



Public Lands

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Staff Responses to Public Comments from the May 4, 2023, PNUT Board Meeting

Anne Cannon

Anne Cannon is a member of the public in the Wasatch Hollow area. Ms. Cannon understands the Board oversees a lot of restoration, particularly to the preserve, but the park was also affected due to the recent flooding. Ms. Cannon said the park itself needed some work due to the destruction of vehicles at the time of the flooding, but also prior to, but the park itself has become a de facto dog park. Ms. Cannon would like the Board to look at the whole park (park and the reserve), not just the areas affected by the flooding so that they can find a place for the dog fountain and direct some of the restoration to allow for the park to find a place for people. Ms. Cannon said people can't enjoy the park because of how many hours are designated for dogs. She would like the Board to consider the options available to aid, manage, and meet the needs of the community in this park.

Staff Response:

Public Lands staff have been working closely with members of the Wasatch Hollow Community Council for over a year on challenges related to off-leash dogs in Wasatch Hollow Park. Public Lands has installed new signage throughout the park clearly outlining designated off-leash hours and locations. Public Lands is also working with the new Park Ranger team to increase education and provide a more proactive presence in the park to help users understand the shared use aspect of this park. This remains a small intervention in need of a more robust solution. Public Lands worked with the Community Council to submit a CIP application that would fund engagement and visioning of the park, including new options for the off-leash dog area. Currently, this application has not been recommended for funding by the CDCIP Board or the Mayor. If this application is not funded, Public Lands is limited in the time and resources that can be dedicated to further engagement and improvements on this issue. The Planning and Parks teams will be meeting to discuss potential options for moving the off-leash area and restoring grass that has become difficult to maintain. If community members would like to see a more significant shift in the structure of the off-leash area (such as full fencing), a formal request must be submitted to Public Lands by the Community Council to begin the process of an ordinance change.

Public Lands is aware of the limited space available for off-leash dogs in the face of rising demand from dog owners across the City. Planning staff are beginning to explore options for additional off-leash dog space to meet this demand. Public Lands is also recommending an additional operation budget for

increased enforcement through Salt Lake County Animal Services program. This request would be included in the FY25 budget.

Bianca Shephard

Bianca Shephard is a member of the Wasatch Hollow Community Council. Ms. Shephard shared that for the last several years, Wasatch Hollow has had off-leash dog hours in the park. Since this inception, things have changed with COVID and pet ownership skyrocketing, and with this, dog park usage has increased, which has driven other park users out of the park. Ms. Shephard would like the Board to consider the grinding demand for off-leash dog parks and how they can allocate space for them in other spaces so the demand can be decreased in this park. Also, consider sending some funding to Wasatch Hollow Park due to the flooding. She shared in the Wasatch Hollow Community Council meeting; another person shared their concerns with off-leash dogs and people being chased by dogs.

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