



**PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT**, 3424 Meridian, Bellingham, Washington 98225  
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October 22, 2010

Anara Thomas  
Grateful Dogs Off-Leash Association  
P.O. Box 31884  
Bellingham, WA 98228

Bobbie Ruth Langley  
The Placid Pet, Inc.  
P.O. Box 2188  
Bellingham, WA 98227-2188

Dear Anara and Bobbie Ruth,

Earlier this year I wrote to you regarding sediment runoff to Lake Whatcom at Bloedel Donovan Park as a result of turf damage from off-leash dogs. As I indicated, turf damage during winter months is excessive and this "bare-soil" condition contributes to the Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) of sediment runoff to the lake. The State Department of Ecology and the City's Stormwater Division issued a warning to my department that this condition cannot persist or a citation will be issued.

Thanks to the Grateful Dogs Off-Leash Association and The Placid Pets for providing suggestions to alleviate this problem. Most of your suggestions necessitated the purchase of temporary fencing and relocating it as needed. Unfortunately, the City does not have the resources to implement such a program. Since August we've met with the City's Stormwater Division and brainstormed alternative solutions to this problem. It has become apparent that use of the area by off-leash dogs has increased to the point where the "carrying capacity" of beach area cannot withstand the use. We either need to limit the number of users or shorten the time of use. We've chosen to implement the latter. Beginning on December 1, 2010 Bloedel Donovan Park will only be available for off-leash dog use until 10:00 a.m daily. The all-day use of the Park will be discontinued. If this remedy does not resolve the problem we will need to relocate the off-leash dog area to the open field south of the parking lot.

This change in policy is not a convenient solution for dog owners; however, we hope you understand that protection of Lake Whatcom is one of the City's highest priorities. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Paul Leuthold

Director of Parks and Recreation

C: David Webster, Chief Administrative Officer  
Marvin Harris, Park Operations Manager  
Bill Reilly, Surface & Stormwater Utility Manager