



DAYTONA DOG BEACH, INC.

Support for Putting Paws in the Sand



MAC ON THE LEFT WAS BORN AT HALIFAX HUMANE SOCIETY, A RESULT OF A PUPPY MILL CONFISCATION.

HE IS A FOSTER FAILURE AND NOW 3 YEARS OLD

DELILAH IN THE MIDDLE IS A PARTI YORKIE AND 1 YEAR OLD

SAMSON ON THE RIGHT WAS TAKEN TO HALIFAX HUMANE SOCIETY BY ANIMAL CONTROL WITH SEVERE CHEMICAL BURNS.

HE IS ALSO A FOSTER FAILURE AND NOW 2 YEARS OLD

THEY ARE SEEN HERE PARTICIPATING IN MUTT STRUTT 2020, WHICH WAS HELD VIRTUALLY.

JUNE 14, 2021

DAYTONA DOG BEACH, INC.

1288 BelAire Drive, Daytona Beach, FL 32118

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Summary

The County of Volusia is home to 35 miles of beach, along its eastern border with the Atlantic Ocean. Nearly 600,000 residents and over 10 million tourists/year spend time in our county, many drawn to the beaches. Despite those numbers, Volusia County's tourism growth lags behind virtually all other coastal counties in the state, according to the Florida Department of Revenue.

Since 1987, dogs have been banned from the Volusia County beaches. Beach code prohibits animals with the exception of 2 parks, Smyrna Dunes Park and Lighthouse Point Park. Those 2 parks represent 1 mile of beach at the inlets. These 2 parks are immensely popular and are often filled to capacity and closed to additional guests early in the morning, especially on weekends and holidays. There is clearly an unmet demand for dog friendly beaches in Volusia County.

In 34 years, much has changed in the world, in the United States, Florida and Volusia County. One thing that has changed is the growth in dog ownership. Pet ownership has risen steadily in recent decades. Today it is estimated between 38 - 50% of American households own a dog. In Florida it is estimated that 40% of households own a dog. Many believe the increase in ownership can be tied to the health benefits of companion animals. Another change can be seen in the boom within pet friendly tourism and travel. Recent surveys indicate 53% of travelers vacation with their pets, and 52% of dog owners say they will only stay at pet-friendly properties. Many hotel chains such as Hilton, Marriott, Hyatt, Sheraton, etc. offer dog friendly accommodations, responding to their customer's requests.

After 34 years, on April 20, 2021, Volusia County Council took a welcomed and positive step, approving an analysis of alternative locations for dogs to access the beach. Staff from Coastal, Beach Safety, Environmental, Parks, Recreation and Culture and Animal Control, along with the County Attorney's office have researched several alternatives to expanding areas that allow animals.

Daytona Dog Beach, Inc. participated in that April 20th meeting. After listening to council members, staff, and residents, we have spent our time anticipating the staff report, researching expressed concerns from the meeting, finding solutions, and preparing for our organization to be a key partner when council votes to expand dog friendly beaches.

This report provides details regarding our organization and how we can support the implementation and ongoing success of additional dog friendly beaches. While we know you cannot make your decision solely based on our support, we hope you feel some degree of reassurance that we are reliable, competent, and committed partners.

It provides feedback to the options presented by Staff for your consideration. We had expected the proposed area we had suggested, between Zelda and University, be included as an option and are disappointed it was not. We have represented it in the options we reviewed within this report. Our feedback is based heavily on the expressed concerns, needs, and opinions of our Daytona Dog Beach Facebook Group membership, which is now on its way to 800.

Daytona Dog Beach Inc. is keeping in mind the quote by Winston Churchill, who said "Perfection is the enemy of progress." We recognize that with opportunity, comes fear. Fear should not stop us. Great things happen when we put an end to fear. We are planning to be here in this community for the long

term. We are willing to embrace the decision of the council, as long as it is a YES, on anything other than Option 1. We can and will work with a YES.

To help allay the fear, we have included the results of research we have conducted related to expressed concerns, along with solutions which we believe negate, minimize, or address those expressed concerns to an acceptable level. We were particularly reassured when we found information from the Environmental Protection Agency and Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, which supports our approach to getting dogs on the beach.

To eliminate concerns and communicate clear intent, we propose, promote and support leashing of dogs in furtherance of safe, environmentally sound, and courteous dog friendly beaches for Volusia County.

To give you confidence, we have provided supporting information regarding many successful and long-term dog beaches in Florida. The model for Daytona Dog Beach Inc. has been an organization called Friends of Jupiter Beach, which has been partnering with the city of Jupiter to keep their beaches dog friendly for 27 years. They have extended support to us and have invited us to visit with them to see firsthand how they have managed to be so successful all these years. We did find Staff's Summary on other Florida counties and municipalities as misleading, in error or limited in detail, and we are concerned that this will not fully advise you to the many long standing and successful dog friendly beaches enjoyed by other Florida communities.

We have provided facts related to dog ownership, and dog friendly tourism. We have just begun to imagine how to interface with key partners to capitalize on this untapped market. We believe this has real potential to positively impact the image of Volusia County, particularly the beachside communities, to expand market share of family friendly, dog friendly tourism. We have begun to brainstorm dog friendly events, which could fill the Ocean Center, hotels, and related industries with guests.

We are anxious for your YES vote so we can divert from this question and move towards pursuing our Purpose and Mission.

Daytona Dog Beach, Inc.



About

January 28th, 2021 -- Daytona Dog Beach Facebook Page was created by Robert Lewis. This was the start of his dream of bringing like-minded people together in hope of creating a community where dog lovers can take their furry friends to the beach on the ocean.

April 20th, 2021 -- Administrators of the Daytona Dog Beach Facebook group attended the Volusia County Council meeting and represented the group in front of the council. There were citizens for and against new dog beaches in Volusia County. The County Council voted unanimously for staff to continue discussion to allow dogs on the beach. This is a very positive outcome, and we thank the council for approving this key step forward. We will continue to explore ways to support the efforts.

May 5th, 2021 -- Daytona Dog Beach filed for Articles of Incorporation as a not-for-profit corporation, Daytona Dog Beach, Inc., with the Florida Department of State. We believe this step will position us to best accomplish our goal of more dog friendly beaches within Volusia County. We have informed the County Council and their team of this announcement and our desire and willingness to partner with them to bring additional dog beaches to fruition.

May 12th, 2021 -- Daytona Dog Beach, Inc. launched our website, www.daytonadogbeach.org

June 8th, 2021 -- Based on results from a membership poll, Daytona Dog Beach Inc. announced our logo and slogan, "Putting Paws in the Sand"

June 11th, 2021 -- The Facebook group hit 700 members.

June 12th, 2021 -- Our first in person membership meeting was held, adding another 5 people to our leadership team, our beach ambassador structure was agreed upon, we launched online donations and merchandise sales.

June 22nd, 2021 -- Daytona Dog Beach, Inc. Board of Directors will attend the Volusia County Council meeting representing our organization and members of Daytona Dog Beach, Inc. Our goal is to seek council's approval on an option to expand dog friendly beach access on Volusia County beaches, and our desire and willingness to partner with them to make additional dog beaches successful.

Purpose

The PURPOSE of our organization is to work with community partners to promote, support and educate the public in furtherance of safe, environmentally sound, and courteous dog friendly beaches in the Greater Daytona Beach area of Volusia County.

Mission

As an entirely volunteer organization, our MISSION is as follows:

To promote dog beaches within Volusia County where well-behaved canine citizens can exercise in a clean, safe environment without endangering or annoying people, property, or wildlife.

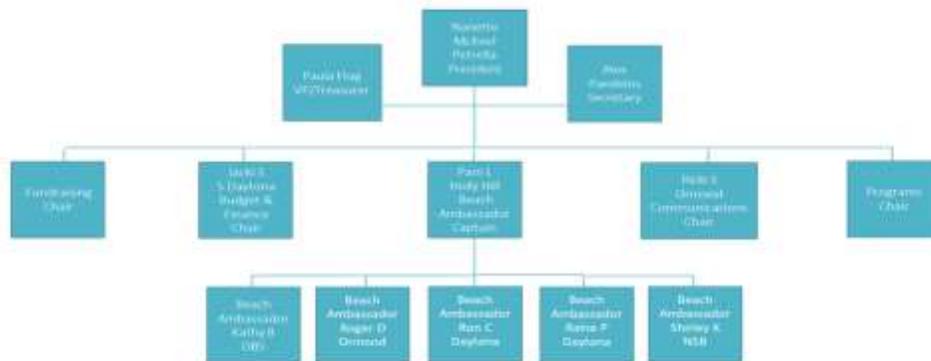
To maintain beautiful, clean, dog friendly beach areas within Volusia County, open to dog lovers and friends who are willing to uphold the dog beaches' rules and regulations.

To view dog beaches as a community project in partnership with key players throughout the community, including the County of Volusia, designed to satisfy the needs of dog owners and non-dog owners alike.

To promote education, training and recreational activities that facilitate responsible dog ownership and better-behaved dogs using volunteers and professionals in the animal welfare industry.

Organizational Chart

We just introduced key leadership and Beach Ambassador opportunities to small groups of members on June 12th and June 19th. Many positions were filled by individuals with previous professional and community service experience. We will continue to fill remaining leadership positions and have potential candidates already in mind.



Each Beach Ambassador will have a team of 20-25 volunteers who will assist in education of dog owners, remove dog waste in designated areas, if needed, and oversee scheduled recurring beach cleanups, that include cleanup of human litter.

Daytona Dog Beach Inc. Option Entire Beach - Option 4

Our membership believes there is no reason to restrict pets to a specific geographic area. This provides:

1. optimum access to those who are physically challenged or handicapped to bring their dogs
2. option to choose areas of the beach that most suits their needs and preferences for utilization
3. best opportunity to expand access to pet friendly hotels, restaurants, and other services
4. adequate parking access, on and off the beach
5. the most broad residential access across the peninsula
6. a more walkable community, supporting a more active lifestyle, sustainable environment and leading to efficiency in time and cost for residents
7. the largest area which would facilitate less dog interactions between people and other dogs

We do understand that this option may not meet with the most broad acceptance by those in opposition and may be best achieved over time, as we can demonstrate the success of expanding access to dogs on the beach in specified areas.

Specified Areas/Town – Combination of Options

If the entire beach is not made dog friendly, our membership believes there is benefit in having access in multiple geographic areas, from the northern areas of Ormond Beach all the way to the existing dog beaches in Ponce Inlet and New Smyrna Beach. (A minimum of 4 distributed in Port Orange, Daytona Beach Shores, Daytona Beach and Ormond)

This provides:

1. increased access to those who are physically challenged or handicapped to bring their dogs, offering beach driving/parking
2. option to choose areas of the beach that most suits their needs and preferences for utilization
3. good opportunity to expand access to pet friendly hotels, restaurants, and other services
4. adequate parking access, on and off the beach
5. broad residential access across the peninsula
6. a more walkable community, supporting a more active lifestyle, sustainable environment and leading to efficiency in time and cost for residents
7. a larger area which would facilitate less dog interactions between people and other dogs

If chosen, we would suggest opening each specific area, consecutively over time, as we can demonstrate the success of expanding access to dogs on the beach in a specified area.

One Specified Area

Zelda Street to University Boulevard - Daytona Dog Beach, Inc. Proposed Option

Our membership believes this is the **most favorable** option if only **one** specific area is to be provided. We are disappointed it was not presented as an option by Volusia County Staff, despite that we had specifically proposed it in our report to Volusia County Council and key staff on April 20th. This provides:

1. a site which is geographically at the midpoint between Flagler Beach and Lighthouse Point Park in Ponce Inlet, the closest dog beaches to the north and the south
2. optimum access to those who are physically challenged or handicapped to bring their dogs, offering beach driving/parking
3. a ½ mile stretch of beach, which is equivalent to that offered in each of Lighthouse Point Park in Ponce Inlet and New Smyrna Dunes Park
4. a beach profile conducive to beach lounging, walking, riding bikes, pushing dog walking/jogging strollers
5. adequate parking access on the beach, supplemented by parking at University Boulevard Beach Park (100 spots) and several spots along Driftwood Avenue. Schnebly Center could be pursued as city provided parking, as it is seldom utilized anywhere near capacity
6. broad residential access to neighborhoods nearby supported by additional access via the Driftwood Avenue access site
7. opportunity to expand access to pet friendly hotels, restaurants, and other services in this area. We have spoken with several properties who are open to supporting dog friendly accommodations should this be approved
8. a more walkable community, supporting a more active lifestyle, sustainable environment and leading to efficiency in time and cost for residents within reach of this area
9. low sea turtle nesting density and low shorebird nesting history

Michael Crotty Bicentennial Park to Al Weeks Sr. North Shore Park - Option 2

Our membership believes this is an acceptable option if only **one** specific area is to be provided. This provides:

1. a site which is geographically closer to Flagler Beach, which is not ideal for residents of Daytona Beach or Daytona Beach Shores
2. limited access to those who are physically challenged or handicapped to bring their dogs, offering no beach driving/parking. Ramps provided are a positive, but would need to be cleared and maintained from sand build up
3. a ½ mile stretch of beach, which is equivalent to that offered in each of Lighthouse Point Park in Ponce Inlet and New Smyrna Dunes Park
4. a natural beach profile which is not as conducive to beach lounging, walking, riding bikes, pushing dog strollers as other specific areas being considered
5. Adequate parking access

6. broad residential access to neighborhoods nearby
7. less opportunity to expand access to pet friendly hotels, restaurants, and other services in this area, as there are few present
8. a more walkable community, supporting a more active lifestyle, sustainable environment and leading to efficiency in time and cost for residents within reach of this area
9. dense sea turtle nesting density and low shorebird nesting history

International Speedway Boulevard to the Boardwalk - Option 3

Our membership believes this is an acceptable option if only one specific area is to be provided. This provides:

1. limited access to those who are physically challenged or handicapped to bring their dogs, offering no beach driving/parking
2. provides a 0.3 mile stretch of beach, which is less than offered in either Lighthouse Point Park in Ponce Inlet or New Smyrna Dunes Park
3. a beach profile conducive to beach lounging, walking, riding bikes, pushing dog walking/jogging strollers
4. parking access via County, City, and private lots
5. broad residential access to neighborhoods nearby, even though this area is more commercial
6. significant opportunity to expand access to pet friendly hotels, restaurants, and other services in this area
7. a more walkable community, supporting a more active lifestyle, sustainable environment and leading to efficiency in time and cost for residents within reach of this area
8. Low sea turtle nesting density and low shorebird nesting history

Restricted times or seasons and clarification of beach code

Daytona Dog Beach Inc. would be open to restrict access during peak hours of the day during summer months and peak holidays of the year, if those are critical decision factors. However, for many months, the beaches are virtually empty, and it would be unnecessary to limit hours during those months. Please see the photos taken at the proposed options over the course of the last months, many during events and at peak hours.

We are not open to restricting access for the entire turtle nesting or shorebird nesting seasons given our plans to partner with and support your Environmental Division and its partners. Further many of the specific sites being looked at have low sea turtle nesting density and low shorebird nesting history. We do not believe dogs in the areas under consideration deserve to have more restrictions than Lighthouse Point Park or Smyrna Dunes Park, which one could argue are more environmentally sensitive.

Daytona Dog Beach Inc. would be open to limit access to specific highly environmentally sensitive areas, should a decision be made to open the entire beach.

We do not see the need to conduct neighborhood and business surveys. The county has posted agendas and minutes on the issue, it has been highly covered in the press and on the news channels. Those who have a position on it have had ample opportunity to weigh in.

Daytona Dog Beach, Inc. does have some concern about this being seen as a trial period. To open an area will require initial startup costs and efforts. It is more difficult to ask sponsors and donors to step up when county council appears to be hedging on their decision.

In our research of the Beach Code, we looked at Sec. 20-113. - Animals. Here it states, "It shall be unlawful for any person owning or having under his control any animal, to permit such animal upon the beach or an approach, except service animals as defined by Florida Statutes and the Americans with Disabilities Act shall be allowed on the beach at all times." Daytona Dog Beach Inc. does ask for clarification as it is not clear what **upon the beach** means. Can an animal ride in a bike basket, a dog walking/jogging stroller or within a motor vehicle that is on the beach or an approach? Some of our members said that they have been told it is acceptable and some have been fined. We believe the code should be relaxed to allow a contained dog to be transported in areas as defined. For example, in a driving section, it should be acceptable for a dog to accompany their owner in a vehicle. In a non-driving section, it should be acceptable for a dog to be transported if contained within a bike basket or dog walking/jogging stroller.

Solutions to Address Concerns/Objections

At the Volusia County Council meeting on April 20, 2021, we listened to the concerns and objections expressed by council members and the public speakers. They were all objections we anticipated. And we believe each can be addressed to eliminate or minimize the concern to an acceptable level for council to feel comfortable voting yes to expand dog friendly beach options.

Cost

Based on the estimates provided by the Volusia County Team, it appears startup cost would be \$21,200 for each specified option, with costs for the entire beach up to 5 times as much, closer to \$100,000. While we understand that the Volusia County Staff must assume they will be responsible for these costs, Daytona Dog Beach Inc. is prepared to assist in these startup costs, as well as plan for yearly support. While we are a relatively new nonprofit organization, we are already receiving private donations, selling merchandise, have potential business sponsors and multiple fund-raising options in mind. We recognize our financial or in-kind donations would need to be approved by the county and meet all legal requirements. We imagine it to be a similar partnership as is present with organizations such as Florida Shore Bird Alliance, Volusia/Flagler Turtle Patrol, and other similar community partnerships.

Dog Bites/Liability

Part of Daytona Dog Beach Inc.'s mission is to promote education, training and recreational activities that facilitate responsible dog ownership and better-behaved dogs using volunteers and professionals in the animal welfare industry. We also believe our beach ambassadors, using approved materials that we can provide, will be able to offer daily reminders and education on dog safety.

We were not able to locate any statistics regarding dog bites on dog friendly beaches, which would seem to indicate that the rate of occurrence does not garner special consideration. According to the Center for Disease Control (CDC) most dog bites occur with a known dog in a familiar place. Most biting dogs (77%) belong to the victim's family or a friend. 80% happen at home. The Humane Society estimates 51% of dog bite victims are children, with the highest between the ages of 5 – 9, and more boys than girls. National Dog Bite Prevention Week will be April 10-16, 2022. This presents a valuable opportunity for Daytona Dog Beach, Inc. to partner with Volusia County Animal Services on community outreach and education events.

To minimize the potential for dog bites, whether to people or other dogs, we are proposing the dog friendly beaches be leash only. The length of the leash used at dog beaches typically ranges from 6 – 10 ft in length.

From our research, we do not believe that Volusia County would be increasing its liability in approving additional dog friendly beach opportunities. According to Florida Statutes, Chapter 767, Owners of dogs shall be liable for any damage done by their dogs to a person or to any animal included in the definitions of "domestic animal" and "livestock" as provided by s. 585.01. It further states, the owner of any dog that bites any person while such person is on or in a public place, or lawfully on or in a private place, including the property of the owner of the dog, is liable for damages suffered by persons bitten, regardless of the former viciousness of the dog or the owners' knowledge of such viciousness. However, any negligence on the part of the person bitten that is a proximate cause of the biting incident reduces the liability of the owner of the dog by the percentage that the bitten person's negligence contributed to the biting incident.

Dog Waste Cleanup

While we understand that the Volusia County Staff must assume they will be responsible for overseeing the clean-up function, Daytona Dog Beach Inc. is prepared to assist in monitoring the areas approved, providing community outreach and education as well as dog waste cleanup through our Daytona Dog Beach Ambassadors. We recognize our volunteer participation would need to be approved by the county.

We also plan to perform organized beach cleanups on a scheduled recurring basis, with a focus on the areas designated as dog friendly.

Parasitic Infections

We believe that with proper outreach, education and enforcement, the potential for parasitic infections is minimal. We have not been able to find any data that supports increased risks of parasitic infections at dog friendly beaches, which would seem to indicate that the rate of occurrence does not garner special consideration. We have included 3 sources for your reference and review.

1. Upon researching the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), we could not find any information regarding parasitic infections associated with dog beaches. We do see the potential to work with our partners in the Environmental, Coastal and Animal Services Department to encourage and provide animal testing and treatment for parasites, which would have far ranging benefits, not just on the beaches but in the community at large. This is in line with our mission to promote education, training and recreational activities that facilitate responsible dog ownership and better-behaved dogs using volunteers and professionals in the animal welfare industry.
2. In research within the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), we could not find any information regarding parasitic infections associated with dog beaches. We did find a brochure entitled “Before You Go to the Beach”, but it focused on disease found in beach water, polluted from storm drains, sewage, malfunctioning septic systems, rainwater, plastics, and cigarette butts, etc. We have attached the brochure for your review.
3. A third source was from an article in Live Science, entitled Beachgoers Beware? 5 Pathogens That Lurk in Sand. They list five types of pathogens found in the sand. After you review the 5 pathogens, most of which are associated with humans, and you are concerned about the minimal risks associated with pathogens, then you might decide the beach is not safe, with or without dogs on it. All walking barefoot and play in the sand would have to cease. At least we can manage the risk from hookworms and roundworms. The article follows:

Hookworms

Walking barefoot on a tropical beach may sound idyllic, but in some areas, you will want to be wary of hookworms, which are parasites that can infect both people and animals. Some species of hookworm that typically infect cats and dogs can be transmitted to people through sand or contaminated soil, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

This happens when infected animals defecate in sand or soil and pass hookworm eggs in their stool. People can then become infected if they walk barefoot or lie down on the infested sand or soil, the CDC says. Indeed, a Canadian couple recently revealed that they contracted hookworms in their feet while walking barefoot on a Caribbean beach. (These hookworms are typically found in tropical or subtropical regions.)

The hookworm larvae can burrow into unprotected skin and then crawl around in the top layers of skin. **However, because humans are not the normal hosts for these hookworms, the parasites usually don't live more than six weeks in people, the CDC says.**

MRSA

The superbug MRSA is particularly problematic in hospitals, but the bacteria can also be found out in the environment, including on beaches, studies have found.

MRSA, which stands for methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus*, is a type of staph bacteria that can cause skin infections and is resistant to several antibiotics. Some people can carry staph bacteria or even MRSA on their skin or in their noses without showing symptoms. (In the United States, about one-third of the population carries staph and 2 percent carries MRSA without showing symptoms.) But in other cases, such as when a person gets a cut or wound in their skin, the bacteria causes an infection.

A number of studies have found staph bacteria and MRSA in seawater and in sand. For example, a 2012 study in the journal *Water Research* analyzed water and sand samples from three Southern California beaches, finding staph bacteria in 53 percent of beach sand samples and MRSA bacteria in 2.7 percent of sand samples.

It's unclear whether that amount of staph and MRSA bacteria in sand poses a health risk to beachgoers, and researchers have called for more studies to look into this question. **But in the meantime, showering after a stint on the beach or in the ocean should help provide protection against staph and MRSA infection, the researchers of the 2012 study said.**

Stomach bugs

You might have heard that swimming in ocean water could get you sick with a stomach bug. Indeed, health officials monitor water quality at beaches and close these beaches when bacteria levels are too high, in order to prevent illness. But what about bacteria in the sand?

Beach sand can also harbor a number of bacteria that can cause gastroenteritis, or stomach infections that lead to diarrhea, nausea and vomiting. A 2012 study in the journal *Applied and Environmental Microbiology*, which analyzed sand from 53 California beaches, found *Escherichia coli* and *Enterococcus* — bacteria typically found in human intestines — as well as *Salmonella* and *Campylobacter*, which are sometimes causes of food poisoning.

But could these bacteria in sand really make you sick? Maybe — a 2009 study that surveyed more than 27,000 Americans who visited the beach found that people who reported digging in the sand or being buried in the sand were more likely to develop gastrointestinal illness shortly after their beach trip than those who didn't report these activities. **However, the researchers noted that their study couldn't prove that bacteria in sand caused the people's gastrointestinal illnesses.**

Fungi

The fungus is among us at the beach, too. Types of fungi that cause skin and nail infections — which belong to a broad group known as "dermatophytes" — have been found on beaches. They may spread

through direct contact with people, animals, or sand, according to the American Society for Microbiology (ASM).

Common beach dermatophytes include Trichophyton mentagrophytes and Trichophyton rubrum, which can be causes of ringworm, athlete's foot, and jock itch, according to ASM.

Other types of fungi found at beaches include species of Aspergillus, which may cause lung infections, and Candida, which can cause yeast infections. However, infections with Aspergillus and Candida are more common among people with weakened immune systems, ASM said.

Roundworms

At beaches that allow dogs, the sand might harbor *Toxocara canis*, a parasitic roundworm that typically infects canines, according to ASM. People can become infected with *T. canis* by accidentally swallowing soil that has been contaminated with dog feces that contain *T. canis* eggs, according to the CDC.

Still, the risk of catching this parasite from beach sand is unclear. However, a study in France conducted in the 1990s found *T. canis* to be a common parasite on beaches, and another study, this one in Australia, found no *T. canis* eggs in more than 250 samples from beaches and parks that allowed dogs.

Because this parasite is more commonly found in puppies than in older dogs, the Australian study concluded that the major risk of *T. canis* to humans is from environments where puppies are found.

Sea Turtles and Nesting Birds

As dog lovers, most of us have a natural tendency to love all animals, including the sea turtles and nesting birds. As part of our research, we have referenced Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission information, Florida Beaches Habitat Conservation Plan, Volusia County Habitat Conservation Plan, and the Florida Shorebird Alliance Website. While they offer caution and guidance regarding the protection of sea turtles, nesting birds and beach mice, we feel confident that what we are proposing is within accepted practice at dog friendly beaches within the state of Florida and in the County of Volusia. The fact that Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission and the Habitat Conservation Plan specifically addresses dogs on the beach, opens the door that is an acceptable option, particularly if their guidance is followed. Some of our research is documented below and key points are bolded.

1. Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) actually provides guidance for dogs on the beach. From their website it stated, "In addition, the FWC is working to address specific types of disturbance, such as dogs on the beach. Although dogs are allowed on some beaches, it is important to be aware that many beaches do not allow dogs, such as those at State Parks or within designated [Critical Wildlife Areas](#). It is also important to consider the wildlife that live and raise their young on Florida beaches—wildlife that may not be compatible with the presence of dogs. Shorebird and sea turtle nests and young can be impacted by dogs on the beach – even leashed dogs can affect wildlife simply by their presence. The best way to protect wildlife is to leave your dog at home when you go to the beach. If pet owners do bring dogs to beaches

where that is allowed, they should still be mindful of wildlife and follow all rules about leashing their dogs and picking up waste. The FWC developed a *Dogs on the Beach* brochure in response to an expressed need from partners to have outreach materials to share when they talk to people about dogs on beaches.

We have included *Dogs on the Beach* brochure for your reference, as it acknowledges many Florida beaches that allow dogs, including Flagler Beach, St. Augustine Beach, Jacksonville Beach and Fernandina Beach to the north, our very own Smyrna Dunes Park and Brevard County's Canova Beach Park, just to mention a few.

2. Also, on FWC website, we referenced their guidance, "Living with Beach-Nesting Shorebirds" It stated, "Several species of shorebirds and seabirds nest along the beaches of the Atlantic and Gulf coasts of Florida. Habitat loss and degradation associated with coastal development has largely restricted many of these species to stretches of beach within parks and preserves. This group of birds is particularly sensitive to human disturbance since environmental conditions on beaches are already harsh and unpredictable. For example, one dog passing near a colony of nesting seabirds can cause all the birds to panic and subsequently leave their nests dangerously exposed to the hot boiling sun.

How you can help protect beach-nesting birds:

Never enter areas posted with shorebird/seabird signs.

Avoid driving on or beyond the upper beach.

Drive slow enough to avoid running over chicks.

Keep dogs on a leash and away from areas where birds may be nesting.

Keep cats indoors, and do not feed stray cats.

Properly dispose of trash to keep predators away.

Do not fly kites near areas where birds may be nesting.

When birds are aggravated, you are too close. "

3. Florida Beaches Habitat Conservation Plan

Florida's world famous beaches are enjoyed by millions of visitors and residents each year and are also home for threatened and endangered coastal wildlife like sea turtles, shorebirds, seabirds and beach mice. To better share the beach, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, in conjunction with the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, an appointed steering committee, and stakeholders, has drafted a Florida Beaches Habitat Conservation Plan. The draft Plan will:

- Cover beachfront construction in 25 Florida counties with established coastal construction control lines, plus sandy beaches in Monroe County

- Guide the Department and permit applicants in avoiding, minimizing, and mitigating threats to coastal wildlife through coastal construction permits
- Set clear wildlife protection standards for coastal construction and beach operations
- Incorporate innovative technologies to make regulatory data more accessible and impact assessments more predictable
- **Balance human social, economic and recreational needs with long-term protection of threatened and endangered species on Florida’s beaches and dunes**

Threatened and Endangered Coastal Wildlife on Florida’s Beaches and Dunes

In order to provide more protection to coastal wildlife listed as federally threatened and endangered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Department is focusing the Plan’s protective measures on twelve species or types of animals:

- Five sea turtles: Green (*Chelonia mydas*), Leatherback (*Dermochelys coriacea*), Loggerhead (*Caretta caretta*), Hawksbill (*Eretmochelys imbricata*) and Kemp’s Ridley (*Lepidochelys kempii*)
- Five beach mice: Choctawhatchee beach mouse (*Peromyscus polionotus allphrys*), Southeastern beach mouse (*Peromyscus polionotus niveiventris*), St. Andrews beach mouse (*Peromyscus polionotus peninsularis*), Anastasia Island beach mouse (*Peromyscus polionotus phasma*) and Perdido Key beach mouse (*Peromyscus polionotus trissyllepsis*)
- Two shorebirds: Red knot (*Calidris canutus rufa*) and Piping plover (*Charadrius melodus*)

In addition, six other types of coastal wildlife are likely candidates for future federal listing and are covered in the Plan:

- Five beach nesting birds: American oystercatcher (*Haematopus palliatus*), Black skimmer (*Rynchops niger*), Least tern (*Sternula antillarum*), Snowy plover (*Charadrius alexandrinus tenuirostris*) and Wilson’s plover (*Charadrius wilsonia*)
- Santa Rosa beach mouse (*Peromyscus polionotus leucocephalus*)

4. In our research of the Volusia County Habitat Conservation Plan, it confirms that pet regulations are stipulated in the Volusia County Beach Code. Individuals who allow animals to roam free on County Beaches will be cited according to Volusia County regulations. Any free-ranging or feral dogs or cats will be reported to Volusia County Animal Control Services. **Since we are encouraging animals to be on leash, contained within a bike basket, a dog stroller or within a motor vehicle, we are not violating that code.**
5. In related information on the website, regarding Sea and shorebirds, **it does make reference to keeping dogs in designated areas and on their leashes, which indicates they have made allowances for the presence of dogs.**

Florida Dog Beaches

This lists 26 of the 72 within the website. (All data collected from the website-Bringfido.com)

Duval County, FL

1. Atlantic Beach- Kathryn Abbey Hanna Park.
2. Jacksonville Beach
3. Mayport (Beach) Naval Air Station
4. Neptune Beach



Nassau County, FL

1. Amelia Island Beaches (except Fort Clinch and Amelia Island State Park).

St. Johns County, FL

2. Ponte Vedra Beach
3. Vilano Beach
4. St. Augustine Beach

Flagler County, FL

1. Varn Park
2. Jungle Hut Road Park
3. Mala Compra Road Beachfront Park
4. Old Salt Park
5. Flagler Beach South along A1A, between South 11th and South 27th streets
6. Flagler Beach North along A1A, between North 11th and North 23rd streets

Volusia County, FL

1. Smyrna Dunes Park
2. Lighthouse Point Park

Brevard County, FL

1. Canova Beach Park
2. Cocoa Beach

St. Pete/Clearwater, FL

1. Fort De Soto Park
2. Honeymoon Island State Park-Honeymoon Island's dog beach

Palm Beach County, FL

1. Jupiter Beach

Fort Lauderdale/Miami, FL -Area

2. Fort Lauderdale Canine Beach
3. Canine Beach- Fort Lauderdale, FL
4. Haulover Beach Park- Miami, FL
5. Bark Beach at North Shore Open Space Park- Miami, FL
6. Bark Beach- Boca Raton, FL
7. Dog Beach of Hollywood- Hollywood, FL

Dogs Ownership Statistics and Why it Matters

Florida estimated population is 21,944,577. This represents close to 8 million households.

Volusia County, Florida's estimated population is 567,650. This represents 220,000 households.

According to the American Veterinary Medical Association (AMVA) 38% of American households own a dog. They further report dog ownership continues to increase.

According to the American Pet Products Association's 2019-2020 National Pet Owners Survey. 63.4 million households own a dog. Because many households own multiple dogs, they estimate this represents close to 100 million Dogs

In Florida, 40% of all households own a dog. Assuming this % holds in Volusia County, we estimate 88,000 households have 1 or more dogs.

Statistica.com reports that dog ownership cuts across generations, 31% by Millennials, 29% by Baby Boomers and 26% by Gen X, 11% by Gen Z, and 4% by Builder

The report also showed that pet ownership rates were highest among White households (64.7%), followed by Hispanic/Latino households (61.4%). Pet ownership was lowest among Black-African American households (36.9%).

Additional dog friendly beaches will provide 40% of County Households something of real value.

DOG OWNERSHIP STATISTICS (NUMBERS PRESENTED ARE ROUNDED FOR EASE OF REPRESENTATION)				
	Population	Households	Households with Dogs	# Of Dogs in Households
USA	332,000,000	166,000,000	63,000,000	100,000,000
Florida	22,000,000	8,000,000	3,200,000	5,080,000
Volusia County	600,000	220,000	88,000	140,000

Dog Friendly Tourism Statistics and Why it Matters.

Pet travel and tourism, particularly with dogs, is a growing trend in the United States and around the world. Several areas in Florida have begun to take steps to capitalize on the demand and are offering a

growing list of pet friendly hotels, restaurants, and activities. Volusia County, particularly the beach area, has untapped potential to benefit from this family friendly oriented tourist draw. An expansion of dog friendly beach options opens the door for a multitude of dog friendly businesses to open, expand and put Volusia County in the spotlight for providing 1st in class, dog friendly hospitality offerings.

1. Floridatraveler.org lists the following as The Best Dog Friendly Towns and Beaches in Florida in 2020:

Tampa selected as Florida's most dog-friendly city and 6th friendliest in the USA.

Pinellas County

Key West

Orlando

Miami

Palm Beach County

Cocoa Beach

Flagler Beach

2. Petjets.com, carried the following article. It is sourced from various sources, such as: [Go Pet Friendly](#), [PBS Pet Travel](#), [Travel Agent Central](#)

Pet Travel Trends 2020

Over half of pet owners are planning to travel with their pets and roughly 2 million domestic animals board commercial and private charter flights each year. Pet travel is an important part of the travel industry and should not be taken lightly or ignored. With over a third of owners saying they simply will not travel without their pets, making traveling with pets as accessible as possible would be beneficial for both travelers and businesses. Owners often sacrifice the length and the frequency of their vacations because of having animals, and many hold pet-friendly accommodations and destinations in high regard. Increasing the options and ease with which owners can take their furry friends may encourage these travelers to take longer, as well as more frequent trips and holidays. For this reason the option of pet friendly air charter is on the increase especially for those looking to relocate with their pets with ease for long distances. Read on for more information on pet travel trends, as we explore the facts and figures behind pet travel in recent years.

- **53% of travelers** take holidays with their pets, so pet-friendly accommodation is a growing industry trend.
- It is estimated that **2 million domestic animals travel** on commercial flights every year.
- **52%** of surveyed owners said that they only stay at **pet-friendly properties**.
- **6% of pets** in the US board a plane every year.
- **27%** of people said that they want to see more **dog-friendly hotels and holiday parks**. **16%** would also like to see this in pubs.
- **15%** would like to see more **dog-friendly beaches**, while **14%** want more **dog-friendly restaurants**.
- A recent poll found that **27% of pet owners** are planning **one or two trips** with their furry friends in the next year.

- **37%** are planning **3 to 5 getaways**, while **31%** intend to travel with their pet **six or more times** across the year.
- **Over half of owners** plan to travel this year with their animal companions.
- **37% of owners** have opted against travelling to stay at home with their dog.
- **78% of owners** and their four-legged friends are **driving and flying** together more now than ever before.
- **37% of families travel with their furry friends.** This is a 19% increase over the last decade

Before we dive into the other facts and figures, let us look at what percentage of Americans own dogs. In the US, **36% of households own a dog**, so right away it looks as though pet travel will be an important factor in traveling for many. So how many Americans travel with their pets each year? A survey by the American Pet Products Association (APPA) found that **37% of animal owners** travel with their pets every year. This is up by 19% over the last decade! Research also shows that **42% of 55-64-year-old owners** take their pets with them making Baby Boomers more likely to bring furry friends on their travels than younger generations. Overall, these stats show that many people own pets, and many travelers look to take their pets along with them. Companies in the air charter industry would do well to take notice of this trend.

- **Over 50% of owners** intend to take their pets away with them this year.
- In **9 out of 10 households**, dogs are considered part of the family.
- **31.3%** plan to take **overnight trips with their pets six or more times a year.**
- **37% of families** travel with their four-legged friends. This is a **19% increase** over the last decade.
- **42% of owners aged 55-64** take their four-legged friends with them travelling. This makes **Baby Boomers** more likely to do this than younger generations.
- If they have to leave their pets at home, **25% of Boomers make homemade treats for their dogs** to enjoy when they are away.
- **75% leave behind an article of clothing** with their scent on it!
- **25% of women** will take their dog on vacation, whereas just **14% of men** will do the same.

Supporting Resources & Photographs

Environmental Protection Agency's "Before You Go to the Beach" Brochure

Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission's "Dogs on the Beach" Brochure

Photos taken at Option 2, Option 3 and Daytona Dog Beach Inc.'s Option.

Questions to Ask Your Local Beach Health Monitoring Official:

- Which beaches do you monitor and how often?
- What do you test for?
- When can I see the test results and who can explain them to me?
- What are the primary sources of pollution that affect this beach?

What to Do if Your Beach is Not Monitored Regularly:

- Avoid swimming after a heavy rain.
- Look for storm drains (pipes that drain polluted water from streets) along the beach. Don't swim near them.
- Look for trash and other signs of pollution such as oil slicks in the water. These sorts of pollutants may indicate the presence of disease-causing microorganisms that may also have been washed into the water.
- If you think your beach water is contaminated, contact your local health or environmental protection officials. It is important for them to know about suspected beach water contamination so they can protect citizens from exposure.
- Work with your local authorities to create a monitoring program.

United States Environmental Protection Agency
EPA-420-F-07-007
September 1997
Office of Water (303)

EPA Before You Go to the Beach...



Is the Water Safe for Swimming?

The water at the beach looks clean, but is it? It may be worth your while to find out before you or your children go swimming. Most water at beaches is safe for swimming. However, you cannot be sure the beach water is safe unless it is tested because your beach water may contain disease-causing microorganisms that you cannot see.

Monitoring of beach water quality by local health and environmental officials is necessary to warn citizens when there is a problem. The United States Environmental Protection Agency's new BEACH Program (Beaches Environmental Assessment, Closure, and Health Program) is designed to help your local government officials provide you with information necessary to protect your health.

How Does Beach Pollution Affect You and Your Family?

Water can be polluted by different things. Trash, such as plastic plates, plastic bags and bottles, and cigarette butts is easy to see. It is often the things we can't see, such as bacteria and other microorganisms, that we need to be more concerned about. If you or your family are exposed to these disease-causing organisms, they may make you sick.

Swimming or playing in shallow water may result in minor illnesses such as sore throats or diarrhea. It also might result in more serious illnesses that may last longer than your vacation at the beach. Children, the elderly and people with weakened immune systems have a greater chance of getting sick when they come in contact with contaminated water.

Where Does This Pollution Come From?

The most frequent sources of disease-causing microorganisms are from sewage overflow, polluted storm water runoff, sewage treatment plant malfunctions, boat sewage and marine toilet pump-out systems.

Pollution of beach water is often much higher during and immediately after rainstorms because water draining into the beach may be carrying sewage from overflowing sewage treatment systems. Rainwater also flows to our beaches after running off lawns, farms, streets, construction sites, and other urban areas, picking up animal waste, fertilizer, pesticides, trash and many other pollutants. Many of these pollutants can end up in the water at our beaches.



DISEASE-CAUSING MICROORGANISMS IN SEAWATER	
Microorganisms	Some Illnesses and Symptoms
Bacteria	Gastroenteritis (acute diarrhea and abdominal pain), amoebiasis (stool poisoning), shigellosis
Viruses	Fever, sore throat, gastroenteritis, diarrhea, respiratory infections, hepatitis
Protozoa	Gastroenteritis, respiratory infections and diarrhea (including diarrhea and abdominal cramps), hepatitis
Helminths	Respiratory infections, vomiting, diarrhoea, coughing, chest pain, fever, diarrhea

BEACH Program

The BEACH Program will help reduce health risks to you and your family by increasing your exposure to disease-causing microorganisms in the water where you swim or play. The BEACH Program is ensuring public access to information about the quality of your beach water. In addition, EPA is working with state, tribal and local health and environmental officials to encourage use of better tests to detect pollution as well as develop methods that will help predict when pollution may occur. With advance warning provided by the local authorities, you will be able to decide when and where to swim.

How Do I Get Information about My Beach?

State, tribal and local health and environmental protection officials are responsible for monitoring the quality of water at our nation's beaches. When they find a beach is contaminated they may post warnings to close the beach. Your local public health or environmental officials can tell you if and when the water at your beach is monitored, who does it and where the results are posted. Check with EPA's Beach Watch website at <http://www.epa.gov/CDC/beaches> or contact your city, county or other local health officials listed in your local telephone book.

For Additional Information about BEACH

For additional information about the BEACH Program, contact the U.S. EPA, Office of Water, Office of Science and Technology at:

401 M Street, SW, Washington, DC 20460
E-Mail: OWG@EPA.epa.gov
or visit EPA's Beach Watch website at <http://www.epa.gov/CDC/beaches>

Some Florida beaches that allow dogs

Panhandle:

- Pensacola Beach Dog Park – Pensacola Beach
- Dog Beach at Pier Park – Panama City Beach
- Cape San Blas Beaches – Cape San Blas

Southwest:

- Honeymoon Island State Park Pet Beach – Dunedin
- Fort De Soto Dog Beach Park – St. Petersburg
- Brohard Beach Paw Park – Venice
- Dog Beach Park – Fort Myers Beach

Keys:

- Anne's Beach – Islamorada
- Dog Beach – Key West

Southeast:

- Haulover Beach Bark Park – Miami Beach
- Fort Lauderdale Canine Beach – Fort Lauderdale
- Jupiter Dog Beach – Jupiter
- Walton Rocks Dog Beach – Jensen Beach

East Central/Indian River:

- Canova Beach Park – Indian Harbour Beach
- Smyrna Dunes Park – New Smyrna Beach

Northeast:

- Flagler Beach – Flagler Beach
- St. Augustine Beach – St. Augustine Beach
- Jacksonville Beach – Jacksonville Beach
- Fernandina Main Beach Park – Fernandina Beach

- Dogs required to be on leash at all times.
- A fee is required to use the dog beach.
- No fees or leashes required.

This is not an exhaustive list of all Florida beaches where dogs are allowed. Please check for current local rules before bringing your dog to the beach.

Are service dogs allowed on the beach?

In accordance with Americans with Disabilities Act Title III regulations, disabled individuals are allowed to be accompanied by service dogs on any beach open to the public. A service dog is trained to do specific tasks directly related to the owner's disability. Emotional support animals, comfort animals and therapy dogs are not considered service animals under Title II and Title III of the ADA and therefore are not permitted on beaches that are closed to pets. A service dog must remain under the owner's control at all times. Any individual whose failure to maintain control of a dog results in disturbance to wildlife will be asked to leave the beach and may receive a citation.



For more information:

Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission
Coastal Wildlife Conservation Initiative
3377 East US Highway 90
Lake City, FL 32055
MyFWC.com/conservation
Coastal@MyFWC.com
(386) 754-1668



♻️ printed on recycled paper

03/2017

Dogs on the Beach

Be a wildlife-friendly pet owner!



Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission
MyFWC.com

Beach habitat is important for wildlife

Many kinds of wildlife depend on Florida's beaches for their survival, including endangered and threatened species.



Over 30 species of shorebirds and seabirds use beach habitats for nesting, resting and finding food. Some birds also use the beach during winter or for nest during Avic migrations.



Sea turtles use Florida's beaches as nesting sites from March to October. They dig nests in the sand and lay their eggs, which incubate and then produce hatchlings.



Beach mice live in and use beach habitats, specifically coastal dunes, for their entire life cycle.



Beach habitats are home to numerous other species and are an important link between marine and terrestrial environments.



How dogs impact beach wildlife

Dogs have many wonderful attributes and are important as human companions. However, their natural instincts to hunt, chase and dig can endanger shorebirds, sea turtles and their nests and result in decreased survival of wildlife on the beach. Dogs may kill or eat adult shorebirds, hatchlings or eggs or scare adults off their nests, leaving eggs and hatchlings unprotected from heat and predators. As a result, birds may abandon nests or whole colonies due to disturbance from dogs. Additionally, when birds are fleeing from dogs, they burn vital energy needed for migration and nesting.

Although unleashed dogs present the biggest danger, leashed dogs also impact wildlife simply by their presence. Birds respond differently to dogs than they do to people. They fly away from dogs sooner, they go further away, and they are more reluctant to return to the area, which means they leave eggs and chicks vulnerable and have less time for critical activities like finding food that they need to survive.

Nesting female sea turtles also can be disturbed by dogs on the beach at night. They may abandon their nesting attempt, returning to the water without laying their eggs. Beach mice are also active at night, making them vulnerable to predation by dogs.

How you can help

- Obey local and Florida State Parks rules on beaches closed to pets.
- To best protect wildlife, leave dogs at home when going to the beach. However, if you plan to bring your dog, go to a beach where dogs are allowed and follow all leash laws.
- Stay out of posted Critical Wildlife Areas, listed on MyFWC.com/CWA.
- Keep out of roped or flagged beach areas, even if you don't see any wildlife.
- Keep your dog as far away from wildlife as possible. Do not allow a dog to disturb or chase birds or dig holes, which could damage turtle nests or trap hatchlings.
- Make sure your dog stays out of the dunes to avoid disturbance of beach mouse habitat.
- Avoid walking your dog on the beach at night during the March-October sea turtle nesting season.
- Pick up pet waste and throw it in the trash.
- Spread the word about being a wildlife-friendly dog owner on the beach!
- If you see dogs disturbing wildlife, report it to the FWC's Wildlife Alert Hotline: **888-404-FWCC (3922)**, #FWC or *FWC on a cell phone, or by texting **Tip@MyFWC.com**.



OPTION 2



RAMP COVERED IN SAND AT NORTH SHORE PARK



STEEP RAMP FROM BICENTENNIAL TO A1A



NICE WALKABLE BEACH AREA



FLASHING LIGHT CROSSING A1A



STEEP TERRAIN TO WALK TO RAMPS TO BICENTENNIAL



STEEP TERRAIN TO WALK TO NORTH SHORE LOT

OPTION 3



JEEP WEEK, SATURDAY APRIL 24 AT NOON



FRIDAY, APRIL 30, 11:15AM



MOTHER'S DAY, SUNDAY, MAY 9 AT 1PM

DAYTONA DOG BEACH OPTION



BIKE WEEK, FRIDAY, MARCH 12TH, 5PM



JEEP WEEK, SATURDAY APRIL 24 AT 11AM



MOTHER'S DAY, SUNDAY, MAY 9 AT NOON



TRUCK EVENT, SATURDAY, JUNE 12 AT 2PM