

Goose Management Strategy

In June 2015, Council adopted in principle, the recommendations contained in the Goose Management Strategy for the Mount Arrowsmith Biosphere Region as prepared by the Guardians of Mid-Island Estuaries Society (Guardians) and directed staff to implement a cull program in 2016 as well as other goose management initiatives. The strategy outlines in detail, the data collection over five years undertaken by the Guardians to support the report's recommendations. The City's news release dated February 2, 2016, outlined goose mitigation initiatives undertaken by the City since 2004 and also the permitting process to conduct a cull.

On June 26, the City conducted a cull of geese from the Englishman River estuary. A total of 484 geese were captured and killed in a humane manner according to Environment Canada and the Canadian Wildlife Services best practices for Canada Goose management and standard operating procedures developed by the Province of BC and approved by the BC Wildlife Chief Veterinarian. The BC Wildlife Chief Veterinarian was onsite to oversee the process and tested all geese for avian flu.

The City of Parksville and the Guardians received permits from the following:

- Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations, West Coast Region - to hunt, trap or kill Canada Goose during the open or closed season as the regional manager considers it necessary for the proper management of the wildlife resource.
- Environment Canada – letter of authorization to conduct damage or danger permit activities on private property (Parksville Qualicum Wildlife Management Area and all lands within).
- Environment Canada - letter of authorization to conduct damage or danger permit activities on private property (Englishman River Estuary/Nature Trust of British Columbia).
- Permission from Surfside RV Resort Ltd to access the property to undertake the cull.
- Canadian Wildlife Service, Environment Canada – for the collection, destruction and disposal of eggs and the removal and destruction of nests for the purpose of encouraging migratory birds to relocate elsewhere.
- Environment Canada Migratory Bird Damage or Danger Permit.

The Migratory Birds Regulations do not allow “donation of birds to another person or entity, including permit nominees”. K’omoks First Nation members participated by breasting some of the meat. The remaining carcasses were disposed of according to animal disposal guidelines and may be used to help feed other birds like hawks and eagles held at wildlife rehabilitation centres.

The City wishes to thank the Guardians of the Mid-Island Estuaries Society and the many volunteers who participated in the cull. Over time, less year-round resident geese will help to restore the degradation and overgrazing along the estuary channel and also less risk to human and animal health. Please refer to the City's website <http://www.parksville.ca/cms.asp?wpID=507> for background information.

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For more information:

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