

10 Facts about Dog Beaches

1. Mistaken Assumption: Dog owners want to take over the beach.

FACT: Our request is based on a simple principle of fairness: Dog owners should have the same access to recreational opportunities as do tennis players, soccer players, sun bathers, surfers, volley ball players, joggers, bicyclists and others who use the city's parks and beaches. Dog owners have no greater claim than others-- all we ask for is a fair shake.*USC study, "A Case for Space"

2. Mistaken Assumption: Those calling for a dog beach are a small outspoken fringe group.

FACT: Dog owners comprise a significant portion of the population. There are 15 coastal counties in the State of California. Each one of those counties has at least one dog beach. There are more than 57 of them up and down the coast of California. The National Park Service is taking the requests of dog owners seriously: in Golden Gate Recreation Area in the Bay area, there is currently a federally funded study regarding loosening the leash laws on their beaches.*Chris Powell, Public Affairs, Golden Gate National Recreation Area

3. Mistaken Assumption: Santa Monica would not be a good place for a dog beach.

FACT: In less than one month, more than 1,000 + enthusiastic Santa Monica residents have responded with a resounding yes, signing petitions, volunteering, and donating money to establish a dog beach.*Unleash The Beach campaign 2004

4. Mistaken Assumption: A dog zone on the Santa Monica Beach would be overrun and out of control because it would become so wildly popular.

FACT: Although it is quite certain it would be very popular, other urban beaches which have designated dog zones do not have safety or liability problems. This includes Upton Beach in the San Francisco area, which is a small stretch of beach which gets more than 1,000 visitors on a busy Saturday.*Rob Ruiz, Chief ParkRanger

5. Mistaken Assumption: The irresponsible dog owners will come and ruin it for everyone.

FACT: Many dog zones are carefully regulated and looked after by the grateful dog owner/volunteers and community groups who help support them. Examples are our neighboring Long Beach Dog Beach and Huntington Dog Beach. With rules clearly posted and doggie bags available and volunteer clean ups, these beaches often end up being the cleanest stretch of the beach.*Martin Senat, Pres., Huntington Dog Beach

5. Mistaken Assumption: The presence of dogs on the beach will add to the bacterial and pollution levels in the water.

FACT: A study of water quality reports from all existing California Dog beaches shows that there are no water quality concerns at any of them and any that did occur have been corrected. The study shows that there are no known measurable amounts of water pollution caused by dogs. Most has been determined to come from sea birds, septic tanks or storm runoff.*Dog Beach Now report. Contact Sandra Toye, Esq.

7. Mistaken Assumption: Use of the beaches by dogs will pose a risk to public health.

FACT: “There have been no additional infectious diseases in general, or individual cases in specific that would limit in any way or pose a risk to the public safety from a dog beach....in addition, since 1997, many medical centers have initiated ‘pet visitation’ programs for their patients in hospitals. These programs attest to the safety for pets and pet contact even in sick hospitalized patients. EllieJ.C. Goldstein, M.D., UCLA Professor of Medicine, Infectious Diseases

8. Mistaken Assumption: Dog beaches are a huge liability to the governing municipalities.

FACT: Not one of the 57 dog beaches surveyed in California has reported any lawsuit or legal action against it.*all CA dog beach managers, as reported in Dog Beach Now report

9. Mistaken Assumption: Dog beaches will strain already pinched budgets of municipalities and governing parties.

FACT: Counties and municipalities throughout the state have reported no extra costs with regard to additional maintenance associated with dog beaches. In many places, clean up is the same as for nondog beaches. In others, cleanup, provision of doggie bags and scoopers are routinely borne by organizations who commit time and resources to maintain a safe and clean environment. In fact, the presence of dog beaches brings benefits both to the local community and local governments with increased revenues from parking fees, concession stand revenues, and increased business at local restaurants and shops.*Huntington Dog Beach, Dog Beach Now report.

10. Mistaken Assumption: It may affect tourism adversely.

FACT: In addition to the increased revenue from locals, more and more people are traveling with their pets. More and more hotels are becoming “pet friendly” as research shows that people enjoy more social interaction if they are accompanied by a dog. Pets bridge communication gaps, even as they provide companionship and reduce stress for people of all ages.*James SerpellPhD: Journal of Royal Science and Medicine

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