



## Midpen Dog Programs

Midpen offers a Volunteer trail patrol companion dog program as well as docent-led dog outings throughout the year. For more information on these programs or if you are interested in signing up, please visit Midpen's website [www.openspace.org](http://www.openspace.org).



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Revised 9-2018

# A Dog Owner's Guide

## Enjoying your Open Space Preserves



Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District



The Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District offers ten dog-friendly preserves. Before heading out to one of these with your dog, please review the dog access guidelines. Your cooperation and compliance is essential to ensure continued dog access, preserve visitor safety, resource protection, and an enjoyable experience for everyone using the trails.

## Where Can I Take my Dog?

- Coal Creek Open Space Preserve
- El Sereno Open Space Preserve (designated trails only)
- Fremont Older Open Space Preserve
- Foothills Open Space Preserve
- La Honda Creek Open Space Preserve (designated trails only)
- Long Ridge Open Space Preserve (designated trails only)
- Pulgas Ridge Open Space Preserve (17.5-acre off-leash area)
- Sierra Azul Open Space Preserve (Kennedy-Limekiln area only)
- St. Joseph's Hill Open Space Preserve
- Thornewood Open Space Preserve
- Windy Hill Open Space Preserve (designated trails only)

## Why are dogs allowed on some preserves and not others?

Midpen is committed to providing an open space experience for every type of user. However the purpose of the nature preserves is to support, protect, and conserve wildlife and nature. Midpen therefore must find the balance between allowing access to experience the preserves while also continuing to protect these precious habitats.



## Leashes

### Why is a leash required?

- **Protecting Wildlife** — The preserves are a sanctuary for many types of wildlife, with some habitats offering unique breeding grounds. Dogs roaming freely, or simply wandering in and out of vegetation can disturb these creatures, for example driving birds away from their nests.
- **Keeping your Dog Safe** — A leash prevents a dog from accidents like getting lost, falling, or possibly being injured by a fast moving bicyclist. It is possible that dogs can encounter wildlife such as rattlesnakes, bobcats, or even a mountain lion and behave in a way that places them in danger. Leashes also protect your dog from other dogs. Even if your dog is friendly, it doesn't mean the other dog it approaches will be. Dogs may become aggressive in a surprise encounter.
- **Other Users** — Not all visitors enjoy dogs. Some people are afraid of them and can become highly stressed when approached by a strange dog.



## Dog Waste

### Please do not leave dog waste or bagged dog waste on Midpen preserves.

- Dog waste is not only unsightly, it can contaminate storm water run-off, ending up in our reservoirs, creeks, and other waterways.
- Dog waste releases harmful amounts of nitrogen fertilizer to the soil and encourages growth of invasive plants such as nettles and thistles, which compete and outgrow native plants.

These preserves are very similar to what you might find in wilderness areas. There are no trash cans, and it is the responsibility of visitors to pack-it-in, pack-it-out for all waste. Please bag dog waste, and take it with you. Not only is it a Midpen rule, it also helps us protect the environment and natural habitat.

## Health and Safety

Remember, a dog depends on its owner! Be aware that dogs can overheat, particularly on strenuous trails and warm, summer days. With no sweat glands and only panting available to disperse body heat, dogs are much more susceptible to heat stroke than we are. Symptoms of heat exhaustion include heavy panting, dry gums, weakness, confusion and inattention.

- Always carry water for your dog. No water is provided.
- Choose a hike within the limits of your dog's ability.
- Restrict exercise in the heat of the day and hike in the shade whenever possible.
- When your hike is finished, give your dog a thorough once-over for ticks and other bugs.

### The following rules apply at all times:

- Visitors may have no more than three (3) dogs per person.
- Dogs are not allowed in any Midpen water areas, including streams or ponds.
- Dogs must be on a leash 6' long or less. Self-retracting leashes are allowed with a maximum extended length of 25 feet.
- Do not allow dogs to harass wildlife or other visitors.

Be a responsible dog owner. Please remember Midpen follows a set of regulations that are strictly enforced and violations of these rules may lead to a citation. If you are visiting with your dog, it is your responsibility to know and follow all regulations. For a complete list of rules please visit the Midpen website at [www.openspace.org/dogs](http://www.openspace.org/dogs).

