

**NUISANCE WILD ANIMAL CONTROL POLICY
of the Crooked Lake Association, Inc.
Whitley and Noble Counties
Approved April 16, 2026**

Article I

**General Purpose and Scope of the Nuisance Wild
Animal Control (NWAC) Policy**

The purpose of this policy is to guide the Crooked Lake Association in its efforts to manage wild animals which are or have the potential to become a nuisance on Crooked Lake. This policy directs identification, monitoring and implementation of control procedures for wild animals on Crooked Lake that threaten damage to water quality, habitat, and native plant life, or that create health or safety risks to lake residents and native wildlife.

This policy applies only to the actions of the Crooked Lake Association, Inc. It does not govern the activities of any lake resident or private individual in managing wild animals on their property.

This policy is implemented in compliance with the authority of the Indiana Department of Natural Resources (Indiana DNR) and the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). The Crooked Lake Association, Inc., is not responsible for the actions of the Indiana DNR or the USDA regarding nuisance wild animals but will seek to inform association membership of the actions of these governmental units when they affect Crooked Lake.

A. Nuisance Wild Animal Control Committee

The purpose of the Nuisance Wild Animal Control (NWAC) committee is to follow and enforce the policy as adopted. The committee will help to identify and monitor nuisance wild animals and make recommendations about their management and control. The committee, with explicit prior approval of the CLA Board of Directors, will direct animal control actions only when warranted under this policy.

The CLA Board of Directors will recruit both directors and lake association members to serve on the committee.

B. The tasks of the NWAC committee will be as follows:

- Conduct ongoing research on methods and application of nuisance wild animal control.
- Undertake reasonable monitoring and data collection, including communication with surrounding lake associations and TWF, report findings and make recommendations to the board of directors and association membership.
- Facilitate notice of control activities considered by the board of directors to the association membership as required by this policy.
- Undertake or arrange for control actions only as allowed by this policy and approved by the board of directors.

C. Definitions

- **Control** means limiting the population of Nuisance Wild Animals as necessary to reduce the threat of damage to water quality, habitat, and native plant life, or to reduce health or safety risks to lake residents and native wildlife. Only methods of control approved by the Indiana DNR may be implemented under this policy.
- **Lake Association** means the Crooked Lake Association, Inc that serves the two basins of Crooked Lake located in Whitley and Noble Counties of Indiana.
- **Indiana DNR** means the Indiana Department of Natural Resources. This may include the Division of Fish and Wildlife (F&W), wildlife biologists, enforcement agents, and any other applicable departments or divisions or specialists of the Indiana Department of Natural Resources.
- **USDA** means the United States Department of Agriculture which may have legal authority over a variety of wild animals, including mute swans
- **NWA** means a Nuisance Wild Animal as defined by Indiana Law.
- **NWAC Permit** means a permit to control the population of specified wild animals within the meaning of this policy, which is primarily directed to mute swans.
- **CGR Permit** means a Canada Goose Registration Permit, a federal permit required to oil eggs of Canada Geese and thereby control population.

Article II

Policy Specific to the Control of Mute Swans

A. History

In 2025, members of the CLA Board of Directors witnessed aggression by mute swans. A mating pair of mute swans built a nest, eggs were laid, and juveniles born.

In 2025, the Lake Association was awarded a NWAC Permit for the control of mute swans. The permit allowed the Lake Association in person or by an approved assistant to destroy nests, oil eggs and/or euthanize mute swans under gun safety rules and respect for the animals. The permit did not limit the number of lethal actions. The Lake Association authorized a volunteer and experienced shooter to cull the swan population in September 2025 by shooting the adult nesting pair, 2 juveniles and 4 additional adult mute swans.

B. Justification

The CLA Board of Directors accepts the accuracy of the publications of the Indiana DNR and the USDA, that mute swans are a threat to cause damage to water quality and ecosystems and pose a health or safety risk to humans. The board also accepts the findings of the publications of the Indiana DNR and USDA that nesting pairs of mute swans present a risk of undesirable swan population increase. The following weblinks are just a few of the resources studied by the CLA.

[DNR: Fish & Wildlife: Mute Swans](#)

[DNR: Fish & Wildlife: Questions & Answers](#)

[DNR: Fish & Wildlife: Permits & Commercial Licenses](#)

[Mute-Swans-WDM-Technical-Series.pdf](#)

Important points gathered from the above references:

- The Indiana DNR and the USDA categorize mute swans as non-native invasive animals.
- Mute swans are not protected by federal law.
- The USDA, funded by the EPA under the Great Lakes Initiative, works to reduce the population of mute swans in the Great Lakes area.
- Mute swan management, and removal when it is needed, is supported by the United States Department of Agriculture, Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Audubon Society, Ducks Unlimited, American Bird Conservancy, and the Indiana Department of Natural Resources

- Mute swans uproot and destroy native aquatic plants that are a food source and provide habitat for fish and native wildlife and are needed to preserve water quality and stabilize shorelines.
- Fecal material from mute swans may endanger human health by contaminating the water with bacteria such as E. coli and Salmonella, and parasites such as cercariae that cause swimmer's itch. Mute swan waste adds nutrients harmful to water quality.
- Aggressive behavior of mute swans toward humans and native wildlife, particularly during mating season, may endanger recreational use of the lake and reduce the native wildlife population.

C. Scope of the Policy as it relates to Mute Swan Control

1. Application, use and Limits of NWAC Permit

Lake associations may apply for a NWAC permit from the Indiana DNR by affirming in writing that mute swans on the lake are (a) causing or threatening to cause damage, or (b) posing a health or safety threat. The permit application does not require specification of damages. The permit requires lake associations to report to the Indiana DNR in writing all actions taken under the permit.

The USDA can implement population control on a public lake if it determines the control is necessary, and the Indiana NWAC permit application includes USDA involvement. This policy will allow USDA personnel to conduct mute swan control on Crooked Lake under the above stipulation.

To authorize the Crooked Lake Association and enable timely action when control of mute swans is necessary, possession of a current NWAC permit is required. At the beginning of each year the Crooked Lake Association board of directors will vote on application for a NWAC permit. At the same time, or at an ensuing board meeting, directors will consider general approval of the use of control options allowable by the DNR NWAC permit. These deliberations (permit application and approval of control) will be noted in the board meeting minutes, and announcement of both board actions will be made at the CLA Annual Meeting.

The permit shall only be applied in compliance with this policy, with the least invasive control methods utilized when consistent with human safety and the extent of threat or damage.

2. Responsibilities of the CLA Board of Directors and the NWAC Committee Specific to Mute Swans

The Board of Directors will:

- Annually review the NWAC Permit and this NWAC policy to verify compliance.
- Confirm that a motion (including a discussion) be made and seconded for consideration at a public board of directors meeting for any mute swan control measures anticipated (lethal or non-lethal). A vote on the motion must be reflected in the official board meeting minutes.
- At any time during the year, discussion of recommended control measures, a motion to approve specific control measures and a vote on the motion must be reflected in the official board meeting minutes.

The NWAC Committee will:

- Record data on the estimated number of nests, eggs, nesting pairs and juveniles in the spring and adult population during molt.
- Record episodes of aggression or lake recreation interference by mute swans.
- Seek input from Indiana DNR or the USDA on evaluating the data collected to support reasonable recommendations for mute swan control.
- Present recommendations on mute swan control to the board of directors based on the data collected.
- Notify the CLA Executive Committee that the committee is considering specific mute swan control measures.
- A plan will be presented to the board of directors if lethal destruction of mute swans is contemplated. Resident safety provisions included in the plan must not be less than that required for control of other waterfowl or for hunting.
- The NWAC Committee will follow the requirements of the NWAC permit in supervision and coordination of the shooter if lethal destruction of mute swans is approved.
- The NWAC Committee will oversee board-approved control methods including proper carcass disposal and required documentation of control outcome to Indiana DNR.
- Notify the board of directors and association membership when board-approved mute swan control measures have been attempted and the outcome of such attempts.

3. Methods of Mute Swan Control considered under this policy

i. Nest Destruction

The following factors will be evaluated to determine whether nest destruction may be considered:

- Evidence of mute swan nest building.
- Consideration of whether nest destruction can be safely attempted.
- Prior discussion and decision by the Nuisance Wild Animal Committee for nest destruction.
- Determination that required removal or scattering of nest materials from the site can be accomplished safely.

ii. Egg Oiling

The following factors will be evaluated to determine whether egg oiling may be considered:

- Presence of eggs on mute swan nests.
- Evaluation of the safety of egg oiling under current conditions.
- Prior discussion and decision by the Nuisance Wild Animal Committee for mute swan egg oiling.
- Confirmation that the Lake Association's current NWAC permit allows egg oiling.

iii. Lethal Action

The following factors will be evaluated to determine whether lethal action may be considered:

- Inability to use or lack of success with less invasive control methods.
- Presence of nesting pairs of mute swans and juveniles on the lake.
- Perceived increase in mute swan population based on observations during molting period.
- Apparent harm by mute swans to native food sources and habitat.
- Serious or repeated acts of aggression by one or more mute swans.
- Indiana DNR or USDA recommendation that population levels endanger lake safety, recreational use, water quality, natural habitats, and/or native wildlife.

Article III

Policy Specific for the Control of Canada Geese

Federal Law allows landowners and homeowner associations to register for authorization to destroy resident Canada Goose nests and eggs.

Oiling of Canada Goose eggs is used sparingly as a method to maintain reasonable population levels on Crooked Lake. The eggs become unviable after oiling.

The Lake Association has been the contact and recipient of an annual Canada Goose Registration (CGR) for more than twenty years. The registration allows for nest and egg destruction only on the Crooked Lake Island and on property where landowners have given permission. Association volunteers and landowners giving permission are specifically listed in the registration. Volunteers receive training that is respectful of the animals.

At the beginning of each year the Crooked Lake Association board of directors will vote on application for a CGR permit. At the same time, or at a following board meeting, directors will consider general approval of the use of available control options allowable by the permit. These deliberations (permit application and approval of control) will be noted in the board meeting minutes and announcement of both board actions will be made at the CLA Annual Meeting.