

Bluffton Opinion

Save the May, clean up after your dog

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Savannah

The sight of dogs on the area's sandbars is as common as pairing a Bud Light can with a Koozie. The two just go together and often do, especially on the big May River sandbar across from Myrtle Island.

Hey, we like dogs as much as the next person and certainly get a kick out of dogs tearing up and down the soft, exposed sand.

A problem arises when, ahem, nature calls and Spot's owners are on the other end of the sandbar engrossed in a game of cornhole, completely unaware of nature taking its course.

While it's certainly a natural function, Spot's poop pollutes the water.

River advocates will tell you that fecal coliform (a sign that fecal matter is in the water) is public enemy No. 1 when it comes to the health of the area's waterways. It's the reason why the S.C. Department of Health and Environmental Control has had to close area oyster beds to harvesting in the Okatie and May rivers in recent years.

The chairman of the May River Management Plan Implementation Committee, Wes Jones, believes dogs on the sandbars are a big enough problem to have suggested that dog owners might keep better track of their four-legged sandbar buddies if a leash law were enforced while on the temporary islands.

"...If the dog defecates on the sandbar, they've got a responsibility to clean them up," Jones said.

While the leash suggestion has just been vocalized, we hope people would just use some common sense and pick up after Spot, regardless if it's on a sandbar or on dry land.

Everything on the ground - dog poop, fertilizers, insecticides, motor oil, you name it - has the potential to wash down the storm sewer and out to sea. And as more rooftops have appeared around town, so has the amount of stormwater runoff, another real problem.

Along with everything else, recent scientific findings indicate that too much fresh water dilutes a saltwater creek or river to the point that the salinity no longer kills fecal coliform bacteria.

Simply put, pick up after Spot.