

## 2023 Watkins Lake Canada Goose Program

The Canada Goose population reduction program on Watkins Lake in 2023 is now complete thanks to the help of a number of people around the lake.

We worked successfully with the Michigan DNR to orchestrate our program. Last year the goose roundup program was suspended because of the the statewide concern for the bird flu. This year the DNR continued its ban for rounding up geese because of the same bird flu. Members of the Watkins Lake Board made special appeal to the DNR because of instances of e-coli discovered on Watkins Lake beaches last year. With that information, we were among very few permits issued this year. However they dictated to us the roundup date.

This Spring, thanks in part to tips from our riparians, we located and broke up 4 nests and collected 19 eggs.

The roundup was conducted on June 14 that resulted in sending 5 adult geese along with 16 juveniles and chicks to a sanctuary in Northern Michigan. Because the DNR dictated to us the date weeks ago, not all the adult geese were at the moulting stage and were still able to fly. A few were able to fly and escaped from our temporary holding pen before our contractor could take them away. Again the program is designed to reduce the geese population on the lake because these birds often return to the birthplace the next year and the overall objectives to help direct future generations to settle in northern Michigan and ultimately the Hudson Bay area. Over the years this has been a successful strategy for the DNR and for us..

We would like to express our sincerest appreciation to all the people who came out with their watercraft to help wrangle the geese this year. The volunteers were so good that we had very few birds go "Maverick" on us and didn't have to chase them all over the lake to recapture them. I am hesitant to mention so many names of the boat teams for fear of leaving anyone out. Just know we are grateful for their participation. However special recognition is given to Kevin and Renee Lynch for all of their extra effort in the physical preparation for the roundup.

Once again, thanks to all for the cooperation in the Canada Goose reduction program that was a success again this year.

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