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8/15/2022

Recommendations to the joint Parks, Recreation and Open Space Committees' regarding proposed dog rules and regulations policy.

Open Space properties along the Carson River were originally acquired to protect the riparian corridor. (Chapter 13.06 of the Carson City Municipal Code) We all recognize the importance of preserving the pastoral qualities associated within the cottonwood-gallery forest. Management of these properties should protect the fragile environment above all other uses.

In order to maintain the wildlife corridor along the Carson River, managing access (particularly dogs) is necessary. I believe dogs should be on leash throughout open-space areas directly adjacent to the river and the associated flood plain areas.

To best accomplish this, yet allow for some off-leash opportunity, I propose the following:

Dogs on leash, and on the trail at the following locations:

Carson River Park (west side)

Buzzy's Ranch Trail

Empire Ranch Trail (Morgan Mill to Vidler Open Space)

Empire Ranch-Riverview Park Connector

Mexican Ditch Trail South

River Trail

Silver Saddle Ranch Trail (adjacent to the river corridor)

Golden Eagle Open Space

Mexican Dam Open Space

Morgan Mill Preserve and Open Space

Old Buzzy's Ranch

Vidler Open Space

Riverview Park is a special case, where unrestrained access has historically been allowed. On-leash would be the preferable regulation, partly because seasonal closure of the wetland areas is a management challenge. But, as a “park” site, allowing dog under direct control might be an acceptable concession. There are several areas that have restricted access, and that should be maintained: The Silver Saddle Ranch has a fenced area south of the fishing pier in Carson River Park. Also, all the area adjacent to the new Buzzy’s Ranch Trail is currently designated dogs-on-leash and stay on the trail.

Dogs off-leash (if Open Space areas are going to allow dogs off leash):

- Ambrose Trails
- Carson River Canyon Road
- Carson Aquatic Trail
- Mexican Ditch Trail North
- Silver Saddle Ranch Trails (East Side)

These suggested regulations would allow for the public and their pets to recreate on the most popular river trails, while reducing the impacts of off-leash dogs in the wildlife corridor. This proposal limits free running dogs to only one side of the river in some of the most sensitive habitats. Maintaining this limited wildlife feeding, nesting and migration, river corridor, as free of interference as possible, will help ensure the protection of the precious resource Carson City vowed to steward.

Humbly submitted,

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