

Gray Russell
Sustainability Officer
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Janet Shapiro
Secretary/Treasurer
Yantacaw Brook Park Conservancy

February 25, 2014

Dear Mrs. Shapiro,

Like all municipalities in the Garden State, the Township of Montclair is concerned about water pollution, and we are taking steps to reduce the volume and improve the quality of stormwater throughout town.

Many residents may not be aware that the greatest source of water pollution in our country today no longer comes from any single points or sources – such as factories, industry, or treatment pipes – but from the myriad sources for which all of society is responsible; we call this Non-Point Source Pollution.

In addition to the pesticides and fertilizer runoff from lawns, automotive fluids, litter, and dog waste, the waterways within our public open spaces have in recent years been hit with an additional challenge: the feces left behind by the flocks of Canada geese which have migrated here. On land, goose feces is an annoyance to residents, including children and families; it then washes down – with rain and melted snow – into our local waterways, such as Yantacaw Brook.

Water quality influences not only environmental health but also human health and safety. Excessive nutrient levels are a main cause of water pollution; nitrogen and phosphorous are the primary pollutants and are concentrated in waterfowl droppings. These overly-available nutrients result in algal blooms in our waterways which kill other organisms requiring the use of oxygen.

Unfortunately, the populations of Canada geese now congregating around our fields and parks no longer migrate; they stay, they nest, and they multiply. Like the deer populations in suburban America, their numbers have grown much larger than they historically ever were in a natural setting, and they have become an invasive species: over-populated, altering the ecosystem around them, and degrading the environment in which they live.

This is why the Township has been asked by residents, and by the NJ Dept. of Environmental Protection (NJ DEP), to discourage geese nesting around our parklands. We ask your community group to take whatever measures you can to reduce and stabilize geese populations in your area. If you or your neighbors have any further questions, please don't hesitate to contact me anytime.

Thank you,
Gray



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