

The Honorable Frances P. Mainella, Director
National Park Service
1849 C Street NW
Washington, D.C. 20240

August 25, 2001

Dear Director Mainella,

The National Park Service has repeatedly promised that it will give the public a fair process with regard to proposed changes to the long enjoyed traditional practice of allowing off leash dog walking recreation in some parts of the Golden Gate National Recreation Area. **But now the public input process is being subverted by the GGNRA suddenly reversing its longstanding policy which allowed off-leash dogs in certain areas -- before the public input process occurs.**

That is unfair.

The Park Service says it is setting up an Advanced Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, which it suggests will fairly allow the public to have input on this highly unpopular change. Nevertheless, the GGNRA employees announce that they have unilaterally reversed the current policy before the ANPR public input process begins. **What good is a public input process if the agency is so committed to the change that it insists on abruptly reversing its longstanding policy and aggressively escalating enforcement just prior to the public comment period?**

The Federal Court previously criticized similar GGNRA efforts that appeared to seek to create a fait accompli which would interfere with a fair public input process:

"These excerpts show an intent on the part of the National Park Service to railroad through the closure, to maintain secrecy, to unleash the fencing with lightening speed, and to establish a fait accompli."

Ft. Funston Dog Walkers v. Babbitt, 96 F. Supp 2d 1021, 1037-38 (2000).

As the prior policy and legal interpretation worked well for twenty years, **there is no need to unfairly ramrod though immediate implementation of a new policy prior to full consideration of the merits of the change.** The GGNRA gives no explanation of why it needs to move so quickly.

This is all even worse public policy because the change is so significant. It would have a huge impact on the quality of life of so many in this densely populated urban area. Many would not take advantage of the opportunity to visit the parks but for the activity of walking our dogs. They give us company, joy and protection, and provide a reason to get outdoors.

The GGNRA staff blames the new enforcement regime on "Washington." **Please explain whether this change is in fact coming from "Washington". If so, who is insisting on making the change prior to a fair public input process, and why?**

Sincerely,

The Honorable Gale A. Norton,
Secretary of the Interior
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street NW
Washington, D.C. 20240

August 25, 2001

Dear Secretary Norton,

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Sincerely,

The Honorable Dianne Feinstein,
United States Senator
One Post Street, Suite 2450
San Francisco, CA 94104

August 25, 2001

Dear Senator Feinstein,

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Sincerely,

The Honorable Barbara Boxer,
United States Senator
1700 Montgomery Street, Suite 240
San Francisco, CA 94111

August 25, 2001

Dear Senator Boxer,

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Sincerely,

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi,
Member of Congress
450 Golden Gate Ave., 14th Floor
San Francisco, CA 94102

August 25, 2001

Dear Representative Pelosi,

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Sincerely,

The Honorable Tom Lantos,
Member of Congress
400 South El Camino Real, Suite 410
San Mateo, CA 94402

August 25, 2001

Dear Representative Lantos,

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Sincerely,

The Honorable Joel Hefley, Chairman
National Parks and Recreation Subcommittee
Committee on Resources,
U.S. House of Representatives
1333 Longworth House Office Building
Washington D.C. 20515-6201

August 25, 2001

Dear Representative Hefley,

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Sincerely,

The Honorable Daniel K. Akaka, Chairman
Subcommittee on National Parks
Committee on Energy and National Resources,
United States Senate
364 Dirksen Building
Washington, DC 20510

August 25, 2001

Dear Senator Akaka,

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