

Survey on Rules Governing the Entry of Dogs in Parks

For the time being, dogs are denied access to the parks in our provincial network. However, we are examining the possibility of permitting the entry of dogs in Quebec parks in the future. We would like to learn from the experience of other park networks to help us make the best choices.

Your assistance in this matter will be of great use!

SECTION A – RESPONDENT IDENTIFICATION AND DESCRIPTION OF PARK NETWORK

Bloc 1 – Identification of respondent

- 1.1 Name: Angie Even
- 1.2 Position: Customer Service Coordinator, Missouri State Parks
- 1.3 Telephone: 573-522-6830
- 1.4 E-mail address: angie.even@dnr.mo.gov

Bloc 2 – Description of the park network

- 2.1 Name of network: Missouri State Parks
- 2.2 How many parks make up your network? 87 state parks and state historic sites
- 2.3 Indicate the % of your parks that correspond to each of the following:
 - A- Protected Areas meeting the criteria of 0 %
IUCN Category II.
 - B- Protected areas meeting the criteria of 0 %
other IUCN categories.

C- Territories not having protected area status. 0 %

2.4 How many visitors do you welcome on a yearly basis? more than 18 million

2.5 Who enforces the regulations governing the presence of dogs in your parks?

All staff levels within our state parks and historic sites inform and enforce our rules with our guests. The regulations themselves are lined out in the Missouri Code of State Regulations.

2.6 Comments:

SECTION B – GENERAL RULES AND REGULATIONS

Bloc 3 – Entry of dogs

3.1 Are dogs permitted in your network's parks?

**If you answer "a" or "b", go straight to Question 3.5.*

3.2 What are the reasons for this answer?

3.3 Do you receive many requests from park visitors who would like to bring their dog to your park?

3.4 In your opinion, is it desirable for your network to permit the entry of dogs in your parks?

** If you answered "c" to Question 3.1, you have finished the survey.*

3.5 Is there an entry fee to the park for dogs?

If so, please indicate the fee. \$

3.6 What % of visitors to your parks do you believe are bringing their dogs? 50%

3.7 Comments: The 50% is based on our overnight camping guests but we do have a fair number of day-users who brings dogs with them as well. Dogs, other than service animals for

persons with disabilities, are not allowed in any state park or historic site building or on a swimming beach.

Bloc 4 – Dog control

4.1 When a dog is allowed entry to a park, must it be on a leash?

**If you answer “c”, go straight to Question 5.1.*

4.2 Are there any regulations regarding the length of the leash?

If so, indicate the length: no longer than 10 feet

4.3 Is this regulation based on a law?

If so, what is the basis? The leash length, in addition to other regulations, is part of the Missouri Code of State Regulations (CSRs). The CSRs are part of what govern our operations; they are the next step down from the Missouri Revised Statutes.

4.4 What penalty is usually applied to a person who does not respect this regulation?

4.5 In your opinion, what % of dog owners obey the regulation? 50%

4.6 Does non-compliance with the regulation represent a significant problem for you?

4.7 Comments: While non-compliance is an issue at times, I would not classify it as a significant problem.

Bloc 5 – Collecting dog feces

5.1 Are dog owners obliged to pick up the feces of their dogs?

**If you answer “no”, go straight to Question 6.1.*

5.2 Is this regulation based on a law?

If so, what is the basis?

5.3 What penalty is usually applied to a person who does not respect this regulation?

5.5 Do you provide waste disposal bags to dog owners to facilitate their collection of dog feces?

If so, indicate the number and the locations where waste dispensers are installed: We have at least one pet waste bag dispenser in each campground; oftentimes more than one. We also provide them in many of our day-use areas and near some trailheads.

5.6 In your opinion, what % of dog owners obey the regulation? 70%

5.7 Does non-compliance with the regulation represent a significant problem for you?

5.8 Comments: Pet waste being left behind is something we hear complaints about but not often enough to be problematic. Being able to provide pet waste bag dispenser in more locations over the last few years has helped with that.

Bloc 6 – Sharing the park with other visitors

6.1 What regulations do you have regarding the disturbance of other visitors (barking, howling, aggressive behaviour, ..., day, night, ...)?

We ask that dogs not be left unattended and be kept under control at all times (in addition to the leash requirement). Should there be excessive barking or an issue that draws complaints from other guests, the party will be spoken to and advised that the rules need to be followed for the enjoyment of all guests. Should a dog be involved in a biting incident or attack of a person or other animal, our State Park Ranger Program becomes involved. In worst-case scenarios when there are large problems and/or the owners are not responsive, staff have asked the party to vacate the park.

6.2 Is this regulation based on a law?

If so, what is the basis? The regulations described in 6.1 are partially mandated through the Code of State Regulations. There are more specific procedures included when a bite or attack is involved.

6.3 What penalty is usually applied to a person who does not respect this regulation?

6.4 What % of dogs do you believe cause a nuisance? 10%

6.5 Does non-compliance with the regulation represent a significant problem for you?

6.6 Comments: Barking dogs are usually most of the issues that get reported in this category. Dogs bark and there will never be complete silence while they are allowed on the premises.

Bloc 7 – Supervision of dogs

7.1 What level of supervision is required by a dog owner?

- a) A dog must always be under the owner's supervision.
- b) A dog may be left alone in a car, unattended.
- c) A dog may be attached to its leash and left alone at a campsite or at the entrance of a building.

7.2 Is this regulation based on a law?

If so, what is the basis? The "unattended" part is not specifically called out in the Code of State Regulations, however, it is part of our park system rules (which hold less credence than a regulation).

7.3 What penalty is usually applied to a person who does not respect this regulation?

7.4 In your opinion, what % of dog owners obey the regulation? 60%

7.5 Does non-compliance with the regulation represent a significant problem for you?

7.6 Comments: The main complaint on this category come from guests leaving their dogs at the campsite unattended, which often leads to them barking. I would not say it is a significant problem though.

Bloc 8 – Number of dogs

8.1 Are there any regulations restricting the number of dogs per visitor?

If so, indicate the number:

8.2 Are there any regulations limiting the number of dogs per accommodation site?

If so, indicate the number: There is a restriction of no more than two dogs per cabin when visitors occupy a designated unit in our Cabins for Canines Program. I will attach a PDF of information on our Cabins for Canines Program.

8.3 Is this regulation based on a law?

If so, what is the basis?

8.4 What penalty is usually applied to a person who does not respect this regulation?

8.5 In your opinion, what % of dog owners obey the regulation? %

8.6 Does non-compliance with the regulation represent a significant problem for you?

8.7 Comments:

Bloc 9 – Animal health

9.1 Do the dogs allowed into the park need to have been vaccinated?

**If you answer “no”, go straight to Question 10.1.*

9.2 What are the vaccinations required? No vaccinations are required for dogs. However, equestrian owners or riders must show proof of current negative Coggins test (equine infectious anemia) upon request by appropriate park personnel and can be denied access to the facilities if such proof cannot be provided.

9.3 What is your method of verification?

Bloc 10 – Layout and amenities

10.1 Are there specific zones set aside and specifically laid out for dogs (e.g. dog parks)?

**If you answer “no”, go straight to Question 11.1.*

10.2 What types of amenities are provided?

This is only at one of our state parks - Weston Bend State Park which is north of a major city (Kansas City). There is a 1.75-acre designated dog park. It is divided into three pens, with a pen designated for small dogs and one for large dogs. Each pen has a park bench, a doggie water fountain and a pet waste station.

10.3 What are the regulations associated with such places?

I will attach a PDF of our rules for the Weston Bend State Park dog park area.

10.4 What are the benefits procured by these places?

Our metropolitan areas are offering more dog park areas and Missouri State Parks guests often inquire about such areas in our system. An appropriate opportunity presented itself with Weston Bend State Park and the city of Weston to cooperatively designate and construct a dog park area. This is our first venture into this option.

10.5 What are the problems encountered in relation to these places?

Our dog park area just opened in May 2015 so we have not yet operated it for a full season.

SECTION C – AUTHORIZED SITES

Bloc 11 – Sites where dogs are permitted

11.1 For each site, identify the type of entry allowed for dogs. In cases where dogs are partially allowed, specify what on criteria you based that type of entry.

Site	Level of accessibility	Comments
Lay-out		
Walking/Hiking trail		One park does not allow dogs on a specific trail that leads to the shut-ins area of the river.
Multifunctional trail (walking and cycling)		
Snowshoeing trail		n/a
Cross-country skiing trail		n/a
Backcountry skiing trail		n/a

Picnic area		
Swimming area		
Playground		
Activity area/Amphitheatre		
Buildings		
Public building (e.g. the visitor centre, a snack bar)		Only allowed if dog is a service animal aiding a person with a disability.
Exhibit hall		Only allowed if dog is a service animal aiding a person with a disability.
Sanitary block		Only allowed if dog is a service animal aiding a person with a disability.
Community shelter		Full access if it is an open shelter; if it is an enclosed shelter only service animals aiding persons with disabilities
Accommodations		
Private accommodations (e.g. a room, a cabin or a ready-to-camp)		Only if unit is designated for the Cabins for Canines Program, and then only one or two
Dormitory		Only allowed if dog is a service animal aiding a person with a disability.
Serviced campground		
Primitive campsite		
Canoeing campsite		n/a
Other		
Lake or river (i.e. canoe, kayak, rowboat, fishing vessel)		
Back country		
Archaeological site		Only allowed if dog is a service animal aiding a person with a disability.

SECTION D – OVERVIEW

Bloc 12 – Overview

12.1 What are the main benefits associated with the presence of dogs?

Dogs have been and continue to be considered a part of the "family" by many visitors.

Missouri State Parks believes in fair and equitable access to all demographics where possible.

Allowing dogs in most areas helps us reach that end. Missouri State Parks researched and implemented a pilot program that limited dogs to two per campsite unless you applied for and received an exemption. There were various criteria that would qualify parties for the exemption.

The year of 2007 was used as an educational period to let visitors know a new rule was coming. The actual limiting to two dogs per campsite was in place for the years of 2008 and 2009. Results were reviewed at the end of each on-season. After two years of a pilot program, we opted to downgrade the limit to a recommendation of no more than two dogs per campsite. The program was simply not beneficial in the areas we needed - namely noise and waste. I can provide more details on that pilot program if you are interested.

12.2 What are the chief incidents that arise when dogs are present?

Thankfully we don't have many of what we would classify as "incidents."

12.3 What are the most common complaints lodged concerning the presence of dogs?

Continued barking and off-leash dogs running over to other campsites or other dogs that are leashed, thereby causing alarm and trouble.

12.4 How many cases of dog bites or attacks on people did you record last year?

5-6

12.5 How many incidents with injuries involving a wild animal and a dog did you record last year?

Only 1 or 2, if any.

12.6 How many cases of dog fights did you record last year? n/a

12.7 Did people witness the disturbance of wildlife species attributable to the presence of dogs?

If so, what were they?

12.8 In the past few years, did you conduct any studies on the impact of the dogs in your parks?

If so, what were they?

12.9 Overall, is the entry of dogs in your establishment beneficial or profitable for your network?

It is beneficial in encouraging more attendance by visitors who travel with their dogs. Depending on what activities they participate in while at a state park, this can lead to increased revenues. We have not conducted any studies specific to revenue as it relates to pet owners versus non-pet owners.

12.10 If you were to amend the regulations regarding the presence of dogs, what would you change?

n/a

12.11 Do you have any other comments to make on the subject?

No.

13.1 Would you like to receive a copy of the survey findings?

You have now completed the survey. Simply forward it to charest.rene@sepaq.com.

Thank you for completing the survey!

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