

Bandy Field Nature Park Off-Leash Dog Violations

During the past three years 1121 observations were made at the park. 7992 dogs were seen during these visits. **5908 were off leash... 74%! Recent months show that after 3PM 92% of dogs are off leash!**



Bandy Field Evening Photos

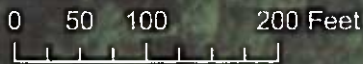




**Open Space:
8.3 acres**

**Dog Hot Spot:
3.4 acres**

Bandy Field
Open Space
Dog Hot Spot



Bandy Field Off-Leash Hourly Observations 2019, 2020,2021

2019		2020		2021	
Average Dogs Off-Leash Per Hour		Average Dogs Off-Leash Per Hour		Average Dogs Off-Leash Per Hour	
7AM	5.2	7AM	6.0	6am	6
8AM	5.4	8AM	6.0	7am	6
9AM	6.0	9AM	6.0	8am	5
10AM	5.4	10AM	6.0	9am	5
11AM	6.1	11AM	4.0	10am	4
Noon	6.5	Noon	6.0	11am	4
1PM	6.0	1PM	6.0	Noon	3
2PM	4.4	2PM	5.0	1pm	3
3PM	5.9	3PM	6.0	2pm	5
4PM	7.2	4PM	8.0	3pm	5
5PM	7.8	5PM	8.0	4pm	8
6PM	8.5	6PM	6.0	5pm	5
7PM	5.7	7PM	4.0	6pm	9
Daily	80	Daily	77	Daily	68
Yearly	29200	Yearly	28105	Yearly	24820

Bandy Field Off-Leash Dog Report: 2022

Day	Date	Time	Dogs Off Leash	Dogs On Leash
Saturday	1-Jan	4:25	12	3
Sunday	2-Jan	10:45	8	0
Tuesday	4-Jan	4:30	8	0
Wednesday	5-Jan	5:00	4	0
Thursday	6-Jan	11:15	3	2
Thursday	6-Jan	5:15	13	2
Friday	7-Jan	1:30	7	4
Friday	7-Jan	3:00	4	0
Friday	7-Jan	4:40	9	1
Saturday	8-Jan	10:00	9	0
Saturday	8-Jan	2:05	9	8
Saturday	8-Jan	4:45	11	0
Sunday	9-Jan	4:30	10	4
Monday	10-Jan	1:55	8	4
Tuesday	11-Jan	11:30	3	3
Wednesday	12-Jan	12:00	4	1
Wednesday	12-Jan	1:20	4	2
Wednesday	12-Jan	4:50	10	0
Thursday	13-Jan	11:50	3	2
Thursday	13-Jan	4:40	11	0
Friday	14-Jan	1:30	8	1
Friday	14-Jan	5:05	9	0
Saturday	15-Jan	10:00	4	3
Saturday	15-Jan	11:40	6	2
Saturday	15-Jan	3:00	6	0
Sunday	16-Jan	10:20	1	2
Monday	17-Jan	1:00	3	1
Monday	17-Jan	4:55	19	0
Tuesday	18-Jan	2:00	8	2
Wednesday	19-Jan	12:00	2	2
Wednesday	19-Jan	4:00	3	0
Thursday	20-Jan	4:20	3	0
Friday	21-Jan	12:45	1	1
Friday	21-Jan	4:00	7	1
Saturday	22-Jan	1:30	6	5
Saturday	22-Jan	4:10	3	0
Sunday	23-Jan	1:00	4	4
Sunday	23-Jan	4:15	3	1
Monday	24-Jan	2:00	7	2
Monday	24-Jan	5:00	9	0
Tuesday	25-Jan	11:00	2	2
Tuesday	25-Jan	4:00	3	2
Wednesday	26-Jan	2:50	8	2
Wednesday	26-Jan	4:15	4	0
Thursday	27-Jan	11:45	2	1
Thursday	27-Jan	5:00	13	0
Friday	28-Jan	10:40	7	1
Friday	28-Jan	11:49	4	1
Friday	28-Jan	4:20	6	0
Saturday	29-Jan	5:00	0	0
Sunday	30-Jan	1:00	4	1
Sunday	30-Jan	4:30	6	1
Monday	31-Jan	11:45	8	2
Monday	31-Jan	4:10	5	0
Tuesday	1-Feb	12:05	6	2
Tuesday	1-Feb	4:20	7	0
Wednesday	2-Feb	1:45	10	2
Wednesday	2-Feb	5:00	9	0
Thursday	3-Feb	4:30	4	0
Saturday	5-Feb	7:30	5	0
Saturday	5-Feb	1:15	9	1
Saturday	5-Feb	5:20	7	0
Sunday	6-Feb	5:15	3	0
Monday	7-Feb	7:30	10	0
Tuesday	8-Feb	11:40	4	2
Wednesday	9-Feb	11:15	6	2
Wednesday	9-Feb	4:40	11	0
Thursday	10-Feb	2:15	9	1
Thursday	10-Feb	4:25	14	1
Friday	11-Feb	9:45	8	4
Friday	11-Feb	5:15	18	1
Saturday	12-Feb	1:00	8	2
Sunday	13-Feb	1:15	1	3
Monday	14-Feb	2:12	5	3
Monday	14-Feb	5:30	4	1
Tuesday	15-Feb	2:15	5	2
Tuesday	15-Feb	4:50	8	0
Wednesday	16-Feb	2:00	0	1
Wednesday	16-Feb	4:15	9	1
Thursday	17-Feb	2:30	15	6
Thursday	17-Feb	4:30	12	2
Friday	18-Feb	9:40	7	0
Friday	18-Feb	2:05	10	4
Friday	18-Feb	5:25	10	0
Saturday	19-Feb	9:30	9	2
Saturday	19-Feb	1:00	9	3
Sunday	20-Feb	9:45	4	0
Sunday	20-Feb	1:30	10	4
Monday	21-Feb	2:45	9	0
Monday	21-Feb	1:20	8	4
Tuesday	22-Feb	2:30	3	4
Wednesday	23-Feb	1:30	2	1
Wednesday	23-Feb	4:58	3	0
Thursday	24-Feb	9:15	6	0
Thursday	24-Feb	5:55	11	1
Friday	25-Feb	2:45	7	1
Friday	25-Feb	12:10	3	2
Friday	25-Feb	5:45	8	0
Saturday	26-Feb	9:30	7	0
Saturday	26-Feb	1:30	13	4
Saturday	26-Feb	4:40	7	1
Sunday	27-Feb	9:45	6	0
Sunday	27-Feb	1:45	7	1
Monday	28-Feb	10:20	8	1
Saturday	2/19	5:14	5	1
Totals			701	147

848

81% of dogs were off-leash in January
84% were off-leash in February

Bandy Field Timeline & Incidents Involving Off-Leash Dogs

- 10/3/2019 Asked ACC for assistance: they thought our suggestion to consider hiring off-duty police was best idea
- 10/15/2019 ACC responded and warned one violator: then sympathized with a dog owner that dogs need a place to run
- 10/17/2019 I asked police to patrol in the busy evening hours: they said rush hour is too busy for them
- 10/27/2019 I asked the ACC for just one hour a week patrolling in the park: told not enough staff
- 10/29/2019 When I asked ACC to please not just drive by the park I was told again to try off-duty police
- 2/10/2020 City Council Meeting: Requested 2 more ACC officers to patrol parks.
- 3/16/2020 Resolution for two more ACC officers approved by city council
- 4/1/2020 All ACC patrols halted due to covid-19
- 11/5/2020 Letter sent to the Mayor requesting ACC patrol one hour a week: no response
- 1/15/2021 ACC responded to assessment of 30,000 off leash in 2020 was that it was safe as no bites were reported
- 11/16/2021 I was accosted by a German Shepard: a volunteer was chased through the woods by another dog
- 12/12/2021 We saw deer from the park being chased by two dogs a half mile from the nature park

Incidents

Our key observer is in his 80's and asks that dogs be leashed: He is routinely treated with disrespect
We have had dog excrement placed in a neighbors mail box
I have heard a regular visitor tell a new visitor not to be concerned about the leash law
Regular's incorrectly tell new visitors the city can't control the back of the park saying it is in Henrico
In 2020 we called the ACC 55 times when 8 or more were off leash: they came into the park twice
Poop is often a problem as off-leash owners don't keep track of their dogs while talking
The dog owners actually have created a dog club called "Bandy Buddies" on Facebook
Many days doberman pinchers are routinely seen running at-large at the park
Turf ware leads to grassless areas and pot holes where the dogs run wild

Dear Members of the Richmond City Council:

My name is Tammy Rose, Vice President of Friends of Westwood Playground in the First District. The Westwood Playground is located on Marian Street in the Westwood Community. It has always been the center of the community where children, teens and young adults have played. It is also the place where many church and neighborhood events have taken place.

In recent years, we have seen more and more people coming with their dogs to let them run around on the playground, without a leash. Signs were posted regarding no pets on the playground, but some didn't care. One incident happened where a man came with his dog and allowed the dog to run free on the playground. I informed him that no dogs were allowed on the playground, and he became unruly and made me feel unsafe. I did call the non-emergency number on him, and he left before the officer got there. Another time, I spoke to a woman with two dogs, and she went from the playground to the church to let her dogs run unleashed. I explained to her that neither of those places were for dogs to run around. While Friends of Bandy Field have created a phone history of calls, they have made, regarding unleashed dogs, we haven't been as successful. I have spoken to some of the people who have their dogs on the playground and unleashed and have explained to them, that their dogs couldn't be on the playground, an especially, unleashed. What we have found, is that, if they aren't able to be on the playground, they have turned to the church cemetery to let their dogs loose. Yes, the back of our church is a cemetery with unmarked graves still there.

Our (Friends of Westwood Playground) goal this year, is to make more calls and document. We would also like to have Animal Care and Control Officers to patrol our neighborhood for violators. I understand there is a pilot program that may be of assistance to us as well, and I would like to see that program implemented throughout the City of Richmond. Bandy Field or Westwood Playground can not be the only parks to have these challenges. It is our hope that the City of Richmond will be able to help by providing the officers needed to patrol and to implement the Mayor's Park Ranger Pilot Program.

Thank you,

Tammy Rose
Friends of Westwood Playground

Vernon Knapp

From: Rankin, Karen <KRMORRIS@nvrinc.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 6, 2022 2:46 PM
To: vwknapp@verizon.net
Subject: Support of hiring more animal control officers

Hi Mr. Knapp, I am not able to attend the council meeting on the 11th. However if time allows I would like this to be read along with the folks that are speaking on behalf of hiring more animal control officers. In my signature line on this the word Pétanque is pronounced paytonk. It is an international lawn bowling game that uses Chimborazo Playground at least twice a week.

A few weeks ago I witnessed a dog attack in Chimborazo Playground at North 29th and East Grace Streets. Signs are posted all around the playground, both official City parks signs and signs made by the Friends Group. All of them have the City leash law code on them.

On the day in question, the owner of a german shepherd type dog responsible for the attack was actually sitting against a pole with one of the signs referencing the leash law code on it while her dog ran leashless. The other dog, who was on a leash, was a much smaller dog. The cries the small dog was making while being tossed around like a rag doll in the mouth of the larger dog were such that the entire playground including a group of loud basketball players stopped dead in their tracks and couldn't help but witness the attack. There was blood on the small dog owner's shirt and the poor small dog was whimpering when the dogs were finally separated. It was terrifying and heart-wrenching to witness. This attack took place in a City playground where small children are at play. Not to make light of the situation, but it could have easily been a child and not a dog that was injured.

Clearly signs are not the answer. I have, on numerous occasions, while in the playground spoken to dog owners who have their dogs off leash and explained that they are in a playground and it is a danger, pointing out the signs telling them there is a dog park nearby that they can use. I hear "oh my dog is friendly" or some other comment that tells me they don't care and will let their dog run. Dogs are animals and will react with instinct no matter how well trained. A "friendly" dog can still knock a small child down and hurt them.

We need more dog parks in the City so that dog owners have a place to run their dog and for safety sake we must have a way to enforce the City code in all of our City parks and playgrounds. Animal Control officers are the obvious choice. Please see fit to allocate funds and hire them.

Thank you for your time.

Karen Rankin
Treasurer of the Friends of Chimborazo Playground
President of Les Boulefrogs Pétanque Club of Virginia

Message classified as *NVR - Business Use Only* on Wednesday, April 6, 2022 2:46:27 PM

Adopted a dog during the pandemic? Put a leash on it or pay, if you live in San Diego

On a seasonably cool evening, several dogs run off leash on a field filled with kids playing soccer and baseball in the Allied Gardens neighborhood of San Diego. One of the dogs is Ellie, who's owned by Marty Marcus, a local resident who's been bringing his adorable pet to frolic in this area for years. Ellie barks and runs in circles as Marcus talks.

"For the most part, the people who come down here do control their dogs," Marcus says. "Yeah, mine is barking a lot. She wants to run and play. And yes, she has bumped into you a few times. But outside of that, most of the dogs down here are reasonably well behaved."

But dogs are not allowed off leash at this field, and Marcus knew he was breaking the rules.

"The dog still needs exercise, and there are very few dog parks in the area," Marcus says. He says he tried for two years to get a dog park built nearby but failed.

Another dog owner at the park, Regan Rath, says she lets her dog off leash because she can't wait for a dog park to be built.

"Nothing's been done to try to establish a dog park in the area and we put a good two years' worth of work into trying to go the proper channels to get a legit dog park and we just hit every road block possible," she says. "We take our chances and we stay away when (ticketing) happens, but then the dog needs to run a week later so we come back."

According to the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animal, about [23 million American households adopted a pet during the pandemic](#). The Humane Society says it doesn't have exact numbers on how many people adopted dogs but lots of people did. And many of those persons got used to letting their dogs run free at nearly empty parks and school fields. Officials in San Diego, Seattle, Boston and Los Angeles say they're having more issues with off leash dogs, in part because of COVID-19. **Now, these cities are aiming to put those dogs back on the leash.**

Key among them is San Diego. The city contracts with **the San Diego Humane Society for its animal control services, and the Humane Society says it now has four "park patrol" officers who are giving out about 200 dog-related citations a month. That's almost triple the number in the early stages of the pandemic.**

"The pandemic opened up an opportunity for many families to adopt a dog when they weren't able to before," says Lindsay Hamrick, the director for shelter outreach & engagement for the Humane Society of the United States. "If a city or a county doesn't have a lot of options for an adopter, they sort of make the best decision that they can to be able to give their dog that outlet."

But dogs don't actually need to run off leash, Hamrick says.

"Dogs get just as much out of having a leashed walk where they're able to sniff wherever they want to," she says. "So consider walking them in a new direction in your neighborhood and stopping when they stop so that they have time to sniff."

There are now more dog owners, and leash laws are new to them, says Bill Ganley, the chief of humane law enforcement for the San Diego Humane Society.

"We thought (the increase in adoptions) was wonderful," Ganley says. "I still think it's wonderful, but if they're new owners, they may not know the rules, and they may just think, 'Oh, they see other people doing it.' "

School fields are a big trouble spot, Ganley says, because while schools were closed due to COVID-19, people got used to bringing their dogs to run free. This has led parents and school officials to complain that dogs and their owners have taken over places that were once the domain of school children.

One reason San Diego is upping enforcement is that off leash dogs pose a risk, something Belén Hernando knows all too well. Her daughter, Alba, was attacked by a dog at a park last summer.

"All of a sudden this dog jumped on her," Hernando says. "We ended up in the hospital, she was traumatized."

Alba, who was 3 at the time, had to get stitches, and now struggles with a deep fear of dogs. People insist their dog is friendly and well behaved, but Alba doesn't know that.

"It really changed our whole family dynamic and the way we spend our free time, because we couldn't come here because dogs were unleashed," Hernando says. "And then just going to any other park, we found that it happens the same."

One of San Diego's new park patrol officers is Sierra Dockery. On a recent morning, she was driving through a busy park and spotted two people watching their dogs run off leash.

"This dog is digging a hole actively," she says. "They're looking at it and not doing anything, but I'll be making contact."

She drove up to the young couple, hopped out and wrote them each a citation.

"Do you know of any dog parks in the area?" she asked the couple. "Because there's like one literally down the street. It's about three minutes from here."

The couple sheepishly accepted their \$300 tickets and promised they won't break the rules again.

<https://www.npr.org/2022/03/06/1083230571/adopted-a-dog-during-the-pandemic-put-a-leash-on-it-or-pay-if-you-live-in-san-di>

Good evening, I am Vernon Knapp, representing the Friends of Bandy Field Nature Park in the 1st District

President Newbille, Vice-President Robertson, and other members of Richmond City Council: Six of you will likely recall when two years ago, Charles Price, the past President of the Friends of Bandy Field, requested the addition of two Animal Care & Control officers. They were to police the off-leash dog issue at the Richmond City Parks. Included in that presentation were the daily observations from 2019, counting the number of dogs off leash vs those on leash at Bandy Field Nature Park. The data showed well over 1000 dogs were observed off leash, accounting for 79% of those seen. There was recognition of this problem city wide from several council members that evening. In March of 2020, Councilwoman Robertson's resolution to add two more ACC officers was approved for fiscal 2020-2021. Unfortunately, as Covid 19 spread, there was a hiring freeze, and the officers were never hired.

Since the Covid pandemic started, more people than ever before have added dogs to their family life. We have continued our observations daily at Bandy Field and the problem of off-leash violations has ballooned to a much bigger issue. Many new dog owners are told that the off-leash law, posted throughout the park, is not enforced. We estimate there were 27000 off leash dogs at the park per year, in the past 3 years. After 3pm the dog people take over the back 3 acres with 92% of dogs running in packs. Our park has only 7 acres of open space, making most of the park unsafe for children, the elderly, joggers, and those with leashed dogs.

The Friends of Bandy Field have continued to send data to the ACC, the Mayor, the Parks Department, and some council members. Animal Care & Control has responded to a handful of our numerous calls with a drive by, but they have only entered the Park two times that we know of. Driving past violators just gives them a reason to think this illegal behavior is acceptable.

A recent article on National Public Radio noted that this is a problem in many cities. The city of San Diego has established a "Park Patrol" to specifically address the issue. Ticketing of offenders is helping to change behavior. Two new properly trained ACC officers could approach violators to make it known that the city is no longer willing to look the other way. The city ordinance prohibiting dogs running at large allows for fines up to \$250. Just 2 fines a day, 7 days a week, would defray the cost of adding two additional ACC officers. If a Park Patrol could be implemented in the 2022-23 budget, we could see the city parks come back for use by law abiding citizens. The mayor has requested funding for two more Park Rangers in the budget for a pilot program. I highly recommend this be approved, so they too could work to reduce the off-leash problem. I have handouts that cover the various efforts we have made the past three years. Thank you for the opportunity to present this proposal.

Vernon Knapp