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Westy Dog Park Guardians Uncover Environmental Report Misrepresentation

Through Colorado Open Records Act (CORA) requests, the Guardians have found hard evidence the “independent third-party” environmental report was cowritten by Westminster Parks, Recreation, and Library (PRL) staff.

At the cost of \$49,020, the City of Westminster engaged ERO Resources to complete a baseline environmental study on the Westminster Hills Open Space (WHOS). When ERO’s initial findings did not meet the PRL narrative, City staff proceeded to author significant findings to advance their dog-park shrinking agenda, thus removing the assessment’s independence. ERO cut and pasted these amended findings into their final report including, but not limited to:

1. Recommending reduction of dog park size.
 - a. Initial report (page 30): no mention of size reduction
 - b. From PRL: “Consider reducing impact of off-leash dogs by reducing the off-leash area and clearly delineating boundaries. Return the off-leash to the original intent of providing a local off-leash area, not a regional destination.”
 - c. Final report (p 43): “Consider reducing impact of off-leash dogs by reducing the off-leash area and clearly delineating boundaries. Return the off-leash to the original intent of providing a local off-leash area, not a regional destination.”
2. Impact of dog feces on the property
 - a. Initial report (p 23): “Dog feces were not notably present throughout the Property.”

Established in 2024, the Westy Dog Park Guardians are a grassroots pack of pawsome people. We work in collaboration with the City to protect and preserve all 420 acres of tail-wagging, community-building, off-leash fun for well-behaved canines and their human companions.

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- b. Final report (p 33): “Dog feces were notably present throughout the Property.”
- 3. Condition of trails
 - a. Initial report (p 21): “The designated trails on the Property are generally in good condition. In areas of high congestion, trail widening and bare ground is common.”
 - b. PRL feedback: “Can we please adjust this, and site literature to support disturbance *particularly as it applies to dogs off leash.”

“All we ask is transparency,” says Guardian Andrew Guthrie. “It’s disheartening to see plans to reduce the dog park have been in the works since at least September 2023, while in January 2024 the public was told the process is just starting,” Guthrie concluded.

The City of Westminster’s website and recent public comments still indicate the ERO report is an “independent, third-party” environmental report recommends reducing the size.

References: Westminster city site: <https://www.westminsterco.gov/WHOS>

Attachments:

- 1. ERO initial report with City staff comments
- 2. ERO final report
- 3. Email communication from City staff to ERO requesting changes to meet their narrative

Interviews available:

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About Westy Dog Park Guardians: Established in 2024, the Westy Dog Park Guardians are a grassroots pack of pawsome people. We work in collaboration with the City to protect and preserve all 420 acres of tail-wagging, community-building, off-leash fun for well-behaved canines and their human companions. Join our pack at westydogs.org.

Our vision: **A community gathering place for our furry friends to roam.**

Our mission: **To be a responsible community partner with the City of Westminster.**