sight Dog Tag Program

Open Space & Mountain Parks is one of few systems on the Colorado Front Range which allow dog guardians to walk dogs off-leash. This opportunity is possible only if dogs are responsibly controlled under voice and sight control and display a voice and sight dog tag. It is a tough standard for both dogs and guardians.

Keep Your Dog Safe

OSMP is home to wildlife that could kill or injure your dog. Coyotes can be especially dangerous to dogs -- never let your dog run with coyotes even if they seem to be playing. The easiest way to keep your dog safe from coyotes is to keep your dog on-leash.

Other animals that could pose a threat to your dog include black bears, mountain lions, porcupines, skunks and rattlesnakes. All of these animals are more likely to attack your dog if your dog is chasing them.

Other safety tips:

- Keep your dog from running in prairie dog colonies to prevent possible exposure to plague.
- Make sure your dog gets enough water and rest stops. Hot temperatures and exercise can cause heat stroke.
- Never leave your dog alone in a car during warm weather.
- When rock climbing or bouldering, make sure you or someone in your party is with your dog.
- Check yourself and your dog for ticks in the spring.
- Make sure to vaccinate your dog for rabies to ensure the safety of you, your dog, and others on the trail.

FAQs

What is voice and sight control?

Dogs are off-leash, but stay within your sight and under your control. This means that when you command your dog to come, it does so the first time. You must have a leash for each dog with you. Only two dogs may be off-leash at once (per person). Each dog must display a voice and sight dog tag. Everyone who walks the dog off-leash on OSMP land must be registered with the Voice and Sight Dog Tag Program.

What is voice and sight control in the corridor?

Some trails require that visitors stay on the trail and also allow dogs to be managed under voice and sight control. The purpose for requiring people to stay on trail is to limit impacts to the area where the trail is located in sensitive resource and restoration areas. On trails where dog guardians are required to stay on trail and dogs can be managed under voice and sight control, dogs are allowed no more than 20 feet away from the trail.

How can I find out which trails allow dogs?

Look at the Dog Regulations by Area page or the OSMP Dog Regulations Map .

Where should I train my dog in voice and sight control?

Public dog parks allow dogs to be off-leash even if they don't meet the voice and sight control standard.

What is the dog waste composting program?

OSMP is participating in a dog waste composting program. Compostable bags and waste receptacles are located at several popular trailheads and access points:

- Dry Creek Trailhead
- Bobolink Trailhead
- Mount Sanitas
- Eagle Trailhead
- South Teller Trailhead
- Marshall Mesa Trailhead
- South Mesa Trailhead
- Sawhill Ponds Trailhead
- Chautauqua at start of Bluebell Rd.
- Wonderland Lake Trailhead
- Four Pines Access
- Shanahan - Lehigh Access
- Wonderland - Utica Access
- East Boulder Gunbarrel Access (Boulderado & Cambridge)
- West South Boulder Creek Trailhead
- North Teller Trailhead
- Boulder Valley Ranch Trailhead
- Cottonwood Trailhead
- Eagle Trail - Access 1/2 mile N of Foothills Trailhead

Composting reduces the amount of dog waste going to landfills and helps transform that waste into a beneficial compost mixture. A local business is doing the composting for OSMP! Watch a video on how dog waste is turned into high quality potting soil.

Why is dog waste such a big deal?

Besides its bad smell, dog waste can pollute water sources and encourage noxious weeds to grow.

Waste left on the ground runs off untreated into storm drains and waterways. Bacteria in waterways increase the potential for serious disease. This is bad for fish too – bacteria that feed on dog waste deplete oxygen, and encourage algal blooms. This can limit sunlight and suffocate aquatic life.

Dog feces contain nitrogen which can cause significant chemical changes in soil composition. When left on the ground, nitrogen leaches into the soil. This can kill native plants and encourage noxious weed infestation.

Dogs also have a wide diversity of intestinal bacteria. These often times carry nasty parasites like heartworms, whipworms, hookworms, roundworms, tapeworms, parvovirus, giardia, salmonella and E. coli. Roundworm is one of the most common parasites found in dog waste. It can remain infectious in contaminated soil and water for years.

Be Doggone Good About Dog Poop

- Always pack out your dog's poop and dispose of it properly.
- Carry extra poop bags with you at all times.
- Compost your dog's poop in OSMP dog waste receptacles.
- Carry a sealable bag with you to cut down on the smell.