Enforcement Plan for beach regulations on COPR in 2009

On January 2009 the COPR staff met with the campus police, Shari Hammond, and Bob Silsbee to develop a plan for the enforcement of the leash law at the reserve.

The agreed plan was for a UCSB police officer to visit to the reserve 50/60 hours per month (12.8 hrs/week). That is 4 times per week for approximately a 3 hour shift (3hrs is their minimum size shift). They started the regular visitations on the 1st of March 2009. UCSB paid for the additional enforcement hours at the Reserve.

Before March 1st, a press release for the newspapers (daily nexus, independent, daily sound, etc) was submitted. The Reserve staff notified Anne Wells at the City of Goleta of the enforcement plan to coordinate the UCSB enforcement schedule with the City of Goleta’s enforcement. The staff also had a meeting with the docents and an officer to explain to the docents how enforcement would be coordinated with the education provided by the docents. All regulatory signs were checked to make sure they were posted and in good condition. The Reserve provided Officer Mike Foster with a desirable schedule of visitations which was 1 shift each day of the weekend and 2 on the week.

After 3 months of implementing the enforcement plan, the Reserve staff compared the number of unleashed dogs with enforcement with the same months in the previous year, before the enforcement plan was implemented. The data showed no difference in the number of unleashed dogs with the proposed enforcement plan (figure 1 and table 1).

Figure 1. Number of dogs without a leash entering COPR in 2009.

*data for Enforcement period is March 1 2009 to April 17 2009
** data for no enforcement period is December 1 2007 to February 28 2009
Table 1. Average counts of beach activities and response of beach goers to docents in 2009. See time period for enforcement in legend of figure 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Enforcement</th>
<th>No Enforcement</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td># people on beach/hr</td>
<td>3.40</td>
<td>3.52</td>
<td>15617</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># surfing surfing/hr</td>
<td>4.09</td>
<td>3.12</td>
<td>14648</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># dogs leashed/hr</td>
<td>0.40</td>
<td>0.36</td>
<td>1619</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># dogs unleashed/hour</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>659</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># trespassers/hr</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% positive response</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>5733</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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The enforcement was terminated shortly after the three months period because it was not effective in reducing the number of unleashed dogs at the beach. To understand why the enforcement was not effective, we conducted an interview with the docents. The comments are listed below. In summary, the officers often did not want to leave their cars for safety reasons so they were not at the beach as originally planned. This was not effective because they could not see an unleashed dog from the bluff top and because the dog owners did not see a police presence on the beach. In addition, the officers explained to the Reserve Director that they had discretion over giving a citation for an unleashed dog. Docents have commented that the dog owners sometimes don’t believe they will be cited but sometimes they are not cited, even if they are confronted by an officer.

Enforcement of the leash law is still an important need at the Reserve and at the Ellwood beach (City of Goleta). A new plan with a dedicated staff is needed. Unleashed dogs coming from the Ellwood beach are a particular problem because the number of dogs is high and because the Reserve docents and enforcement is located a mile away on the eastern entrance to the Reserve.

Comments from the docents.

- I did see and talk to Shawn one time when he came by just to have a look around from the cliff view. My time period is 9-11 on Thursdays.

- Officer was at top of hill, did not walk down to beach.

- Officer was parked in front of Jen's office.

- I took a makeup shift on Monday, April 20. There was a dog off-leash and the owner refused to leash it. I called UCPD. Two officers came down to the beach at Ellwood and talked to people. I watched from Sands through binoculars. I didn't talk to the officers afterwards, so I don't know exactly what the interaction between the officers and the beachgoers was.
- I called the dispatcher about a dog off leash and he told me to call animal control.
- I have never seen an officer on the beach.
- I called them once to report a dog off leash; they told me they couldn't get there in time and that it was "difficult for them to intercept a dog and owner".