



(<https://greaterparkhill.org>)

Receive Email From GPHC
cghfranck@aol.com



Denver Goose Kill Sparks Controversy

By newspaper537 / July 31, 2019 / News (<https://greaterparkhill.org/category/news/>)

Secret Round-up Violates City's Own Policy

By *Cara DeGette*

Editor, GPHC

In late June, top officials from the Denver Parks and Recreation department launched, without public notice, an operation to remove 1,662 geese from several city parks, including City Park just west of Park Hill. After the geese were killed, they were processed and, according to the city, their meat given to organizations to distribute to people in need.

The pre-dawn roundups, in the works since last October, occurred the same month that Parks and Rec published a Goose Management Program that includes several proposals to tackle the city's growing goose population. Among the top recommendations: the critical need for public outreach and support.

The roundups, conducted by U.S. Department of Agriculture workers at an hour when parks were closed to the public, occurred while the geese were in molting season and could not fly, and shortly after their goslings had hatched.

Parks deputy executive director Scott Gilmore defended the decision, saying the goose populations in some parks had become untenable.

"We get so many complaints about people coming out here with a blanket to sit on the grass, and they cannot sit on the grass because there's so much goose poop in the parks," Gilmore told Fox31. Several city council members, as well as many park enthusiasts, supported the roundups. Others were horrified by the wholesale removal of the animals.

Several critical details

Lost amid the controversy were several critical details. Most notably, the city's Goose Management Program, dated this June – the same month the roundups began – includes multiple statements underscoring the need for public support and acceptance of any goose management plan, including lethal control.

Denver has taken other steps to reduce goose populations, including oiling goose eggs to prevent them from hatching, and using a "Goosinator" machine to harass the geese.

"Besides hazing and egg treatment, the next most important part of a Resident Canada Goose Management Plan is public outreach and support," according to the document. (The city's policy, along with the contract and permit to kill the geese, can be read online here. (<https://greaterparkhill.org/2019/07/denver-geese-kill-documents/>))



This photo of a goose couple with their goslings was taken last year at Ferril Lake in City Park. Photo by Mark Silverstein



Goose checking out cyclists racing through City Park in 2017. Photo by Reid Neureiter

"The public's understanding of the specific measures being performed, and their support of those strategies are necessary for the success or failure of a control program."

Other sections highlight the need to educate the public via notification boards, bulletin boards or brochures. It was recommended a survey be conducted to gauge public opinion on the city's goose management plans. "Public relations or outreach is important to success."

The Parks and Recreation department did not conduct public outreach or notification before the roundups occurred. Spokeswoman Cynthia Karvaski said the city did not alert the media "for the safety of employees."

The June goose management plan describes the possibility of euthanization as a last resort – not as an already decided action plan. However, Denver's plan to catch and kill the geese and donate the meat to an unidentified source was actually put in motion last fall.

Contract signed last October

On Oct. 22, the city agreed to pay the USDA approximately \$150,000 for goose management and wildlife damage services. The contract, signed by Mayor Michael B. Hancock, named parks deputy director Gilmore as the project administrator.

Several months later, on June 5, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service issued the permit to cull as many as 2,200 geese, plus a number of other bird species, including mourning doves, red tailed hawks, great horned owls and mallard ducks.

The roundups began in mid-June, and continued into July. After several news outlets were tipped of the city's actions, the story erupted in controversy. Many residents expressed support for the eradication underway. Others were shocked by the sudden removal of the geese.

One group, Canada Geese Protection Colorado, organized with a mission to promote non-lethal methods of controlling wild birds in parks, and to hold government officials accountable.

On July 23, the national advocacy group Friends of Animals filed a lawsuit against Colorado Wildlife Services, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

The suit, which does not name Denver as a defendant, claims the federal and state agencies failed to conduct any analysis for potential health risks associated with consuming meat from geese that may have been exposed to pollutants and pesticides. In addition, the suit alleges the permit to cull the Denver geese did not expressly allow processing and distributing the birds for human consumption.

After the roundups, officials initially refused to provide details, including where the geese were processed or ended up. They later identified the Denver nonprofit Metro Caring as one of the recipient organizations, but have not said where the rest of the meat ended up. That is also at odds with the city's Goose Management Program, which specifies, "if [euthanized] birds are to be processed for human consumption, the name of the processing location, costs and final distribution location must be included in the request."

Holding officials accountable

Canada geese live up to 24 years in the wild, and mate for life. The Humane Society of the United States objects to killing them simply because they are regarded as nuisances.

Numerous cities and towns across the country have adopted non-lethal programs for controlling goose populations – including, in Colorado, Greeley and Fort Collins. Asking the public to not feed them, setting up "tolerance zones" and robust public education campaigns are all recommended. Many cities have programs to clean up the goose poop from sidewalks, grass and pathways in the spring, when the geese are molting and when their mess is most annoying.

Christine Franck, a member of the Denver goose protection group, said she is distressed the park she spends the most time in – Washington Park – is now devoid of geese. She wishes that city officials had first tried the other methods their Goose Management Program identified as possibilities, including dog hazing, tapping volunteers to haze and clean up poop, and spraying the grass with a chemical the geese don't like.

"I recognize that others feel differently," Franck said. "But whether or not we can agree about the geese, we should all be able to agree that our city should be engaging and informing us, allowing opportunities for public input and alternative solutions."

Share this GPHC Page:

 (<https://greaterparkhill.org/2019/07/denver-goose-kill-sparks-controversy/#print>)

 (<https://greaterparkhill.org/2019/07/denver-goose-kill-sparks-controversy/?share=twitter&nb=1>)

 (<https://greaterparkhill.org/2019/07/denver-goose-kill-sparks-controversy/?share=facebook&nb=1>)

 (<https://greaterparkhill.org/2019/07/denver-goose-kill-sparks-controversy/?share=linkedin&nb=1>)

Empty search input field

SEARCH

EVENTS

FREE FARM STAND (HTTPS://GREATERPARKHILL.ORG/GPHC-EVENT/FREE-FARM-STAND/)
Mondays from 10:00am - 1:00pm June through October Come by and pick up some free produce. If you are[...]

41ST ANNUAL PARK HILL HOME TOUR & STREET FAIR (HTTPS://GREATERPARKHILL.ORG/GPHC-EVENT/41ST-ANNUAL-PARK-HILL-HOME-TOUR-STREET-FAIR/)
Sunday, September 8 from 11:00am - 5:00pm On a Sunday, Sept 8th, the Greater Park Hill Community (GPHC), along[...]

GPHC ANNUAL MEETING (HTTPS://GREATERPARKHILL.ORG/GPHC-EVENT/GPHC-ANNUAL-MEETING/)
Thursday, October 3rd at 6:00pm GPHC's Annual Meeting will be held on Thurs, October 3rd at 6:00pm at the[...]

[Read More » \(/events/\)](#)

BECOME A MEMBER

Your membership supports our mission and our programs, keeps you "in the know" through our monthly member email, and provides you with voting privileges at our annual meeting in October. Click to join us today!

MOST RECENT ARTICLES

ONEIDA PARK CENTER NEAR CAPACITY (HTTPS://GREATERPARKHILL.ORG/2019/07/ONEIDA-PARK-CENTER-NEAR-CAPACITY/)
Once Sleepy Business Block Bustling; Traffic and Parking Woes Spill into Surrounding Neighborhood Story and photos by Cara DeGette Editor,[...]

DENVER GOOSE KILL SPARKS CONTROVERSY (HTTPS://GREATERPARKHILL.ORG/2019/07/DENVER-GOOSE-KILL-SPARKS-CONTROVERSY/)
Secret Round-up Violates City's Own Policy By Cara DeGette Editor, GPHC This photo of a goose couple with their goslings[...]

THOUGHTS ON LEADERSHIP (HTTPS://GREATERPARKHILL.ORG/2019/07/THOUGHTS-ON-LEADERSHIP/)
It's Time For Our Elected Officials To Up Their Game By Brenda Morrison For the GPHN Given Denver's rapid[...]

IN THE MOOD FOR NECTAR ([HTTPS://GREATERPARKHILL.ORG/2019/07/IN-THE-MOOD-FOR-NECTAR/](https://greaterparkhill.org/2019/07/in-the-mood-for-nectar/))

Rufous-tailed Hummingbirds zip up to Colorado from Mexico and Central America in May for the summer, and head back[...]

CHALLENGES AT HALLETT ([HTTPS://GREATERPARKHILL.ORG/2019/07/CHALLENGES-AT-HALLETT/](https://greaterparkhill.org/2019/07/challenges-at-hallett/))

Imagine Being A School Without Boundaries Imagine a young family lives at 29th and Jasmine. During the school year, they[...]

[Read More » \(https://greaterparkhill.org/2019/07/challenges-at-hallett/\)](https://greaterparkhill.org/2019/07/challenges-at-hallett/)

Support GPHC & Our Programs

Every dollar counts! *Gifts of any size support our programs serving neighbors in Greater Park Hill. From our food pantry to our sustainability initiatives, we couldn't do it without you.*

[MAKE A DIFFERENCE TODAY » \(/GET-INVOLVED\)](#)

 Greater Park Hill Community, Inc. (GPHC), est. 1961 (<https://greaterparkhill.org>)

About Us (<https://greaterparkhill.org/about-us/>)

Join Us (<https://greaterparkhill.org/join-us/>)

Newspaper (<https://greaterparkhill.org/newspaper/>)

Food Programs (<https://greaterparkhill.org/food-programs/>)

Sustainability (<https://greaterparkhill.org/sustainability/>)

Events (<https://greaterparkhill.org/events/>)

Resources (<https://greaterparkhill.org/resources/>)

 2823 Fairfax St., Denver, CO 80207  303-388-0918  info@greaterparkhill.org (<mailto:info@greaterparkhill.org>)

The Greater Park Hill Community, Inc. is a tax exempt 501(c)3 non profit organization.

Copyright © 2019 Greater Park Hill Community, Inc. (GPHC), est. 1961. All Rights Reserved. Site by VectorDefector.com (<http://www.vectordefector.com>).

Follow Us:

