

May 2013



Friends Interested
FIDOS
 Dogs and Open Space

Proposed Changes to the Green Tag Program

Quick and simple newsletter this month.

On May 21st OSMP staff will present their punitively focused modifications to the Green Tag Program to Council for approval. These proposals were made available at 5pm Friday, May 17th giving the public only **FOUR DAYS** to review.

We have listed these proposals below and have commented in italics on the key features below

It should be noted that the process lasted a year and was completely obscure to the public. Asking for opinions and ignoring them is not transparency.

Staff only presented the details to the Open Space Board of Trustees with just **5 DAYS for public review.**

These changes are being driven through with almost no public consideration

We'd like to ask you now, before you get on with your day, to send council an email expressing your concern over the punitive and discriminatory nature of the Green Tag revocation proposals. Please also express your concern over the disregard for proper public review of the final Green Tag proposal. Four days between OSMP's release of the final proposal and the City Council meeting is insufficient to inform and allow proper feedback from the public.

Email address - "council@bouldercolorado.gov"

Sample Text

I am writing to express my opposition to the new Voice & Sight Green Tag revocation proposal. This proposal is punitive and discriminatory,

and it unfairly targets the single user group of dogs and dog guardians. No other Open Space user group faces revocation of their privileges for only one or two violations.

I am also concerned about the speed and secrecy with which the changes to the Green Tag program are being driven through. The final proposal was released only 4 days before the City Council meeting. Please consider that you are not hearing from a representative group of your constituents, with this inconsiderate amount of time for proper public review.

Considering the discriminatory nature of the proposal and the disregard for proper public vetting, I ask you to please reject the OSMP Green Tag revocation proposal.

Kind Regards

<Your Name and address> "

Please also consider attending and speaking at the City Council meeting on May 21st at Council Chambers, starting at 6 PM.

The Green Tag Program item is #5C on the agenda.
http://www.bouldercolorado.gov/index.php?option=com_content&id=464&Itemid=260

OSMP Recommendations.

Below is a list of the OSMP recommendations which will be put before council. The full OSMP proposal may be found at the following link, starting on page 145.

http://www.bouldercolorado.gov/files/City%20Council/Agendas/2013/05212013/05.21.13_Final_Agenda_Packet_Electronic.pdf

1 Require all program participants attend an information session. New program participants must attend a session before they can register in the program. During the first calendar year (2014), existing participants may remain active in the program and will have until Dec. 31, 2014 to complete the information session. The information session must be repeated every five years.

This will call for all 20 thousand or so V&S households (OSMP number) in Boulder to attend a class in 2014. Thats 400 participants a week. FIDOS does

not have a problem with the principle, but wonders about the implementation.

2 Require proof of current rabies vaccination for all dogs to be registered in the program. City of Boulder residents are required to provide a valid City of Boulder dog license as proof of current rabies vaccination. Require that all dogs on OSMP lands display a valid rabies vaccination tag.

FIDOS believes that dogs should be up to date on the rabies vaccine and has no problems with this requirement.

3. Implement education and outreach strategies:

These are OSMP internal processes which should improve the staff outreach,

4. Increase fines for Voice and Sight Evidence Tag Required (B.R.C. 6-13-2) and Dog at Large violations (B.R.C. 6-1-16) to \$100 (maximum), \$200 (maximum), and \$300 (minimum) for first, second and third or more convictions respectively.

Provide mechanism for dismissal of tickets for lawful participants who inadvertently failed to display tag. The bond amount for dog-related City Manager's Rule violations (B.R.C. 8-3-3) will be increased to \$100.

This is an improvement, if your dog tag is lost but you are in the computer system it suggests you will not be fined. Increased fines are inevitable

Encourage courts to order such additions to fines as watching the voice and sight video, attending the voice and sight information session, dog training, and/or demonstration testing for egregious or repeat dog-related violations consistent with the nature of the violation. Community service for dog waste violations may be particularly appropriate.

Possible problem here as offenders would be charged for the information session, training, or demonstration testing as well as the fine associated with the offence. The resulting costs could be out of the range of some lower income residents.

5 Revocation of program privileges will occur after one conviction of the following violations involving a dog:

- * Aggressive Animal Prohibited (B.R.C. 6-1-20),
- * Failure to Protect Wildlife (or livestock) (B.R.C. 8-3-5), and
- * Violations of City Manager's Rule (B.R.C. 8-3-3) involving wildlife protection.

Convictions of Aggressive Animal Prohibited and Failure to Protect Wildlife violations on OSMP and other lands under the jurisdiction of the City of Boulder will be considered for revocation.

F IDOS feels that loss of your Green Tag for a single incident of a dog simply chasing a squirrel (B.R.C 8-3-5) is extreme and overly punitive. FIDOS recommends that dog chasing, without actual contact, be included as a two-strike violation.

FIDOS also strongly opposes that walking your dog off leash in a Seasonal

Leashing area (B.R.C 8-3-3 involving wildlife protection) should cause loss of your Green Tag with only a single violation. FIDOS believes that this is a personal conduct violation, which should only result in a ticket or fine.

FIDOS agrees that dogs causing injury or death to wildlife, livestock, or people (B.R.C 6-1-20) is a serious matter, and one-strike revocation is acceptable.

6 Revocation of program privileges will occur after two convictions in two years by a single guardian. The following violations involving a dog apply:

- * Dog at Large (B.R.C. 6-1-16)
- * Failure to remove excrement (B.R.C. 6-1-18)
- * Guardians not displaying a tag on off-leash dogs (B.R.C. 6-13-2)
- * Violations of City Manager's Rule (B.R.C. 8-3-3) not involving wildlife protection.

Revocation of program privileges applies to the preceding violations on all OSMP lands and other City of Boulder properties where voice and sight privileges are recognized.

FIDOS opposes that the entire household should lose Green Tag program privileges for two personal conduct strikes (eg failure to remove excrement, forgetting to bring a leash) of a single guardian. FIDOS believes that personal conduct violations should result only in fines to the offending individual. These personal conduct violations should not result in punishment of innocent members of the household with loss of their Green Tag privileges.

7 A guardian with two revocations in three years or three revocations will lose his/her voice and sight privileges for five years and may thereafter apply for reinstatement.

As many dog breeds only live 10-12 years, this is effectively a lifetime ban

8 Require a minimum fine of \$300 and a minimum one year revocation period for a guardian with revoked privileges having a dog off leash.

9 Program privileges may be reinstated after successful completion of a reinstatement process. Reinstatement from revocation due to a conviction of aggressive dog or failure to protect wildlife violations must include successful completion of the voice and sight evaluation test by the revoked guardian and dog and the retaking of the information session by the revoked guardian. Reinstatement from all other revocations will at least include the retaking of the information session by the revoked guardian; and at the discretion of the courts may require successful completion of the voice and sight evaluation test or other actions. Reinstatement will include payment of fees for the information session, the voice and sight evaluation test (if required) and payment of a reinstatement fee.

No dollar figures are available for these reinstatement programs and fees. It is

assumed that they will be substantial, and will be in addition to any fines or costs associated with the incident

10 Green Tag Fees

- * City of Boulder Residents (\$13),
- * Boulder County residents outside the City of Boulder (\$33),
- * Non-Boulder County residents (\$75), and
- * The registration fee includes one guardian and one dog; the fee for each additional guardian in a household is (\$5) and the fee for each additional dog in a household is (\$10).

Annual household renewal fee:

- * City of Boulder Residents (\$5),
- * Boulder County residents outside the City of Boulder (\$20), and
- * Non-Boulder County residents (\$30).

The additional guardian and dog registration fees will be waived for City of Boulder households who meet income criteria consistent with the City of Boulder Food Tax Rebate Program or the Parks and Recreation Reduced Rate Program County residents



FIDOS Meetings, Membership and Feedback

Members of FIDOS include a wide cross section of the Boulder Community, the common factor being an interest in enjoying and protecting the the Open Space, accompanied by our dogs. Many supporters are in fact "between dogs", but value meeting others with their dogs on the trail.

In order to retain and expand this access we each need to be "good stewards" of the lands around us and keep an eye on whats going on on the trails as well as in the meeting rooms.

Let us know if you have any ideas or observations on the direction of FIDOS. New perspectives on V&S are always valuable in developing our arguments.

FIDOS meets on the first Monday of each month, 7pm at the Outlook Hotel, Boulder. The agenda is always published in advance to make sure we hit all the issues. If anyone would like to address the group let us know in advance (mail here) and we'll make time in the schedule.

Sincerely,

[Newsletter Team](#)

Friends Interested in Dogs and Open Space

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