

To Whom It May Concern,

I would like to provide some comments, opinions and facts in opposition to the use of athletic fields as "off leash dog use", specifically Whites Creek Park. I have lived in the Galena Country Estates neighborhood for 14+ years near Whites Creek Park. The Galena Country Estates HOA contributes to the annual cost of maintenance and upkeep of this facility and park. I am a frequent visitor of the park for self recreation. I have two school aged children who have been using this facility for the past 13 + years as a recreational facility. I have also been involved as a parent and coach with Great Basin Youth Soccer League for the past 8+ years. Whites Creek Park has been our primary field for children's soccer league practice activities during this time. The Great Basin Youth Soccer League runs both a Fall and Spring League for children age 4-14 and use this field as a primary facility. I spend a significant amount of time using this facility and have three significant concerns with the proposed use changes for the facility.

1) Safety

The Humane Society estimates 51% of dog bites victims are children. The American Veterinary Association states that the rate of dog bites for children is highest between ages 5-9. Getting bit by a dog is the second most frequent cause of visits to emergency rooms for children according to a survey in JAMA 1998;279:53.

The majority of dog owners I have encountered at Whites Creek Park over the years are courteous and either leash their pet or leave (sometimes irritated) when I arrive with children and soccer gear. However, some do not. I have had dogs chase children and soccer balls during practice. I have lost one soccer ball to puncture when it was bit by a dog. I have watched some children be anxious around unfamiliar dogs and others play aggressively with unfamiliar dogs. Often the dogs become excited with children running around and soccer balls being kicked and they simply want to play and be part of the action. But this behavior is prone to turn tragic when a child inadvertently steps on a paw with cleats or gets tangled up with an unfamiliar dog. Sometimes I have put up with the pets on the field, other times I have asked the pet owner to leave. Even if the field has certain times/rules for children vs pet use I feel this will increase overlap as some individuals will not follow posted rules and increase the chances of trouble. A child will pay the consequence.

2) Dog droppings

I believe the majority of dog owners are responsible and considerate and work to clean up their pets droppings. However, some are not. As soccer coach I get to the practice field routinely 15-20 minutes early to set up for practice and to clean up dog droppings from a field where dogs are not currently allowed to roam off of a leash. I try to always have a couple of extra plastic bags and latex gloves in my car for this purpose. A neighbor whose fence adjoins the field has attached a basket where they graciously often stock plastic bags for this purpose. At times I have arrived unprepared and have sacrificed many soccer cones for the purpose of sweeping and lifting away dog droppings. It is a multiple time a season occurrence to have one of the children step in droppings during practice that I missed during my quick inspection. It is a common topic of conversation at practice among the kids regarding the stink, size and consistency of different areas of droppings. Please see attached photo of my son attempting to remove droppings with a cone at our most recent practice October 21, 2022. This is a common occurrence at a facility where dogs are not currently allowed to roam off leash. I am sure this is an example of only a

few irresponsible pet owners not using due diligence to clean up after their pet but I believe this problem will increase significantly in a facility where off leash dog rules are in place. The kids deserve to have a clean facility to practice in. It is our responsibility as parents and administrators to provide this environment.

3) Quality of Life in the Neighborhood

There is a lack of open space facilities in the south end of Reno. This problem is being exacerbated by recent aggressive growth. Residents, children and pet owners all deserve appropriate facilities for recreational use. However, this facility is already under heavy use and traffic. Drive by this park late afternoon/early evening hours in the spring or fall and you will find there is already a lack of parking with cars double parked throughout the facility and lining the streets in the neighboring cul de sac. If this area is determined to be an "off leash" destination for pet owners this neighborhood is going to be flooded with increased traffic from surrounding areas coming to use the facility due to lack of these facilities elsewhere. This congestion is going to lower the quality of life in this neighborhood and potentially bring unwanted individuals to our homes. Several neighbors have already posted warning signs stating "slow down children at play" at the edges of their driveways as cars rush up and down the streets above posted speed limits. About once a season I receive an email from the soccer league requesting us coaches to ask our parents to slow down and be courteous while driving in the neighborhood due to resident level of safety for children and families in the neighborhood.

Children and pet owners deserve appropriate facilities. However, these facilities cannot double for one another without consequences. This facility has a long history of use by children and their needs should not be sacrificed due to a lack of appropriate planning and aggressive growth. I do feel children's needs and safety come before pets. Whites Creek park is a different facility than South Valleys Regional Park, Lazy 5 Regional Park and North Valleys Regional Park which have been used in the pilot program. Whites Creek is much smaller and has a single entrance/exit in a private cul de sac of a small neighborhood with a home owners association and speed limits of 25mph. This neighborhood does not provide multiple points of entrance and exit with wider open spaces and roads with higher speed limits. Pet owners will flock to this location due to the fenced in nature and lack of traffic they see as a risk to their pets. This location will be overrun and overused leading to disgruntled home owners and confrontation between pet owners and families looking to use the facilities. The majority of pet owners will obey the posted "off leash" hours but some will not. Most responsible pet owners will clean up after their animal but some will not. Residents of the neighborhood will be restricted from using the facility/park with their children during these "off leash" hours due to the threat of an unfamiliar dog getting excited and jumping up on their child. Use of this facility as an "off leash" location will lead to deterioration of this neighborhood, strife between users of the facility and a danger to the children and families that currently use this facility and call it home. The vocal minority of pet owners should not be able to alter established precedence of a facility used by the neighborhood majority that is currently happy with current protocols and protections.

Thank You,
Ben Horgan
bhorgan@uw.edu
775-291-9066

Re: Whites Creek Park off leash changes meeting

Ben Horgan <benthorgan@gmail.com>

Tue 10/25/2022 8:18 AM

To: Wallace-Barnum Colleen <CWallace@washoecounty.gov>

Cc: Evans, Denise <DEvans@washoecounty.gov>

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Colleen and Denise,

These photos are to adjoin the word document previously sent. Taken from my two most recent soccer practices at Whites Creek Park after I learned of this meeting. Please include with the word document to the commissioners as they are referenced.

Thank you,

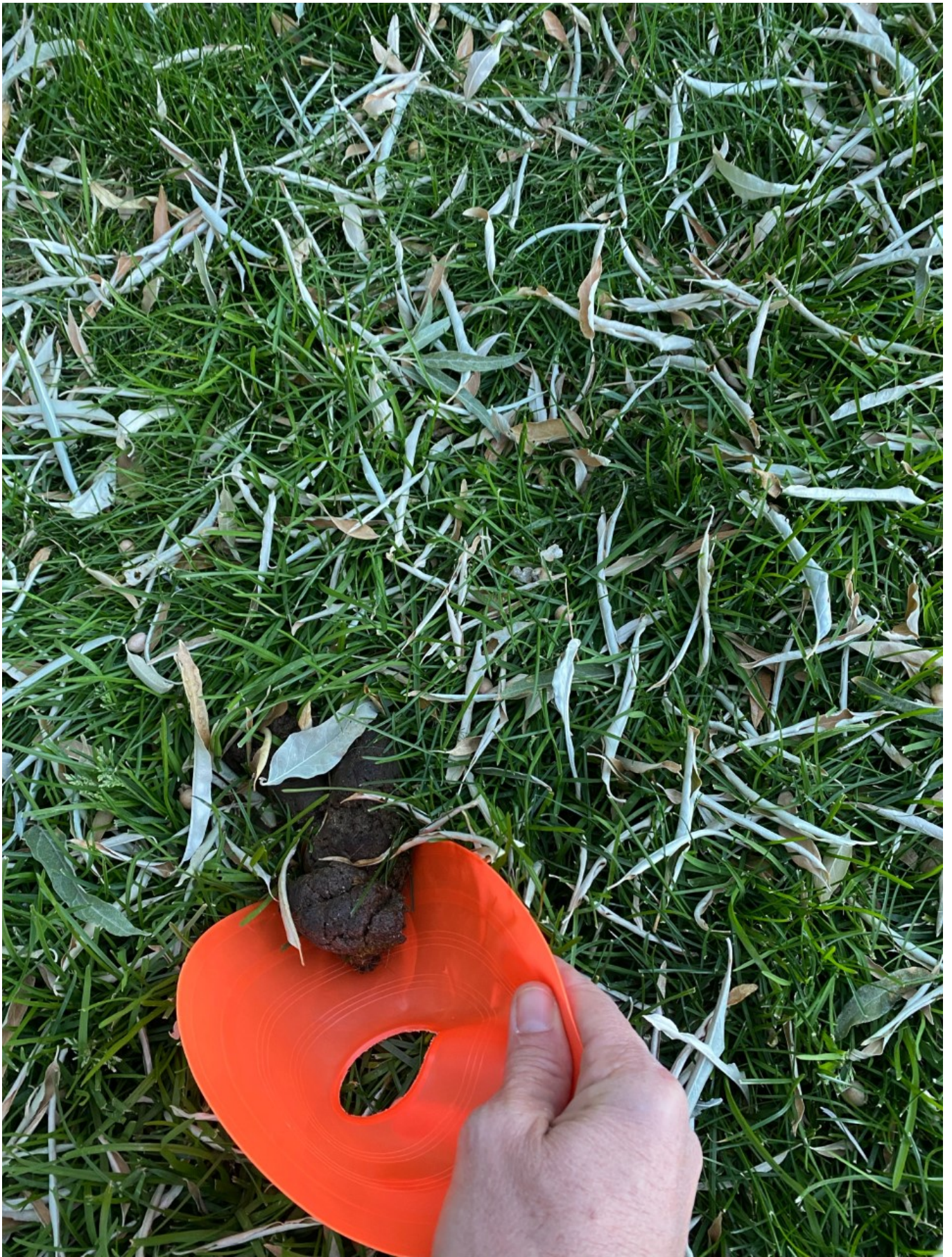
Ben Horgan















On Mon, Oct 24, 2022 at 10:00 PM Ben Horgan <benthorgan@gmail.com> wrote:

Off-Leash Dog Areas

Cynthia Reed <creednev@gmail.com>

Wed 10/26/2022 9:30 PM

To: Nicholas-Martin Kearney <nkearney@washoecounty.us>; Lucey, Robert (Bob) L <BLucey@washoecounty.gov>; Darla Lee <dlee@washoecounty.us>; Wallace-Barnum Colleen <CWallace@washoecounty.gov>; Evans, Denise <DEvans@washoecounty.gov>; Timothy Dake <tdake@washoecounty.us>; Doug Doolittle <ddoolittle@washoecounty.us>; Maxwell DiNatale <mdinatale@washoecounty.us>; Patterson, Jeff <JPatterson@washoecounty.gov>; Lisa Rode <lrode@washoecounty.us>; Chen, Stephanie <SChen@washoecounty.gov>; Ormer L Rains <orains@washoecounty.us>; Brown, Andy <ABrown@washoecounty.gov>; Kevin Joell <kjoell@washoecounty.us>

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Please read the attached letter commenting on off-leash dog areas in Washoe County.

For new members of the Park Commission, I've attached two previous letters I've written in past years about the lack of safe areas to run dogs.

See you at the Nov. 1 meeting.

Cynthia Reed
Galena Country Estates Homeowner
HOA Board Member

2425 Solitude Drive
Reno, NV 89511
October 25, 2022

Washoe County Open Space and
Regional Parks Commission
1011 E. 9th Street
Reno, NV 89501

RE: Whites Creek Park Off-Leash Dog Park?



Johnson Lane Dog Park in Douglas County

Dear Parks Commission:

Thank you so much for allowing dogs off-leash at the soccer field near South Valleys Library this past year. It is a joy to have somewhere to go to throw balls to our dogs. Since the signs were put up, I have noticed minimal issues. I hope that this area is approved to continue! But I have a lab who runs to the creek, drops the ball in the creek; then runs across the baseball park to Reno Ice, so we purchased a 100 ft training leash to use on her.

Consequently, I'm still inquiring about making Whites Creek Park an off-leash area, at least in the mornings, **every day of the week (8-1 pm)**, so working people have a safe place to play with dogs on weekends and allow Galena Country Estates homeowners to **walk** to the Whites Creek Park to play with dogs and **save gas!**

It does not make sense that over 300 HOA homeowners contribute \$11,000 a year to the maintenance of the Whites Creek Park but we cannot use it to play with our dogs. The park is generally empty during the week until 3-8 pm for soccer practice in spring and fall. There are more dogs in this development and surrounding areas than children. I've been stopped four times since 2020, during Covid (8:15 am, 9:15 am, 11:00 am, 2 pm.). **No one is in the park!** I'm quietly checking out the area for trash and poop as I've done for over 20 years plus throwing the ball to my dog.

I am one of five Board Members. All members have dogs and have played with them off-leash in the park. But I'm the only one who has been stopped by the ranger for playing with my dogs off-leash in the park. My dogs are on-leash before we leave the grass. I've been writing letters every year since. Last year, I was going to attend the Nov. meeting but I ended up in a surgeon's office to remove melanoma from my arm, thankfully Stage 1. But, I'll be there November 1, 2022!

Here are some of the reasons that one HOA Board who lives near the park used last year in arguing against Whites Creek Park being an off-leash area in mornings:

- Increased traffic speeding and more traffic: **GCE HOA had Washoe County Traffic Calming do a traffic study on Telluride Dr. June 2021 24/7 for a week. The previous year it seemed like speeding occurred before and after soccer practices between 4-8 pm. Results: 85% of drivers go 32 mph. Others were slower. In my opinion, traffic to**

park would be minimal because most of us walk to the park. I've only seen 1-3 cars at a time when dog people are using the park.

- Increase use of park: Whites Creek Park was created when the GCE developer sold the land in 1985 to Washoe County with the stipulation that GCE HOA would maintain the grass area. By 2005, GCE contracted Washoe County Parks to do the park maintenance. Consequently, many homeowners think the park belongs to GCE HOA and they want the park to be their private playground. Whites Creek Park is a public park.
- **Whites Creek Park has been used as an off-leash dog park for over 20 years because it has a fence all around it!** South Reno has nothing as safe as this park. Cyan Dog Park is the closest fenced area but it is already too congested plus 11 minutes away driving instead of walking. I recently checked out the Johnson Lane Dog Park in Douglas County. An area less congested than south Reno. They have a dog park in a rural area! Washoe County needs more fenced dog areas.



- **Increase dog poop:** Dogs owners in this area have greatly improved picking up poop. I know because I've been the unofficial poop fairy of Whites Creek Park & Trail for over 20 years. Twenty years ago, I carried an orange 5-gallon bucket to pick up poop in Whites Creek Park area. The area north of the park in the Government Lots was a dogs "run-at-large" area. Not anymore. Now, I just carry a small bucket or just use bags for occasional distracted owners. We can organize more volunteers. We have the best kept park in the County except the ranger keeps running us off.



I've attached my previous letters, for more ideas for the new members of the Parks Commission.

I believe we can make Whites Creek Park a multi-use park...a win-win for everyone ...dog-owners and sporting activities because green areas are precious. These are examples of how the park has been used in the past:

- Family playing in park with dog. Mom is jogging around perimeter with dog off leash. Kids are playing baseball with dad in the center.
- Grandma bringing grandkids to park to play soccer while she throws ball to the dog.
- Spring evening... lots of people are walking around the perimeter. Dogs are playing. Kids are playing. It looks like Central Park in New York!
- "Duckman" practicing with his well-trained dog to fetch decoys.

Please let us use Whites Creek Park for diverse activities.

Cynthia Reed, Galena Country Estates Board Member & Homeowner with a dog.

2425 Solitude Drive
Reno, NV 89511
July 21, 2021

Washoe County Open Space and
Regional Parks Commission
1001 E. 9th Street
Reno, NV 89512

Re: Temporary Dog Park in South Reno

Dear Parks Commission:



Hi, Cynthia Reed, retired grandmother, who has lived in Reno area for over 34 years. I wrote a letter last year about the need for multi-use parks in south Reno and I hope to talk at a Park Commission meeting this year.

We desperately need a dog park for off-leash activities in South Reno area off Mt. Rose Hwy. Can dog-owners use existing small parks while County Planners pursue funding, estimated at 6 million dollars, for the next phase expansion of the South Valleys Park which includes a dog park?

Terri Schultz, Regional Animal Services, says there are over 15,000 dogs registered south of the Hidden Valley Area. Dog owners need a safe area with no foxtails, rattlesnakes or other wildlife to train and play with their dogs.

Here is the problem in the Whites Creek Park area: with the increase in high density apartments off Wedge Parkway and homes being built all around the Whites Creek Park area, dog-owners have nowhere to take their dogs off-leash to play fetch unless they drive 25 minutes to Hidden Valley Regional Dog Park or the new Cyan Dog Park, both off Veterans Parkway on the east side of Reno. **We need a dog park on the southwest side of Reno.**

The increase in high density homes is being felt in the older southwest neighborhood parks of south Reno. For example, many people think Whites Creek Park is a dog park. Why would they think that?

- For over 20 years the Galena Country Estates HOA homeowners have contributed to the maintenance fees of that park. The park was built by the Galena Country Estates (GCE) HOA.
- The unwritten rules of (GCE) homeowners with dogs using Whites Creek Park have been when youth sports are not practicing, in spring or fall after school, dog owners can play with their dogs off-leash within the fenced area as long as no children are impacted. If children or families are impacted, dogs must be on-leash in park and playground.
- But the posted Whites Creek Park County rules are: **Keep pets on a leash; off the grass and out of playground area.** Animal control & Park Rangers are enforcing those rules the past two years even though more dog owners use the park than children.

- I understand the leash issue since this park is not gated but during pandemic, walking to the park with dogs and grandkids was a huge relief. It was our only relief! To be confronted by the park ranger when no one else is at the park is not right. For twenty years, I've been using the park with my children, my grandchildren and my dogs. W
- e leave the area better than we found it.
- Can we meet to mitigate Galena Country Estate HOA traffic concerns on Killington Drive related to youth sports and to work as a team to create a win-win situation for dog owners and non-dog owners similar to the multi-use Village Green Park in Incline Village?
- Green space is valuable to all tax-paying citizens as space becomes more limited.
- The park is booked for youth sports during weekdays in spring and fall from 4-8 pm which leaves huge blocks of time when this park is used by dog owners, and occasionally by neighborhood kids, and families.
- So why not allow dog owners use of the park from 8-2 pm. Youth sports and families can use the park from 2-8 pm?

Whites Creek Park, with just the installation of a retractable gate and a change of signage, could be a temporary area for families with pets to play and socialize until the County builds a dog park near South Valleys Library in the next phase of development.

I'd be happy to meet with you.

Sincerely,

Cynthia M. Reed
775-762-5110
creednev@gmail.com

cc: Commissioners
Colleen Wallace Barnum
Sophia Kirschenman

2425 Solitude Drive
Reno, NV 89511
July 6, 2020

Washoe County Parks Administration
1001 East 9th Street
Building A, 2nd floor
Reno, NV 89512

Re: Temporary Dog Park in South Reno

Dear Parks & Open Space Department:

With the high-density apartments and housing being built in South Reno plus the Covid situation, I'm really feeling crunched for space to take my dogs. I live near Whites Creek Park and walk to the park daily with my grandchildren. I walk the perimeter of the park while the grandkids kick soccer balls around. Then we go to the playground. A few weeks ago, Animal Control was there to tell me that the dogs, both 11 years old, could not be on the grass unleashed. No one else was there. I was leaving the park better than I found it. **The rules at Whites Creek Park need to be changed.** From the photo above, even on-leash, dogs are not allowed on grass or playground.



Families are using the park with their kids and dogs, running free, throwing balls and flying kites. I've talked to several dog owners using the park because it is safer to train and play with dogs in the park than confronting foxtail issues and vet expenses; coyotes; rattlesnakes; and this week, bears. Even the Forest Service has now posted big signs at Whites and Thomas Creek Trails that all dogs must be leashed. Where can we socialize the dogs and train them in south Reno? Hidden Valley Dog Park is twenty-five minutes away and it is crowded.

The gal from Animal Control suggested I go visit the temporary dog park up in Incline so I did plus checked-out the Tahoe City Dog Park and the Hidden Valley Dog Park. I also obtained information on the See Spot Run Dog Park in Boulder City, Nevada, where I grew up. Sophia Kirschenman, Washoe County Park Planner, responded to my e-mail inquiring about plans for future dog parks. She said that there are plans for a dog park near the South Valleys Library but, of course, with the current economic challenges that will be delayed.

So, I propose, that like the Village Green Temporary Dog Park in Incline, Washoe County make Whites Creek Park a temporary pet-friendly park. First, by adding two gates, one to enter and one to exit with dogs on leash. Next, closing the present entry so dogs can be kept in the grass area even though someone with a leashed dog may be passing by, heading to the Whites Creek Trailhead. My guess is the park is used by 80% dog owners right now. I walked my little dog to the park last evening and five big dogs with owners were playing ball or walking the perimeter. All dogs off-leash. All happily and safely enjoying the great Nevada outdoors. Finally, the gates would also allow handicap individuals to enter with their wheel chairs. We do have a gentleman in the Galena Country Estate area who is wheel-chair bound and rolls next to his mammoth dog down the middle of the street to the park but he can't go into the park with the present set up. Post the scheduled activities for the park every two weeks just like the Village Green. Dogs are not allowed when sporting or family activities are booked and posted by Washoe County. Place poop bag dispensers on every side of the fence.

I'm sure we can make this a win-win place for both dog owners and non-dog owners, who all pay taxes, by getting the maximum use out of this neighborhood park. Please make these simple changes to the Whites Creek Park and re-evaluate the situation when a dog park is built near South Valleys Library.

In the meantime, as a person who came from a dog-fearing family but became a dog-loving citizen after moving to Reno over 30 years ago and getting involved with a 4-H dog group with my children, I would love to see dog parks with agility courses so the youth and adults of our community can have healthy activities to do with their pets.

Finally, I'd be happy to help you in any way to raise funds for gates, updated signage, and bag supplies to make these small changes to the Whites Creek Park with big benefits for everyone including Animal Control who have more serious concerns than bugging a grandma in the park with her grandkids and dogs.

Sincerely,

Cynthia M. Reed
775-762-5110

Cc: Bob Lucey, District 2 Washoe County Board of Commissioner
Cc: Truckee Meadows Parks Foundation
Cc: Sophia Kirschenman, Washoe County Parks Administration



Re: White's Creek Park

Wallace-Barnum Colleen <CWallace@washoecounty.gov>

Fri 10/28/2022 1:34 PM

To: Elena Shulman <sourcelife@hotmail.com>

Cc: Walker, Celia <CWalker@washoecounty.gov>; Evans, Denise <DEvans@washoecounty.gov>

Good afternoon,

Thank you for providing these comments. We will be sure to provide this correspondence as public comment for the meeting on November 1.



Colleen Wallace Barnum

Park Operations Superintendent

Community Services Department | Regional Parks and Open Space

cwallace@washoecounty.gov | Office: [775-328-2181](tel:775-328-2181)

3101 Longley Lane, Reno, NV 89520



From: Elena Shulman <sourcelife@hotmail.com>

Sent: Friday, October 28, 2022 1:00 PM

To: Wallace-Barnum Colleen <CWallace@washoecounty.gov>

Cc: Walker, Celia <CWalker@washoecounty.gov>

Subject: Re: White's Creek Park

[**NOTICE:** This message originated outside of Washoe County -- **DO NOT CLICK** on **links** or open **attachments** unless you are sure the content is safe.]

Good afternoon, Ms. Wallace Barnum,

First, thank you for your comprehensive response to my last email. That was very much appreciated.

I have just learned that a hearing is being held on Tuesday, November 2, for the possible approval of White's Creek Park as an off-leash dog park. I am not able to attend the meeting, either in person or on Zoom due to my work schedule, and therefore, wanted to reiterate my concerns via email.

Since we last communicated, my concerns about this have only increased. As I had mentioned, there are quite a few people already running their dogs off leash around this park, which has dramatically increased the amount of traffic in what used to be a quiet residential neighborhood. Earlier this week, during a time when there was both a soccer practice at the park and people coming and going with their dogs, during the 15-minute, .5 mile walk I took around the block with my dog, I counted 39 cars that drove by me.

Not only has this decreased the quality of life in our neighborhood, but it becomes a safety issue when the people driving by are speeding (constantly), driving too close to pedestrians when we have no sidewalks in our neighborhood, and speeding up to the park when the children who live on the

Killington Drive cul-de-sac are playing outside. This is especially an issue late in the day on Killington Dr., when the sun is in drivers' eyes.

I can only assume that having this park approved as an off leash dog park will further increase the traffic on Killington Drive, further increasing potential safety issues and further decreasing any peace and quiet on that street and in the neighborhood in general. I am hopeful that there is another space that can be used for this purpose, that does not so directly impact a residential neighborhood.

Thank you,
Elena Shulman

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From: Wallace-Barnum Colleen <CWallace@washoecounty.gov>
Sent: Friday, March 25, 2022 3:16:35 PM
To: Elena Shulman <sourcelife@hotmail.com>
Cc: Walker, Celia <CWalker@washoecounty.gov>
Subject: Re: White's Creek Park

Good afternoon Elena,

Thank you for your email and expressing your concerns about Whites Creek Park. Washoe County's Open Space and Regional Park Commission approved the use of three sports fields to allow for an off-leash dog pilot program. This was in November of 2021 (see links below for agenda/presentation/minutes).

https://www.washoecounty.gov/parks/board_committees/2021/files/110221-Agenda.pdf

https://www.washoecounty.gov/parks/board_committees/2021/files/WashoeCounty-off-leash-presentation.pdf

https://www.washoecounty.gov/parks/board_committees/2021/files/110221-Draft-Parks-Open-Space-Minutes.pdf

https://www.washoecounty.gov/parks/board_committees/2022/files/020122-DRAFT-Parks-Open-Space-Minutes.pdf

Whites Creek Park was initially on this list at the request of members of the public. During the November meeting a few folks from the HOA attended the meeting, in opposition of allowing the off-leash use at Whites Creek Park. Whites Creek Park was removed from the list and currently does not allow for off-leash dogs in the park. However, we have since received numerous requests to add Whites Creek Park back to our list of potential future off-leash dog areas.

Off leash dogs are a problem at each and every one of our parks and trailheads. This pilot program is an effort to provide some space for that type of use, while attempting to curb it elsewhere and provide spaces throughout our community for off-lease use. Regional Animal Services (RAS) is supportive of these efforts and would be my first contact if experience problems in the future with dog related issues as you described in your email. They can be reached at (775) 322-DOGS. What this can do, at minimum, is help keep a record of these issues & provide for additional patrols by RAS. In addition, we do have Park Rangers patrolling Whites Creek Park from time to time, informing the public of the leash requirements.

I hope this helps you understand where we currently are with this pilot program. I am including Celia Walker, Park Ranger, in case she has any additional input for you. Thank you Elena.



Colleen Wallace Barnum
Park Operations Superintendent
Community Services Department | Regional Parks and Open Space
cwallace@washoecounty.gov | Office: [775-328-2181](tel:775-328-2181)
3101 Longley Lane, Reno, NV 89520



From: Elena Shulman <sourcelife@hotmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, March 19, 2022 11:17 AM
To: Wallace-Barnum Colleen <CWallace@washoecounty.gov>
Subject: White's Creek Park

[**NOTICE:** This message originated outside of Washoe County -- **DO NOT CLICK** on links or open attachments unless you are sure the content is safe.]

Dear Ms. Wallace Barnum,

I am writing to see what can be done about a situation that has been developing for a number of years at White's Creek Park. I am a longtime South Reno resident, living on the cul-de-sac of Killington Drive, where White's Creek Park is located, for almost 28 years. While we have always had some issues with people speeding up the street to go to the park or to take their kids to soccer practice, we now have the more significant issue of the park having become a dog park. I have actually heard White's Creek Park referred to a couple times recently as, "the South Reno dog park."

In the last few years, the number of people driving into our neighborhood and going up Killington Dr. to use the park for their dogs, has increased markedly. It is especially bad on the weekends when the weather is nice, but on any given day, all day long, there are cars with dogs in them going up and down the street to and from the park. The parking lot at the park is often full of people who are there specifically to allow their dogs to run around the field. This is even the case during children's soccer practices: because practices only take up a portion of the field, people still take their dogs to the far section of the field to run off-leash while parents and children are at soccer.

In addition to the "dog park" creating the nuisance of constant traffic on our previously, fairly peaceful residential street, it creates various dangers for residents. When other residents and I take our dogs for walks in the neighborhood, there are constantly cars driving by us; because our neighborhood has no sidewalks, we have to remain vigilant. We have young children who live on the Killington Dr. cul-de-sac who often play outside in nice weather. I have seen, more than once, one of them run across the street to greet a friend or grab a rolling ball while a car is approaching the park -- this is especially dangerous late in the day, when the sun is in drivers' eyes and it can be hard to see what (or who) is in front of them. Finally, having dogs constantly off-leash at the park creates potential dangers for residents who simply want to walk through the park (that their HOA dues help to maintain). Just yesterday, while out in my front yard, I heard a woman scream, "No, get away!" because a dog ran off the field and charged up to her while she was walking by. Thankfully the owner called the dog back and the dog didn't do anything to her, and she was able to continue her walk into the neighborhood. My husband and I have also had experiences walking through the park, as we do often to access or return from lower White's

Creek Trail, in which dogs have run off the field or away from their owners in the parking lot, to approach us. Luckily so far the dogs have been friendly, but there's always the chance that one won't be. Parents using the playground equipment with their young children shouldn't have to worry about this, either. Finally, I have a small dog and I used to bring her up to White's Creek during the hot weather so she could take a brief (on-leash) dip in the creek. Now, because of all the larger, off-leash dogs at the park all the time, I'm no longer able to even do that.

If it is permissible that the park be used as a dog park, please accept my apologies for needlessly taking up your time. If not, I would love to know what might be done to remedy the nuisance and potential dangers being created. Thanks very much.

Sincerely,

Elena Shulman

Phone message* received from Jean Held on Friday, October 21, 2022

Regarding South Valley Regional Park's off leash dog area, Mrs. Held and husband will be out of town and unable to give comment in person but they wanted to express that they think it is a great park and they feel everyone is really responsible and friendly. They hope the Park Commissioners will vote to allow them to continue to use South Valley's for off leash dogs.

*The phone message in its entirety was also emailed to the Park Commissioners.

29 October 2022

To Whom It May Concern:

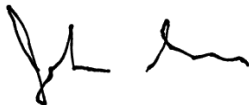
As a resident in Galena Country Estates, the community which Whites Creek Park resides within, it has come to my attention Washoe County Regional Parks and Open Space is continuing to work towards designating Whites Creek Park as an "off-leash" dog park for all Washoe County residents either on a trial basis or permanently. In short, I, John Grecu, residing on Whistler Ridge, Reno, NV, mere feet from the park, can not disagree with this designation or possible action by Washoe County Open Space and Regional Parks Commission.

There are many residents within Galena Country Estates, including a super-majority of our HOA board members, myself included, that also do not want Whites Creek Park designated as an "off-leash" dog park for many of the reasons listed below and shared with the Board of County Commissioners in a past meeting when I along with other residents of Galena Country Estates expressed concern and dissatisfaction with this initiative in our neighborhood.

1. The nature of Whites Creek Park is that it is in the middle of a neighborhood with many homes immediately adjacent and surrounding it from Galena Country Estates and Monte Rosa, not a large regional park like nearby South Valleys Regional Park.
2. Galena Country Estates and Monte Rosa, through the collection of HOA dues from their respective residents pay for the landscaping and maintenance of Whites Creek Park. Any designation as an "off-leash" park would increase the required maintenance and degradation of the park regarding in increased expenses.
3. Increased traffic flow within Galena Country Estates that would result from this is undesirable from a safety perspective.
4. South Valleys Regional Park, a much, much larger park is less than 2 miles away and not located in the center of a quiet neighborhood but bordered by Wedge Parkway and I-580.
5. Dog waste will increase exponentially from what dog waste there already is in the park and along the trail.
6. The park is used by sports teams regularly who often have to collect the dog waste prior to using it.

As I am unable to attend the upcoming meeting on 1 November, 2022 at 2:30 p.m. due to business travel, I would like to request that this letter and concerns expressed within, be read into the record and the Commissioners reach the same conclusion they did about a year ago regarding this park where the concerns expressed above and the area the park resides has not changed since this last raised.

Thank you for your time and careful consideration.



John C. Grecu

Fw: Comment on Open Space and Regional Parks Commission agenda

From: Walker, Celia <CWalker@washoecounty.gov>

Sent: Thursday, October 27, 2022 8:40 AM

To: John C. Sagebiel <jcsagebiel@icloud.com>; Wallace-Barnum Colleen <CWallace@washoecounty.gov>

Subject: RE: Comment on Open Space and Regional Parks Commission agenda

Good morning,

Thank you for your email, we will include your comment in the meeting.

Thank you,

Celia Walker

Park Ranger

Community Services Department | Washoe County Regional Parks and Open Space

cwalker@washoecounty.us | Office: 775.785-4512 ext. 104 Fax: 775-785-4707

Rancho San Rafael Regional Park, 1595 N. Sierra Street, Reno, NV 89503

-----Original Message-----

From: John C. Sagebiel <jcsagebiel@icloud.com>

Sent: Wednesday, October 26, 2022 5:15 PM

To: Walker, Celia <CWalker@washoecounty.gov>; Wallace-Barnum Colleen <CWallace@washoecounty.gov>

Subject: Comment on Open Space and Regional Parks Commission agenda

[NOTICE: This message originated outside of Washoe County -- DO NOT CLICK on links or open attachments unless you are sure the content is safe.]

Hi,

I'm sorry if this is the wrong way to comment, but the agenda of the Commission does not provide an email to provide comment and the list of the commissioners on the website does not provide any contact information.

Your emails were on the staff report on the item I wish to comment on, which is the Off Leash Dog Pilot Program.

I appreciate your efforts writing this staff report and I would like to express my strong support for this program. I hope it will continue.

Thank you,

—John

John Sagebiel

5000 Rose Rock Ln

Reno, NV 89511

Tuesday, November 1, 2022

Washoe County Open Space and Regional Parks Commission

1001 E. 9th Street

Reno NV

Dear Commissioners,

I would like to give Washoe County Parks a BIG THANK YOU for conducting an off-leash pilot program. Using the multi-use South Valley's Regional Park athletic field this past year has been outstanding. From my experience, I haven't seen any problems arise during visits with my two dogs.

I am asking for your vote to make the Off-Leash Program an ongoing feature of our local regional park system.

Thank you for considering this request.

Kind regards,

Mrs. K. Oppenlander

Public Comment from homeowner submitted for November 1, 2022, meeting via email to Denise Evans at devans@washoecounty.gov.

FW: South Valley Regional Park

Walker, Celia <CWalker@washoecounty.gov>

Mon 10/31/2022 9:11 AM

To: Evans, Denise <DEvans@washoecounty.gov>

Celia Walker

Park Ranger

Community Services Department | Washoe County Regional Parks and Open Space

cwalker@washoecounty.us | Office: 775.785-4512 ext. 104 Fax: 775-785-4707

Rancho San Rafael Regional Park, 1595 N. Sierra Street, Reno, NV 89503



From: Robin Dohne <wild.bird@verizon.net>

Sent: Thursday, October 13, 2022 6:58 AM

To: Walker, Celia <CWalker@washoecounty.gov>

Subject: South Valley Regional Park

[**NOTICE:** This message originated outside of Washoe County -- **DO NOT CLICK** on **links** or open **attachments** unless you are sure the content is safe.]

Dear Ranger Walker,

I hope you are the right person to send this to. I know that the Pilot Program for the Dog Park at South Valley Regional Park will be up for review soon.

The park has been a wonderful place for people to bring their friendly dogs!! When the trial first started, almost a year ago, I was excited to see how it would work out. At first, I thought that some folks wouldn't clean up, as required. I and other dog people did clean up a few messes that weren't ours, but we've managed to "police" ourselves and other new-comers to the park, so It really isn't an issue anymore. In fact, we pick up more trash that has been left behind by the afternoon / evening events than we do dog messes.

The dog park has become a great place for those of us who don't have human children to meet with other dog-owners and their dogs to meet, play, and share stories. There are quite a number of "regulars" who come at various times. We really have developed a great social (human and canine) network. Since the pilot program began, I have never witnessed any problems between dogs or people.

I want to express my support for allowing the dog park area to be a permanent part of the park's activities. It is a great use of the park during the many hours when there are no other events.

Please express my support to whomever needs to know when considering the continuation of the dog park program at the South Meadows Regional Park.

Sincerely,

Robin Dohne

775-357-7191

TO: Open Space and Regional Parks Commission Members

I would like to offer my comments and express opposition to the "Off-Leash" dog program under review on November 1, 2022. My specific opposition is to the Whites Creek portion of the proposal.

I am commenting as an owner in Galena Country Estates as well as the Executive Director of Great Basin Youth Soccer League.

As an owner in Galena Country Estates, my concerns are:

1. Currently, the park is not an off-leash park, but many dog owners can be seen at the park all throughout the day running their dogs without a leash. I have also witnessed a dog trainer at the field conducting dog training sessions. My "leashed" dog was attacked outside of the fenced area in the parking lot by an "off-leash" dog. The dog ran out of the fenced area and relentlessly attacked my dog. If you allow increased off-leash use, then the number of out-of-control dog instances will increase substantially.
2. I walk through Whites Creek Park 4-5 times weekly. I have witnessed dog owners not cleaning up after their dog. I have politely questioned the owner about his/her responsibility to clean up and have faced criticism for my efforts. There are many responsible dog owners, but just as many irresponsible owners. Whites Creek Park has enough use by dog owners that do not bother to clean up, we do not need to add potential additional unsanitary situations to a family park.
3. Finally, Whites Creek Park is financially supported by the Galena Country Estates HOA in conjunction with Washoe County Parks. The park is maintained for the primary enjoyment of the families in the neighborhood. Many children walk or ride their bikes/scooters to the park. With an "off-leash" designation, the vehicle traffic will increase with dog owners driving to the park. The chances for a pedestrian/vehicle accident will increase with many more outsiders driving to Whites Creek Park.

Another significant use of the park is as a practice field for neighborhood and surrounding area soccer teams in the fall and spring. Great Basin Youth Soccer League (GBYSL) fortunately is allowed to permit the field area to our young teams for practice. Whites Creek Park is a highly sought-after location for south Reno area teams. Many of the teams that use Whites Creek live in the neighborhood.

GBYSL does receive complaints from coaches regarding the unsanitary conditions at the park. Most of the coaches tell us they must walk the field area prior to practice and clean the field of dog feces. They do not always find all the dog deposits. Unfortunately, the players do. If the owners were "responsible" owners, this step would not be necessary. Why would this situation improve with an "off-leash" designation?

Finally, why would you consider making Whites Creek Park an "off-leash" park when you have also run the program on the lower field at South Valley Sports Complex? South Valley Regional Sports Complex is only 1.7 miles from Whites Creek Park. Our soccer players must deal with the issues the "off-leash" program has created at South Valley. None of the other parks, Lazy 5 or NVRSC, have a neighborhood park in the program near them.

Please keep Whites Creek Park a neighborhood park for the current youth and their families to enjoy. Thank you for your attention to my thoughts and concerns.

Vicki LaRovere
Galena Country Estates owner and Great Basin Youth Soccer League
executivedirector@gbysl.org
775-250-8509

From: Erica Krysztof <ekrysztof@sbcglobal.net>
Sent: Monday, October 31, 2022 9:54 PM
To: Wallace-Barnum Colleen <CWallace@washoecounty.gov>
Subject: Whites Creek Park

[NOTICE: This message originated outside of Washoe County -- DO NOT CLICK on links or open attachments unless you are sure the content is safe.]

Dear Ms. Wallace Barnum,

I will not be able to attend tomorrow's meeting but want to make sure that my voice is heard and would hope that my concerns will be addressed.

I live on Killington Drive, adjacent to Whites Creek Park. To be specific, my house backs up to the park field space. I love living next to this park. I have taken my dog there. I have also taken my children there, played flag football with my family on Thanksgiving, flown kites, and met many new people there whom I now consider friends. I even had a perfect stranger notice that my backdoor was open and went out of her way to notify another neighbor when I couldn't be located. I have great conversations over my back fence. It is a lovely family park and I use it often.

In the past two years, the park has had much more use as a dog park and, while I love dogs, the waste, noise and traffic has become a problem. I was hoping that the addition of the Cyan dog parks in Double Diamond and the opening up of the South Valleys park for dog use would solve some of the problems here but it only seems to have increased. We are a neighborhood park with one residential street providing access into and out of the park. Cars speed up and down Killington at high rates of speed, especially in the mornings and afternoons and on the weekends. While this is also true (even more so, but that's another issue) for the soccer groups that use the field, the soccer groups are limited in the times and seasons in which they use the greenspace. This means that the traffic is also limited and times

in which the greenspace is being utilized for soccer is also limited, thereby preserving the park the rest of the time for families. This would not be the case should Whites Creek Park allow dog usage.

As for waste, I have provided a bin along the fence and filled it with dog bags. There is also a dog bag dispenser at the mouth of the trail. During COVID shutdowns when the park wasn't doing trash pickup, I also placed a bin for waste by the park and disposed of any trash myself, all in hopes that the dog owners would clean up after their dogs. None of this seems to have made a difference. I believe that it has even gotten worse with the increase use. Stepping in waste has become a common occurrence. I just don't see how families and soccer teams can continue to enjoy the park when it becomes a designated dog area.

These are the main concerns that I have and many have been echoed by my neighbors. For myself, noise has also been an added problem. Dogs barking and having spats in the early hours, late hours, and all times of the day are additional issues that impact me as a homeowner. It seems that there is a reason that designated dog use parks tend to be built away from homes.

I also have some questions:

Are children, families, and soccer teams still going to be allowed to use the greenspace? Would they even want to with all the dog waste?

How will safety and liability concerns address with children and unfamiliar dogs sharing the same play space?

How will the turf be able to be maintained? I have heard complaints on social media that the Cyan (large) dog park has already had their turf destroyed with no plans to replant.

Finally, I am confused as to why our HOA pays for park maintenance, especially if we have no say in the usage of the park. I've lived here over 18 years and have always been confused by this. I'm willing to listen to the reasoning behind this but as many times as I've asked, I've never heard of an explanation for it, nor have I ever heard of another park where the HOA pays for the maintenance unless it was a private neighborhood park.

Thank you,

Erica Krysztof
ekrysztof@sbcglobal.net
2510 Killington Drive

Fw: Approval for the Measure Allowing Offleash Dogs in Certain Parks

Wallace-Barnum Colleen <CWallace@washoecounty.gov>

Tue 11/1/2022 10:54 AM

To: Evans, Denise <DEvans@washoecounty.gov>

From: Katriel Van Cleve <kvanclave@nevada.unr.edu>**Sent:** Monday, October 31, 2022 4:37 PM**To:** Wallace-Barnum Colleen <CWallace@washoecounty.gov>**Subject:** Approval for the Measure Allowing Offleash Dogs in Certain Parks

[NOTICE: This message originated outside of Washoe County -- DO NOT CLICK on links or open attachments unless you are sure the content is safe.]

Dear Miss Wallace:

My name is Katriel Van Cleve, and I am a resident living near the South Valleys Library and baseball complexes. I own a couple of energetic dogs that positively love to run around. I do not have the ability to take my girls into the hills or out to trails very often, and I would greatly appreciate the use of the open fields for exercising them. I have been very responsible to pick up after my dogs, and I am sure others would be too if they also could have the opportunity to use the fields in question. Many dog owners like me lack adequate access to dog parks, and many others do not have the physical capacity to hike on strenuous trails. Please approve the use of these public fields for dogs during after hours. I and many others would be grateful. Thank you.

Respectfully,
Katriel Van Cleve

Re: off-leash dog use at Whites Creek Park

Wallace-Barnum Colleen <CWallace@washoecounty.gov>

Mon 10/24/2022 9:38 AM

To: Pam Ganger <pamstossel@yahoo.com>; Brown, Andy <ABrown@washoecounty.gov>

Cc: Evans, Denise <DEvans@washoecounty.gov>

Good morning Pam,

Thank you for taking the time to provide your comments. I am including Denise Evans on this response. Denise is responsible for all of the Open Space and Regional Park Commission administrative tasks, including providing the written public comment to the commissioners. I will have her contact you if she has any questions. Have a great week!



Colleen Wallace Barnum

Park Operations Superintendent

Community Services Department | Regional Parks and Open Space

cwallace@washoecounty.gov | Office: [775-328-2181](tel:775-328-2181)

3101 Longley Lane, Reno, NV 89520



From: Pam Ganger <pamstossel@yahoo.com>

Sent: Saturday, October 22, 2022 3:14 PM

To: Wallace-Barnum Colleen <CWallace@washoecounty.gov>; Brown, Andy <ABrown@washoecounty.gov>

Subject: off-leash dog use at Whites Creek Park

[**NOTICE:** This message originated outside of Washoe County -- **DO NOT CLICK** on links or open attachments unless you are sure the content is safe.]

Colleen & Andy,

My name is Pamala Ganger. This message is regarding the proposal to designate the athletic field at Whites Creek Park as “off-leash dog use.” I have lived in Galena Country Estates since 2009, approximately 13 years. I am also currently the Treasurer on the Galena Country Estates HOA Board of Directors. Through the collection of dues from homeowners, the Galena Country Estates HOA contributes \$11,000 annually to the maintenance of Whites Creek Park.

I am an animal lover and all my life, I have had dogs. I currently have 2 children, ages 10 and 12 and 1 dog. I love my dog and love to walk my dog on lease to the park, but I do not believe the small athletic field in our neighborhood should be approved for “off leash” dog usage. There is a small handful of people in our neighborhood who like to run their dogs at this park and they are in favor of this proposed rule, but they do not represent most of the people who live in the neighborhood or even those who use the park. A few reasons I speak against this proposed rule:

- Our small park was intended as green space for our neighborhood and Monte Rosa directly to the west of the park, for use by children and families who live in our neighborhood.
- Our small park is tucked away in a tiny corner of the neighborhood. It is not a large regional open space.
- The designation of this park as “off-lease dog use” will surely bring in lots of traffic to our neighborhood, causing traffic and safety issues as people speed through the neighborhood to drive to the park.
- There is a shared athletic/dog use park at the South Valleys Regional Sports Complex that is just over a mile from our neighborhood.
- Dog poop is a big problem at our park as it is, even with the current dogs-on-lease-only rule. Designating the park as off-lease dog use will make this problem much, much worse.
- Even if all dog poop was picked up, there is still residue left behind. Consider a dog has diarrhea that cannot be picked up, and then you have children running and playing and falling or rolling on the lawn. This presents a health hazard.

- The lawn will become damaged and destroyed, adding to the maintenance costs of the field.

The South Valleys Regional Sports Complex is less than two miles from our neighborhood and has a section of field that has already been converted to a mixed athletic/dog use park. Why is it necessary to have another one so close? Many of the people who currently use the White's Creek field to run their dogs drive there, so why not encourage them to drive a mile down the road to the regional park instead?

If Washoe County wishes to have a designated dog use area at Whites Creek Park, then I propose that we fence in a separate section of grass or sagebrush specifically for dog use so that we do not have kids playing on athletic fields with dog poop.

I'd like my comments shared with each of the Open Space and Regional Parks Commissioners and read into the record at the November meeting during discussion of this item.

Feel free to contact me

Pam Ganger
pamstossel@yahoo.com
cell: 775-772-3457