

Article 44

Moratorium on implementation of Natural Resources Commission Dog Restrictions on Conservation Land

Mr. Shobrys moves: that the Town vote to urge the Natural Resources Commission (NRC) to adopt a two-year moratorium on implementing any new NRC dog restrictions on Conservation Land.

Article 44 Moratorium on NRC Dog Restrictions

Why a Moratorium?

- Both sides are frustrated, fatigued and emotional
- We had many meetings with little convergence
- Going forward, collaboration is more efficient than coercion or conflict

Note: Article includes restrictions voted on in December 2017

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Points of conflict

- Conflicting opinions on conditions in Concord
- Lack of data specific to Concord creates confusion over the specific problems being addressed.
- Concord's 1500 dog owning households lose privileges they have enjoyed for decades.
- No acknowledgement of the value of dogs, and their need for off leash exercise

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Precautionary Principle

Taking action under uncertainty. Data is incomplete, but there is evidence that a significant threat exists.

- Climate change: mean annual and seasonal temperatures; crop and ecosystem displacement; Underlying chemistry understood since mid 1800's
- DDT: persistence, bioaccumulation, aquatic toxicity, predatory bird populations

Where is the evidence of a significant threat?

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Moratorium allows

- Cooling off period
- Possible mediation – people on both sides are locked into patterns of interaction
- Educating dog owners to improve etiquette
- Defining a baseline to measure the effectiveness of restrictions.

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Use data to resolve conflicting opinions

- Clearer definition of the specific problem(s) and measures of success in Concord
- Collaborative collection of data specific to Concord **within current budgets**
 - Methods from \$850 Las Cruces NM dog waste study could be part of \$18,000 Ranger program
 - 2015 Open Space and Recreation Plan tasks DNR with **baseline data collection**. Dog owners now work with the DNR on trails and invasives. Engage them in monitoring wildlife and diversity.

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Can we move forward with a collaborative,
fact based approach?

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