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CANADA GEESE
PROTECTION COLORADO

CGPC calls for continued action although Denver hints at not killing Canada geese in 2021

August 10, 2020, Denver, CO - Canada Geese Protection Colorado (CGPC) acknowledges the recent [“Update Summary of 2020 Goose Management Efforts”](#) by Denver Parks and Recreation (DPR) Deputy Executive Director Scott Gilmore that “although we do not have final data from this year’s culling efforts, preliminary numbers are indicating that our population management goals have been met, and culling will not be necessary in 2021.” Mr. Gilmore’s public statements have reiterated an intention not to kill in 2021. However, he has not made a firm commitment.

While we welcome DPR’s new commitment to “engage the public” on wildlife management issues, DPR’s announcement does not verify that there will be no further killings. Rather, it only states “culling will not be necessary in 2021.” CGPC remains concerned that this leaves open the possibility of future round-ups and slaughters. The 2019 and 2020 round-ups were a unilateral exercise of unchecked power. Despite protestations to the contrary, the round-ups were done without the public engagement, notification, and transparency required by the city’s own initiatives and policies. DPR’s understanding of transparency is to provide the public with information, which is still determined by DPR; however, a transparent process must involve a two-way discussion. The continued lack of accountability and oversight that our elected and appointed officials exhibited in their decision to kill Canada geese is the same lack of public engagement being called out weekly on other issues in City Council.

We are somewhat relieved in knowing that DPR confirms the geese killed in this year’s slaughter “will be tested” and that “no meat will be donated before test results confirm the safety of the meat.” We recognize that while there is no legal compulsion to hold donated meat to any standards whatsoever, we appreciate that -at a minimum- the city recognized the moral obligation to its citizens and took initial steps to honor the legitimate concerns touching on questions of food safety.

CGPC supports DPR’s plans to focus on effective application of humane, non-lethal management of Canada geese, to include: nest destruction prior to egg laying, testing the eggs for fertility before oiling, use of visual deterrents and non-lethal predator simulation, conversion of bluegrass turf to tall, low-maintenance vegetation along shorelines, and the use of dogs for hazing. A crucial measure necessary to understand Canada geese populations is to initiate a leg-band research program. The program should engage existing data that may suggest the effectiveness of non-lethal management

methods and ideas. The program needs to also incorporate more comprehensive natural and cultural histories of the species which can be paired with population data. CGPC continues to call for an examination of research questions and evidence necessary to support management efforts.

CGPC continues to push for the City to identify locations where goose droppings continue to coincide at high-levels with human traffic (e.g., viewing platforms, boat launches, etc.) and to use turf- or path-cleaning equipment to target those areas.

In summary, the 2019 cull led to sustained public opposition, a petition with 5,342 signatures asking for the killings to stop, a 2019 lawsuit alleging the initial cull broke the law, multiple public forums, including at least two organized independently of CGPC, and hours of public comment. CGPC's advocacy has empowered Denver residents to call out the secretive nature by which DPR contracted with USDA/APHIS-WS, and the absence of efforts to garner public support for lethal methods of Canada goose management.

CGPC's ongoing actions have also provided a backdrop against which national organizations including PETA, In Defense of Animals, Friends of Animals, United Poultry Concerns, and individuals such as Colorado's First Gentleman Marlon Reis, and many more have condemned the killing of this sentient species that mates for life and co-parents their young.

To ensure that DPR carries the new plans forward with transparency and accountability, we recommend an Urban Wildlife Advocate advisory position be created to provide testimony to City Council and relevant advisory and oversight boards that report to the Council, including but not limited to the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board (PRAB). This person or persons must not hold or report to a position which would create a conflict of interest in the city's political structure. In addition, we call for the creation of an Urban Wildlife Task Force comprising concerned citizen groups, wildlife organizations, and DPR officials.

[Canada Geese Protection Colorado, LLC](#) is a grassroots activist group, which was formed in 2019 by local residents outraged by the slaughter of 1,662 geese in Denver's parks. CGPC's mission is to encourage the City and County of Denver to stop killing Canada geese, shift to non-lethal and humane alternatives of goose engagement, engage and notify the public in a meaningful manner, and support our food insecure local residents with healthy, non-pesticide-laden food.