



*The document will be updated as new questions are asked. If you have a question, check here **FIRST**. If you have other questions, contact [emailer@rsca.org](mailto:emailer@rsca.org).*

*This information has been reviewed by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, CA Dept. of Fish & Game, and is presented with the cooperation of the City of Redwood City.*

---

*Updated March 20, 2012 9:16 AM*

## **ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS on Canada Goose Mitigation in the Shores:**

### **Question #1: What am I being required to do?**

**A:** With one exception, all of the methods for controlling movement and location are suggestions for voluntary actions that can help keep Canada geese from feeding on and fouling your property with their droppings. That one exception is FEEDING ANY WILDLIFE, which is a misdemeanor offense in California, whether on public or private property.

Please remember, though, that resident Canada geese remaining in this area will move to those properties and concentrate in areas where no control measures are being used.

**Question #2: What prevents the City from disrupting nests and preventing eggs from hatching in the protected wildlife habitat areas surrounding the Shores?** I didn't expect these areas would protect "nuisance" species. Being able to address these nests and eggs in those areas might help reduce our local population.

**A:** The wildlife area surrounding the Shores are under control of the CA Dept. of Fish & Game (DFG) and U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (FWS) and are "protected" wildlife preserves. Basically, no one can do anything to disturb any wildlife in those preserve areas.

**Question #3: How can a species like the Canada goose be both a "protected" species and a "nuisance" species?**

**A:** Migrating Canada geese are a protected species, and their numbers have remained fairly constant over the last 50 years. It is only when the Canada geese cease migrating, settle into an urban area, become "resident", and begin to over-populate that area that they become a "nuisance" species.

There is no clear way to distinguish between migratory and resident Canada geese, so regulations in place to protect the migratory birds must be respected for ALL Canada geese.

# Canada Goose Mitigation in Redwood Shores: ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS

**Question #4: Why not trap & remove the geese?** It appears, on the surface, to be quicker, more effective, and better value for money & effort required. Presumably this could be done outside the protected wildlife habitat areas. And if they were found free of disease & parasites, the geese could be donated to local charities?

**A:** Again, although the numbers of resident Canada geese have increased to the point of being recognized as a "nuisance", the migratory birds are still federally protected, and there is no clear way to distinguish between the two.

Wildlife officials also note that removing existing Canada geese does not prevent new geese from moving and settling into the same area, so this would only be a temporary solution.

Permitting for the removal of Canada geese in any particular area is difficult and has extremely narrow parameters. The only place of which we are aware in which such permits have been granted is around the New York City airports, and this was only after the near catastrophic downing of USAir Flight #1549 in 2009 ("Miracle on the Hudson"). In certain NY-NJ areas they are trapping the geese, taking them to a poultry processor, then donating the dressed birds to local food banks. See the following New York Times article for details:

<http://cityroom.blogs.nytimes.com/2011/06/15/culled-geese-are-bound-for-tables-not-dump/>

The best approach is to make our open spaces less hospitable to those Canada geese who want to settle here, and those methods have been described.

**Question #5: Why not allow increased hunting of Canada geese in the wildlife areas surrounding the Shores? Wouldn't this help reduce the local population?**

**A:** CA DFG has early season hunts intended for resident bird populations. Unfortunately when birds are well fed outside of legal hunting areas there is less success. DFG's experience is that the Canada geese quickly move out of hunting areas, then return as soon as the hunting season ends.

There is also the issue of not being able to distinguish between resident and migratory Canada geese, and we don't want to take action that would have a negative impact on the migratory population.

**Question #6: What about using "screachers" close to the wildlife preserve areas? Won't these disrupt the wildlife in these protected areas?**

**A:** Very good point. Noisemakers that imitate birds of prey probably should not be used close to the levees and the wildlife preserve areas surrounding the Shores.



# Canada Goose Mitigation in Redwood Shores: ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS

## **Question #7: Does the restriction on feeding wildlife mean I need to remove my hummingbird feeder?**

**A:** In a very technical sense, “maybe”. But small feeders for native hummingbirds and small songbirds are not creating any problem that US FWS or CA DFG feels needs to be addressed.

However, large bird feeders that create “spillage” of feed onto the ground attracts squirrels, rats, raccoons, and other nuisance species. These feeders should be removed.

## **Question #8: What should I do if I see someone feeding geese?**

**A:** If you are in the City parks or other public areas and there is a “No Feeding” sign nearby, you need to use your own discretion as to whether you might want to point out the sign to that person. Families with young children especially might be unfamiliar with the law and penalties.

If you see the same person several times feeding any wildlife in the parks or along the waterways, contact Valerie Matonis at Redwood City Parks & Rec by email, [vmatonis@redwoodcity.org](mailto:vmatonis@redwoodcity.org), or phone (650) 780-7250.

Please provide the location, times, and if possible a description of the person. We recognize that we DO have a few habitual feeders in the Shores who may need more than a gentle reminder.

## **Question #9: What should I do if I know someone is putting out food on their property?**

**A:** If you live in one of the Shores HOAs, first contact your association management. Each HOA should determine how it wants to deal with these feeding issues on its private property.

If you live in one of the Shores apartment complexes, contact your apartment management. Again, the management should make its own decisions about dealing with these issues on those properties.

## **Question #10: Comments on ENFORCEMENT in general?**

**A:** The City will be placing more “No Feeding” signs with stronger language around the parks and public areas. We are encouraging our HOAs, businesses, and other private property owners to do the same, and we will provide exact language, artwork, and a source vendor for those signs shortly.

We want to make all Shores residents aware that feeding ANY wildlife is harmful to the wildlife and NOT environmentally sound. We would hope that once residents are aware of the problems and of state law, they would voluntarily stop this practice.

We would hope that enforcement of state law, with fines up to \$1,000 and six (6) months in jail for each violation, would be needed only as a last resort.



# Canada Goose Mitigation in Redwood Shores: ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS

## Question #11: How soon should we expect to see any results?

**A:** The City has already begun installing goose fencing around the park areas. New “No Feeding” signs should be up in parks and other public areas within the next month.

We expect that it will take our HOAs, businesses, and other private property owners a few months to develop and begin to implement their individual plans.

Don't expect any sudden or dramatic improvements. Let's encourage everyone to do what they can and see where we are at the end of this next breeding season.

