

OPPOSITION TO KILLING OUR GEESE

Talking Points, Unanswered Questions and Non-Lethal Suggestions

*Canada geese are beautiful, intelligent birds
who mate for life, fiercely protect their eggs and young,
and display loyalty for other members of their flock.*

Talking Points:

- The Lake of the Pines Board of Directors is yet again working to obtain a depredation permit from US Fish & Wildlife Services to kill our geese. Last year 80 geese were shot in early spring. In the fall MORE geese were killed when the Board approved “hunting” in our community. We estimate, in addition to the 80 healthy Canada geese killed with the deprivation permit, that another 120* could have possibly also been killed by the hunt.
- The Lake of the Pines (LOP) recommendations for reducing our geese population is fatally flawed.
- Creating a bogus “problem” to justify killing of our geese is a disgrace and a sham.
- IF the “problem” is human health and safety, then scientific water testing data must be provided for LOP’s water, not another community 25 miles away. To this date no evidence has been provided to verify a health problem exists at LOP. In fact, historical water testing data suggests the contrary.
- The human waste seeping into the water at Lake Wildwood is the genius of the health issues in that community NOT the geese (more than likely, the geese became infected FROM the contaminated water).
- The claim of a “potential” water quality health issue, without scientific testing and verification, does NOT justify another Canada goose killing spree in our residential community. It has not been justified, is not supported, and it will not be tolerated.
- LOP’s three-year historical water quality report DOES NOT support increased E.coli levels as some LOP Board members would have everyone believe.
- Killing geese in our well populated, active, residential community is blatantly irresponsible. In addition to teaching children that solving wildlife/human conflicts is accomplished by killing wildlife, destroying their nests, and young, the horrific impact on our children and grandchildren seeing these beautiful birds being shot and maimed, their dead bodies piled up on the beach, and tossed into the trash is shocking and unconscionable.
- Killing geese to reduce population numbers results in a “Rebound or Compensatory Rebound Effect” which means that the remaining geese produce greater numbers of gosling births and/or other geese move in. The so-called “problem” becomes exacerbated.

Unanswered questions:

1. What are the historical geese numbers during specific times of the year?
2. On a long-term basis, how effective, or ineffective, is lethal culling compared to non-lethal methods to reduce geese populations?
3. Why weren't all members of the LOP Homeowners Association asked to vote on whether they approved of a **deprivation permit** to slaughter the community's Canada Goose population, destroy their nests and developing young?
4. Is hunting to kill wildlife at LOP an activity supported by a majority of the membership?
5. Why weren't all members of the LOP Homeowners Association asked to vote on whether they approved of a **waterfowl hunting season**, IN ADDITION TO THE DEPREDATION PERMIT to slaughter even MORE of the community's Canada Goose population?
6. Is the (prohibited & illegal) feeding of wildlife by community members correlated to the size of the Canada goose population?
7. Will the community's safety be compromised again with firearms being discharged in private areas where owners have not given permission and/or within unsafe distances to structures?
8. Will pets and/or members be at risk of errant shotgun blasts?
9. Will more members be threatened by Board members when raising concerns about the killing of the geese?
10. Are the sounds of gunshot blasts in our community consistent with our way-of-life at LOP and the reasons we chose to live here? Many of us reside here BECAUSE we enjoy the wildlife, lakes, and natural settings.

Alternatives & Options to Lethal Canada Geese Depredation Culls & Hunts:

- The following activities must be considered and implemented WITH CONSISTENCY and planning:
- Develop an education program and materials for LOP members. Feeding geese is illegal for many reasons and we know it may create problems for neighbors.
- Feeding bans should be strictly enforced including fines levied for non-compliance.
- Consistently employ non-lethal methods of site management, such as maintaining tall grasses and/or bushes at the edge of the water to discourage the birds.
- Utilize humane methods to deter the birds, such as LOW-Powered lasers used at twilight and dawn, flags, mechanical scare devices, herding dogs, audio sounds, and more which have been effective in diminishing geese populations OVER TIME.
- Work with organizations like Geese Peace (www.GeesePeace.com) to institute a comprehensive and scheduled diversion program.
- Evaluate OvoControl and other birth control contraceptives.
- Agree upon a coordinated effort to locate geese nests and institute HUMANE egg deprivation protocols.
- Research a mechanical, remote-controlled hazing device like “The Goosinator.” (<https://goosinator.com>)
- Evaluate the feasibility of purchasing a large capacity “sand sifting” machine like CleanSands.com (this asset will also keep the beaches free of other debris.)
- Employ sweepers to monitor trails, pathways and sidewalks to remove goose droppings.
- Residents of LOP are open to a win-win solution that does not harm, but rather, promotes and supports the natural LOP landscape that everyone wishes to protect.

* This number is based on LOP’s September 18, 2020 document titled “Goose Depredation During Resident Canada Goose Season and Annual Waterfowl Season Protocols and Procedures” (page 2). HUNTING BAG LIMITS: If there were 4 hunters that had *possession limits* for a 5 day period (the “early season”) that would be 30 dead geese x 4 hunters = 120 dead geese. We are forced to estimate because the LOP Board has yet to release the total number of dead geese.