



## Media Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Egg addling program continues to control Okanagan Valley goose population**

Communities along the Okanagan Valley are continuing with a comprehensive approach to manage non-migratory Canada Geese populations through the *Okanagan Valley Goose Management Program* (OVGMP).

Program coordinator Kate Hagmeier is careful to remind people that management actions are targeting geese that are not native to the region. These are hybrid offspring of several different subspecies of Canada Geese that were introduced in the 1960's and '70's. Canada Geese from elsewhere in Canada and the US were moved here as part of managed introduction programs.

For the 14<sup>th</sup> year, an egg addling program is now underway between Vernon and Osoyoos. Addling is a critical component of goose population management and is the most minimally invasive form of population control. It is part of a long-term regional strategy for preventing the goose population (which currently sits around 2,500 birds) from growing out of control along the Okanagan Valley.

In the last 13 years, more than 17,000 eggs have been addled along the Valley, which equates to an estimated 10,000-13,000 geese not entering the population, not to mention thousands of offspring.

Egg addling must adhere to strict federal rules and cannot be done by members of the general public. 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.

**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.**

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)).

This year, due to the current public health emergency, some adjustments may be required to the addling program. Where crews cannot access nests because they are in care

residences/hospital environments, apartment patios or other locations that will not allow for physical distancing, crew members can still record the location data for future years. Knowing locations will also help the OVGMP understand where sources of geese come from later in the spring and summer.

## **Background:**

The Okanagan Valley Goose Management Program (OVGMP) has been helping communities through actions such as public education, egg addling, population monitoring, and working with regulatory agencies to ensure OVGMP management goals align with federal and provincial goals as well.

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. The U.S. Humane Society supports this egg addling technique. 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 life cycle.

But egg addling and nest surveys are not perfect—nests are missed—they could be in dangerous locations, or on private property. The key to success of the program is finding and accessing new nests. This is why it is important for members of the public to report nests when they're found.

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 Vernon, Central Okanagan Regional District, Regional District of Okanagan Similkameen, District of West Kelowna, City of Kelowna, City of Penticton, District of Lake Country, Town of Osoyoos, Town of Oliver, District of Peachland, District of Summerland, Westbank First Nation, Greater Vernon Water, and the District of Coldstream.

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

## **For more information:**

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