

# Chatfield State Park

## Dog Off-Leash Area Management Plan

October 2010





# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>1.0 Introduction .....</b>	<b>1</b>
Park Description .....	1
Purpose of the Plan .....	2
Planning Process.....	2
Park Goals.....	6
Future Plan Updates.....	6
Summary of Key Management Issues .....	7
<b>2.0 Relevant Plans and Studies.....</b>	<b>9</b>
Chatfield State Park Management Plan .....	9
Chatfield State Park Stewardship Plan .....	9
Off-Leash Area User Study .....	9
Influence of Pet Recreation Areas on Soil and Water Quality .....	10
Effects of Dog Off-Leash Areas on Birds and Small Mammals .....	10
Vegetation Evaluation .....	10
Regional Dog Park Analysis.....	10
Historic Photos .....	11
<b>3.0 Management Goals and Suggested Actions .....</b>	<b>13</b>
Goals.....	13
Management Actions .....	13
<b>4.0 Preferred Alternative .....</b>	<b>17</b>
Overview of the Preferred Alternative.....	17
Primary Dog Off-Leash Area .....	17
Flatwater Training Area.....	17
Fees.....	18
Role of Partners and Volunteers .....	19
<b>5.0 Implementation Plan.....</b>	<b>21</b>
Suggested Phasing.....	21
Funding and Investment Needs.....	21
<b>6.0 References .....</b>	<b>23</b>

## Figures

Figure 1. Chatfield State Park Dog Off-Leash Area Location

Figure 2. Chatfield State Park Preferred Alternative North

Figure 3. Chatfield State Park Preferred Alternative South

## Appendix

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

THIS PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK

### Park Description

Chatfield Reservoir lies on the South Platte River at its confluence with Plum Creek, near the foothills of the Rocky Mountains about 25 miles southwest of downtown Denver. The dam and reservoir are owned and operated by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps). The Corps leases 5,318 land and water acres to the State of Colorado Department of Natural Resources Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation to operate Chatfield State Park. The Corps has leased separate portions of its Chatfield property to the Colorado Division of Wildlife for fish production and rearing areas, and to the City and County of Denver, which in turn has a management agreement with Denver Botanic Gardens.

Currently the most visited state park in Colorado, Chatfield State Park attracts more than 1.5 million people each year and collected more than \$2 million in revenue in 2007. Chatfield State Park includes a full-service campground; miles of hiking, biking, and equestrian trails; horse stables; dog off-leash and sport dog training areas; a model airplane field; and a hot air balloon port; all of which are around a popular lake with boating, fishing, and a full-service marina. Chatfield 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.

### Chatfield State Park Dog Off-Leash Area History

In 1982, the Colorado Hunting Dog Association, a retriever training group, approached Chatfield State Park to designate an area for sport dog training. A one-year pilot project was subsequently approved with the training area located south of the gravel ponds in Chatfield State Park. The pilot area received little use due to the distance from existing parking, conflicts with wildlife, no sanitary amenities, and poor management control. In 1983, the training was moved to its current location downstream of the dam, where there were restroom facilities, a parking lot, and a small pond sustained by the fish planting base and a high water table. The fish planting base primarily supplies the water for the ponds in the dog off-leash area. Originally three ponds were excavated, but only two are filled through the fish planting base operations. The third pond is dry.

#### History of Use at Chatfield State Park

**1982**—Parks Board establishes a dog trial area site for one year.

**1983**—Parks Board approves 4 acres for dog training and exercise use at the east pond adjacent to the Cottonwood Grove picnic area. Visitation reaches about 5,000 users in the first year.

**1990**—Visitation about 12,000 users; use encompasses more than 40 acres.

**2000**—Visitation reaches 161,000, with sport dog training use decreasing as dog walking becomes the dominant activity.

**2002**—The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers updates recreation management plan and defines dog training/ exercise area perimeters.

**2004**—Visitation reaches 209,000.

**2005**—Chatfield and Cherry Creek staff meet to address management concerns at the dog areas.

**2009**—Visitation grows, reaching 247,000 or 15 percent of park visitation.

Visitation to the dog off-leash area has grown substantially over the years. At the end of in 1984, visitor use numbered about 5,000. In 1990, 12,000 people visited the dog off-leash area, more than 160,000 visitors in 2000, about 209,000 visitors in 2004, and 247,000 visitors in 2009, which accounted for 15 percent of Chatfield State Park’s visitation. Recently, sport dog training has become a less significant activity, while dog walking, socializing, and playing are the prevalent uses.

## **Purpose of the Plan**

The purpose of the Chatfield 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 Chatfield State Park. Implementation of the Dog Off-Leash Area Management Plan will assist Colorado State Parks in its efforts to manage and enhance this area 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 Chatfield 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 Chatfield 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 Chatfield and Cherry Creek State Parks to establish a sustainable management plan for each area. To complete this study, staff developed a three-phase process including an 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 Chatfield 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 Chatfield and Cherry Creek State Parks was available at both open houses. A total of 65 participants attended the open house near Chatfield State Park, while 102 participants attended the open house near Cherry Creek State Park. The State Parks planning team collected 58 comment sheets at the Chatfield open house, 85 comment sheets at the Cherry Creek open house, and 557 comments online. The top three concerns listed for Chatfield State Park were:

- Size of the area
- Water access
- Access to a flatwater sport dog training area

After analyzing public comments from the April open houses, the State Parks planning team developed a draft preliminary preferred alternative for Chatfield 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 Chatfield 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 Chatfield and Cherry Creek State Parks, is presented below.

### ***Planning Phase Guiding Principles***

1. Colorado State Parks operates Chatfield and Cherry Creek 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 Chatfield and Cherry Creek. 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 Chatfield 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 an additional option 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 Chatfield and Cherry Creek 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 Chatfield 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 Chatfield State Park is one of the largest designated dog off-leash areas in the Denver Metropolitan Area. The fenced dog off-leash area at Chatfield State Park will be approximately 69 acres. Two separate areas for hunting dog trainers to use through a permit system will add 23.5 acres for a total of 92.5 acres.

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 Chatfield State Park Dog Off-Leash Area Management Plan serves as the primary planning document for the dog off-leash area at Chatfield State Park. Specifically, the Division Strategic Plan is a useful guide for achieving a broad range of Division-wide goals and objectives, while the Chatfield 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 Chatfield 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 Chatfield 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 Chatfield 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

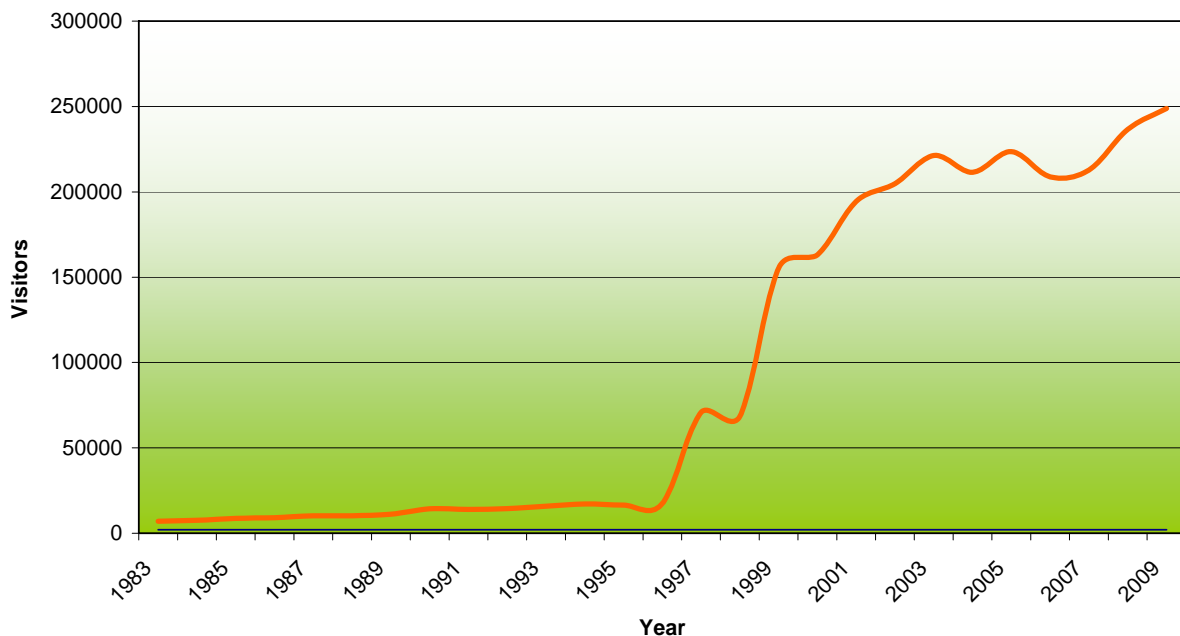
that meets the changing needs of Chatfield State Park and visitors over time, the Dog Off-Leash Area Management Plan may be supplemented with updated information as needed, including minor changes to management actions, additional management actions that help Chatfield State Park adapt to changes in 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 Chatfield 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 mid-1980s.

**Chatfield State Park Dog Off-Leash Area Visitation (1983 to 2009).**



- **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, including the river channel from the outlet works to the east at Chatfield.
- **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 Chatfield 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.

### **Chatfield State Park Management Plan**

The intent of the 1988 Management Plan is to provide a guide for future operation and maintenance of the area in a manner that provides a high standard of service, protection of resources, and future development that provides for the needs and enjoyment of the citizens and visitors to Colorado and Chatfield State Parks.

### **Chatfield 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 Chatfield 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: Chatfield State Park collected 281 surveys with primarily demographic and area experience data. Surveys were completed only in the dog off-leash area and did not include other recreation users of the areas such as bikers, hikers, boaters, and fisherman. About 95 percent of the respondents rated their experience as "very safe" or "safe" for dogs and 96 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 45 percent said they would be "very comfortable" and 22 percent indicated they would be "comfortable."

The survey asked respondents if 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, 36 percent had witnessed conflict between dogs, 12 percent between dogs and bicyclists, 11 percent between dog owners, 5 percent between dogs and fishermen, and 5 percent between dogs and people. Reports of conflicts between dogs and wildlife, and dogs and horses were limited.

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 and introducing rules for owner responsibility (in the form of increased signage). Respondents expressed interest in cleaner water areas and improved bathroom facilities, and proposed having regular “park clean-up” days.

## **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 Chatfield State Park (GEI 2008). The study, *The Influence of Pet Recreation Areas on Soil and Water Quality at Chatfield 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 Chatfield 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 (Nosal 2009). The evaluation concluded that the high traffic has denuded several areas at the dog off-leash area, particularly around the ponds. In addition, the evaluation stated that it would be difficult for the vegetation to recover with continued foot and animal 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. Chatfield State Park has acquired these photos for future reference.

THIS PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK



## 3.0 MANAGEMENT GOALS AND SUGGESTED ACTIONS

---

### Goals

Chatfield 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 Chatfield 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 Chatfield 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 Chatfield 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 Chatfield 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 Chatfield 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.

THIS PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK

## 4.0 PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE

---

### Overview of the Preferred Alternative

The Preferred Alternative is an articulation of the vision to effectively manage the Chatfield 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. In addition, flatwater training will be moved to the south end of Chatfield State Park at the second gravel pond (Figure 1).

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 Chatfield 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 at Chatfield State Park in its current location (Figure 1). From east to west, the dog off-leash area will extend from the asphalt trail on the eastern pond to the Corps service road. From north to south, the dog off-leash area will extend from the main park road to the Corps service road (Figure 2). The dog off-leash area will include all of the asphalt and soft surface trails encompassed in the boundaries that provide access to the two ponds. The dog off-leash area will be about 69 acres and will be delineated by a combination of multiple fencing types. The perimeter near the Owl Glen and Stevens Grove parking areas will likely be fenced with split two-rail fence with jumbo rail sections. The remainder of the area fencing will be five-foot wire fence with wood posts. In each case, fencing will be aesthetically constructed, create a low profile, and minimize construction and maintenance costs.

Other improvements will include erosion control at both ponds, additional dog waste bag dispensers, signs, trash cans, and benches. Trails within the dog off-leash area will be improved and some minor reroutes may occur. The restrooms at both parking areas will be weatherized to allow winter access and use. Revegetation at strategic points throughout the dog off-leash area will occur.

### Flatwater Training Area

To better accommodate flatwater training needs for sport dog trainers, this activity will be moved to the south end of Chatfield State Park at the second gravel pond (Figure 3). American Kennel Club (AKC) test requirements for retriever hunting tests should not normally exceed 100 yards, and the AKC further recommends (AKC 2008) that hunting test situations shall, to the extent that is practical and realistic, make use of the natural hazards, numerous decoys, hunting equipment, and obstacles that are encountered in true hunting. While a full 100-yard perimeter

around the pond is not practical, trainers can make use of a relatively unused area with water and natural hazards and treed and vegetated terrain. The nearby gravel pond parking lot will offer a good staging area to prepare individual dogs for retrieves, and park staff will post signs around the area advising park users of sport dog training use. Use of the area for sport dog training will be allowed by special permit only all day on Tuesdays and Thursdays, and Sunday mornings from 5 am to 10 am. Use of the area will be closely monitored, and visitors allowing dogs to run off-leash without the required permit will be cited. The 15.5-acre upland training site will continue to be available for sport dog trainers. In addition to obtaining a permit for training activities, all sport dog trainers will be required to purchase an annual or daily dog off-leash pass.

During public comment periods, dog off-leash users and sport dog trainers alike noted the incompatibility of uses. Trainers stated that off-leash dogs consistently interfere with dogs that are training and that many people do not understand what is required for training exercises. Off-leash users stated that loud noises from starter pistols and blank ammunition scare their dogs and significantly detract from an enjoyable park experience for them and their dogs. Separating these two uses should alleviate these conflicts.

## Fees

A planning team subcommittee met with field staff from both Chatfield and Cherry Creek 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.

Chatfield 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 \$67,380 annually.

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

Pass Type	Total Passes	Pass Price	Pass Revenue
Annual	3,306	\$20	\$66,120
Daily	630	\$2	\$1,260
<b>ESTIMATE TOTAL</b>			<b>\$67,380</b>

## **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.

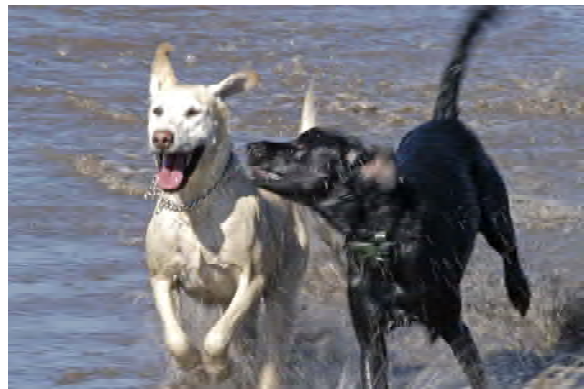
### **Goals**

- 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 six principal elements of the first phase for the dog off-leash area at Chatfield State Park are presented below.

1. **Fencing (off-leash area):** 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, restrooms, and water hydrants will be outside of the fenced area.
2. **Access Points:** Construct bullpen-type entrances (10 feet x 20 feet) at Owl Glen and Stevens Grove. Each bullpen will be divided in two for an entrance section and an exit section.
3. **Fencing (upland training area):** Erect fencing along the main park road and tie into the planting base fencing to the east.
4. **Trails:** Complete minor trail reroutes where dictated by fence installation.
5. **Waste Collection Stations:** Strategic placement of waste collection stations, including one at the upland training area parking lot by the planting base.
6. **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 \$63,900 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 \$46,900. 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 both areas at Chatfield State Park is presented in Table 2.

**Table 2. Chatfield State Park Off-Leash Area Improvements – Cost Estimate**

Item	Bid Items	Quantity	Unit	Unit Price	Total
1	Mobilization and site staking-surveying	1	LS	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 2,500.00
2	Site demolition (grub old fencing, bathroom preparation)	1	LS	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 2,500.00
3	Water, sediment, and erosion control	1	LS	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 2,500.00
4	Dog waste bag dispenser and sign	10	EA	\$ 200.00	\$ 2,000.00
5	Trash can	10	EA	\$ 200.00	\$ 2,000.00
6	Bench	2	EA	\$ 600.00	\$ 1,200.00
7	Single post sign	16	EA	\$ 100.00	\$ 1,600.00
8	Double 4x4 post sign	6	EA	\$ 200.00	\$ 1,200.00
9	Double 6x6 post sign	3	EA	\$ 300.00	\$ 900.00
10	Double 4x4 post sign with two steel sleeves in thickened concrete	2	EA	\$ 400.00	\$ 800.00
11	Install signs on kiosk	3	EA	\$ 50.00	\$ 150.00
12	8-foot-wide new gravel trail along fence	3,000	LF	\$ 8.00	\$ 24,000.00
13	8-foot-wide gravel trail rehabilitation	2,000	LF	\$ 4.00	\$ 8,000.00
14	5-foot fence with wood posts	8,000	LF	\$ 6.00	\$ 48,000.00
15	Split 2-rail fence with 8-foot "jumbo" rail sections	2,000	LF	\$ 8.00	\$ 16,000.00
16	Restroom weatherization (insulation, add heater, electrical upgrades)	1	LS	\$ 30,000.00	\$ 30,000.00
17	Vegetative rehabilitation	1	LS	\$ 20,000.00	\$ 20,000.00
18	Contingency	1	LS	\$ 25,000.00	\$ 25,000.00
<b>ESTIMATE TOTAL</b>				<b>\$</b>	<b>188,350.00</b>

## 6.0 REFERENCES

---

- American Kennel Club (AKC). 2008. Regulations & Guidelines for AKC® Hunting Tests for Retrievers. Available at: < <http://www.akc.org/pdfs/rulebooks/RHTRET.pdf>>. Last accessed September 8, 2010.
- Business Research Division. 2008. Off-Leash Area User Study: Chatfield 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 Chatfield State Park. Unpublished Study completed for Colorado State Parks.
- Nosal, Daniel. 2008. Rangeland Management Specialist, Natural Resources Conservation Service. Letter to Keith Kahler, Assistant Park Manager, Chatfield State Park.

THIS PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK

# Figures

## Dog Off-Leash Area Management Plan





# Appendix A

## Dog Off-Leash Area Management Plan







---

**Chatfield State  
Park: Dog Off-  
leash Area  
Comment  
Summary Report**

---

Public Meeting and  
Other comments

---

June 2 through 11, 2010

---

## **BACKGROUND**

Chatfield State Park is a reservoir-based park located in the southern Metro-Denver area and is comprised of 3,895 land acres and 1,423 water acres. Colorado State Parks manages outdoor recreation at Chatfield, while all of the land is owned by The U.S. Army Corp of Engineers.

In 2009 the park's visitation was 1,651,460 people and of those approximately 247,000<sup>1</sup> visitors can be attributed to the off-leash dog area. The park's total revenue in 2009 was \$1,948,218<sup>2</sup> and of that, approximately \$179,459<sup>3</sup> 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 3, 2010 at Hampton Inn that was attended by 156 members of the public who submitted 182 comment cards (sample comment card, Appendix A). Comment cards asked individuals to 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 Chatfield website, as well as by telephone, mail, and/or email. An additional 111 comments were received via the online form and 48 comments were received via all other sources.

## **PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE COMMENT SUMMARY**

Individuals were asked via a comment card to select (from a list of six categories) the type of user group that they belonged to. Attendees most often identified themselves as off-leash dog area users (47 percent). The next largest group (28 percent) did not specify their type of usage. See Figure 1 below for a breakdown of user groups and Appendix B for additional details.

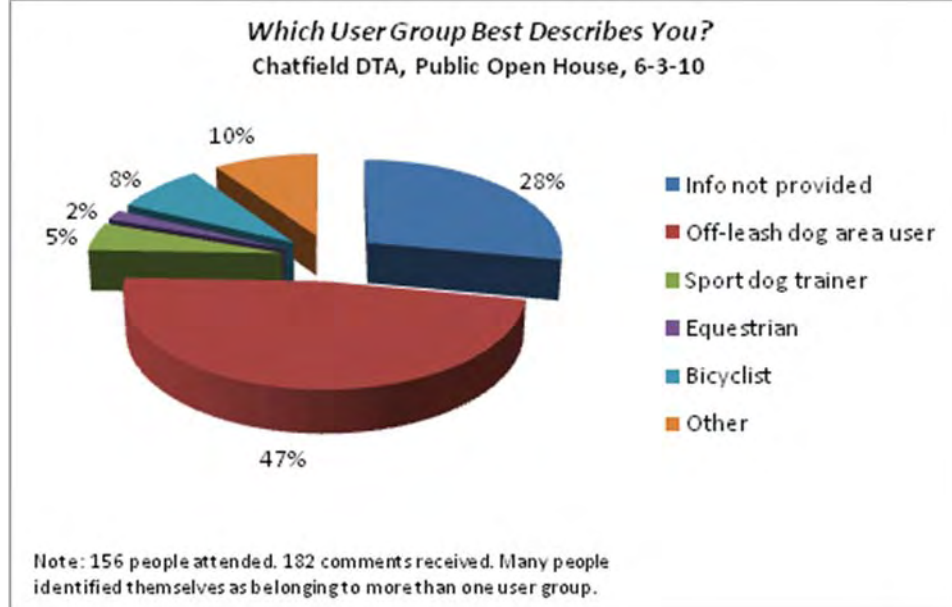
---

<sup>1</sup> Personal communication from Scott Roush, June 22, 2010.

<sup>2</sup> PARKS Park Manager report for 2009 calendar year, as accessed June 21, 2010.

<sup>3</sup> Personal communication from Scott Roush, June 22, 2010.

**Figure 1. User groups, Pubic Meeting, June 3, 2010**



Contained within the 182 comment cards were at least 356<sup>4</sup> individual substantive comments. Public meeting participants submitted a variety of responses of both a positive and a negative nature and of those 356 comments, the top four categories or themes are labeled Figure 2 below and are shown in detail in Appendix C.

### ***Perceived Negative***

About 70 percent of the comments received indicated that respondents perceive aspects or elements of Chatfield's draft preferred alternative and/or the stakeholder option in a negative light. The top ten negative comment categories or themes included:

- Need to allow access to river for running water (cleaner) / need water access points to river
- Oppose fees / Why pay more for less? / All user groups should pay additional fee.
- No desirable elements / leave things alone
- Restrict bike users from area / keep them on designated bike paths / charge bikes a fee / why aren't they asked to make concessions to other users?
- Oppose fence
- Oppose the reduction in acreage / want more acreage
- Use a warning system of some kind to warn park users of a water release & continue to allow access to river
- Move the sport dog training area to another part of park (and/or to rescue-dog water area)
- Oppose/question the need of sport dog training area / Don't "divide" park.

<sup>4</sup> 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.

### ***Perceived Positive***

The second largest category (six percent) contains comments that view aspects or elements of the draft preferred alternative and/or the stakeholder option in a positive light such as:

- Supports a modest fee / supports a daily fee
- Supports fencing
- Supports a sport dog training area / Dog trainers need separate area, away from dog walkers, with water access
- Supports commercial/multi-use license for people w/ more than 3 dogs
- Understands/supports need for changes
- Supports new/improved bathrooms

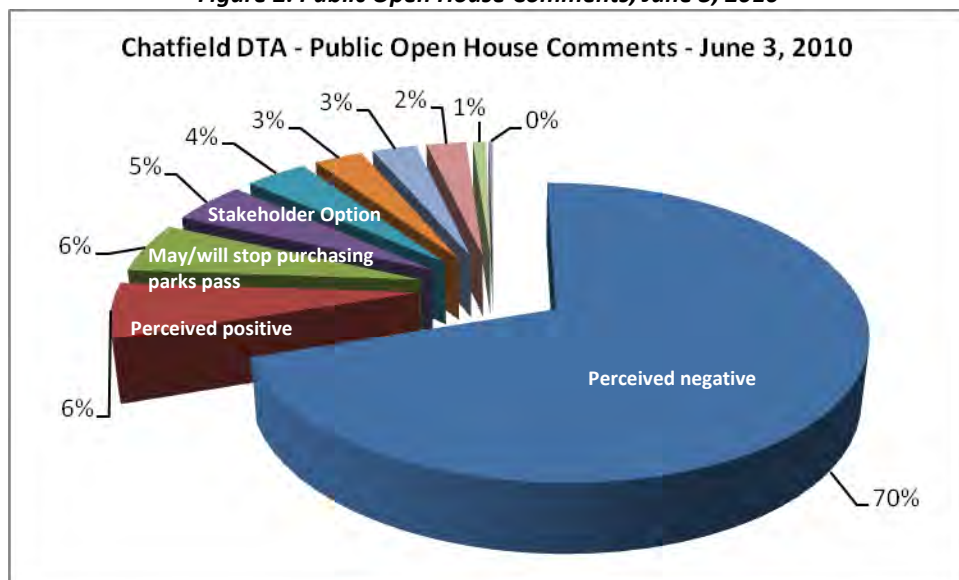
### ***Park Passes***

Six percent indicated that they may or will discontinue purchasing annual parks passes if these changes are implemented.

### ***Support Stakeholder Option***

The final category labeled on the Figure 2 below represents five percent of the comments and is in general support of the Stakeholder Option. 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 the location, acreage, or general access to the sports-dog training area.

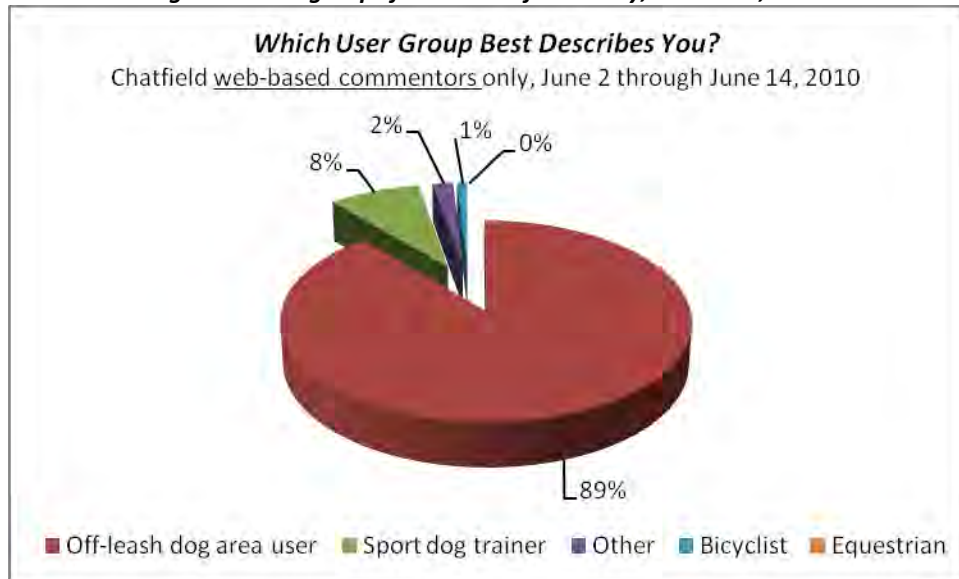
**Figure 2. Public Open House Comments, June 3, 2010**



### **WEB-BASED COMMENTS USING ONLINE FORM**

Of the 111 people that submitted an online form, 89 percent self-identified themselves as being an off-leash dog area user; sport dog trainers were the next largest group representing eight percent (see Figure 3 and Appendix D for a detailed list):

**Figure 3. User groups from online forms only, June 2-14, 2010**



### ***Negative Perception***

Contained within the 111 online forms were at least 164 individual comments. Comments received from these online forms show that just over half (51 percent) perceive aspects or elements of the draft preferred alternative and/or the stakeholder options in a negative light. The top five reasons the proposed changes were viewed negatively include:

- Oppose the reduction in acreage or want more acreage added
- No desirable elements; leave park alone
- Oppose fees / Why pay more for less? / All user groups should pay additional fee.
- Opposed to fencing
- Oppose sport dog training area / Sport dog training area is too large

### ***Support Stakeholder Option***

Twenty-one percent prefer the Stakeholder Option, but like Open House participants, most respondents that commented on this option did not favor it “as is” and often proposed additional modifications, largely centered around the off-leash dog area proximity or acreage relative to the sports dog training area.

### ***General Opposition***

About 11 percent of comments indicated general opposition to the entire planning process or to the rationale used for the changes. See Appendix E for a complete list of related comments grouped under this category.

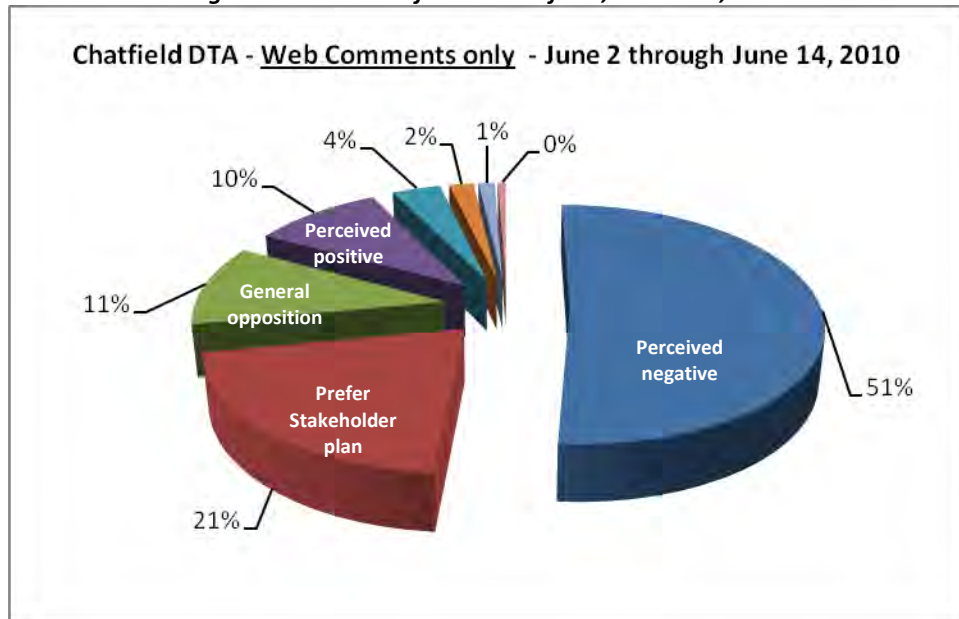
### ***Positive Perception***

About 10 percent of comments indicated support for the elements of the State Parks Preliminary Draft Alternative for Chatfield. Some of the more common positive comments corresponded to:

- Supports a sport-dog training area / Supports a separate sports dog area

- Supportive of a modest fee

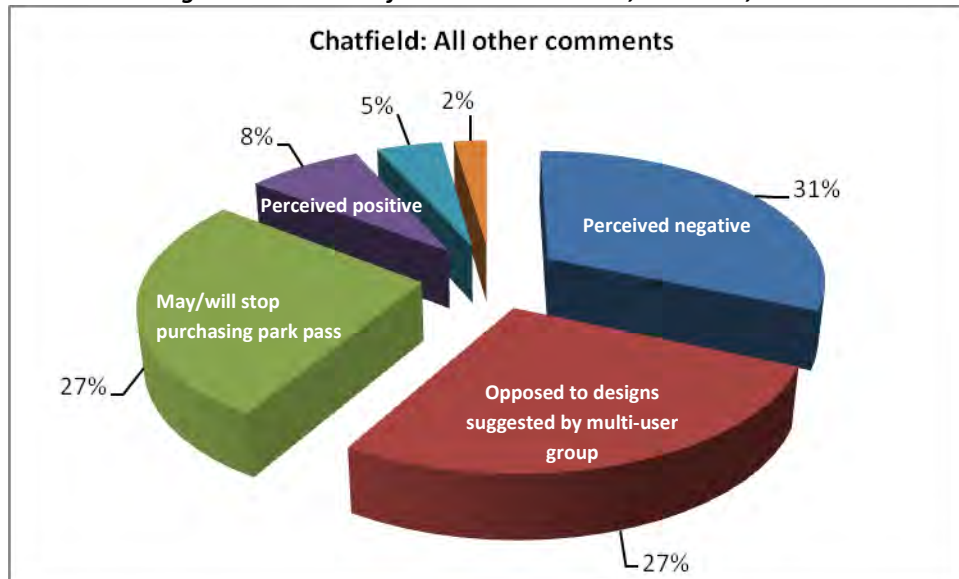
**Figure 4. Comments from online form, June 2-14, 2010**



**OTHER COMMENTS**

The 48 comments received from all other sources such as email, telephone, and written letter indicate that (31 percent) perceive aspects or elements of the draft preferred alternative and/or the stakeholder options in a negative light. Twenty-seven percent of comments indicate opposition to the designs suggested by multi-user groups and preference for the option submitted by the newly formed group, Colorado Off-leash Dog Association. Another 27 percent of comments collected via email, telephone, and written letter specified that the user may not or will not purchase a park pass in the future. Only eight percent of comments view the changes positively.

**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 Chatfield off-leash area. Anywhere from 6 to 10 percent of the comments received by the various means indicated positive perceptions one or more elements of the State Parks Preliminary Draft Alternative.

Some other repeated themes occur within the comments, but didn't necessarily make the "top five" comment categories. Some of these other recurring comments included:

- General opposition to entire planning process and/or rationale used for the changes
- Perception that that public process has been flawed and that elements included in the alternatives do not represent public opinion or 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:

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Chatfield Comment Card</b></p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>Dog Off-leash Training Area</b></p> <p>After reviewing the “List of Givens,” State Parks Preliminary Draft Alternative, and the Stakeholder Option for <b>Chatfield State Park</b>, please specify <u>any additional changes/elements you would like State Parks to consider in developing a Final Draft Alternative to present to the State Parks Board</u>. For example, what elements of the Stakeholder Option and the Preliminary Draft Alternative are most desirable from your perspective?</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
--

Back:

<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <p><b>Which user group best describes you?</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Off leash dog area user   <input type="checkbox"/> Sport dog trainer   <input type="checkbox"/> Equestrian   <input type="checkbox"/> Bicyclist   <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME!!!</b></p>
--



## APPENDIX B – OPEN HOUSE, USER GROUPS

Which user group best describes you?	Count*
Info not provided	64
Off-leash dog area user	109
Sport dog trainer	11
Equestrian	4
Bicyclist	19
Other	22
<i>not specified</i>	3
<i>runner</i>	1
<i>walker / hiker</i>	4
<i>boater</i>	2
<i>camper</i>	2
<i>environmental group</i>	1
<i>kayaker</i>	1
<i>tax &amp; fee payer / citizen</i>	2
<i>run w/ dog on leash</i>	1
<i>tracking training</i>	2
<i>fisherman</i>	1
<i>park volunteer</i>	1
<i>swimmer at gravel ponds</i>	1
<i>law enforcement officer</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	249
Perceived POSITIVE aspects / elements of draft preferred alternative/stakeholder option	22
May/will stop coming to park (or stop buying a pass) if these changes are made (may include decrease area, fences, charge fee, etc.)	20
Prefer Stakeholder option (or with modifications)	17
General opposition to entire planning process and/or rationale for change	14
Flawed public process / Elements included in alternatives do not represent public opinion	11
Why wasn't the Army Corps of Engineers at the meeting? / The Corps should be more accountable to the public and/or questions. / Should have better coordination between agencies. / If Corp wants/needs these changes, they should pay for them.	10
Prefer State Parks Draft Alternative (or with modifications)	9
Undecided about either plan / both plans need modifications.	3
Additional user fees should be spent at same park's DTA facilities only.	1
	356
Perceived NEGATIVE aspects / elements of draft preferred alternative/stakeholder option:	
Allow access to river for running water (cleaner) / need water access points to river	25
Oppose fees / Why pay more for less? / All user groups should pay additional fee.	25
No desirable elements / leave things alone	20
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?	19
Oppose fence	19
Oppose the reduction in acreage / want more acreage	18
Use a warning system of some kind to warn park users of a water release & continue to allow access to river	16
Move the sport dog training area to another part of park (and/or to rescue-dog water area)	14
Oppose/question the need of sport dog training area / Don't "divide" park.	14
Sport dog training area is too large	14
Oppose "Givens" / "Givens" are not fair and/or need further modifications	12
Need to know when/if guns will be used in sport dog training area. / Concern for loud sounds.	10
Limit sport dog training area to certain days/times (or by reservation) so general public has access to both ponds	7
Allow more access to water sources (non-specific) / Water access is what "makes" the park	7
Heath concerns of pond water / use additional signage when bacteria is high	7
Not enough shaded areas	6
Maintain what we have; don't build more	3
Open sport dog training areas to general use during winter (or off-peak) months	3
Require dogs to pass an obedience test for entry to park. / Require vaccinations.	3
Allow more than two dogs per person	2
ADA concerns / Concerned that fencing will cut off sidewalks that are used by elderly/handicapped	2
Stakeholder Plan is unworkable (concerned about conflicts at entrance area)	1
Will have to leash dogs until inside the gate	1
Fence off river access only, keeping rest of park open	1
	249
Perceived POSITIVE aspects / elements of draft preferred alternative/stakeholder option:	

Supports a modest fee / supports a daily fee	7
Supports fencing	5
Supports a sport dog training area / Dog trainers need separate area, away from dog walkers, with water access	5
Supports commercial/multi-use license for people w/ more than 3 dogs	2
Understands/supports need for changes	2
Supports new/improved bathrooms	1
	22

NOTES:

Totals will not add up to the number of comment cards or by names on sign-in sheet.

Most people provided multiple comments per comment card.

Many people identified themselves as belonging to more than one user group.

## APPENDIX D – ONLINE FORM, USER GROUPS

Which user group best describes you?	<i>Count</i>
Off-leash dog area user	96
Sport dog trainer	9
Other	2
Bicyclist	1
Equestrian	0

## APPENDIX E – ONLINE FORM, COMMENT THEMES

Comments Summarized by "theme"	Count
<b>Perceived NEGATIVE aspects / elements of draft preferred alternative/stakeholder option</b>	<b>84</b>
Prefer Stakeholder option (or with modifications)	34
General opposition to entire planning process and/or rationale for change	18
<b>Perceived POSITIVE aspects / elements of draft preferred alternative/stakeholder option</b>	<b>16</b>
May/will stop coming to park (or stop buying a pass) if these changes are made (may include decrease area, fences, charge fee, etc.)	6
Prefer State Parks Draft Alternative (or with modifications)	3
Flawed public process / Elements included in alternatives do not represent public opinion	2
Keep Plan B as originally proposed with no changes.	1
	<b>164</b>
<b>Perceived NEGATIVE aspects / elements of draft preferred alternative/stakeholder option:</b>	
Oppose the reduction in acreage / want more acreage	14
No desirable elements / leave things alone	12
Oppose fees / Why pay more for less? / All user groups should pay additional fee.	11
Oppose fence	9
Oppose sport dog training area / Sport dog training area is too large	8
Allow more access to water sources (non-specific) / Water access is what "makes" the park	6
Having sport-dog training area in the middle of dog-walker area is not suitable for either group	5
Allow more than two dogs per person	5
Concern for water quality of pond water	3
Concern for lack of access to river water	2
Oppose "Givens" / "Givens" are not fair and/or need further modifications	2
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?	2
Limit sport dog training area to certain days/times (or by reservation) so general public has access to both ponds	2
Allow access to river for running water (cleaner) / need water access points to river	2
If sports-dog training area tends to be underutilized, can it be opened up to dog walkers?	1
	<b>84</b>
<b>Perceived POSITIVE aspects / elements of draft preferred alternative/stakeholder option:</b>	
Supports a sport-dog training area / Supports a separate sports dog area	7
Supports a modest fee / supports a daily fee	5
Supports fencing	2
Supports limit of 2 pets per person	1
Supports a volunteer program	1
	<b>16</b>

## APPENDIX F – COMMENTS FROM ALL OTHER SOURCES

Comments Summarized by "theme" Comments from other sources (phone, mail, email)	Count
<b>Perceived NEGATIVE aspects / elements of draft preferred alternative/stakeholder option</b>	<b>28</b>
Opposed to designs submitted by multi-user groups	24
May/will stop coming to park (or stop buying a pass) if these changes are made (may include decrease area, fences, charge fee, etc.)	24
<b>Perceived POSITIVE aspects / elements of draft preferred alternative/stakeholder option</b>	<b>7</b>
General opposition to entire planning process and/or rationale for change	4
Flawed public process / Elements included in alternatives do not represent public opinion	2
	<b>89</b>
<b>Perceived NEGATIVE aspects / elements of draft preferred alternative/stakeholder option:</b>	
Oppose fence	7
Oppose fees / Why pay more for less? / All user groups should pay additional fee.	6
Oppose the reduction in acreage / want more acreage	5
No desirable elements / leave things alone	5
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?	3
Oppose sport dog training area / Sport dog training area is too large	2
	<b>28</b>
<b>Perceived POSITIVE aspects / elements of draft preferred alternative/stakeholder option:</b>	
Supports a modest fee / supports a daily fee	4
Supports a volunteer program	2
Supports improved amenities	1
	<b>7</b>