



Question: What is Healthy Waters, Healthy Parks?

Answer: Healthy Waters, Healthy Parks is an initiative highlighting the City's long history of keeping its parks and waterways clean and healthy. However, the City has received concerns about the number of Canada geese and the excrement they leave on Foster City beaches, playfields, parks, and walkways, in addition to the City's waterways. Heavy concentrations of goose droppings contain bacteria that can degrade the lagoon's water quality, creating a potential public health hazard and diminishing the community's ability to enjoy outdoor recreational amenities.

Q: What has been done so far to keep the City's waterways and parks clean?

A: As part of the City's Lagoon Management Plan, the City contracts with a lagoon water management company to help understand the best methods to reduce the bacteria levels in the lagoon. This can be achieved by several different methods, including chemical, mechanical, outreach programs, and wildlife population control. For more information on how Foster City keeps its waterways clean, visit www.fostercity.org/citymanager/page/healthy-waters-healthy-parks. To keep the City's 24 parks clean, Foster City Staff previously used power washers to clean park areas and pathways where run-off cannot be diverted from the lagoon. Staff now utilizes more time-intensive raking and sweeping methods for feces removal.

Q: How does the City plan to manage the large Canada geese population?

A: For many years, the City has employed several goose management tactics. However, any one management strategy used alone is typically ineffective for any significant length of time since tolerance and adaptation will likely occur. Moving forward, City Staff will implement several techniques, at times individually or in conjunction, and in varying ways at unique times and locations, including;

Nesting Management: The areas to be searched and treated include suitable nesting habitats immediately adjacent to water bodies. The City will continue to collaborate with the neighboring cities in an egg-addling effort to facilitate future nest searches. This type of mitigation generally won't make a noticeable impact on the population until a span of 20 years.

Removal and Disposition: Capturing and removing flightless, mixed age groups of geese during the spring/summer flightless period is an effective way to reduce the localized population of geese. Selective and occasional lethal removal of geese is also an effective complement to other nonlethal measures. Lethal removal of geese through euthanization is a management option. Goose removal and disposition would need to be conducted according to the regulatory permit conditions.

Habitat Modification and Site Aversion: Site Modifications may include but are not limited to: no mowing areas, increased height of vegetation around ponds and creek banks, planting or promoting shrubs by natural willow colonization, landscape plantings, or added temporary or permanent barriers, such as temporary snow fence, woven wire, fishing line, etc. Staff may also expand the use of strobe lights in and around water areas and stay up to date on all new technologies for goose reduction strategies. Other techniques that may help with site aversion include liquid deterrents applied to lawn areas or fogging the geese with a non-harmful chemical that will cause irritation and make the treated areas uninviting. The chemicals are not harmful to pets or other wildlife.

Q: What can Foster City residents and visitors do to help keep Foster City healthy?

A: Leave wild birds alone, and remember that all non-domestic birds are wild animals for whom human food like bread, popcorn, or lunch scraps is not healthy. Additionally, throw away, recycle, or take all your trash from City parks after use to avoid attracting wild animals.