

# ~ Important Reasons to Leash Your Dog ~

## ~Safety~

**80 % of rattlesnake bites to dogs are on a dog's nose.**

When dogs are not on a leash they wander nose first off the trail into rattlesnake habitat. If your dog is bitten, you will need to carry your dog to your car and go for immediate medical attention to save your dog's life. Depending on the size and age of your dog, where it was bitten and how much venom was released will determine whether or not the dog will survive. A local pet hospital anti-venom vaccination can cost up to \$1,000.

**Poison Oak is very common in the Park.**

Dogs moving through poison oak collect the oils on their fur. The dog then deposits the toxic oil everywhere it touches including inside your house, car, other dogs and you! Poison oak is noxious year-round and hard to detect when it loses its leaves.

**Poison plants are common in the Park.**

A common plant called Castor Bean (*Ricinus communis*) has small spiny fruit containing a poisonous seed rich in ricin. The seeds stick your dog's fur and the dog may try to remove them with their mouth or simply eat the fruit out of curiosity.

**Ticks and fleas are abundant** in the grasses and bushes off the trail and you or your dog could be exposed to lyme disease.

## ~Resource Protection~

**The urban area around the Park has grown considerably in the past decade,** impacting rare native plants and animals. Many undesignated trails scar the landscape and encourage erosion. More dogs off the trail in natural open space areas damages the natural environment.

**Many endangered birds and animals share the Park with you and your dog.**

San Diego County has more sensitive, threatened, and endangered species than any other county in the continental United States. 20 of these species live in this area, and in a small area the impact of multiple dogs off leash is noticeable. Animals and insects build nests and seek shelter in the brush and trees that surround the trails in the Park. It only takes one off leash dog to run through a bush and knock over a nest full of eggs.

**Your dog's presence affects resident predatory and prey animals**

Dogs chase predators like snakes and hawks which prey on rodents, therefore predators will not return to an unsafe area to hunt. Without predators to keep their numbers in check, rodents and other prey animals multiply quickly. You can imagine the stress of being chased on a daily basis by a creature ten times your size! Dogs may also affect an animal's opportunity to reproduce.

## ~People~

**As a dog owner, it's hard to imagine feeling uncomfortable around dogs.**

If your unleashed dog approaches a person who is afraid of dogs, they may harm your dog out of fear. While most dogs are friendly, aggressive dogs do visit the Park with their owners and the odds of a dog fight increase when one or both dogs are off leash.

**The leash law is not new.**

As development increases and cities grow, so does the demand for recreation opportunities in open space parks. To preserve the unique qualities of the San Dieguito River Park everyone must take actions to protect, not destroy them. Always leashing and cleaning up after your dog are two easy ways you can protect the environment every day.



**San Diego Municipal Code 63.0102 (b) (2) states that dogs must be on a leash of 8 feet or less**

**San Diego Municipal Code 63.670 states that pet owners must clean up after their pet.**

## Helpful Hiking Tips For you and your Dog!

- Always remember to bring plenty water for you and your dog
- Bring a zip lock bag or bowl for your dog to drink from
- Stay hydrated by drinking before you become thirsty
- Wear sturdy shoes with good traction for hiking
- Stay on designated trails
- Dress appropriately for current and predicted weather conditions
- During hot summer months it is best to hike with your dog in the morning or late afternoon
- After hiking, check your dog for ticks & prickly plant matter that could easily become embedded in their skin or ears.

**Always be aware of your surroundings when outdoors**

## Visit 24 Hour Off Leash Areas Within The Following Locations

Poway Community Park– Poway  
Torrey Highlands Park– Carmel Valley  
Maddox Neighborhood Park -Mira Mesa  
Kearny Mesa Community Park -Kearny Mesa  
Escondido Dog Run Park -SE Escondido

### City of San Diego Off-Leash Parks

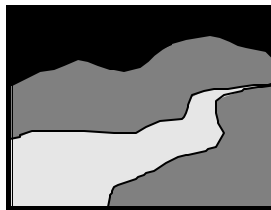
Dog Beach – Coronado  
Dog Beach –Ocean Beach  
Dusty Rhodes Park -Ocean Beach  
Fiesta Island - Mission Bay  
Nate’s Point/Morley Field– Balboa Park  
Doyle Community Park—UTC  
<http://www.sannet.gov/park-and-recreation>

**Please obey all posted signs and respect the boundaries of the off-leash areas.**

For additional information about the San Dieguito River Park please contact our office or visit our website.

We are happy to provide you with trail maps, a current activity schedule, or other brochures.

(858) 674-2270  
[www.sdrp.org](http://www.sdrp.org)



**San Dieguito River Park**

# Why Should I Leash My Dog?

A Dog Owner’s Guide to  
Enjoying the River Park



18372 Sycamore Creek Rd.  
Escondido, CA 92025  
Phone: (858) 674-2270  
Fax: (858) 674-2280  
[www.sdrp.org](http://www.sdrp.org)

**San Dieguito River Park**