

DRAFT

NUISANCE WILD ANIMAL CONTROL POLICY

of the

Crooked Lake Association, Inc. Whitley and Noble Counties

January 19, 2026

Association Membership Opportunity to give Input on Draft Policy

Notice of this draft policy shall be given to Lake Association Members by placement of the policy onto the official lake web site. Announcements on Facebook and by mass email will direct members and residents to the policy when it is available on the website.

Lake Association Members can give input on the draft policy by the following: written comments, objections, or suggested alternatives on the official web site at -- [The Crooked Lake Noble Whitley Co. Indiana](#) - or written comments to the President of the Crooked Lake Association.

**The draft policy will be presented for discussion at the February 19 CLA Board Meeting. The board of directors will consider all written input from lake association members and recommend changes before the policy is considered for adoption. All proposed changes will be read into the record and voted on separately by the board. A vote on the resulting policy will be taken and must be approved by a vote of 51% of the CLA board members present at the meeting in person or by phone. If there is significant uncertainty about the draft policy, it will be returned to the appropriate committee for redrafting and resubmission to the board at a later date.*

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 will direct 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 will be implemented in compliance with Federal Law, Indiana statutory and administrative laws, and applicable authority and guidance of the Indiana Department of Natural Resources (Indiana DNR) and the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). The Crooked Lake Association, Inc., does not control and is not responsible for the actions of the Indiana DNR or the USDA regarding nuisance wild animals but will seek to give notification to the association membership of the acts of these governmental units when they affect Crooked Lake.

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.

1 **The tasks of the NWAC committee will be as follows:**

- 2 • Conduct ongoing research on methods of control and implementation
3 with Indiana DNR and USDA.
- 4 • Communicate with the lake associations of the surrounding lakes and
5 The Watershed Foundation (TWF) to collect data and coordinate
6 efforts.
- 7 • Undertake reasonable monitoring and data collection, report findings
8 and make recommendations to the board of directions and association
9 membership.
- 10 • Facilitate notice of control activities to the association membership as
11 required by this policy.
- 12 • Complete or arrange for control actions only as allowed by this policy
13 and approved by the board of directors.

14 **Definitions**

- 15 • “Control” means to limit the population of Nuisance Wild Animals as
16 necessary to reduce the threat of damage to water quality, habitat,
17 and native plant life, or to reduce health or safety risks to lake
18 residents and native wildlife. There are various methods of control that
19 may be implemented under this policy.
- 20 • “Lake Association” means the Crooked Lake Association, Inc that
21 serves the two basins of the Crooked Lake located in both Whitley
22 and Noble Counties of Indiana.
- 23 • “Indiana DNR” means the Indiana Department of Natural Resources.
24 This may include the Division of Fish and Wildlife, wildlife biologists,
25 enforcement agents, and any other applicable departments or
26 divisions or specialists of the Indiana Department of Natural
27 Resources.
- 28 • “USDA” means the United States Department of Agriculture which
29 may have legal authority over a variety of wild animals, including Mute
30 Swans

1 • “NWA” means a Nuisance Wild Animal as defined by Indiana Law.

2 • “NWAC Permit” means a permit to control the actions of specified wild

3 animals within the meaning of this policy, which is primarily directed to

4 Mute Swans.

5

6 **Policy Specific to Control of Mute Swans**

7 **History**

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

11 In 2025, the Lake Association was awarded a NWAC Permit for the
12 control of mute swans. The permit allowed the Lake Association in person
13 or by an approved assistant to destroy nests and oil eggs. The permit
14 authorized the shooting of mute swans under gun safety rules and respect
15 for the animals. The permit did not limit the number of lethal actions. The
16 Lake Association authorized a volunteer and experienced shooter to cull
17 the swan population in September 2025 by shooting the adult nesting pair,
18 2 juveniles and 4 additional adult mute swans.

19 **Justification**

20 The CLA Board of Directors accepts the accuracy of the publications
21 of the Indiana DNR and the USDA, that mute swans are a threat to cause
22 damage to water quality and ecosystems and pose a health or safety risk.
23 The board also accepts the findings of the publications of the Indiana DNR
24 and USDA that nesting pairs of mute swans present a risk to permanent
25 population increase.

26 • The Indiana DNR categorizes Mute Swans as invasive animals.

27 • Mute Swans are not protected by federal law.

28 • Mute swans uproot and destroy native aquatic plants that are
29 needed to preserve water quality and stabilize shorelines.

- 1 • Mute swans reduce the food source available to native wildlife and
2 can destroy native habitats of fish and wildlife.
- 3 • The large amount of fecal material from mute swans may endanger
4 human health by contaminating the water and add nutrients harmful
5 to water quality.
- 6 • Aggressive behavior of mute swans toward humans and native
7 wildlife, particularly during mating season, may endanger
8 recreational use of the lake and reduce the native wildlife population.

9

10 **Scope of the Policy as it relates to Mute Swan Control**

11 **Application, use and Limits of NWAC Permit**

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

18 The USDA can implement population control on a public lake if it
19 determines the control is necessary, and the Indiana NWAC Permit
20 application allows USDA involvement.

21 At the beginning of each year the Crooked Lake Association should
22 apply for and renew a NWAC Permit for Mute Swans. Holding a current
23 permit ensures that the Lake Association can act promptly when control is
24 necessary.

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

1 Any use of the NWAC Permit shall require notice to the association
2 membership and action by the board of directors in compliance with this
3 policy.

4 **Responsibilities of the CLA Board of Directors and the NWAC**
5 **Committee Specific to Mute Swans**

6 The Board of Directors will:

- 7 • Review the NWAC Permit and this NWAC policy for compliance.
- 8 • Ensure that a motion (including a discussion) be made and seconded
9 for consideration at an advertised board of directors meeting for any
10 mute swan control measure anticipated (lethal or non-lethal).
11 Discussion of the recommended control measure, a motion for the
12 specific control measure and a vote on the motion must be reflected
13 in the official board meeting minutes.

14 The NWAC Committee will:

- 15 • Monitor, collect and record data on habitat destruction, number of
16 nests, eggs, nesting pairs and juveniles and perceived mute swan
17 population.
- 18 • Record episodes of aggression or lake recreation interference by
19 mute swans.
- 20 • Seek input from Indiana DNR or the USDA on evaluating the data
21 collected to support reasonable recommendations for mute swan
22 control.
- 23 • Present recommendations on mute swan control to the board of
24 directors based on the data collected.
- 25 • Notify the CLA Executive Committee that the committee is
26 considering specific mute swan control measures.
- 27 • Facilitate notification of association membership of anticipated mute
28 swan control measures.
- 29 • Notify the board of directors and association membership (on the
30 association website) when board-approved specific mute swan
31 control measures have been attempted and the outcome of such
32 attempts.

1 If lethal destruction of mute swans is contemplated:

- 2 • The NWAC committee will ensure that lake association membership
3 is notified of the date and time of the board meeting at which lethal
4 destruction of mute swans will be considered. Association members
5 may attend but may speak on the issue only if arrangements are
6 made in advance or if invited to speak by the President.
- 7 • A specific plan for lethal destruction will be presented. This may
8 include the number of target swans, shooter, range of dates and
9 times as is consistent with effective operation. Resident safety
10 provisions included in the plan must not be less than that required for
11 control of other waterfowl or for hunting.

12 If lethal destruction of mute swans is approved:

- 13 • Notice shall be given on the official Association web site. This should
14 include the specific control method to be employed and
15 considerations for resident safety but may omit specific dates or times
16 of day if inconsistent with an effective operation. The Lake
17 Association may be limited in its ability to give notice of destruction
18 implemented by the USDA or Indiana DNR.
- 19 • The NWAC Committee will ensure appropriate supervision and
20 coordination by the permit holder of the assistant completing the
21 destruction.
- 22 • The NWAC Committee will oversee board-approved control methods
23 including proper body disposal, required documentation of control
24 outcome to Indiana DNR and notice on the association website of
25 actions taken.

26 **Methods of Mute Swan Control considered under this policy**

- 27 • Nest Destruction
- 28 • Egg Oiling
- 29 • Mute Swan lethal destruction

1 **Nest Destruction**

2 Factors for determining whether nest destruction may be considered. All
3 factors are not required. NWAC Permit is not required for nest destruction

4 • Evidence of swan nest building
5 • Analysis of whether nest destruction is safe
6 • Discussion and decision by Nuisance Wild Animal Committee for nest
7 destruction.
8 • Determination that the required removing or scattering of nest
9 materials from the site can be accomplished.

10 **Egg Oiling**

11 Factors for determining whether egg oiling may be considered. All
12 factors are not required.

13 • Evaluation of the safety of egg oiling under current conditions.
14 • Confirmation that Lake Association current NWAC Permit allows egg
15 oiling.

16 **Lethal Action**

17 Factors for determining whether lethal action may be considered. All
18 factors are not required.

19 • Presence of nesting pairs of mute swans and juveniles on the lake,
20 • Perceived increase in mute swan population based on observations
21 • Increase in visible harm by mute swans to native food sources and
22 habitat.
23 • Serious or repeated acts of aggression by one or more mute swans.
24 • Indiana DNR or USDA recommendation that population levels
25 endanger lake safety, recreational use, water quality, natural habitats,
26 and/or native wildlife.
27 • Inability to use or lack of success with less invasive control methods
28 to avoid threat of harm or damage.

1 **Policy Specific for the Control of Canada Geese**

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

5 The Lake Association has been the contact and recipient of a Canada
6 Goose Registration for several years. The registration allows for nest and
7 egg destruction only on the Crooked Lake Island and on property where
8 landowners have given permission. The landowners and association
9 volunteers are specifically listed in the registration.

10 Volunteers receive training that is respectful of the Geese. The eggs
11 are destroyed by oiling and one egg is left “unoiled” in each nest to the
12 extent possible.

13 Oiling is used sparingly as a method to maintain reasonable
14 population levels on Crooked Lake.