

**REPORT TO CAPITAL REGIONAL DISTRICT BOARD  
MEETING OF WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 12, 2022**

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**SUBJECT**     **Bylaw No. 4522 – Regional Goose Management Service**

**ISSUE SUMMARY**

The Capital Regional District (CRD) Board requested the development of a regional Goose Management Service and a report outlining costs for such a service.

**BACKGROUND**

At the June 8, 2022 CRD Board meeting, staff were directed to bring back a report outlining costs for a Canada Goose Management Service. Staff provided an Initiative Business Case that included the costs for this service in the provisional budget. This report provides a draft establishing bylaw for consideration (Appendix A) and provides further details of the proposed cost-share for a goose management service (Appendix B).

**ALTERNATIVES**

*Alternative 1*

1. That Bylaw No. 4522, “Canada Goose Management Service Establishment Bylaw No. 1, 2022”, be introduced and read a first, second and third time;
2. That participating area approval be obtained by regional alternative approval process; and
3. That Bylaw No. 4522 be forwarded to the Inspector of Municipalities for review of the elector approval method.

*Alternative 2*

That Bylaw No. 4522 be deferred pending further information from staff.

**IMPLICATIONS**

*Environmental & Climate Implications*

The current Vancouver Island Canada goose population ranges from 10,000 to 15,000, with an estimated 3,500-7,000 birds over-wintering in the capital region. Data from banded birds confirms that Canada geese are moving between regions on Vancouver Island. In the capital region, the Canada goose population had an annual growth rate of 16% from 1977-1997 (Christmas bird count), while survey data from 2017-2021 indicates the population is roughly doubling every 4.3 years.

The inconsistent and uncoordinated approach to managing goose populations across the region has resulted in moving geese and their associated impacts into new areas, continued expansion of nesting and over-wintering populations, and increasing ecological, economic and social impacts to agricultural and recreational lands, estuaries and wetlands. Stewardship groups report

significant and ongoing damage to native ecosystems on nearshore islands and to important estuaries, as a result of increasing goose populations, while the farming community reports significant and ongoing agricultural and economic impacts from geese.

#### *Service Delivery and Intergovernmental Implications*

A regional Canada Goose Management Service would provide coordinated management of Canada goose populations and would include:

- a) monitoring, mapping, reporting on Canada Goose populations and their impacts
- b) coordinating and establishing collaborative partnerships with municipalities, First Nations, large landowners, Peninsula and Area Agricultural Commission, other government agencies and stewardship groups to implement the CRD's Regional Canada Goose Management Strategy and manage Canada Goose populations in the region
- c) facilitating the development and implementation of a communications strategy and public education program to support the management of Canada Goose populations; and
- d) collaboration with other Vancouver Island regional districts, local governments and First Nations to reduce Canada Goose populations through the Vancouver Island Canada Goose Management Working Group.

#### *Financial Implications*

An Initiative Business Case outlining the proposed annual budget for a Regional Goose Management Service has been submitted as part of the provisional budget package.

Staff have proposed potential costs for this regional service be cost-shared based on population (50%) and converted assessment (50%) for the participating partners. The proposed cost apportionment for the participating partners for 2023 is presented in Appendix B.

#### *Legal Implications*

A regional district may operate any service it deems desirable, provided that on establishment of the service by way of service establishing bylaw, it received participating area approval. There are three options to obtain participating area approval for Bylaw No. 4522: regional alternative approval process; municipal consent on behalf with alternative approval process (AAP) in the electoral areas; and referendum/elector assent.

As a regional goose management service is only effective if all municipalities and electoral areas participate, a regional AAP is advised. This would put the responsibility of objecting to the service on the electors, who, if 10% were not in favour, could determine not to proceed. An alternative is the municipal consent process, which would permit any municipality or electoral area, by AAP, to effectively veto the creation of the service if they were not in favour of its establishment. Given an AAP is already required in the Electoral Areas, it is recommended a regional AAP be pursued.

### **CONCLUSION**

Increasing populations of Canada geese in the capital region are causing significant impacts to estuary habitats, ecological reserves, recreational fields, beaches and lakes, and agricultural crops, resulting in increasing pressure on local governments to take coordinated action. Staff

have prepared a service establishing bylaw to monitor goose populations and to coordinate partnerships between land use agencies under various jurisdictions, including First Nations, federal and provincial wildlife agencies, parks and recreation boards, local and regional governments, airport authorities, farmers and other owners of large properties to support effective management of Canada geese in the capital region.

**RECOMMENDATION**

1. That Bylaw No. 4522, “Canada Goose Management Service Establishment Bylaw No. 1, 2022”, be introduced and read a first, second, and third time;
2. That participating area approval be obtained by regional alternative approval process; and
3. That Bylaw No. 4522 be forwarded to the Inspector of Municipalities for review of the elector approval method.

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| Submitted by: | Peter Kickham, M.E.T. R.P.Bio. Acting Senior Manager, Environmental Protection |
| Concurrence:  | Larisa Hutcheson, P. Eng., General Manager, Parks & Environmental Services     |
| Concurrence:  | Kristen Morley, J.D., General Manager, Corporate Services & Corporate Officer  |
| Concurrence:  | Robert Lapham, MCIP, RPP, Chief Administrative Officer                         |

**ATTACHMENTS**

- Appendix A: Bylaw No. 4522, “Canada Goose Management Service Establishment Bylaw No. 1, 2022”
- Appendix B: Goose Management Service – Participant Apportionment