



## INFORMATION RELEASE

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### Okanagan Valley Goose Management Program

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The Okanagan Valley Goose Management Program (OVGMP) is conducting its 16<sup>th</sup> annual egg addling program this year. The valley communities continue their commitment to maintain this comprehensive and cooperative approach to finding balance and reducing conflict between people and nesting geese.

Egg addling is an important population management tool. It is the least invasive form of population control, supported by many animal welfare groups such as the U.S. Humane Society, which provides a protocol to ensure the addling process is humane and effective. Egg addling involves shaking eggs or coating them with non-toxic biodegradable food-grade corn oil within 14 days of incubation to make them non-viable. Once addled, eggs are returned to the nest. Geese continue to incubate until they realize the eggs will not hatch. By then it is generally too late in the year to produce more eggs. Adults are not harmed and will continue with their regular annual life cycle.

The OVGMP egg addling program is responsible for preventing the goose population (an estimated 2,500 birds) from growing out of control. In the 15 years of addling, more than 20,000 eggs have been addled which equates to an estimated 11,000 - 15,000 geese directly not entering the population. This does not include the thousands of offspring that those geese could have produced over the years.

In addition to addling, the OVGMP assists communities through actions such as public education, population monitoring, habitat modification, and working with regulatory agencies to ensure OVGMP management goals align with federal and provincial objectives.

Kate Hagmeier, program coordinator, is careful to remind people that management actions target geese that would not naturally be nesting in the region. These are generations of offspring of several different subspecies of Canada Geese that were introduced in the 1960s and 1970s. Canada geese from elsewhere in Canada and the U.S. were moved here as part of managed introduction programs.

Key to success of the program is finding and accessing new nests. The public is asked to report lone geese, pairs of geese, or nest locations on private or public land by emailing [coordinator@okanagangooseplan.com](mailto:coordinator@okanagangooseplan.com) or calling 1-877-943-3209.

Field crews will continue to practice any ongoing recommendations provided by public health authorities to control the spread of COVID-19. In circumstances where nest sites cannot be accessed for health and safety reasons, crews would still like to know the locations to help understand where sources of geese come from, and to potentially visit locations when it becomes safe to do so.

The public is asked to keep away from goose nests and not touch the eggs. A federal permit is required to allow crews to addle goose eggs. If a nest is on private land, a permission form to access the nest is available on the program website ([www.okanagangooseplan.com](http://www.okanagangooseplan.com)). Crews will be addling until mid-May.

Interior Health continues to encourage local governments throughout the Okanagan to reduce the risk of recreational water contamination from sources such as geese. The OVGMP is a partnership between the City of Kelowna, Regional District of North Okanagan, Central Okanagan Regional District, Regional District of Okanagan Similkameen, City of West Kelowna, City of Vernon, City of Penticton, District of Lake Country, Town of Osoyoos, Town of Oliver, District of Peachland, District of Summerland, Westbank First Nation, and the District of Coldstream.

Information about the program is available at [okanagangooseplan.com](http://okanagangooseplan.com).

For more information contact:

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Partners in the OVGMP

