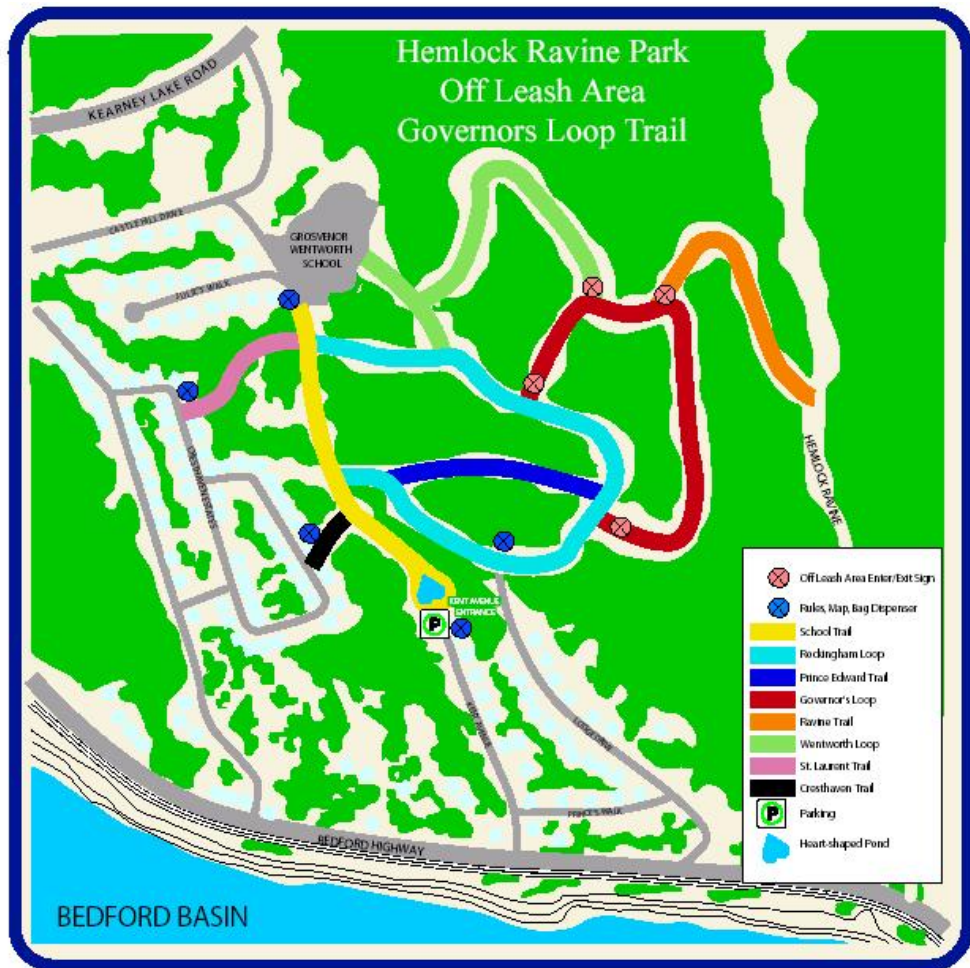


**Hemlock Ravine Park  
Off Leash Area Cleanliness Monitoring Results  
April 28, 2008**

**Background**

A key goal of the Off Leash Park Areas Strategy is to ensure off leash areas are clean and free of dog waste. Monitoring for compliance with this goal is the responsibility of the HRM Interdepartmental Off Leash Strategy Committee.

Hemlock Ravine Park was monitored on Monday, April 28. Small survey flags were placed beside locations in the park where owners had failed to clean up dog waste. The School Trail, Rockingham Loop, and Governors Loop were surveyed.



The area surveyed was extensive and the results were encouraging with only thirty flags used. All this is good news but due to extensive winter icing of the trail system from December to early April, the park has had limited use over the past number of months.

The majority of dog owners who regularly use the park are local residents. The location and limited hours of operation of the Governors Loop off leash area is well suited for neighbourhood use and unlikely to attract large numbers of visitors.

It was evident that some of the waste was left during the winter but most had occurred recently. Six flags were used on the School Trail. Two flags were used in the Governors Loop off leash area. The remaining deposits of dog waste were located along the Rockingham Loop.



**Flags along the Rockingham Loop**

Although the results of the survey were generally favorable, further monitoring will take place as more dog owners visit the park in the coming weeks. Gentle reminders and peer pressure are often mentioned as helpful strategies to remind dog owners to pick up after their pets however chronic non-compliance should be reported to HRM at: 490 4000. A description of the dog, owner, time and location of the offence can be used by animal control and bylaw officials to identify offenders.



**Governors Loop**

## **Recommendations**

It is unlikely that the cleanliness of the park will deteriorate in the coming months however the Interdepartmental Off Leash Strategy Committee now has survey results for the park that will provide a baseline to measure ongoing compliance by dog owners. If dog waste becomes a chronic problem at Hemlock Ravine Park the Committee may decide to consider revoking dog related privileges in the Park by invoking Section 3.4 of the Strategy

### **3.4 Discretionary Park Redesignation Process**

At its discretion, the Committee may revoke an on leash or off leash area designation and impose a “No Dogs” designation in a park or sportsfield where dog owners chronically fail to follow the “Stoop and Scoop” provisions of the Dog By-law. The Committee may also choose to apply a “No Dogs” designation in a park or sportsfield where chronic user conflicts or environmental impacts cannot be resolved. The Committee will prepare an information report to the responsible Council stating its concerns and its intention to redesignate the affected park. This will be accompanied by a published public notice (14) days before the “No Dogs” designation is scheduled to take effect. On a semi-annual basis, reinstatement appeals will be considered by the Committee.