



EDOA NEWS

Newsletter of the Eastham Dog Owners' Association

• Results of Cons Comm Meeting

• [Off-leash dogs under direct voice control will be allowed.](#)

Eastham Cons Comm Votes on Changes to Rules at Wiley Park

The Eastham Conservation Commission discussed and voted on rules changes for Wiley Park last night. At issue were rules changes such as banning dogs off-leash in the Summer and closing off pond access along trails. This most contentious issue was opposed by EDOA and many other dog owners.

After discussion, and analysis of usage data by Cons Com members, **[the banning of dogs off-leash in Summer months was removed from the rules changes. The vote was 7-0.](#)**

Walking dogs off-leash and under the handlers direct voice control is in the town by-laws and has been the tradition applied in most recreation and conservation areas. That included Wiley Park where it is a popular activity.

Rules changes will be made. Watersports access is limited to the Great Pond Rd area and biking is banned on trails. Other rules will be reinforced by improved signage including, trial etiquette, and respect for re-planted areas.

There are other rules regarding dogs that EDOA, the Open Space Committee and Conservation Commission all agree are reasonable. Dogs must be on leash while in the parking lot, or picnic areas until on the trails. Town rules for voice control will be enforced. Waste cannot be left, bagged or unbagged, anywhere in the park. Stay on the trails. Prior conversation indicated that some pond access for dogs could remain.

EDOA offered to work with Natural Resources officer Stephanie Sykes and the OSC to develop materials educating and clarifying proper etiquette and voice controlled behavior expected in a multi-use park.

Cons Com members sited the monitoring survey done this summer at the park. Several members were positively impressed and even surprised by the general behavior of dog handlers and their charges. The credit must be shared by the EDOA and OSC monitors whose open and honest discussion and analysis made a strong case for the result we sought.

The public comment sessions held last Spring brought home the point that dog owners and most other users of the park were not abusing the park and not interfering with conservation goals. The Summer 2023 usage monitoring reinforced this position. Users were not without the occasional infraction. Yet, the point was made that this is an activity cherished by many and should not be impinged based on anecdotal evidence, a few complaints, or personal preferences. We can do better, but the rules and bans are not always the best resolution. Education and cooperation are more effective tools.

Thank you all who wrote, signed, spoke and discussed this issue. It made all the difference.

Thank you Open Space Committee members for their open and honest expression of concern and work in analyzing the issues and finding resolution.

Thank you to the Cons Com members who were open to changing their opinions and allowing the monitoring survey to speak to their concerns.

Finally, thank you for all the expressions of support for the work EDOA members do for the dog owners of Eastham.

Watch the Meeting

The Conservation Commission meeting of November 14th will be available on video in about a week. The video is to be posted on the Town of Eastham website. We will send the direct link when it is available.

You are receiving this e-mail blast as a member of the Eastham Dog Owners' Association. Thank you for your support.

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Suggestions & Comments:

Ed.Daniels@EasthamDog.org



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