

# WHY DOGS ARE NOT ALLOWED ON SONOMA OVERLOOK TRAIL



Sonoma Overlook Trail (SOT) was approved by the City of Sonoma, designed and constructed exclusively for hiking/walking and to bring back and protect the wildlife on the property. Dogs, horses, bicycles & other vehicles, and smoking are strictly prohibited on Sonoma Overlook Trail by Sonoma City ordinance\*. Funding for construction and maintenance of SOT is primarily from private donations with few public funds. Volunteers, committed to protecting the natural habitat and wildlife, constructed and maintain SOT.

Your dog may be gentle and on a leash. But wild animals will still react the same as they do for any predator and may flee in fear, often before you know they are there. The effects of all of dogs that visit here are cumulative. Please be considerate of others and our wildlife by leaving your dog home while enjoying SOT.

\*SMC 8.06.070, 8.12.030, SMC 8.12.070,  
SMC 8.12.090, SMC 8.12.110, SMC 9.12.145

## EFFECTS ON WILDLIFE

- Dogs may mark the trail with their urine and feces. This can interrupt the normal behavior of wildlife and can cause wild animals to leave the area.
- Dogs carry diseases that can spread to wildlife. Wildlife often does not have the immunity afforded to domesticated animals.
- Dogs disturb the quiet, natural experience for other hikers. This is one of the few nearby trails in a natural habitat where walkers/hikers (even those who are dog-lovers) need not encounter and contend with dogs. It is a sanctuary for many.
- Some people are allergic or fearful of dogs.
- Many long segments of the trail are very narrow (2' wide in some places) and rocky. Hikers encountering dogs may be forced to step off the trail, exposing themselves to poison oak, snake bite or falling.

## HAZARDS FOR DOGS

- Dogs can be attacked by snakes, ticks or other wild creatures.
- Dogs can become the prey of mountain lions or coyotes. A dog running through the brush can trigger the pursuit reflex of a mountain lion—leading it back to the dog owner.
- Dogs can get diseases from wildlife including rabies, canine distemper, and parvo virus.
- Poison oak can be easily spread by contact with an animal's fur.

## SERVICE ANIMALS

Q: Are emotional support, therapy, comfort, or companion animals considered service animals under the ADA?

A. No. These terms are used to describe animals that provide comfort just by being with a person. Because they have not been trained to perform a specific job or task, they do not qualify as service animals under the ADA.

[www.ada.gov/regs2010/service\\_animal\\_qa.html](http://www.ada.gov/regs2010/service_animal_qa.html)

### Leashed dogs are allowed at:

- Sonoma Bike Path
- Sonoma Regional Park
- Bartholomew Park
- Depot Park
- Nathanson Creek Park
- Maxwell Regional Park
- Jean K.T. Carter Park
- Dog Park (off-leash okay)



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OVERLOOK TRAIL

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