



Welcome to Laurier Woods!

A Message from the Friends of Laurier Woods
and the North Bay-Mattawa Conservation Authority (NBMCA)



We are readying for a new year with new trails, a larger area and planned activities in Laurier Woods Conservation Area. As the interest and enjoyment of Laurier Woods has grown, so has the problem with dogs off leash. This letter is part of the second annual effort to inform our patrons of the requirement to keep all dogs leashed and under control in Laurier Woods and to thank those who are supporting this initiative.

People are drawn to Laurier Woods by their love of nature and the outdoors. This is the reason The Friends of Laurier Woods have supported and protected this property for many years. Visitors can escape the traffic and congestion of down town and hike the trails while in the centre of our city. It is a natural place to take dogs for exercise and an enjoyment. Seniors enjoy walking the trails, as well as joggers, nature photographers, and families with small children. **This is not an environment that lends itself to dogs running off leash or to dog feces left on the pathways.** Your pet may be friendly and gentle, but to a person who is not comfortable with dogs, they represent a threat when they come running towards them. There have been some near misses in the past with people being knocked over, photographers interrupted, and owners with dogs on-leash being frightened and jumped on. In fairness to everyone and in keeping with the regulations, NBMCA the Friends of Laurier Woods wants to remind pet owners that ***poop-and-scoop rules apply and pets must be leashed and under control at all times in the woods.***

These rules are consistent with Conservation Authority Act and Regulations as well as the City of North Bay's by-laws. They are posted and will be more rigidly enforced during the coming year. Here are our concerns:

1. Public Safety: Visitors to the woods can be knocked over and injured by free running dogs and there are many people who are not comfortable around dogs. They have a right to enjoy the woods safe and secure that they will not be surprised or frightened in this way. There are legal implications with animals being allowed to run free anywhere in the city.
2. Animal Safety: Leashed dogs can be injured by larger dogs and are not easily to defend themselves or get away. Off leash dogs may encounter wildlife off the trails and could be injured by bear, racoons, porcupine, fox and so on.
3. Conservation: Dogs instinctively act as predators when running in a natural environment. They can kill or injure wild. Many wildlife species are instinctively fearful of dogs, causing them to become startled, stressed, abandon nests or use their limited energy to vacate an area. Dog feces can transmit a number of harmful pathogens to wildlife such as: Parvovirus, Muscle Cysts, Leptospirosis and parasites (ticks, tapeworms and fleas). Beaver cannot separate dog from wolf feces and can abandon their habitat when there is a large presence of poop in the area.

Laurier Woods should be accessible to everyone in an environment of mutual respect and sharing. We do not want to see any person or animal injured in this preserve. We value this secure, conservation area and are asking you to share our commitment to prevent its destruction.

**Thank you to all the responsible pet owners
who are sharing and enjoying this wonderful park with everyone.**