



## WILDLIFE DAMAGE AND NUISANCE CONTROL PERMITS FOR CANADA GOOSE PROGRAMS

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### PREFACE

This information circular is provided to inform permittees and interested applicants about the regulations concerning Wildlife Damage and Nuisance Control Permits for Resident Canada Goose Programs. This circular is designed specifically to address the regulations and the concerns of contractors, sites, commercial businesses, and public nuisance animal control agencies. This circular is intended to be a guide for those participating in the Wildlife Damage and Nuisance Control of Canada Geese.

Permittees may receive a current copy of this circular with approved permit or renewal information. Updates will be provided if regulations change. Permittees are expected to know and understand the state regulations and any pertinent local regulations related to damage control methods (i.e., discharge of firearms, local building codes, etc.) and to act within those regulations. In addition, permittees are expected to conduct control operations in a professional manner so as to develop and foster public confidence in the integrity of wildlife damage and nuisance control.

Answers to questions not provided in this circular may be addressed to the United States Department of Agriculture Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service Wildlife Services (USDA-APHIS-WS) Office, Department of Natural Resources (DNR), Wildlife Division Permit Specialist, or by contacting a DNR office listed at the end of this circular.

### INTRODUCTION



The sight and sounds of a flock of Canada geese marks the passage of time, the turning of seasons, evoking deep-seated emotions, and for many, affirming perennial connections with the wild. Yet local increases in giant Canada goose populations can evoke an entirely different range of emotions. The following information describes common problems and solutions for people inhabiting areas with Canada geese.

The once nearly extinct giant Canada goose (*Branta canadensis maxima*) has experienced population explosions in areas throughout North America. This trend is due in part to the success of wildlife management programs and the adaptability of these magnificent birds.

In Michigan, the number of giant Canada geese counted each spring increased from about 9,000 in 1970 to over 300,000 in 2000. Today, Michigan's Canada goose populations are managed between 175,000 and 225,000. Giant Canada geese nest in every Michigan County, but are most common in the southern third of the state.

Geese are herbivores and have a preference for grass shoots, aquatic vegetation, seed heads, and various grains. Canada geese usually nest in March and April. Adult Canada geese have very few predators, though raccoons, skunks, fox and crows sometimes prey on their eggs.

In general, geese have benefited from the way humans have altered the landscape. Canada geese are attracted to areas that provide food, water, and protection. Urban areas with lakes and ponds offer all the resources that geese need to survive. During the summer months, Canada geese can be a problem for some property owners. Birds often find refuge on lakes and golf course ponds, taking advantage of the lush lawns, while experiencing their annual wing molt (loss of flight feathers). Most human-geese conflict is associated with urban settings where manicured lawns are located in close proximity to water and molting geese that leave droppings and feathers on lawns, beaches, docks, sidewalks, and golf courses. Geese take advantage of large agricultural fields in fall and winter. These areas provide high energy foods, allowing some geese to stay in

Michigan throughout the winter. Canada geese may cause damage to agricultural crops through consumption or trampling.

The DNR has a Resident Canada Goose Program that has been developed to give private landowners (including businesses and other commercial entities) options to address their goose-human conflicts on their sites.

## METHODS OF CONTROL

**Elimination of Feeding:** Artificial feeding can lead to large concentrations of geese as they congregate for "free handouts." Feeding causes the loss of wild instincts and can lead to nutritional imbalance. Geese also lose their fear of humans when fed, which can lead to abnormal behavior such as aggression towards humans, causing an animal/human conflict. Communities must work to abolish feeding resident Canada geese. Some local governments have established "no feeding" ordinances.

**Hunting:** Where permitted by law, hunting is an effective and economical tool to control goose populations. Hunting provides opportunities for friends and family to participate in an important Michigan heritage plus procure a valued, healthy food source. Michigan has established hunting seasons in cooperation with the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) that are timed to target resident geese. The annual Michigan Waterfowl Hunting Digest contains season dates and bag limits, but be sure to check local township firearm ordinances before hunting geese in suburban settings.

**Scare Devices:** Scare devices can be a cost-effective way to repel geese when applied consistently as soon as geese arrive on your property. There are many commercial companies that sell the scare devices listed below:

- Shell crackers (may require a federal permit)
- Bird bangers
- Screamers
- Rockets
- Bird alarm
- Distress cries
- Motion detector accessories
- Electronic noise systems
- Bird scare balloons
- Plastic flags
- Mylar scare tape
- Lasers, flashing or rotating strobe lights
- Canine effigies (coyote, wolf, or dog cutouts or 3D models)
- Radio-controlled boats (prior authorization may be required by the DNR Law Enforcement Division)

**Dogs:** Many sites have reported success using dogs trained to harass geese. Geese perceive the dogs as predators and avoid them. It is important that dogs are handled properly in order for this technique to be effective. Letting household dogs roam a property may chase geese away, but if a dog catches or harms a goose at any time, it is a violation of federal law. Also, dogs are not allowed to harass geese when they are flightless.

**Repellents:** 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, before rain or mowing reduces their impact. Remember, geese are more prone to avoid sites where repellents have been used if alternative feeding sites are available.

**Barrier Fencing:** Fence barriers constructed at least 30 inches high can exclude molted (non-flighted) geese from lawns in June and July. Barriers can be constructed from plastic snow fence, chain link, woven wire, string, mylar tape or chicken wire. Barrier fencing works most effectively when placed along shorelines, but it has to be used at times when young birds would not be trapped on land.

**Landscaping or Habitat Modifications:** Making your yard less attractive to geese can reduce goose use. 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. Allowing lawns or common areas used by geese to grow taller vegetation can also discourage geese from using these sites. Geese are especially attracted to lawns that are heavily

fertilized, watered, and mowed. Studies show that fertilizing lawns increases their nutritional value to geese. Letting the lawn grow longer and not fertilizing or watering it will make it less attractive to geese.

**Egg/Nest Destruction:** If other methods of control are ineffective and you are located in an eligible area, 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. Egg/nest destruction can only be done under a permit issued by USDA-APHIS Wildlife Services.

**Goose Round Up and Relocation:** Removing or killing geese outside of the normal hunting season is considered a last resort after other techniques have been unsuccessful. Since 1972, the DNR has permitted and coordinated "goose round-ups." Problem geese are trapped and transported out of the area at the request of local residents and/or a local unit of government. This program takes place in late June when the birds are flightless. Birds are relocated to suitable sites within Michigan. Birds may be killed and taken to a processor and donated to a charitable organization.

Round up is 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 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 the same or different birds move back into the area within a short time. Unless the attractive habitat is modified, or birds are removed from the population (via hunting), geese will return. Relocating geese is not a long-term solution 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. Many sites report that geese are back within several weeks of round up. Special permits from the DNR or from USDA Wildlife Services must be obtained for round up and relocation. Because round up of Canada geese is very costly and it is difficult to find suitable locations for relocation, the DNR requires that sites try other alternative control methods before being eligible to receive permits for round up and relocation.

When considering nuisance goose control methods for an area, you have to consider several things: how large is the problem area, how do the geese get there, and what specifically is the problem. If geese always walked to the site, then consider exclusion techniques. If they fly onto the site, use harassment techniques. Another consideration is size of the affected area.

The best results are obtained by using a combination of several different control methods and changing tactics often to prevent geese from becoming conditioned to any one of them. In addition, studies show that geese exposed to hunting are more likely to respond to scare devices outside the goose hunting seasons. There are private animal control companies available that can be consulted for help in scaring and controlling geese. Before using any explosive devices, remember to check local ordinances, federal permit requirements, and inform your neighbors.

## **WILDLIFE DAMAGE AND WILDLIFE “NUISANCE”**

The term “damage” is easily understood, however, “nuisance” means different things to different people. For some, the mere presence of a red fox in the woods behind their house constitutes an intolerable situation. For others, glimpsing the same animal would be a thrilling and rewarding experience. Education can play an important role in nuisance recognition and resolution. A wild animal that poses no real threat to the safety of the public, livestock, crops, or property should not be viewed as a nuisance simply because it exists. A public that is knowledgeable about the habits and life history of wild animals is better equipped to recognize and solve wildlife damage and nuisance situations. One role of the DNR is to ensure the well-being of the state’s wildlife populations while also assuring that individual wild animals are not posing a threat to human safety or creating unreasonable property, crop, or livestock damage. As long as humans coexist with wild animals, conflicts will arise. The DNR attempts to resolve these conflicts through direct action, education, and technical assistance in cooperation with private businesses, the federal government, and other state agencies. Care must be taken to ensure that damage and nuisance control measures are necessary and warranted.

## TYPES OF PERMITS

Under the authority of the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act and the Wildlife Conservation Order (WCO), the DNR administers a permit system for damage and nuisance animal control of Canada geese when legal hunting cannot alleviate problems. The permit system allows nuisance Canada geese causing damage to property to be taken during times of the year and by methods not normally allowed under the regular hunting and trapping rules.

Under the damage and nuisance control system the following types of permits are issued:

### 1. **Damage and Nuisance Animal Control Permit**

This permit, issued by a Conservation Officer or Wildlife Biologist at one of the offices listed at the end of this circular, is provided to the landowner, lessee, or their designated agent and is not transferable. The permits are issued, following inspection, on a case-by-case basis usually for crop damage purposes.

### 2. **Nuisance/Damage Application and Permit for Canada Goose Contractors**

Contractors may destroy Canada goose nests and eggs, round up/capture and hold, kill, and transport Canada geese only by permit issued by the DNR. There are three different types of contractor permits. The deadline to apply is **March 1**.

#### a) **Permit to Conduct Nest and Egg Destruction for Population Control by Contractor (Fee \$200)**

- Permits a nuisance animal control business (public or non-profit) to destroy Canada goose nests and eggs. Sites interested in nest and egg activities for nuisance or damage control must fulfill program guidelines and possess an individual site permit for nest destruction.
- Aggressive geese are also included under this permit. Contractors may assist with aggressive geese situations. However, you need to get a site-specific permit from your local DNR biologist for each aggressive goose situation.

#### b) **Permit to Transport Canada Geese by Contractor (Fee \$300)**

- Permits a nuisance animal control business (public or non-profit) or individual with approved crates and training to pick up geese from sites with site permits, and transport to a designated release site.

#### c) **Permit to Conduct All Canada Goose Programs by Contractor (Fee \$500)**

- Permits a nuisance animal control business (public or non-profit) to participate in **all** Michigan DNR Resident Canada Goose Programs as per the Michigan DNR program guidelines.
- Destruction of Canada goose nests and eggs
- Round up capture/hold of Canada geese
- Transportation of Canada geese to release sites
- Removal of Canada geese nests in inappropriate locations
- Aggressive geese

**Canada Goose Contractors must train all employees and maintain records on birds captured, released, banded birds, and locations. In addition, this information shall be supplied to the Department at any given time.**

### 3. **Canada Goose Egg/Nest Destruction Permit**

The DNR encourages landowners to increase their tolerance of Canada geese to reduce human-geese conflicts in situations where there are no human safety or health threats. The DNR recommends applicants to attempt alternate control techniques to address human-geese conflicts before they are permitted to destroy nests/eggs or round up birds. DNR encourages homeowners to learn more about non-lethal techniques including habitat modification and scare tactics to reduce conflicts. You can find

out more information on alternative methods to address goose conflicts on our website, [www.michigan.gov/wildlifepermits](http://www.michigan.gov/wildlifepermits).

This program addresses local resident goose populations on sites that are located in specific geographic areas and other designated sites that meet program criteria. The Canada Goose Egg/Nest Destruction Program allows landowners to request a permit to destroy nests and eggs, which then will encourage geese to migrate north. A copy of the approved Canada Goose Egg/Nest Destruction Permit must be supplied to any hired contractors. All individuals new to the nest destruction program must complete mandatory training prior to the issuance of the permit.

### Permit Requirements

- Applicant must submit a permit application and verify they are within an eligible egg/nest destruction area. The lake, body of water or site must be located within:
  - **Oakland County, Macomb County, Wayne County,**
  - the **City of Sault Saint Marie, the City of Alpena, City of Flint** -Townships Mt. Morris, Genesee, Burton, Flint, **City of Grand Blanc** - Grand Blanc Township, **City of Fenton** - Fenton Township, **City of Lapper** -Lapeer Township, **City of Howell** -Marion and Osceola Townships, **City of Brighton**-Brighton Township, **City of Ann Arbor** -Ann Arbor, Pittsfield, and Scio Townships, **City of Ypsilanti** -Ypsilanti Township, **City of Grand Rapids** - Plainfield, Ada, Cascade Townships, and Cities of Walker, Grand Rapids, East Grand Rapids, Grandville, Wyoming, and Kentwood.
  - Areas that meet the following criteria:
    - Locations 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).
    - To resolve other serious health related concerns (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 lakes with swimming beaches where there are elevated E. coli counts and large numbers of Canada geese that pose a threat to large groups of people. A permit may be issued for a site that had a recent (last 1-3 years) swimming beach closure due to elevated E. coli counts and has a large number of geese currently using the area.
    - Farms that have a history of Canada goose permits due to agricultural damage.
    - Sites that are within the designated limits of incorporated cities.
    - Locations where hunting as a measure to control goose numbers is not an option due to city or local ordinances.
  - Other sites as approved by the DNR and that meet eligibility criteria

**It is the applicant's responsibility to confirm they are within the eligible area before submitting application.**

- New sites are determined when the following criteria have been met: must have participated in the round up program at least 3 out of the last 5 years, and removed an AVERAGE of 25 birds or more. Those sites will receive advance notification from the DNR letting them know of their eligibility.

- It is recommended that the applicant have tried to control geese using alternative measures which may include hunting; feeding bans; habitat modification; fencing; barriers; repellents; scare techniques such as scarecrows, flags, reflective tape; and harassment.
- A representative from each new site must have completed mandatory training before a permit will be issued. An application is required annually to participate in the program.
- Applicant will be responsible to assure that all new persons involved with the actual nest destruction (i.e., harassing birds from nest sites, removing eggs) have completed training as designated by the DNR; OR be directly supervised by an individual who has completed this training. If applicant is hiring a nuisance animal control business to conduct the nest destruction, applicant (or representative) must have completed the mandatory training prior to a permit being issued. The DNR maintains a list of all individuals who have completed this training.
- Applicant is responsible for providing any and all personnel to handle the goose eggs, or use a state permitted private nuisance animal control company to carry out the work.
- Applicant will be responsible for providing complete and accurate record keeping of the nest destruction operations and file a report providing details as required by the DNR. Report must be submitted to the USDA-APHIS-WS office by **May 12**.
- Applicant will be responsible to assure that all eggs, eggshell fragments, and/or contents that are removed from nests be destroyed as specified in the mandatory training.
- Applicant may destroy Canada goose eggs and nests only within the timeframe specified and, in a manner, approved by the DNR. This information will be conveyed in the mandatory training.
- All applications should be postmarked by **March 20**.
- This permit does not authorize trespass.
- There is no fee for eligible participants.
- Applicant must notify **all** lakefront landowners (this includes sites with multiple property owners) of Canada goose control activities.

#### 4. Round Up (Capture) and Hold Canada Geese

If landowners are still experiencing conflicts with Canada geese after they have tried a variety of control methods (including nest destruction in eligible areas), they may request a permit to have geese on their lake or site rounded up and relocated to designated release sites. Most participants in this program hire a licensed nuisance animal control company to move the birds.

To receive a permit to Round Up and Hold Canada Geese the site must first get approval from a DNR Wildlife Division biologist. **If your site is eligible for nest destruction you must actively participate in that program prior to applying for a round up permit.**

##### Permit Requirements

- It is recommended that the applicant has tried to control geese using alternative measures which may include hunting; feeding bans; habitat modification; fencing; barriers; repellents; scare techniques such as, scarecrows, flags, reflective tape; and harassment.
- All applications for Canada goose Round-up and Hold must be postmarked by **May 19**. *Late permits will not be accepted.*
- Geese will only be captured during the summer flightless period (approximately June 5-June 30).
- Applicant (or the contractor) agrees to record banded/collared geese captured during round-up and release as per DNR instructions.
- Round up, holding, and transporting of Canada geese will only be allowed during the dates and at the release locations designated by the DNR. Each individual site must have a valid site permit.

- The Applicant must bear all costs of the capture and any subsequent removal operations.
- All Applicants who have contracted with a private licensed animal control company must provide the DNR with the name of the licensed contractor on their permit application.
- If your site is eligible for Canada goose nest and egg destruction, you are required to participate in nest destruction prior to receiving a permit to Round Up (Capture) and Hold geese.
- A completed translocation/round-up report must be submitted for your site by **August 1** to remain eligible for future permits. These are generally turned in by contractors.
- This permit does not authorize trespass.
- Applicant must notify **all** lakefront landowners (this includes sites with multiple property owners) of Canada goose control activities.

**Fee Structure for Round Up (Capture) and Hold** (there are no fees for Egg/Nest Destruction):

- **SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENCE: \$100.00** Non-Refundable (i.e., a residence that owns a pond)
- **ALL OTHERS: \$200.00** Non-Refundable (includes all lake associations, businesses, apartments, condos, parks, golf courses etc.)

## **Additional Egg/Nest Destruction and Round Up and Hold Requirements:**

Permits may be issued only to those that meet one or more of the following definitions:

### **1. LAKE, LAKE ASSOCIATION, OR SITE WITH MULTIPLE PROPERTY OWNERS, SURROUNDING THE LAKE/SITE:**

This will require one of the following to be submitted with your application:

- a. **Resolution:** A resolution approved in writing by a local government official (township, city etc.), which represents the property owners on the subject lake, body of water and/or site, approving Nest/Egg Destruction, Round Up and Hold, or both for their site. A copy of resolution must be sent with application. Contact your local township/city clerk to request a resolution. Resolution's are usually valid for one year, but can be valid for up to 5 years. Resolutions for Round Up and Hold must clearly state that geese may be killed.
  - b. **Petition:** Approval consisting of signatures of at least 70% of the lakeshore property owners, which clearly states what Canada goose control activity is being requested. For Round Up and Hold, those signing must understand that geese may be killed. Petition forms are available from the Michigan DNR. The petition will be valid for a 5-year period, though the applicant must apply annually for the program. A copy of signed petition must be on file with the DNR.
2. **COMMERCIAL/BUSINESS:** Applicant is an institution, corporation, or other single entity which owns/controls all lands surrounding or containing the subject lake/body of water/site. This can include golf courses, apartments/condos, parks, and recreation areas. This requires only a signature from the owner/land manager of the site.
3. **SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENCE:** Applicant is an individual with sole ownership and control of the subject lake/body of water/site, with no public access.

**\*Note: The Round Up (Capture) and Hold Canada Goose permit does not allow for the handling and transporting of live birds. Handling and transporting of live geese may be done by a contractor or by a private landowner who has applied for and received permission for this activity under the Nuisance/Damage Application and Permit for Canada Goose Contractors, PR2088. You may contract with a private contractor to have the geese transported to a designated release location. A list of authorized and licensed contractors is available at [www.michigan.gov/DNR](http://www.michigan.gov/DNR).**

## **APPLICATION PROCESS FOR WILDLIFE DAMAGE AND NUISANCE CANADA GOOSE PROGRAMS**

### **New Permits**

All applicants should read and understand the following steps involved in the application and permitting process.

- 1) Read this Information Circular (IC 2088) and the application/permit forms entirely. If you have questions, contact USDA-APHIS WS at 517-318-3471 or [MI.Goose.Permits@aphis.usda.gov](mailto:MI.Goose.Permits@aphis.usda.gov). Contractors should contact DNR Wildlife Division Permit Specialist at 517-284-6210 or [DNR-PermitSpecialist@michigan.gov](mailto:DNR-PermitSpecialist@michigan.gov).
- 2) Complete the application form. Be sure to completely fill out the application, enclose the correct fee (if applicable), sign and date the form, and provide any additional documentation that may be required.
- 3) Submit your application and required attachments to: USDA-APHIS-WS, 2803 Jolly Rd., Suite 100, Okemos, MI 48864. Contractors should submit applications to DNR Wildlife Division Permit Specialist, PO Box 30444, Lansing, MI 48933.
- 4) Permits may not be mailed out until just before the start of either egg and nest destruction or roundup. Please plan accordingly. If you hire a contractor it is your responsibility to provide them with a copy of your permit. They must have a copy of your permit prior to starting any collection or handling activities.



- 5) You will be required to maintain records throughout the duration of your permit and to report permit activities, per *Record Keeping Requirements*.

## Training

Training is required for all those participating in the Egg and Nest Destruction Program and in order to be a licensed contractor within the State of Michigan. Below lists all those required to take training:

- Egg and nest destruction training is required for all sites new to the Egg and Nest Destruction Program.
- Egg and nest destruction training is required for all new contractors.
- Handling and transport training is required for all new contractors.
- Crate inspection is required for all new contractors.
- Egg and nest destruction training is required for sites that have already been accepted to the program and have new people to train.

## Criteria for Multiple Sites

For applicants that have multiple sites, sites must be located within one mile of each other in order to be included on the same application and permit. Information on Canada goose brood movements indicate that about 80% of broods will move one mile or less between nesting sites and brood-rearing areas.

In general, multiple lakes cannot apply for nest destruction or round up permits under one application. Lakes that are identified and named as separate and individual water bodies (e.g., on plat maps, USGS topo maps, etc.) must apply as individual sites in an application, regardless if they are connected by channels. Likewise, lakes that have separate lake associations must apply individually.

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

## Lake Association/Condos

Lake Associations must follow the Egg/Nest Destruction and Round Up and Hold Requirements above. If there are lakefront landowners that do not belong to the lake association or there are multiple lake associations, all parties must be adequately notified of Canada goose control activities prior to the control activity. This includes Condominiums with multiple owners. **All members must be notified of the program prior to conducting Canada goose control on the property.**

## Legal Status

Canada geese are an important natural resource and are federally protected by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. They can be legally hunted during the hunting seasons with the proper licenses. The permitted harassment techniques and repellants described in this circular are legal methods. Throwing firecrackers or chasing geese with any motorized device (on land or water) are *NOT* authorized scare methods. Killing geese outside of the established hunting season and disturbing nests with goose eggs present can be done only under special permit, which can be applied for only when other techniques have been unsuccessful.

## Liabilities

Through the wildlife damage and nuisance control permit system, the DNR provides a mechanism with which landowners can address wildlife damage problems. However, the DNR is not liable for any action, or lack of action, taken by the permittee or the landowner, nor is the DNR liable for any damages or injuries caused or suffered by either party. Any control measure undertaken by a nuisance animal control operator is considered a contractual matter between the permittee and the complainant.

## Record Keeping Requirements

Each permittee must keep records of their egg /nest destruction and round up and hold activities. Such records shall be reported on the DNR report form (form numbers PR2088-1 and PR2086-1) and sent to USDA-APHIS-WS by **May 12** for egg /nest destruction and **August 1** for round up and holding. Submission of the report is a

condition for eligibility for future permits. Permittees shall allow, at any reasonable time, a DNR official to examine and inspect such records and animals in their possession.

## Complaints

All complaints regarding violations in relation to the nuisance Canada goose program should be forwarded to the Law Enforcement Division, PO Box 30031, Lansing, MI 48909. If immediate action is required, call the nearest DNR Office, Conservation Officer, or the toll-free RAP Hotline 1-800-292-7800. The RAP Hotline number is exclusively for reporting violations and is not a general information number.

## PERMIT SUSPENSION/REVOCAION PROCEDURES

Statutory law, quoted in WCO Section 5.55, provides the legal basis for permit suspension or revocation. Permittees should be aware that any conviction for a violation of the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act or Wildlife Conservation Order, including a violation of a condition of the permit, shall result in the revocation of the permit upon action by the Department of Natural Resources. Permit suspensions or revocations are conducted by an Administrative Hearing Officer under the procedures of the Administrative Procedures Act. Persons under a hunting, trapping, or fur dealer license revocation are ineligible to obtain a commercial nuisance animal control permit for the period of their revocation.

## Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI)

HPAI is a virus which may be carried by migrating waterfowl and can infect waterfowl and domestic poultry, such as chickens, turkeys, quail, ducks and geese. HPAI viruses are extremely contagious and can cause high death loss in flocks. It is important that permit holders understand that the Canada Goose Program can be cancelled at any time if HPAI is detected in Michigan. In 2015, HPAI was discovered in southeast Michigan and the round up program was suspended except in approved situations where there were elevated health and safety concerns. All permittees will be notified should the program be cancelled.

## Permit Conditions

The applicant/permittee's signature on the permit application certifies that the applicant/permittee:

- 1) Has read and understands this Information Circular (IC2088) and the application/permit form and agrees to abide by all requirements therein.
- 2) Understands that questions regarding the rules and regulations governing this permit should be directed to the USDA-APHIS-WS at 517-318-3471 or DNR Wildlife Division Permit Specialist, PO Box 30444, Lansing, MI 48909-7944, 517-284-6210.
- 3) Understands that making a false statement on the application/permit form, resolution/petition; or failure to comply with the provisions of this permit, is a violation of state law and may result in the revocation of this permit, denial of future permits, and criminal penalties.
- 4) Understands that this permit does not provide any authorization to circumvent any federal, state, local laws, or any other local zoning and ordinances, and that it is the applicant/permittee's responsibility to know and comply with federal, state, and local laws.
- 5) Understands that any conviction for a violation of the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act or Wildlife Conservation Order, including a violation of a condition of this permit, shall result in the revocation of the permit upon action by the DNR.
- 6) Understands that this permit expires on **May 12** for nest destruction and **July 1** for round up and that the activity report must be turned in by its deadline: **May 20** for nest destruction and **August 1** for round up.
- 7) Understands that this permit is held by one trained primary permit holder. Additional people may participate under direct supervision of the permittee without the needing a separate permit for each person.
- 8) Understands that this permit authorizes permitted activities in the state of Michigan, but not outside of the state of Michigan.
- 9) Understands that all permitted activities shall be for legitimate Canada goose related nuisances.
- 10) Understands that this permit allows wildlife damage and nuisance control activities only on the animals listed within WCO Section 5.51a.

- 11) Understands that animals captured under the authority of this permit may be released or euthanized.
- 12) Understands that live animals cannot be held under the authority of this permit for more than 24 hours unless special approval has been granted to do so.
- 13) Understands that animals, or parts thereof, held under the authority of this permit shall not be sold.
- 14) Understands the difference between Damage and Nuisance Animal Control Permit, Nuisance/Damage Application and Permit for Canada Goose Contractors, Canada Goose Egg/Nest Destruction Permit, and Round Up (Capture) and Hold Canada Geese.
- 15) Hereby releases, waives, discharges and covenants not to sue the State of Michigan, its departments, officers, employees and agents, from any and all liability to permittee, its officers, employees and agents, for all losses, injury, death or damage, and any claims or demands thereto, on account of injury to person or property, or resulting in death of permittee, its officers, employees or agents, in reference to the activities authorized by this permit.
- 16) Hereby covenants and agrees to indemnify and save harmless, the State of Michigan, its departments, officers, employees and agents, from any and all claims and demands, for all loss, injury, death or damage, that any person or entity may have or make, in any manner, arising out of any occurrence related to (1) issuance of this permit; (2) the activities authorized by this permit; and (3) the use or occupancy of the premises which are the subject of this permit by the permittee, its employees, contractors, or its authorized representatives.

## **WILDLIFE DAMAGE CONTROL RULES AND REGULATIONS**

The rules and regulations concerning damage and nuisance animal control permits for Canada goose programs are contained in the following sections of the Wildlife Conservation Order (WCO).

### **5.51a Damage and nuisance animal control permit, Canada goose site permit issuance; definitions.**

(1) For the purposes of sections 5.51a and 5.51b of this order, the terms in this section shall have the meaning ascribed to them in this section.

(a) "Permit" means a site permit for Canada geese issued under the authority of the department's federal special Canada goose permit.

(b) "Permittee" means a person who has applied for and been issued a site permit by the department. History: Am. 1, 2010, Eff. Jan 7, 2010.

### **5.51b Damage and nuisance animal control permit; Canada goose, eggs, nests, site permit, requirement, issuance, reporting.**

(1) To capture and hold Canada geese, destroy Canada goose eggs and nests under the authority granted to the state of Michigan by the federal special Canada goose permit a permittee must:

(a) Possess written certification of the successful completion of a department sponsored training to handle and/or destroy Canada goose eggs and nests.

(b) Provide the department with one of the following:

(i) A petition requesting transport of geese signed by a minimum of 70 percent of the riparian owners on the involved water body.

(ii) A signed request for transport of geese from a governmental agency representative of the riparian owners.

(iii) Proof of sole ownership of the site.

(c) Make application for and be issued a Canada goose site permit by the wildlife permit specialist on a form provided by the department at the fees noted in section 5.110 (3).

(d) Submit an annual report as required by section 5.54 of this order.

(2) An annual Canada goose site permit shall be valid for the period from March 11 through August 31 per federal regulation 50 CFR 21.26. Failure of the permittee to comply with the permit provisions will make the permittee ineligible to receive a Canada goose control permit for a period of one year.

(3) The department shall not be liable for any damage suffered by a complainant as a result of the performance of the permittee operating under the authority of a permit.

(4) Permits shall be issued only to bona fide landowners or lessees, and shall not be transferable.

(5) To transport Canada geese under this section a permittee must do the following:

(a) Possess written certification of the successful completion of department sponsored training to handle and transport geese.

(b) Make application for and be issued a goose permit by the wildlife permit specialist on a form provided by the department at the fee noted in section 5.110 (4).

(c) Possess and employ state inspected and approved transportation cages.

(d) Transport geese to locations and within timeframes specified by the department.

(e) Submit an annual report required by section 5.54 of this order.

History: Am. 1, 2010, Eff. Jan 7, 2010.

### **5.52 Nuisance animal control businesses, public nuisance animal control agencies and non-profit nuisance animal control organizations, permit issuance; requirements.**

Sec. 5.52 The department's wildlife permit specialist may issue a permit to a reputable nuisance animal control business, public nuisance animal control agency, or non-profit nuisance animal control organization for the purpose of taking certain animals causing damage to personal or real property. A person issued a permit under this section is subject to all of the following requirements:

(1) Permits shall expire on the third March 31 after the date of issue, except as noted in section 5.52b of this order.

(2) Permittees may, upon verifying the complaint of any person suffering damage or nuisance, effect control measures at any time of year within cities, villages, or townships closed to hunting or prohibiting the discharge of firearms. In other areas of the state, permittees may, upon verifying the complaint of any person suffering damage or nuisance, effect control measures from April 1 to September 30. Notwithstanding the other provision of this subsection, permittees may, upon verifying a complaint of damage or nuisance, effect control measures at any time of year within the curtilage of the complainant. For the purposes of this subsection, "curtilage" means the dwelling house, associated buildings, and associated yard used for domestic purposes. Control measures in areas and at times not otherwise provided by this subsection shall only be initiated on those complaints referred to the permittee by a wildlife biologist or conservation officer. Control of damage caused by protected migratory birds shall require a federal permit, except as noted in section 5.52b of this order.

(3) Permittees shall be authorized to undertake control measures on the premises of the complainant for the control of bats that are not threatened or endangered and the control of coyote, fox, weasels, mink, raccoon, skunk, opossum, woodchuck, badger, muskrat, squirrels, ground squirrels, rabbits, English sparrows, feral pigeons, starlings, and crows. Permittees shall also be authorized to undertake control measures on the premises of the complainant on beaver on private lands in zone 3 during the closed season; however, beaver shall not be live trapped and relocated or translocated without authorization of the wildlife management unit supervisor. Control of damage by other wildlife shall be undertaken only as authorized by a wildlife biologist or conservation officer.

(4) To effect control measures, permittees may use foothold traps, body gripping or conibear type traps, live traps, firearms if possessed and used in compliance with all applicable state, local, and federal firearm laws and colony or multiple-catch traps for species other than muskrat. Colony traps may be used for muskrat if used in compliance with subsection 3.600(5). To affect control measures, permittees may also use snares the entire year if one or more of the following conditions are met:

(a) Permitted species is within the curtilage of the complainant.

(b) Permitted species is trapped upon the premises of the complainant in completely submerged underwater sets.

(c) For the control of fox and coyote outside the curtilage upon the premises of the complainant in the Lower Peninsula if the snare meets the requirements of subsection 3.609(2), subdivisions (b) through (j).

(5) Permittees may sell live nuisance feral pigeons live trapped during legitimate nuisance control operations.

(6) A dead animal taken by means other than pesticides during the open season for that animal may be disposed in any manner provided by section 4.3 of this order if the person disposing of the animal is licensed to take the animal under part 435, hunting and fishing licensing, of the natural resources and environmental protection act, 1994 PA 451.

(7) Non-profit nuisance animal control organizations shall comply with all rules and regulations for permittees. The permit shall be issued in the name of an official of the organization. The person to whom the non-profit nuisance animal control permit is issued shall not authorize any employee or volunteer of the organization to undertake control measures without providing the employee or volunteer a copy of the permit countersigned by that person. An employee or volunteer undertaking nuisance animal control measures shall produce a copy of the countersigned permit upon demand of a police or peace officer.

(8) All live traps, foot-hold traps, and other catching devices which are designed and used in a manner to trap or capture animals alive shall be checked daily. All traps and catching devices used under the authority of a permit issued under this section shall be marked as provided by section 3.600, subsections (2) and (3), except that the trap or catching device shall be marked "permit no." followed by the permittee's permit number, and the business name, and business phone number of the permittee.

(9) Captured animals shall not be released from or upon a public roadway or right of way. Captured animals shall not be released upon the lands of another person, whether private or public lands, without the consent of the landowner or land manager.

(10) All animals, which the permittee is authorized to take, shall be taken and disposed of in a manner to ensure humane handling or killing. Captured animals shall not be held longer than 24 hours unless requested by a department representative, or by a physician or public health official for public health reasons. Captured animals shall not be euthanized except by methods recommended and approved by the department.

(11) Any control measures undertaken by the permittee shall be considered a contractual agreement between the permittee and the complainant. The cost of control effected under the authority of a permit is the responsibility of the permittee.

(12) The department shall not be liable for any damage suffered by a complainant as a result of the performance of the permittee operating under the authority of a permit.

History: Eff. Mar 31, 1989; Am. 21, 1990, Eff. Dec 15, 1990; Am. 16, 1991, Eff. Jan 1, 1992; Am. 8, 1992, Eff. Aug 1, 1992; Am. 2, 1996, Eff. Apr 1, 1996; Am. 1, 2000, Eff. Feb 1, 2000; Am. 11, 2004, Eff. Jun 5, 2004; Am. 9, 2005, Eff. Jul 8, 2005; Am. 1, 2010, Eff. Jan 7, 2010.

#### **5.52a Nuisance animal control businesses, public nuisance animal control agencies and non-profit nuisance animal control organizations; Canada goose permit, definitions.**

(1) For the purposes of sections 5.52a and 5.52b of this order, the terms in this section shall have the meaning ascribed to them in this section.

(a) "Permit" means a Canada goose permit issued under the authority of the department's federal special Canada goose permit.

(b) "Permittee" means a nuisance animal control business, public nuisance animal control agency, or non-profit animal control agency who has applied for and been issued a Canada goose permit by the department.

History: Am. 1, 2010, Eff. Jan 7, 2010.

#### **5.52b Nuisance animal control businesses, public nuisance animal control agencies and non-profit nuisance animal control organizations; Canada goose permit, requirements, issuance, reporting.**

(1) To capture and hold or kill Canada geese, destroy Canada goose eggs and nests under the authority granted to the state of Michigan by the federal special Canada goose permit, a permittee must:

- (a) Possess written certification of the successful completion of a department sponsored training to handle and/or destroy Canada goose eggs and nests.
- (b) Make application for and be issued a Canada goose permit by the wildlife permit specialist on a form provided by the department at the fee noted in section 5.110 (5).
- (c) Submit an annual report as required by section 5.54 of this order.
- (2) An annual Canada goose permit shall be valid for the period from March 11 through August 31 per federal regulation 50 CFR 21.26. Failure of the permittee to comply with the permit provisions will make the permittee ineligible to receive Canada goose control permits for a period of one year.
- (3) The department shall not be liable for any damage suffered by a complainant as a result of the performance of the permittee operating under the authority of a permit.
- (4) To transport Canada geese under this section a permittee must do the following:
  - (a) Ensure that the landowner or land lessee of the site from which geese are to be removed holds a valid permit under section 5.51b of this order.
  - (b) Possess written certification of the successful completion of a department sponsored training to handle and transport geese.
  - (c) Make application for and be issued a Canada goose permit by the wildlife permit specialist on a form provided by the department at the fee noted in section 5.110 (6).
  - (d) Possess and employ state inspected and approved transportation cages.
  - (e) Transport geese to locations and within timeframes specified by the department.
  - (f) Submit a site report to the department on form provided by the department.
- (5) An annual Canada goose permit shall be valid for the period from March 11 through August 31 per federal regulation 50 CFR 21.26. Failure of the permittee to comply with the permit provisions will make the permittee ineligible to receive Canada goose control permits for a period of one year.

History: Am. 1, 2010, Eff. Jan 7, 2010.

### **5.110 Special permits; fees; disposition.**

Sec. 5.110 The following fees are established for permits issued by the director:

- (1) A fee of \$100 shall be collected for each taxidermy permit issued. Taxidermy specimen identification tags shall be \$10 per fifty.
- (2) A fee equivalent to the fee charged for a resident antlerless deer hunting license shall be collected for each managed deer hunting permit and each deer management assistance permit purchased by a permittee.
- (3) An annual fee of \$200 shall be collected for a site permit to participate in the capture and holding of Canada geese, as specified in section 5.51b of this order, except as follows:
  - (a) An annual fee for a single family residence shall be \$100.
  - (4) An annual fee of \$300 shall be collected for a site permit to participate in the transport of Canada geese as specified in section 5.51b of this order.
  - (5) An annual fee of \$200 shall be collected from a nuisance animal control business, public nuisance animal control agency, or non-profit nuisance animal control organization to participate in the following, as specified in section 5.52b of this order:
    - (a) Capture, holding or killing of Canada geese.
    - (b) Destruction of Canada goose nests and eggs.
  - (6) An annual fee of \$300 shall be collected from a nuisance animal control business, public nuisance animal control agency, or non-profit nuisance animal control organization to participate in the transport of Canada geese as specified in section 5.52b of this order.

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT THE RESIDENT CANADA GOOSE PROGRAM

## **What will happen to the geese that are “rounded-up” but are not relocated?**

Some geese rounded-up during June may be killed and prepared by a meat processor for distribution to charitable organizations for use in soup kitchens.

## **How can I participate in this program on my site if I haven't in the past?**

If you are experiencing conflicts with Canada geese on your property, you are encouraged to address them using methods such as scare tactics, repellants, fencing, landscape alterations, and trained dogs. If you have questions about these methods or they are not successful, contact your local Wildlife Biologist.

## **What costs are associated with Canada goose round-up?**

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 private contractor services to round up, capture, and relocate the birds.

## **Why is there a fee for Canada goose round up activities?**

The DNR permit fee structure was approved by the Natural Resources Commission (NRC) to partially cover DNR's cost to administer the resident Canada goose program. In the past all the funding for this program has come from hunter dollars. Our records also show that approximately 54% of the sites that apply for round up activities actually conduct that activity. DNR spends a significant amount of time processing, issuing, and tracking these unnecessary permits. We also want to encourage landowners to address their Canada goose conflicts by using alternative measures.

## **What if I am not the only landowner on my lake and want to round up geese?**

If you are not the sole owner of the body of water, you must submit a petition with signatures of at least 70% of the lakefront/riparian property owners. A resolution approved by a local government official that represents the property owners may also be used.

## **Can I hire a contractor to help with the situation?**

Absolutely. A list of private nuisance animal control firms that are specifically permitted and trained to handle resident Canada geese is located on the DNR website at [www.michigan.gov/wildlifepermits](http://www.michigan.gov/wildlifepermits).

## CONTACTS

### **Egg/Nest Destruction and Round Up Application Questions**

Contact: USDA-APHIS-WS, 2803 Jolly Rd, Suite 100, Okemos, MI 48864, 517-318-3471 or MI.Goose.Permits@usda.gov.

### **Permit Regulations and Contractor Permit Questions**

Contact: Wildlife Permit Specialist, DNR, Wildlife Division, PO Box 30444, Lansing, MI 48909-7944, 517-284-6210 or DNR-PermitSpecialist@michigan.gov.

### **Site Specific Questions and Aggressive Geese**

Contact your local Wildlife Field Office Biologist.

### **Biological Questions**

Contact: Waterfowl and Wetland Specialist, DNR, Wildlife Division, Lansing Customer Service Center 4166 Legacy Parkway, Lansing, MI 48911, 517-284-4721, or the DNR website at [www.michigan.gov/wildlifepermits](http://www.michigan.gov/wildlifepermits).

## DISTRICT LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICES

Applicants may contact a Michigan DNR District Law Enforcement Office at one of the locations listed below:

**DNR District 1 Law Enforcement Office**, 1990 US-41 S, Marquette, MI 49855, 906-228-6561.

**Counties:** Keweenaw, Houghton, Ontonagon, Gogebic, Baraga, Iron, Dickinson, Menominee, Marquette.

**DNR District 2 Law Enforcement Office**, RR4, PO Box 796, 5100 State HWY M-123, Newberry, MI 49868, 906-293-5131. **Counties:** Alger, Delta, Schoolcraft, Luce, Chippewa, Mackinac.

**DNR District 3 Law Enforcement Office**, PO Box 667 1732 W M-32, Gaylord, MI 49735, 989-732-3541.

**Counties:** Antrim, Charlevoix, Cheboygan, Emmet, Otsego, Alpena, Montmorency, Presque Isle.

**DNR District 4 Law Enforcement Office**, 8015 Mackinaw Trail, Cadillac, MI 49601, 231-775-9727. **Counties:**

Benzie, Leelanau, Grand Traverse, Manistee, Wexford, Mason, Lake, Osceola, Oceana, Newaygo, Mecosta.

**DNR District 5 Law Enforcement Office**, PO Box 128, 8717 N Roscommon Rd, Roscommon, MI 48653, 989-275-5151. **Counties:** Kalkaska, Missaukee Crawford, Oscoda, Alcona, Roscommon, Ogemaw, Iosco, Clare, Gladwin, Arenac.

**DNR District 6 Law Enforcement Office**, 503 N Euclid Ave, Suite 1, Bay City, MI 48706, 989-684-9141.

**Counties:** Montcalm, Saginaw, Huron, Sanilac, Tuscola, Isabella, Midland, Bay, Gratiot.

**DNR District 7 Law Enforcement Office**, 621 N 10th St. Plainwell, MI 49080, 269-685-6851. **Counties:**

Muskegon, Ottawa, Kent, Ionia, Allegan, Barry, Van Buren, Kalamazoo, Berrien, Cass, St. Joseph.

**DNR District 8 Law Enforcement Office**, 4166 Legacy Parkway, Lansing, MI 48911, 517-284-4720.

**Counties:** Clinton, Shiawassee, Eaton, Ingham, Jackson, Hillsdale, Branch, Calhoun.

**DNR District 9 Law Enforcement Office**, 1801 Atwater St. Detroit, MI 48207, 313-396-6890. **Counties:**

Livingston, Washtenaw, Lenawee, St. Clair, Oakland, Macomb, Wayne, Monroe, Lapeer, Genesee.



## **WILDLIFE OPERATION SERVICE CENTERS**

Applicants may contact a Michigan DNR Customer Service Centers Below:

### **Upper Peninsula**

**Baraga Operation Service Center**, 427 US-41 N, Baraga, MI 49908, 906-353-6651.

**Marquette Operation Service Center**, 1990 US-41 S, Marquette, MI 49855, 906-228-6561.

**Newberry Operation Service Center**, 5100 M-123, Newberry, MI 49868, 906-293-5131.

### **Northern Lower Peninsula**

**Gaylord Operation Service Center**, 1732 W. M-32, Gaylord, MI 49735, 989-732-3541.

**Cadillac Operation Service Center**, 8015 Mackinaw Trail, Cadillac, MI 49601, 231-775-9727.

**Roscommon Operation Service Center**, I-75 & M-18 S, 8717 N Roscommon Rd., Roscommon, MI 48653, 989-275-5151.

### **Southern Lower Peninsula**

**Bay City Operation Service Center**, 3580 State Park Dr. Bay City, MI 48706, 989-684-9141.

**Plainwell Operation Service Center**, 621 N. 10<sup>th</sup> St., Plainwell, MI 49080, 269-685-6851.

**Detroit Metro Operation Service Center**, 1801 Atwater St. Detroit, MI 48201, 313-396-6890.

**Lansing Customer Service Center**, 4166 Legacy Parkway, Lansing, MI 48911, 517-284-4720.