Clemson dog park now up and running

Official grand opening set for spring

BY GREG OLIVER
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CLEMSON — Dog owners now have a place to walk their four-legged friends as a new 1-acre dog park located at the back portion of Nettles Park has officially opened.

"Our groundskeepers see people every day out there using it," said Clemson Parks and Rec Director Steve Figueroa. "Sometimes, they see five, six, seven dogs out there."

Flooding resulting from recent rains has led Figueroa to look toward spring as far as a grand opening. However, he added that the wet weather hasn't dampened the enthusiasm of those using the facility.

"Everybody loves it," he said. "I get e-mails almost daily from people saying they come out and use the park and enjoy it as well as people we normally don't hear from that much. Several groups are even helping us prepare for the grand opening, and the Concerned Citizens for Animals and Pickens County Humane Society want to be a part of it.

"I guess man's best friend has a lot of supporters."

The overall cost of the park was $16,000, with $13,000 of that for fencing to keep the animals inside as well as benches and a water station. Figueroa said the park allows a dog owner to remove the leash and allow their pet to roam around and interact with other dogs.

Contained within the park is a smaller area for dogs under 25 pounds and another area for larger dogs with an entrance area for them to greet one another. No dog or human food is allowed in the park and no children are allowed, unless accompanied by an adult.

Though no restrictions are placed on dogs based on their breed, the Clemson Parks and Rec Director says the animals must be under voice control and non-aggressive. A sign has also been posted, containing rules for both dogs and owners and emphasizing that the city does not assume any liability.

In addition, Figueroa said owners must clean up after their dogs, and mutt mitts — consisting of plastic gloves — are available for owners to collect waste and dispose of in the proper receptacle. Individual owners are required to place a leash on their dog or dogs if the animal doesn't get along with other dogs in the park.

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Rob Gentry and his dog, Luke, play a game of fetch at the Clemson Dog Park on Wednesday morning.