



**SEP 3 0 2020**

Mr. Colin Plant  
Chair  
Board of Directors  
Capital Regional District  
625 Fisgard Street  
Victoria BC V8W 2S6

Dear Mr. Plant:

Thank you for your letter of July 22, 2020, concerning the nuisance temperate-breeding Canada Geese in Victoria, British Columbia. I am also responding to your correspondence of August 12, 2019, addressed to my predecessor, the Honourable Catherine McKenna, on this issue, and I regret the delay in responding.

Canada Geese and Cackling Geese are migratory birds that are protected under Canada's *Migratory Birds Convention Act, 1994*, which prohibits killing or capturing migratory birds, or damaging, destroying, removing or disturbing their nests, except as provided for under the *Migratory Birds Regulations*. Environment and Climate Change Canada's Canadian Wildlife Service is responsible for overseeing the implementation of this legislation.

Canada Geese are a valued natural resource for many Canadians. They provide an appreciated source of wildlife viewing and, for some, a source of food. However, they do cause conflicts in some areas, particularly in urban and agricultural contexts where some populations may have access to food, water and shelter year-round and so may not migrate at all. Environment and Climate Change Canada strives to meet its mandate to protect and conserve migratory birds while also providing expert advice and issuing permits to authorize otherwise prohibited activities if Canada Geese are causing, or are about to cause, serious damage or danger.

Efforts have been undertaken by the Department to control Canada Goose populations. For example, in recent years, hunting regulations for temperate-breeding Canada Geese have been liberalized in Southern Canada in several provinces, including British Columbia. Municipalities are encouraged to re-evaluate firearm discharge bylaws to further enable hunting where it is safe and appropriate to do so. However, conflicts persist in some areas where Canada Geese cannot be safely harvested by traditional hunting methods.




In urban areas, habitat modification and other methods are considered to be the most efficient ways to address nuisance Canada Goose. But when habitat modifications and other non-lethal control efforts are demonstrated to be insufficient to reduce serious conflicts, Environment and Climate Change Canada can assist landowners and local or regional governments. The Department may issue damage or danger permits to undertake otherwise prohibited activities such as destroying eggs or killing adult birds. For example, in Saanich and elsewhere on Vancouver Island, Environment and Climate Change Canada approved several “kill to remove” and “egg destruction” permit applications in recent years.

For further information, I invite you to consult the Department’s handbook for managing Canada Geese and Cackling Geese in Southern Canada ([www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/migratory-bird-conservation/managing-conflicts.html](http://www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/migratory-bird-conservation/managing-conflicts.html)) in order to assist landowners. Should you have further questions, please contact Mr. Ian Parnell, Environment and Climate Change Canada’s Manager for Wildlife and Habitat Assessment, Canadian Wildlife Service, Pacific Region, at [ian.parnell@canada.ca](mailto:ian.parnell@canada.ca).

I appreciate your bringing the concerns of the Capital Regional District’s Board of Directors to my attention. Please accept my best regards.

Sincerely,



The Honourable Jonathan Wilkinson, P.C., M.P.