



Secord Lake Association
Goose Management Plan – April 16, 2025 edition
Questions / Suggestions: SecordLakeAssociation@gmail.com

It is recognized Secord Lake needs a Goose Management Program. The Secord Lake Association is a volunteer club. As property owners and friends of Secord, we seek to create a safe, enjoyable lake environment for generations to come.


With 69 miles of shoreline and 1100 acres of water, the entirety of Secord Lake will need a coordinated effort.

As the regulations or laws regarding the management of geese have changed, and are highly regulated, this will require collaboration between property owners, townships, Secord Lake Association, MI DNR, and vendors hired to help manage this situation for Secord Lake. You do not need to be a member of the SLA to volunteer or help.

Here is a high-level summary of the regulatory requirements:


Goose Management

- **MI DNR stopped Goose Round Ups in 2025.**
- **Phase One: Discourage Geese (This Year on Secord)**
 - Do not feed them.
 - Scare devices.
 - Barrier Fencing.
 - Dogs.
 - Hunting (Sept 1 into Feb)
- **Phase Two: Nest and Egg Destruction Permit (Next Year)**
 - If done right, the Geese will migrate North.
 - 70% of lakefront property owners agree via signed petition, or townships approve resolution.
- **Phase Three: Goose Capture and Euthanasia Permit (Several Years Out)**



We published a Secord Lake Association Goose Management Plan with tips and tricks along with information from the MI DNR.

We will be interviewing mitigation companies to learn more.



For calendar **2025**, we will execute **Phase One to Discourage Geese**. The following pages contain information provided by the MI DNR. **On page 3 there is a summary of things landowners can do to deter geese from their property.** We encourage you to read and implement some of these ideas on your lake front.

As we move through the year, we will collect feedback from lake property owners to finalize plans to move to Phase Two in 2026. This will include obtaining the required approvals, permits and hiring of a licensed professional. The Secord Lake Association fund raising efforts will help offset this cost.

Our research indicates a successful Phase Two execution is the best way to manage geese. The more nests destroyed over time, the fewer geese the lake will hold. Our desire is to not need Phase Three.

For those that want to learn more via video. This 10-minute video explains the situation:

<https://youtu.be/KFkhVuucFGs> The following link is to a more detailed 47-minute 2019 MI DNR Egg and Nest Destruction Training Video [Egg and Nest Destruction Training Video \(Classroom Portion\) - YouTube](#)

Please read the following materials from the MI DNR with tips and tricks to deter geese on page 3 you can implement on your lake front property.

Nuisance Canada goose FAQs

What is the Canada Goose Program?

This Canada Goose Program has been developed to give private landowners (including businesses and other commercial entities) options to address goose-human conflicts on their sites. The program focuses on resident Canada geese, which remain in Michigan year-round and are typically responsible for most conflicts. The program has procedures for the issuance of permits to address conflicts.

What changes have been made to the Canada Goose Program?

Beginning in 2025, nest and egg destruction permits will be available statewide and will no longer have geographic restrictions.

Beginning in 2025, Canada goose round up and relocation will no longer be allowed. All birds permitted for capture will be euthanized. 2025 will be a pilot year for the program with very limited capture and euthanasia permits allowed. This is to allow time to assess logistics, costs, capacity, and interest in the program.

USDA-APHIS Wildlife Services will be conducting all Canada goose capture, transport, and euthanasia. [Canada Goose Contractors](#) can still respond to incidents of aggressive pairs of nesting geese and conduct nest and egg destruction.

Why have there been changes to the Canada Goose Program?

Managing human-goose conflicts in urban and suburban areas has become increasingly challenging because of municipal development and ordinances that limit hunting, reduced human tolerance of geese, and increased disease concerns (e.g., Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI)).

Previously, most round up participants hired a licensed nuisance animal control company to remove the birds. Most geese that were rounded up were relocated to suitable sites such as State Game Areas. However, moving geese increases the risk of transmission and spread of diseases such as HPAI and there is a lack of suitable release sites because relocating geese risks moving the conflict from one location to another. Relocation of geese also only provides a short-term resolution of the conflict because geese typically return to the capture site once they can fly.

What are goose-human conflicts?

Goose-human conflict occurs when goose behavior is unwanted by humans, or vice versa. For example, goose feces in parking lots can be a conflict for humans, whereas human disturbance to nests can be a conflict for geese. Reducing conflicts relies on managing these behaviors, with the goal to create coexistence between geese and humans.

What are some things landowners can do to deter geese from their property?

First, do not artificially feed geese or other waterfowl. Feeding concentrates geese, causes the loss of wild instincts, aggression, and can lead to nutritional imbalance.

If permitted by law in your area, hunting geese is a very effective and economical tool to control goose populations. [Goose hunting seasons](#) stretch from September 1 into early February in various locations across Michigan. Some of these seasons are set to specifically target resident geese. The annual Michigan Waterfowl Hunting Regulations Summary contains season dates and bag limits; but you should also check local township firearm ordinances for local hunting closures.

Scare devices can be a cost-effective way to repel geese when applied consistently as soon as geese arrive on your property prior to nesting. There are many commercial companies that sell scare devices such as shell crackers, screamers, bird alarms, motion detector accessories, electronic noise systems, bird bangers, rockets, and distress cries. There are also visual stimuli techniques used to scare geese such as bird scare balloons, plastic flags, Mylar scare tape, predator effigies, and laser deterrents. Physical barriers such as fences can be used to exclude flightless geese from lawns during their molt. Barrier fencing works most effectively when placed along shorelines but should only be used at times when young birds would not be trapped on land. Fencing may be as simple as two strands of twine at the water's edge. Some [Canada Goose Contractors](#) offer these services.

Many locations have reported success using **dogs** trained to chase geese off the property. Increasingly, lakefront property owners are also reporting that their dogs are effective at deterring geese. Dog service companies are available for hire. **Commercially available repellents** can be applied on lawns to deter geese from feeding on the grass. The disadvantage to using repellents is that they are effective only over a short period and rain or mowing reduces their effectiveness.

Using a combination of several different control methods and changing tactics often to prevent geese from becoming conditioned to any one of them, often has the best results. In addition, studies show that geese exposed to hunting are more likely to respond to scare devices outside the goose hunting seasons. If you have questions about these methods or they are not successful, [contact your local Wildlife Biologist](#).

As a last resort, you can also contact the DNR to inquire about Canada goose nest and egg destruction.

Why are Canada geese so often found on golf courses and lakefront properties?

Urban and suburban developments with manicured lawns, abundant water bodies, and refuge offer all the resources that geese need to thrive. Geese are attracted to lawns mowed short but are not as attracted to taller grasses or other vegetation; therefore, simple landscape alterations can be used to deter geese from your property by making your yard less attractive to geese. For example, an un-mowed 6-foot-wide shoreline buffer of tall native grasses or a hedgerow 20 to 30 inches tall can discourage geese from visiting your lawn.

What are Nest and Egg Destruction Permits?

If other methods of control are ineffective, destroying Canada goose nests and eggs may be an option for reducing local Canada goose populations. If done properly and at the right time, nest destruction will prompt Canada geese to migrate north on what is called a molt migration. Landowners are encouraged to first use

alternative methods (e.g., scare devices) to address Canada goose conflicts on their site before participating in nest and egg destruction. Nest and egg destruction can only be done under a permit (no fee) issued by USDA-APHIS Wildlife Services. Applicants may also hire a [Canada Goose Contractor](#) to perform this service.

There are no longer any geographic requirements for Nest and Egg Destruction Permits (permits are available statewide).

How can landowners participate in Canada goose nest and egg destruction?

Landowners are strongly encouraged to first use alternative methods to address Canada goose conflicts on their site before participating in nest and egg destruction. If alternative methods have failed to remedy the issue, landowners can contact USDA-APHIS Wildlife Services at mi.goose.permits@usda.gov to request a nest and egg destruction permit.

For lakes, lake associations, or sites with multiple property owners surrounding the lake/site, a signed petition from at least 70 percent of the lakefront property owners or a government resolution approving the activity is required. A resolution must be approved by the local government official (township, city, etc.), which represents the property owners on the subject lake, body of water or site, approving nest destruction for their site. A copy of petition or resolution must be sent with [application](#) to USDA-APHIS Wildlife Services.

What is the Canada goose Capture and Euthanasia Permit?

If landowners are still experiencing conflicts with Canada geese after they have tried a variety of control methods including nest and egg destruction, they may request a permit to have geese on their lake or site captured and humanely euthanized by USDA-APHIS Wildlife Services. To be eligible for capture and euthanasia permits, sites must have participated in nest and egg destruction and either meet approved human health and safety criteria OR have a minimum of 100 geese on their site at time of permit application.

What are approved human health and safety situations that would allow the capture and euthanasia of Canada geese?

Human health and safety situations include:

- Where exposure to geese could have serious health consequences because at least some patients/residents will have compromised health or mobility (e.g., nursing homes, medical care facilities, hospital containment ponds).
- Serious broad scale health-related concerns that cannot otherwise be prevented (e.g., from ponds used to supply fire suppression water at corporate sites or wastewater treatment ponds where droppings and feathers can clog water intakes) or safety concerns (e.g., car proving grounds).
- Public or private swimming beaches where there are elevated E. coli counts according to EGLE's water quality standards and large numbers of Canada geese that pose a threat to large groups of people.
- A permit may be issued for a site that provides official documentation of a swimming beach closure last year due to elevated E. coli counts and has a large number of geese currently using the area.

- Public parks that have participated in the Canada Goose Round Up Program since 2017, either continuously or intermittently, and where the average number of birds over the last three round up periods is > 500.

Why aren't Canada geese rounded up and relocated anymore?

The Canada Goose Program used to allow the round up and relocation of geese. Most participants in this activity hired a licensed nuisance animal control company to move the birds to suitable sites such as State Game Areas. Beginning in 2025, relocation of geese is no longer be allowed because moving geese increases the risk of transmission and spread of diseases such as [highly pathogenic avian influenza \(HPAI\)](#) otherwise known as bird flu. Additionally, round up and relocation is also not an effective long-term solution for addressing Canada goose conflicts and has had limited success in reducing the number of goose complaints. Round up and relocation provides only short-term resolution of human-goose conflicts because adult geese instinctively return to previous breeding sites. It does provide property owners temporary relief, but different birds may move back into the area within a short time. Unless the attractive habitat is modified, or birds are repeatedly removed from the population (via hunting), geese will return. Relocating geese is not allowed or a long-term solution, because as human and goose populations grow, there are fewer places to put rounded up geese where the natural habitat can support them, and they will not cause additional conflicts.

What costs are associated with Canada goose capture and euthanasia?

Most sites will be charged a non-refundable \$200 DNR permit fee per site (\$100 for single family residences). In addition, applicants must bear any costs charged by USDA-APHIS Wildlife Services to capture and euthanize the birds.

What happens to the geese after they are captured and euthanized?

As of 2025, we are working towards the goal of offering the option for participating sites to pay to have the meat processed, tested for contaminants, and donated. Until then, or in lieu of a successful donation program, the euthanized geese will be landfilled. We will update this page as new information becomes available.

Are there any special criteria for multiple sites under one Nest and Egg Destruction and/or Capture and Euthanasia Permit(s)?

For applicants that have multiple sites, sites must be located within one mile of each other to be included on the same application and permit. A one-mile buffer is used because 80 percent of Canada goose broods will move one mile or less between nesting sites and brood-rearing areas.

In general, multiple lakes cannot apply for Nest and Egg Destruction or Capture and Euthanasia Permits under one application. Lakes identified and named as separate and individual water bodies (e.g., on plat maps, USGS topo maps, etc.) must apply as one site in an application, regardless of if they are connected by channels. Likewise, lakes that have separate lake associations must apply as one site in an application.

Applicants that do not comply with the above criteria will risk ineligibility of program participation the following year.

Who do I contact for more information?

USDA-APHIS-Wildlife Services for permit applications: mi.goose.permits@usda.gov

Permit Specialist for permit regulations questions: dnr-permitspecialist@michigan.gov

[Contact your Local Wildlife Biologist for site-specific questions.](#) [Customer Service Centers](#)

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