

Canada Goose Population Control

As you are probably aware **the Canada Goose population has exploded** nationwide, in Michigan, and of most concern to us, on East & West Twin Lakes. The Michigan DNR estimates that there are now over 300,000 Canada geese in Michigan, up from nearly being extinct in the 1940's. Some estimates are that there are up to 150 nesting Canada geese on East Twin Lake alone.

These **geese are becoming a major problem**. Not only do they foul your lawn when they decide to feed on it, but they can present a **serious health hazard**, especially to small children. Canada goose defecate up to 2 lbs of feces every day. That feces contains pathogenic protozoa and bacteria. Direct contact by children can occur when playing in the yard or on the beach or by ingesting lake water that has been contaminated by goose feces.

The other issue regarding our lakes is the **amount of phosphorus that geese can defecate** into the water. They not only leave their feces on your yard, but also in the water. The feces from a single goose can leave up to 1/2 pound of phosphorus per year. With an estimated 150 geese on East Twin alone, that is the equivalent of 75 pounds of phosphorus being added to the lake each year.

Phosphorus can be detrimental to the lake because it can **accelerate plant growth and algae blooms**. One pound of phosphorus can support 500 pounds of algae. So the estimated goose population on East Twin is adding up to 37,500 lbs of potential algae growth to the lake.

This is supported by our own studies of East Twin Lake. TLPOA takes phosphorus readings every summer on both East and West Twin Lakes. While West Twin's phosphorus readings have remained consistent, **East Twin's have shown a slight increase**. While there can be a couple of reasons for the increase, but the exploding Canada goose population is certainly one of them.

Fortunately, there is something that we can do. The DNR has a program to help control Canada goose populations. It consists of both an egg/nest destruction element and a round up/relocation element. However, the Michigan DNR has not allowed the roundup portion for the past few years including this year.

So, **TLPOA has applied to the DNR for the egg/nest destruction program for 2024**. Both Albert Township and Charlton Township have passed resolutions in support of this program. If approved by the DNR we will hire a firm called Goose Busters to conduct the program. It consists of them locating the goose nests during the nesting season, usually late March - early April, removing the eggs, and destroying the nests. No live geese are harmed during the process.

This is a multi year program, in that **it will most likely be necessary to do it for several years**. It probably won't reduce the goose population much in 2024. The idea is to make our lakes an inhospitable place for the geese to nest. After a few years of unsuccessful nesting, the geese will be motivated to find different lakes to build their nests. Typically they move further north.

When the program is implemented, Goose Busters will look around our lakes in order to find the nests. This may require them to have access to your property. While the DNR permit will allow us to hire Goose Busters to find and destroy the goose eggs and nests, it does not give

explicit permission to access your property. However, **they will knock on your door** before they look around your property. So, if you do not want Goose Busters to check your property for goose nests, you must let them know by putting a sign on your door to that effect.

Again, if you don't want Goose Busters to check your property for Canada goose nests, please let them know by putting a sign on your door.

They will be conducting their search during April - most likely the weekends of April 13th and 27th.

Hopefully you and everyone else on East and West Twin Lakes will cooperate and we can begin to reduce the population of Canada geese.

If you have any question please feel free to email me at umsu1@sbcglobal.net.