



P.O. Box 1749
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Item No. 02
Halifax Regional Council
July 26, 2016

TO: Mayor Savage and Members of Halifax Regional Council

Original Signed by Director

SUBMITTED BY: Brad Anguish, Director of Parks & Recreation

DATE: July 14, 2016

SUBJECT: Off-Leash Dogs in Provincial and Municipal Parks

INFORMATION REPORT

ORIGIN

Letter received from Deputy Minister, Nova Scotia Environment (NSE), dated June 21, 2016.

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

Provincial Parks Act and Provincial Park Regulations
By-Law P-600 - Respecting Municipal Parks
By-Law A-700 - Respecting Animals and Responsible Pet Ownership

BACKGROUND

A letter was received from the Deputy Minister, NSE, on June 21, 2016 (Attachment A) regarding enforcement of dogs that are off-leash in Provincial Parks in the Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM). Included with the letter from the Deputy Minister was an educational brochure from Parks Nova Scotia regarding the expectations of dog and owner behavior while visiting Provincial Parks (Attachment B).

DISCUSSION

By way of enforcement of the Provincial Parks Act and Regulations, Provincial Conservation Officers will be conducting compliance activities in Provincial Parks across HRM. This may include reposting signage where necessary, educational pamphlets, and issuing written warnings or fines where appropriate (as advised by the Deputy Minister of Environment in Attachment A).

By way of enforcement of By-Law A-700, Respecting Animals and Responsible Pet Ownership, HRM Compliance Officers will continue to actively patrol Municipal Off-Leash Parks while engaging and educating park users on By-Law A-700 and other park rules and expectations.

While on patrol, officers ensure compliance and respect for the following:

- Dogs must be licensed and the tag on the dog
- Must be on leash outside of the designated off-leash zone
- Dogs cannot run at large
- Owners must pick up after their dogs
- Animals cannot attack
- Owners must carry a leash
- Dogs must come when called

Compliance Officers also respond to complaints received through 311 for incidents that occur in parks. The officers report and record all park activities, both from proactive patrols and reactive complaints. See attachment C for a statistical history of these activities.

If, while on patrol or responding to a complaint, an officer determines a violation has occurred, that officer has the discretion to issue a Violation Notice or a Summary Offence Ticket.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

No community engagement was required.

ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment A - Letter received from Deputy Minister of NSE dated June 21, 2016
- Attachment B - Brochure – Your Responsibilities as a Dog Owner in Nova Scotia Provincial Parks
- Attachment C - Off-Leash Park Patrol Statistics

A copy of this report can be obtained online at <http://www.halifax.ca/council/agendasc/cagenda.php> then choose the appropriate meeting date, or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 902.490.4210, or Fax 902.490.4208.

Report Prepared by: Ray Walsh, Manager of Parks, 902-490-6591

Report Approved by: _____
Bob Bjerke, Chief Planner and Director of Planning & Development, 490-1627

Original Signed

NOVA SCOTIA
Environment
Office of the Deputy Minister

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Our File No.:
10-700-40- 50538

JUN 21 2016

Halifax Regional Municipality

Mr. John Traves, CAO
Halifax Regional Municipality
PO Box 1749
Halifax, NS B3J 3A5

JUN 23 2016

Chief Administrative Officer

Dear Mr. Traves:

Enforcement of the Provincial Parks Act and Regulations is one of the mandated responsibilities of Nova Scotia Environment's Conservation Officers.

One of the infractions officers commonly encounter in provincial parks is in regard to dogs that are off leash. The Provincial Park Regulations require dogs to be on a leash that does not exceed six feet in length and is handheld or securely tied to restrict the animal from running loose. This ensures the safety of all park users including children and the animal. Domestic animal owners must also clean up any excrement left by their animals in the park.

To ensure the safety of all park users and adherence to the Provincial Park Regulations, Conservation Officers will conduct compliance activities in provincial parks in the Halifax Regional Municipality.

An initial phase of this activity includes the reposting of signage where necessary, distribution of educational pamphlets and issuing written warnings as appropriate. Should individuals choose to ignore the regulations, officers will issue a \$180.00 fine for each offence.

I've enclosed a brochure for your information 'Your Responsibilities as a Dog Owner in Nova Scotia Provincial Parks'.

If you have any questions, please give me a call at 902-424-8150.

Sincerely,

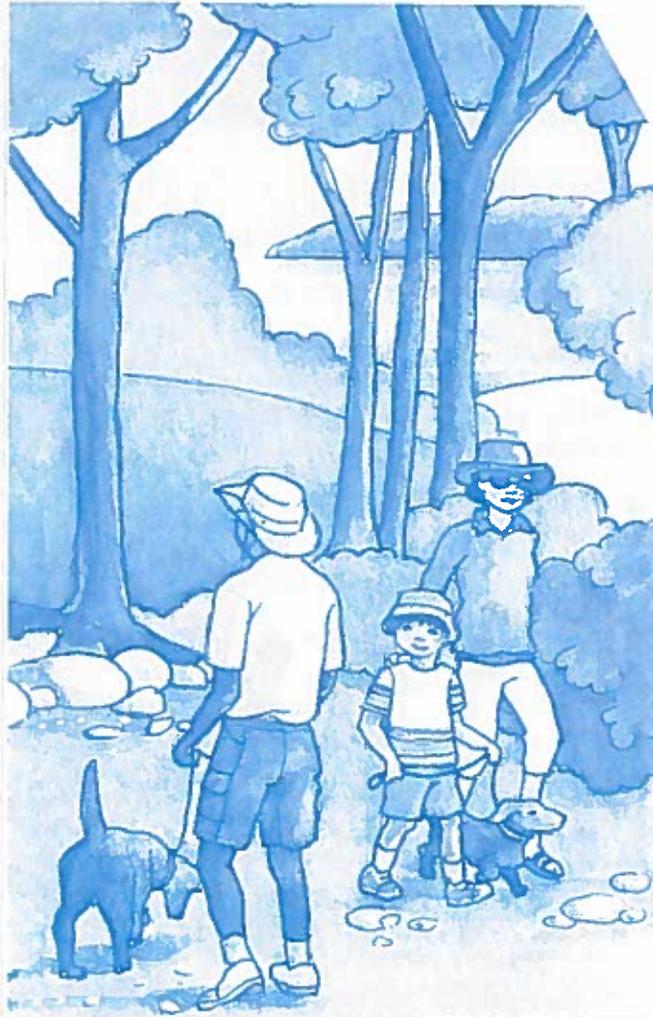
Original signed

Frances Martin
Deputy Minister

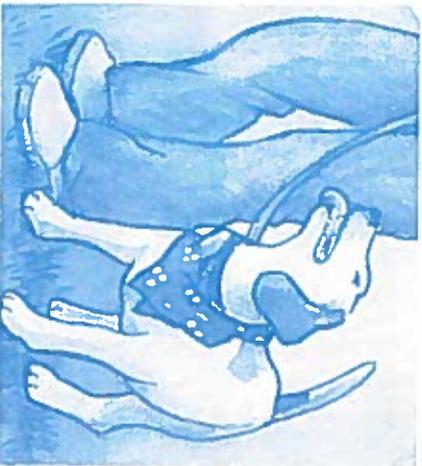
c: Frank Dunn, Deputy Minister, DNR

Your Responsibilities as a **Dog Owner**

in Nova Scotia Provincial Parks




NOVA SCOTIA



You are welcome to bring your pets into Nova Scotia Provincial Parks if you follow these rules:

The rules apply whether the park is open or closed for the season.

- Keep your dog on a leash at all times when in the park including swimming areas.
- Limit the leash length to 2 metres/6 feet.
- Clean up your dog's poop and place it in a garbage container. Garbage containers are removed when parks close. In the off-season you must remove your dog's waste from the park and dispose of it at home.
- Make sure your dog does not make excessive noise or disturb other park users.

It is your responsibility to learn and follow the park rules. If you have questions, talk to park staff or contact your nearest Department of Natural Resources office.

For more information, see the *Provincial Parks Regulations* – <https://www.novascotia.ca/just/regulations/regs/ppregs.htm>

What Happens if My Dog is Found Off-Leash in a Provincial Park?

Park staff or Conservation Officers will ask you to put your dog on a leash immediately.

A Conservation Officer may issue a fine if your dog is off-lead. They have the authority and responsibility to remove your dog from the park if it appears aggressive or out of control.

The minimum fine is \$180.

Tips for a Pleasant Visit

Make sure your dog is immunized against common diseases such as rabies.

Keep your dog out of washrooms, cooking shelters or change houses.

Unless your dog loves camping as much as you do, they may be happier at home with a sitter or meeting new friends at a boarding facility.

Parks exist for the benefit of all who use them. Please be respectful of others and help us make parks an enjoyable experience for everyone.



Remember even the most loving, well-trained dog may act differently or even aggressively when in a new place, around new people, or in the presence of wildlife.

Seven Good Reasons to Keep Your Dog On Leash

- 1 To respect other park users. Some people are allergic to dogs. Some people fear them, even friendly ones.
- 2 To prevent injuries. If your dog frightens or jumps on a child or a senior, they could fall or be easily injured.
- 3 To keep them from chasing or harassing wildlife.
- 4 To protect species at risk. For example, Piping plover nests are easily destroyed by a dog running on the beach.
- 5 To reduce the risk of fights with other dogs.
- 6 To minimize unpleasant or painful encounters with wildlife such as skunks or porcupines. Veterinary treatment for these can be expensive.
- 7 To keep your dog safe. Your dog can't read signs that warn of eroding cliffs, drop-offs or other hazards!



Department of Natural Resources
Parks, Outreach and
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Information Circular PK5 - 80 • Printed June 2016

parks.novascotia.ca

Attachment C - Off-Leash Park Patrol Statistics

PARK	2011		2012		2013		2014		2015	
	PROACTIVE PATROLS	COMPLAINTS	PROACTIVE PATROLS	COMPLAINTS	PROACTIVE PATROLS	COMPLAINTS	PROACTIVE PATROLS	COMPLAINTS	PROACTIVE PATROLS	COMPLAINTS
Point Pleasant Park	181	15	119	27	69	11	70	19	180	18
Shubie Park	259	13	110	23	152	19	60	25	209	71
Dartmouth Commons	38	1	18	4	15	2	12	1	10	0
Hemlock Ravine Park	22	0	16	3	19	4	12	10	12	0
Sandy Lake Park	23	3	20	1	3	0	3	3	13	1
Fort Needham	25	2	15	3	3	2	1	0	6	1
Mainland Common	opened January 1st, 2015								199	12
<i>Totals</i>	<i>548</i>	<i>34</i>	<i>298</i>	<i>61</i>	<i>261</i>	<i>38</i>	<i>158</i>	<i>58</i>	<i>629</i>	<i>103</i>