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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-0514

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

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SUBCOMMITTEES:
EMERGING THREATS
NSA AND CYBERSECURITY

Senior Whip

January 10, 2017

Mary L. Kendall
Deputy Inspector General
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Deputy Inspector General Kendall:

For the last 40 years, recreation at the Golden Gate National Recreation Area (GGNRA) has included off-leash dog walking. However, as part of a recent effort to create a dog management plan for the GGNRA, the National Park Service (NPS) has proposed to radically restrict the areas in which off-leash and on-leash dog walking is permitted. In dense urban areas like the San Francisco Bay Area, this is a significant and substantial change to residents' use of their public lands.

In late December 2016, as part of an ongoing Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request, NPS learned that a former employee had used a personal email account for official communications related to the Dog Management Plan planning process. These emails, which were released to the public today, make it clear that this employee was deliberately using his personal email in order to inappropriately coordinate with special interest groups. Please see the attached emails for examples of this improper activity.

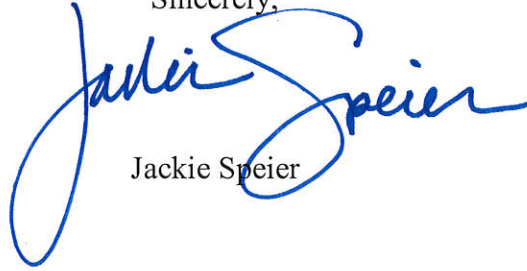
1. The employee sent documents to advocacy groups, and told them to respond only to his home email address. The employee marked this correspondence CONFIDENTIAL.
2. The employee solicited particular viewpoints to submit public comments.
3. The employee may have engaged in prohibited grassroots lobbying by advising advocacy groups on how to communicate with Democratic Leader Nancy Pelosi.
4. The employee coordinated with groups on their advocacy materials.
5. The employee advised advocacy groups on media strategy.

The NPS has stated that it will conduct an "independent inquiry" into whether this personal email was used in a manner that is not consistent with applicable laws and policies, and if so,

whether its use affected the planning and rulemaking processes. While this is laudable, an internal inquiry staffed by NPS employees cannot be truly independent as the NPS claims.

I ask that you conduct a truly independent inquiry into whether NPS employees acted improperly with regards to their work on the GGNRA Dog Management Plan. The use of personal email to improperly coordinate with outside advocacy groups is potentially illegal and must not be allowed.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jackie Speier". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial "J".

Jackie Speier

①

From: Howard Levitt and Wendy Scheffers howandwen@**(b) (6)**
Subject: Doc of interest
Date: July 01, 2015 at 1:43 PM America/Los_Angeles
To: Amy Meyer a7w2m@**(b) (6)**, ndesai@npca.org, rebecca@**(b) (6)**



Amy, Neal, and Becky:

Here's something I believe you were interested in seeing. More to come. Respond only to this home email address.

HL

Attachments:

DOC002.pdf (59.88 kB)

From: Amy Meyer [\(b\)\(6\)](mailto:a7w2m@(b)(6))
Subject: Re: Doc of interest
Date: July 01, 2015 at 1:55 PM America/Los_Angeles
To: Howard Levitt and Wendy Scheffers [\(b\)\(6\)](mailto:howandwen@(b)(6))



Thank you, HL. On Jul 1, 2015, at 1:43 PM, Howard Levitt and Wendy Scheffers wrote: > Amy, Neal, and Becky: > > Here's something I believe you were interested in seeing. More to come. Respond only to this home email address. > > HL > > > Amy Meyer www.amymeyer.com

From: [A](#)
Amy Meyer [\(b\)\(6\)](mailto:a7w2m@(b)(6))
Subject: Re: Doc of interest
Date: July 01, 2015 at 3:14 PM America/Los_Angeles
To: Howard Levitt and Wendy Scheffers [\(b\)\(6\)](mailto:howandwen@(b)(6))
Cc: Neal Desai ndesai@npc.org, Becky Evans [\(b\)\(6\)](mailto:rebecae@(b)(6))

Howard, Now that I've had a chance to study this chart and see how dogs are walking/not walking in various places, what's obviously missing and which I'm sure you'll send us next is how GGNRA's proposed Dog Management Plan provides for them with the same kind of numbers. We will not have a meeting with Dan Bernal until probably the week of July 20. Having these comparative figures all together equivalently will be very useful. Amy On Jul 1, 2015, at 1:43 PM, Howard Levitt and Wendy Scheffers wrote: > Amy, Neal, and Becky: > > Here's something I believe you were interested in seeing. More to come. Respond only to this home email address. > > HL > > >

From: [H](#)
Howard Levitt and Wendy Scheffers [\(b\)\(6\)](mailto:howandwen@(b)(6))
Subject: Re: Doc of interest
Date: July 01, 2015 at 5:52 PM America/Los_Angeles
To: Amy Meyer [\(b\)\(6\)](mailto:a7w2m@(b)(6)), ndesai@npc.org, [\(b\)\(6\)](mailto:rebecae@(b)(6))

CONFIDENTIAL.

More.

Howard

On Wed, Jul 1, 2015 at 1:43 PM, Howard Levitt and Wendy Scheffers <[\(b\)\(6\)](mailto:howandwen@(b)(6))> wrote:

Amy, Neal, and Becky:

Here's something I believe you were interested in seeing. More to come. Respond only to this home email address.

HL

From:

H

Howard Levitt and Wendy Scheffers [\(b\)\(6\)](mailto:howandwen@(b)(6))

Subject:

Re: Doc of interest

Date:

July 01, 2015 at 5:54 PM America/Los_Angeles

To:

Amy Meyer [\(b\)\(6\)](mailto:a7w2m@(b)(6)) ndesai@npca.org, rebecca@[\(b\)\(6\)](mailto:(b)(6))

CONFIDENTIAL

More.

Howard

On Wed, Jul 1, 2015 at 5:52 PM, Howard Levitt and Wendy Scheffers <[\(b\)\(6\)](mailto:howandwen@(b)(6))> wrote:

CONFIDENTIAL.

More.

Howard

On Wed, Jul 1, 2015 at 1:43 PM, Howard Levitt and Wendy Scheffers <[\(b\)\(6\)](mailto:howandwen@(b)(6))> wrote:

Amy, Neal, and Becky:

Here's something I believe you were interested in seeing. More to come. Respond only to this home email address.

HL

Attachments:

[Background.docx](#) (14.5 kB)

[Neighboring agencies.doc](#) (32.5 kB)

From:

A

Amy Meyer [\(b\)\(6\)](mailto:a7w2m@(b)(6))

Subject:

Re: Doc of interest

Date:

July 07, 2015 at 11:10 AM America/Los_Angeles

To:

Howard Levitt and Wendy Scheffers [\(b\)\(6\)](mailto:howandwen@(b)(6))

Howard,

The background document you sent is helpful and we have edited it to suit our needs.

But the Neighboring Agencies paper, while helpful, does not give any comparison with what

GGNRA is offering. Chris pointed out that the dog people say they are only getting to use 1% of the GGNRA. But the GGNRA only controls 13,000 acres of its 80,000. And much of the land is unsuited for people to walk on as well as dogs. We don't need a percent, but we do have to be able to show clearly how GGNRA stacks up against the others.

It isn't necessary to use the same format as the Neighboring Agencies paper, but only to have a paper for GGNRA so as to clearly make comparisons.

We have a meeting with Dan Bernal on Monday July 13.

We need something to show this comparison at that meeting. We plan to send him the Background paper and the Neighboring Agencies paper in advance, this Friday. It would be best to have the comparison paper to send in with the other two.

Amy

On Jul 1, 2015, at 5:54 PM, Howard Levitt and Wendy Scheffers <[<howandwen@\(b\) \(6\)>](mailto:howandwen@(b) (6))> wrote:

CONFIDENTIAL

More.

Howard

On Wed, Jul 1, 2015 at 5:52 PM, Howard Levitt and Wendy Scheffers <[<howandwen@\(b\) \(6\)>](mailto:howandwen@(b) (6))> wrote:

CONFIDENTIAL.

More.

Howard

On Wed, Jul 1, 2015 at 1:43 PM, Howard Levitt and Wendy Scheffers <[<howandwen@\(b\) \(6\)>](mailto:howandwen@(b) (6))> wrote:

Amy, Neal, and Becky:

Here's something I believe you were interested in seeing. More to come. Respond only to this home email address.

HL

<Background.docx><Neighboring agencies.doc>

From:

B

BeckyE [<rebecae@\(b\) \(6\)>](mailto:rebecae@(b) (6))

2

From: Howard Levitt and Wendy Scheffers [\(b\) \(6\)](mailto:howandwen@(b) (6))
Subject: Re: dog comment sample
Date: February 26, 2016 at 9:34 PM America/Los_Angeles
To: Amy Meyer [\(b\) \(6\)](mailto:amy7w2m@(b) (6))



This is a great letter. Yes, we have to find a way to get these letters into the record. On Monday, I'll send you a link to pass on to people who comment on the neighborhood blog.

On Feb 26, 2016, at 4:54 PM, Amy Meyer wrote:

[Adam Green](#) from Sea Cliff

17h ago

As someone with three dogs, I'm all in favor of restricting dogs.

The problem is the arrogant, self-entitled, obstinately righteous "dog lover" owners, not the dogs.

The dogs are fine, even the most poorly socialized dogs that want to bark and bite, it's not the dog, it's the human.

But the restrictions on dogs will give back the beaches to habitat, the wildlife and the people.

It's not just the negligent dog walkers, it's not just the bites, attacks, hospitalizations from severe and permanent injuries, it's not the kids stepping in poop or the damage to the environment, or the indigenous wildlife massacres caused by domesticated cats and dogs, it's all of these plus those imbeciles buying Pit Bulls and other aggressive species as personal weapons.

I'd really like to walk along the beach (or around Lake Tahoe) without having to worry about protecting my children from aggressive dogs or, as happened recently, shooing away a dog that was off-leash and got into the belongings of someone as they were in the lake, then it pissed on their clothes and towels, then I shooed it away again and again till, half an hour later, the "owner" wandered by and pretended to be a dog lover. It's not the dogs, it's the damn owners that think dogs are "people" or even equal to people.

As someone allergic to dogs (yes, you really have to love your dog to be allergic and want to be with him or her ... I'm a mess for half a day after I wash one of our dogs ... runny nose, itchy eyes ... but when that mutt can't rest until he has positioned himself to rest his chin on my foot, it's all worth it times ten ... well, times three, let's say ...) anyway, as someone concerned about health and hygiene, I'm insulted and offended by people carrying their dogs into supermarkets and public spaces or having them in or around cafes -- they're no better than smokers.

It's high time for dog owners to get a clue and stop imposing their lifestyle upon others.

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From: Howard Levitt and Wendy Scheffers howandwen@ (b) (6)
Subject: Re: Dog Management
Date: September 10, 2015 at 9:35 PM America/Los_Angeles
To: Amy Meyer a7w2m@ (b) (6)
Cc: Neal Desai ndesai@npca.org, Becky Evans rebecca (b) (6)



CONFIDENTIAL Dear Amy (and Neal and Becky, too): Thank you for getting some momentum going on this. Yes, letters addressed to Chris asking her to be firm on protecting park resources and allowing for those who don't want a dog experience would be very useful. Cc to Rep Pelosi would also be good, because she is the one we need to stay away from this issue. Dan Bernal and Robert Edmonson need to be able to report to Nancy that there is a very sizable cohort who do not want Golden Gate to become a dog park. Whenever you three feel up to it, I know Chris and I would like to meet to talk about a strategy to activate non-dog advocates to make their voices heard on the Draft Rule. In deep appreciation. Howard On Sep 10, 2015, at 10:14 AM, Amy Meyer wrote: > Howard, > > I have collected one good dog management letter from a neighbor of Sutro Heights Park. It is addressed to you and Chris and it is not electronic but was mailed to me with just your names on it and no park address. > > Since you wrote yesterday that the best estimate for the Dog Management draft rule is now early November, the subject will not be on the September agenda of P4P/P, and for now I don't see the need to meet about it. > > But my having one letter brings up the best way to give the park letters to present to the public and legislators. I expect there will be some kind of electronic form attached to the Draft Rule when it is released and that should get a lot of responses from both sides. But in soliciting letters in advance to support the need for a Rule from the people who don't deal with details but are hot about unpleasant dog stories— a process that takes lots of personal contact and time— am I right in thinking that addressing the letters to Chris and you, and getting them sent to me, Becky, or Neal, by snail mail or e-mail, and our passing them on to you is what you will need to begin a pile of letters of support. > > Please share with us any thoughts you may have as to anything productive we may do during this waiting period. > > Amy > > >

4

From: Amy Meyer a7w2m (b) (6)
Subject: GGNRA Dog Management History
Date: July 14, 2015 at 1:45 PM America/Los_Angeles
To: Neal Desai ndesai@npca.org, Becky Evans rebecca@ (b) (6)
Cc: Howard Levitt and Wendy Scheffers howandwen@ (b) (6)



Neal and Becky,

Howard confirmed 8 locations. I inserted Neal's corrections.

Now I am waiting for Howard to phone me back again: #5 includes San Mateo County. No off-leash accommodation to that county is shown— and that is where Speier is causing trouble. Please read that paragraph carefully to see whether there is a missing clause or sentence, such as "Some (or number of) on-leash sites have been identified."

Please look this over one more time and then I will prepare our 4 page packet.

This paper now has a title.

GGNRA Dog Management History

1. Of the 407 areas of the National Park System, not one permits off-leash dogs, and it is a significant stretch for NPS to even consider off-leash dog use.
2. When Golden Gate National Recreation Area took over the ownership of most of the beach areas of San Francisco and southern Marin, the park's administration acknowledged the long tradition of off-leash dog recreation in those areas of the park. This led to a 1979 recommendation by the Federal Advisory Commission for the GGNRA that dogs be allowed off-leash in different areas of the park, though the recommendation was not informed by scientific research or consideration of other park users. GGNRA made that recommendation park policy.
3. By the mid-1990s, the damage caused by off-leash dogs to dunes, habitat, and wildlife had become evident. When the Federal Advisory Commission tried to rescind the 1979 policy, dog owners went to court. The judge ruled there would have to be a formal public removal of the policy, instead of reverting to the national regulations. GGNRA petitioned the NPS regional and national directorate to allow development of a Special Rule for dog management, for this park only. This regulation would meet the preservation and recreation mandates of

5

From: Howard Levitt and Wendy Scheffers howandwen@ (b) (6)
Subject: Spencer Michels interviews
Date: September 21, 2015 at 12:27 AM America/Los_Angeles
To: Amy Meyer a7w2m@ (b) (6), Neal Desai ndesai@npca.org, Becky Evans
rebecae@ (b) (6), cmargulis@goldengateaudubon.org



CONFIDENTIAL Dear All: I spoke with Spencer Michels, who is producing the PBS News Hour story on Golden Gate dog mgt. He told me his interview line up is Chris Lehnertz, Amy Meyer, Cindy Margulis, Sally Stephens of SF Dog and Save Our Recreation, Huey Johnson, speaking on behalf of dog walkers in general, and maybe Martha Walters of Crissy Field Dog. Amy, it's interesting he's got Huey on his list; I wanted you to know, in case Spencer's questions attempt to pit you against Huey. Huey seems to mostly reflect the interests of Muir Beach dog walkers - he apparently is connected in some way to Laura Pandapas, a very hysterical Muir Beach voice. Three key points re Muir Beach are: a) there are very high resource values at Muir Beach that need protecting, including shorebirds riparian habitat, and creek biota; b) Muir Beach is relatively small and it would be impossible to allow both an off-leash and a dog-free experience, which is possible at the other areas NPS proposes for regulated off-leash use; c) NPS proposes on-leash on the entire beach, which means visitors could still enjoy the beach with their dogs very close at hand - 'on leash' is not 'no dogs.' Meanwhile, a big thanks to each of you for helping to assure that more than one side is heard from in this overheated issue. Gratefully, Howard