



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Animal and
Plant Health
Inspection
Service

Wildlife Services

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July 12, 2016

Mill Creek MetroParks
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Mr. Avery,

Thank you for contacting Wildlife Services (WS) for assistance in reducing damage from resident Canada geese (*Branta Canadensis*). Between 30 March and 25 May 2016, WS conducted a total of 7 site visits to Mill Creek MetroParks property. Wildlife Services employees added Canada goose eggs at 6 different sites located on park-owned property. Egg adding was conducted in accordance with the approved 2016 Ohio Division of Wildlife nest destruction permit, which was obtained by the MetroParks.

Mill Creek MetroParks have been managing the damages associated with a growing goose population since 2010. In 2014 the goose population at the Mill Creek MetroParks exceeded sociological carrying capacity and as a result a round up of geese was completed to reduce the impacts to park facilities and water quality. As expected, in 2015 there were significantly lower numbers of nests and eggs due to the 2014 round up.

In total, WS located 69 nests (**Figures 1; 2; 3**) and treated 363 eggs during the 2016 nesting season. A global positioning system (GPS) coordinate was obtained for each treated nest (**Attachment 1**). Multiple banded birds were observed. Banding numbers that were visible were submitted to the United States Geological Survey (USGS) for banding data (**Attachment 2**). There was an average of 5.26 eggs/nest. Generally, 3-4 goslings in a brood will reach flight stage. Factoring in the 363 eggs that WS treated, it is estimated that 207 to 276 flight stage Canada geese were prevented from entering the population on Mill Creek MetroParks property. When compared to 2015 efforts, the number of goose nests located and eggs treated in 2016 was higher at every site (**Table 1**). This is likely a result of the mild winter and favorable weather conditions during nesting season. There was a 21% increase in the number of nests located and a 44% increase in the number of eggs treated at the Newport Wetland site. No nests were located at Lily Pond and Lake Cohasset sites. There were 2 nests located and 11 eggs treated at Lake Glacier which was an increase from 2015 when no nests were located. Three separate pairs of geese with varying numbers of goslings were observed at Lake Glacier post egg adding efforts. Specific attention was given to the wooded area across West Glacier Drive on the west side of the lake because WS suspected nesting activity occurred there in 2015. It is believed that the geese with goslings observed in this area had come in from surrounding private properties. There was a 210% increase in the number of nests located and a 271% increase in the number of eggs treated at the Wildlife Sanctuary site. The use of a kayak to access each impoundment allowed for greater goose nest locating success rates. Small islands with thick vegetation, which provide favorable nesting habitat, were more accessible and allowed for WS to better investigate likely nesting sites. Early detection was important as emergent vegetation made access with the kayak more difficult later in the season.



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Table 1. A comparison of the number of Canada goose nests located and the number of eggs treated on Mill Creek MetroParks owned and managed property, 2013-2016.

Year	2013		2014		2015		2016	
	Nest	Eggs	Nest	Eggs	Nest	Eggs	Nest	Eggs
Newport Wetlands	34	164	37	201	29	124	35	179
Lily Pond	0	0	3	15	0	0	0	0
Lake Cohasset	0	0	6	30	0	0	0	0
Lake Glacier	0	0	2	10	0	0	2	11
Wildlife Sanctuary	2	2	4	12	10	45	31	167
Other**	0	0	0	0	1	4	1	6
Total	36	166	52	268	40	173	69	363

** A Canada goose nest was treated at a Mill Creek MetroParks maintenance building that is not depicted on the included maps.



Figure 1. Canada goose nest treatment locations (yellow dots) at the Newport Wetlands site, 2016.



Figure 2. Canada goose nest treatment locations (yellow dots) at the Lake Glacier site, 2016.



Figure 3. Canada goose nest treatment locations (yellow dots) at the Wildlife Sanctuary site, 2016.

Because habitat features attracting Canada geese are found on MetroParks properties, it is realistic to expect that geese will continue to utilize these areas. Therefore it is recommended that the following methods to reduce Canada goose damage continue as part of an integrated Canada goose damage management plan at your location:

- The unlawful act of feeding geese or other waterfowl by the public should be actively enforced. Signs stating that feeding of waterfowl is prohibited have been posted in public and common areas. With posted signs already in place, it is recommended that enforcement be pursued especially with repeat offenders until feeding is discontinued. If feeding is not discontinued it should be expected that large numbers of geese will reestablish in a short period of time causing additional damage.
- Harassment activities in areas where geese are not desired should continue and must be implemented immediately when geese are present for maximum effectiveness. Harassment may include the use of loud noises, chasing on foot or with vehicles, pyrotechnics, dogs, etc. It is important to be persistent and proactive with harassment efforts to ensure that geese do not become established in large numbers. Please remember to check with your local authorities to ensure that these tools or techniques are legal to use in your area.
- Egg addling/nest destruction of Canada goose nests should be continued and pursued aggressively. In Ohio, geese begin to nest as early as late February and can continue through May 31, so the MetroParks should be vigilant during these times and nests should be treated during the entire nesting season to prevent hatching. Permits for egg addling/nest destruction can be obtained through the Ohio Division of Wildlife.

Additional information for managing waterfowl damage may be found on our web page at: <http://www.aphis.usda.gov/wps/portal/aphis/ourfocus/wildlifedamage> and at the Ohio Division of Wildlife's web page at: <http://wildlife.ohiodnr.gov/species-and-habitats/nuisance-wildlife>. If you have any questions or need additional assistance, please contact our office at 330-726-3386.

Attachment 1. Locations (Latitude and Longitude) of Canada goose nests treated by Wildlife Services, 30 March-25 May 2016. (NW=Newport Wetlands; SAN=Wildlife Sanctuary; MG=Maintenance Garage; GL=Lake Glacier)

<u>ID Number</u>	<u>Latitude</u>	<u>Longitude</u>
NW1	41.050738	-80.677765
NW2	41.052881	-80.676411
NW3	41.053328	-80.676718
NW4	41.053388	-80.676039
NW5	41.054514	-80.676689
NW6	41.054099	-80.677465
NW7	41.054160	-80.677523
NW8	41.053090	-80.677112
NW9	41.054169	-80.678359
NW10	41.054401	-80.678439
NW11	41.054519	-80.678626
NW12	41.054439	-80.677428
NW13	41.054360	-80.676890
NW14	41.054630	-80.677080
NW15	41.054200	-80.678240
NW16	41.054340	-80.678800
NW17	41.053930	-80.678500
NW18	41.053780	-80.677520
NW19	41.052200	-80.675540
NW20	41.054090	-80.678790
NW21	41.054410	-80.677090
NW22	41.050550	-80.675740
NW23	41.053170	-80.676530
NW24	41.053010	-80.676090
NW25	41.053270	-80.676090
NW26	41.053360	-80.677090
NW27	41.054180	-80.677540
NW28	41.054100	-80.677470
NW29	41.054530	-80.678600
NW30	41.053970	-80.678270
NW31	41.054110	-80.676940
NW32	41.050780	-80.680190
NW33	41.054500	-80.677220
NW34	41.054700	-80.677190
NW35	41.052030	-80.675500
SAN1	40.978260	-80.689670
SAN2	40.976950	-80.689640
SAN3	40.976310	-80.696040
SAN4	40.978820	-80.695110
SAN5	40.978290	-80.692600
SAN6	40.978320	-80.692560

<u>ID Number</u>	<u>Latitude</u>	<u>Longitude</u>
SAN7	40.978120	-80.689670
SAN8	40.977600	-80.689650
SAN9	40.977280	-80.689630
SAN10	40.976600	-80.693980
SAN11	40.977440	-80.696000
SAN12	40.979390	-80.695080
SAN13	40.978930	-80.695250
SAN14	40.978230	-80.692400
SAN15	40.978060	-80.692180
SAN16	40.977840	-80.689650
SAN17	40.976700	-80.689610
SAN18	40.976200	-80.693500
SAN19	40.975050	-80.691550
SAN20	40.974630	-80.691640
SAN21	40.979320	-80.693310
SAN22	40.979190	-80.689670
SAN23	40.978400	-80.692760
SAN24	40.978430	-80.689670
SAN25	40.977470	-80.691750
SAN26	40.976780	-80.689620
SAN27	40.977360	-80.689620
SAN28	40.977230	-80.689630
SAN29	40.977780	-80.689640
SAN30	40.978280	-80.692470
SAN31	40.977930	-80.689650
MG1	41.088710	-80.702500
GL1	41.100810	-80.671930
GL2	41.091680	-80.675610

Attachment 2. Banding information from banded waterfowl species viewed on MetroParks properties during Canada goose egg/nest treatment.

1038-33376 = Species: Large Canada Goose

Date banded: 06/26/2008

Banding Location: KENSINGTON, COLUMBIANA COUNTY, OHIO, USA

Age: WAS TOO YOUNG TO FLY WHEN BANDED IN 2008

Sex: FEMALE

1078-42108 = Species: Large Canada Goose

Date banded: 06/20/2012

Banding Location: PETERSBURG, COLUMBIANA COUNTY, OHIO, USA

Age: WAS TOO YOUNG TO FLY WHEN BANDED IN 2012

Sex: FEMALE

1038-33448 = Species: Large Canada Goose

Date banded: 06/26/2008

Banding Location: AUSTINTOWN, MAHONING COUNTY, OHIO, USA

Age: HATCHED IN 2007 OR EARLIER

Sex: FEMALE

95v = Species: Great Egret

Date banded: 06/26/2014

Banding Location: COLLINGWOOD, ONTARIO, CANADA

Age: WAS TOO YOUNG TO FLY WHEN BANDED IN 2014

Sex: UNKNOWN

Leg Band Number: 1987-17219