

# Outdoor adventures with your dog

BY JULIE BROWN

For The Bulletin  
A near slam-dunk way to bring a sparkle to many park or trail users' eyes is to ask if you can meet their dog.



Dogs are a part of many Central Oregonians' lives and are involved with their owners in many recreational adventures. In Bend, there's so much to do with a four-legged friend, including walking and running on the trails and paths, swimming in the Deschutes River and playing and running off-leash at eight off-leash areas.

For newcomers or those who have called Bend home for decades, it's a good idea to brush up on the dos and don'ts of dog responsibility so that everyone can enjoy the parks and trails. Dogs are required by city ordinance to be on a leash in any public area in the city of Bend except in designated off-leash areas. Additionally, dog owners are to clean up after their dog. To help out, dog waste bags and trash receptacles are available at many Bend parks and trails.

The most important step to a successful dog park experience is knowing your dog. Not all dogs are good candidates



Submitted photo

Ponderosa Park has a fenced area designated for small dogs.

for off-leash dog parks. If a dog has not had regular interaction with other dogs, it may lack the necessary social skills to make the visit safe and enjoyable. I recently advised a friend who adopted a puppy to socialize her new friend at a puppy kindergarten class, not at the dog park. It's the best place for socialization, and all dogs visiting the park must be immunized with their tags showing current vaccinations.

I also recommend making your initial visit at a time that

is not busy. Daytime hours during the week and late week-end afternoons are generally the quietest times at the off-leash areas.

Just as a parent would not leave a young child unattended; watch your pet and monitor whom he/she is playing with and if their behavior is appropriate. Remain in sight and voice control of your dog at all times. While we're talking about kids and dogs, do not allow children to approach a dog without permission from the

dog's handler. Not all dogs who visit the dog park are socialized to children and you would hate for a dog or a child to learn this the hard way.

If there is a tussle in the off-leash area with another dog, always respect the wishes of the handler and be prepared to move to another area of the park in order to help facilitate dogs getting along. Sometimes a little distance is all it takes for everyone to enjoy the off-leash area.

Instances of off-leash dogs

will no longer be available for lease by the district. BPRD is working to identify other potential locations for off-leash river access. Input is welcomed through Feb. 28 at [bendpark-sandrec.org/riverplan](http://bendpark-sandrec.org/riverplan).

While it's tempting to view all open grass areas as off-leash dog play areas, it's not safe for other park users. Off-leash dogs can easily get in another user's way on a trail and cause an accident or injury. For people who are afraid or uncomfortable around dogs, an encounter with an off-leash dog can be downright terrifying. In addition, off-leash dogs can instigate aggression problems or fights with leashed dogs. Each year, BPRD receives numerous reports of problem encounters, several resulting in dog bites or injuries.

To play it safe for your dog and other park visitors, please keep the leash attached or visit one of the designated off-leash areas. You love 'em so leash 'em.

■ Julie Brown is the communication and community relations manager for Bend Park and Recreation District.

## Off-leash areas in local parks

Bend has eight off-leash dog areas in local parks including:

- Big Sky Park, 21690 Neff Road, 5 acres, fenced, Bend
- Discovery Park, 1315 NW Discovery Park Drive, 1.6 acres, fenced, Bend
- Riverbend Park, 799 SW Columbia St., 1.1 acres, fenced with river access and small dog area, Bend
- Ponderosa Park, 225 SE 15th St., 2.9 acres, fenced, with small dog area, Bend
- Bob Wenger Memorial Off-Leash Area at Pine Nursery Park, NE Purcell Rd, 18.8 acres, fenced with seasonal splash pad and small dog park, Bend
- Hollinshead Park, 1235 NE Jones Rd, 3.7 acres, unfenced, Bend
- Overturf Butte Reservoir, Skyliner Summit Loop, 4.6 acres, fenced, Bend
- Awbrey Reservoir, NW 10th and Trenton, about 5 acres, partially fenced, Bend

**Small Dog Areas:** There are fenced small dog areas at the Riverbend, Pine Nursery and Ponderosa Park off-leash areas. The criteria for small dogs is less than 15 inches at the shoulder and under 25 pounds.



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