

# Summary of the Crooked Lake Association Response to Questions and Comments Presented at the Mute Swan Listening Session 10/16/25

## Basic issues concerning CLA's mute swan control

### Issue #1--Why is the Crooked Lake Association concerned about mute swans on Crooked Lake?

#### Summary of Issue#1 questions and comments presented on 10/16/25:

- Speakers at the listening session wanted to know why CLA sees a need to control Mute swans on Crooked Lake.
- They disputed accounts of mute swan aggressiveness.
- They challenged CLA's take on the harm to Crooked Lake posed by mute swans.
- They questioned the assertion that mute swans are more harmful than the wildlife, migratory or non-migratory, already living on Crooked Lake.

#### Recap of CLA response:

- Mute swans can be aggressive especially to other wildlife and to a lesser extent humans and pets
- Although many speakers at the listening session stated they have not witnessed aggressive behavior by mute swans, one board member stated that he experienced an unprovoked attack by a mute swan in his yard.
- Mute swans are non-native because they were imported from Eurasia in the early 1900's and have no natural predators.
- Mute swans are invasive in that they have spread quickly, caused harm to the environment, and have out-competed native, desirable waterfowl for resources.
- Mute swans add their waste to the lake which increases nutrient pollution and is a potential human health risk.
- Once established mute swans can multiply rapidly
- Although mute swans mate for life, if the life of one ends, the other will move on to find a new mate

**Direct response by board member:** Denise McCann commented that she saw one incident of shooting. 2 adults and juveniles were shot: 2 shots per Mute Swan. This was not the same incident that Ms. Geiger observed.

**Direct response from board:** Mute Swans are not migratory but do move between lakes.

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**Issue #2**--Why was mute swan control undertaken without input from lake residents, association members or the entire board of directors? Was the method of deciding to kill the mute swans appropriate and was the control carried out legally, correctly and properly? Will the Indiana DNR remove or control swans?

### **Summary of Issue#2 questions and comments presented on 10/16/25:**

- Speakers at the listening session wanted to know if the CLA board approved the control of mute swans on Crooked Lake.
- They wanted a say on how wildlife is managed on Crooked Lake.
- They expressed a need for notification by Facebook, email, the Crooked Lake website, or other methods whenever any lake-wide action is considered or planned.
- They considered it unacceptable that a few board members decided to do this without specific board approval.

### **Recap of CLA response:**

- While the actions were legal, the CLA did NOT formally approve of the killing of 8 mute swans on Crooked Lake.
- The decision to control mute swans should require formal approval by the board.
- Notification of the intent to control wildlife on Crooked Lake should be sent to lake residents prior to a final board decision.

**Direct response by board to the question:** Was there a vote on the swans by the board of directors as a whole? The final answer given was “no”.

**Direct response by board member:** The Facebook page is not part of (or controlled by, or an official site of) the Association. The Facebook page has its own administrators. It has been and continues to be used by the association to notify residents of upcoming events. The official website for the association is “[thecrookedlakenoblewhitleycoindiana.com](http://thecrookedlakenoblewhitleycoindiana.com)”. The Crooked Lake website, which has been online for a little over one year, is evolving as communication needs are discovered. With other lake-related information, it contains meeting notices, agendas, minutes, bylaws and financial reports of the association. The Association has published a newsletter in the past with notice of events and plans to resume this practice.

**Direct response by board member:** The DNR is no longer willing to help with eradication but will issue a permit for it to be legally done by specified people. Statements by board members indicated uncertainty of when DNR participation in swan destruction occurred - perhaps 12 years ago or more.

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### **Issue #3—Was the safety of residents taken into consideration?**

#### **Summary of Issue#3 questions and comments presented on 10/16/25:**

- Several speakers at the listening session said they witnessed the shooting and expressed concerns about safety.
- They conveyed their distress and shock caused by witnessing this act.
- They communicated that this incident has and will cause division within the lake community
- They wanted assurance that CLA has a safety protocol in place for instances like this.
- They asked whether CLA bylaws contain statements about the rights of residents and about safety.

#### **Recap of CLA response:**

- The timing of control measures, activity on the lake, the experience of the shooter, measures taken by the shooter and the type of firearm and ammunition used and its range were all considered.
- In the attempt to fulfill our mission and vision, CLA should consider the safety of all lake residents. The board will continue to consider this and establish how best to secure the safety of the residents of Crooked Lake.

### **Issue #4—What will be the process of dealing with the swans in the future?**

Will the Crooked Lake Association look into other methods of control?

#### **Summary of Issue#4 questions and comments presented on 10/16/25:**

- Several speakers at the listening session said they were against culling or euthanizing the swans (especially by shooting).
- They conveyed a desire that a moratorium on killing the swans be continued.
- They wanted assurance that CLA will develop a plan for how we address nuisance wildlife on Crooked Lake in the future.
- They asked whether there are other options besides euthanasia.

#### **Recap of CLA response:**

- CLA will continue to host educational events on threats to lake water quality.
- CLA will seek the input of association members and lake residents on the control of nuisance wildlife.
- CLA will continue to research methods of control of nuisance wildlife.
- Regular monitoring by the board will apprise residents of the severity of the threat to Crooked Lake from increasing mute swan population.
- The CLA board will discuss and decide, using member and lake resident input, whether control is warranted and which methods of control should be utilized.

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**Issue #5**—How does the Crooked Lake Association select directors for the board? What is the process of becoming a member of the Board of Directors?

### **Summary of Issue#5 questions and comments presented on 10/16/25:**

- Speakers at the listening session wondered about the process of selecting candidates and officers of the board.
- They wanted assurance that board members were still elected by the members of the association.

### **Recap of CLA response:**

- Through our bylaws, CLA has always been charged with holding director elections at the Crooked Lake Association annual meeting.
- Under the bylaws, officers are elected by board members at the first Board of Directors meeting after the annual meeting.
- Results of both elections are recorded in the minutes of the respective meetings. Officers and board members are also posted on the Crooked Lake website.
- The CLA will consider creating a policy that will establish the right of members and residents to future notification of activities on the lake.

**Direct response by board member:** Persons show an interest in coming onto the board, nominations are presented and nominees are voted on by the members present at the annual meeting.

**Additional Direct response of some board members:** We need women and youth on the board, and members are encouraged to express interest in serving as a director.

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**Issue #6**—Could the Crooked Lake Association do a better job of communicating with and listening to lake residents? Are there Bylaws statements covering the rights of residents?

### **Summary of Issue#6 questions and comments presented on 10/16/25:**

- Several speakers at the listening session said they could not find board meeting minutes or that they were not detailed enough.
- They asked if the CLA bylaws contain statements relating to the rights of association members and lake residents.
- They asked if the CLA bylaws contain statements relating to the right to safety of association members and lake residents.

### **Recap of CLA response:**

- Good communication with its members is vital to any organization and breakdown of communication, evidenced by our current situation, must be repaired as soon as possible.
- The Crooked Lake Association can and will do a better job of communicating with our members and lake residents in the future.
- The board follows standards set by Robert's Rules of Order in terms of the preparation of board meeting minutes and the recording of decisions made. Board meeting minutes will cover the topics and issues discussed but are not a full narrative of the discussion.
- The bylaws of CLA were re-written in 2024 and approved in 2025. Currently there are no specific provisions for notification of members.
- The Board will draft policy provisions related to residents' rights to notification of activities on the lake.
- Since the Crooked Lake Association is not a homeowner's association, CLA has no authority over individual property owners' property rights or property management.

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**Issue #7**—Concerning the shooter's actions, experience, safety consciousness, compliance with hunting requirements and regulations.

### **Summary of Issue#7 questions and comments presented on 10/16/25:**

- Several speakers at the listening session said the shooter seemed reckless and not safety conscious.
- They also were concerned that the shooter seemed inexperienced and not compliant with hunting requirements or regulations.
- They communicated their feeling that the shooting of mute swans was cruel.
- They asked how the swan bodies were disposed of?

**Direct Response:** The swan bodies were buried.

### **Recap of CLA response based upon detailed statements from the shooter:**

- The shooter expressed that he obeyed the lake speed limit, carried the correct permit, followed all hunting regulations and requirements, and was assured by a representative of the DNR that the manner of shooting was proper.
- Addressing safety of the control process, the shooter communicated that he directed fire away from houses and people, towards wooded areas and aimed downward to limit the travel distance of ammunition. The shooter identified the firearm and ammunition used as similar to those in use on Crooked Lake for hunting geese and ducks.
- The shooter asserted that he has 17 years of experience hunting waterfowl.
- The shooter mentioned he was concerned for his own safety after hearing gunfire from the shore.

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### **Issue #8—Going forward.**

The CLA board of directors will create a policy concerning wildlife or other natural factors posing potential harm to the lake. The policy may address elements to be considered in identifying wildlife harm to the lake, solutions appropriate to the extent of the harm, considerations warranting application for a DNR permit, appropriate notice and participation of lake residents, board minutes and votes, and safety considerations. The policy will be published on the Association's official web site.

The board established a moratorium on its lethal control of mute swans on Crooked Lake until the board has created the policy outlined above. The current permit allowing lethal action expires on December 31, 2025. A new permit will be sought only in compliance with the policy and required procedures for decision making, notices, and safety.

The CLA board will review its bylaws and create or clarify existing policy on nomination and election of directors of the Association.