

# Canada Geese: Urban Management

A large Canada goose is shown in flight, its wings spread wide, against a background of a snowy field with other geese. The goose has a black head and neck with a white patch on its cheek, and brown and white feathers on its body. The background is a soft-focus scene of a snowy landscape with several other geese, some standing and some in flight.

Fox Waterway Agency

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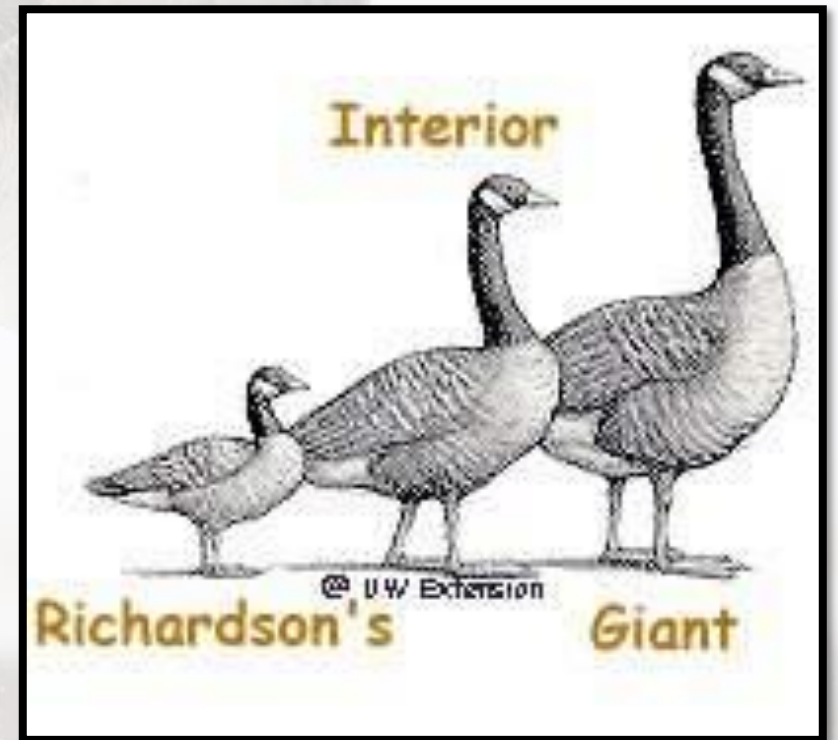
# Outline



- **Background** of Canada Geese in Illinois and North America
- **Conflicts** occurring with Canada Geese in urban and suburban areas
- Management **strategies** for Canada geese and how to **implement** those strategies into a management program
- **Resources** available

# Types of Canada Geese

- Giant
  - “Resident” or “Temperate Breeding”
  - Nest in Illinois; often remain in Illinois year-round
- Interiors
  - Formerly “MVP” geese
  - Nest in Canada





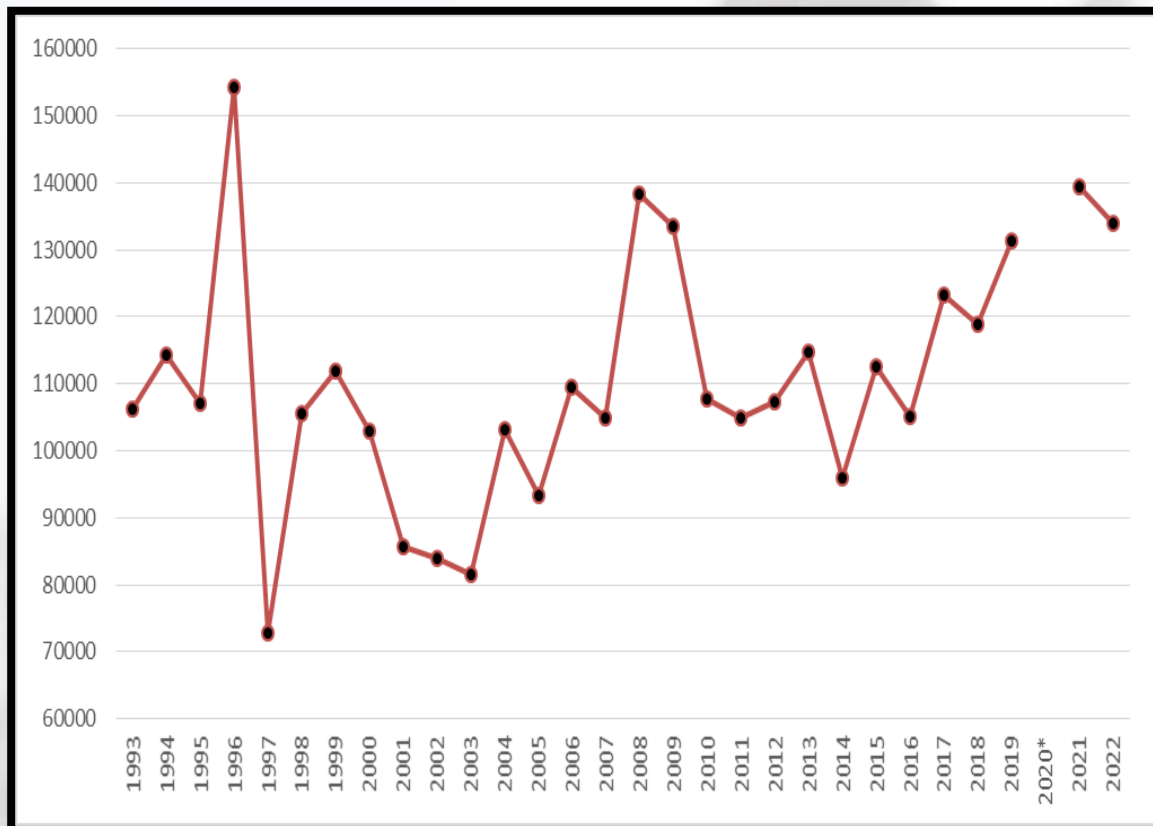
# Giant Canada Goose

- Native to Illinois
- Thought to be extinct in the 1950s

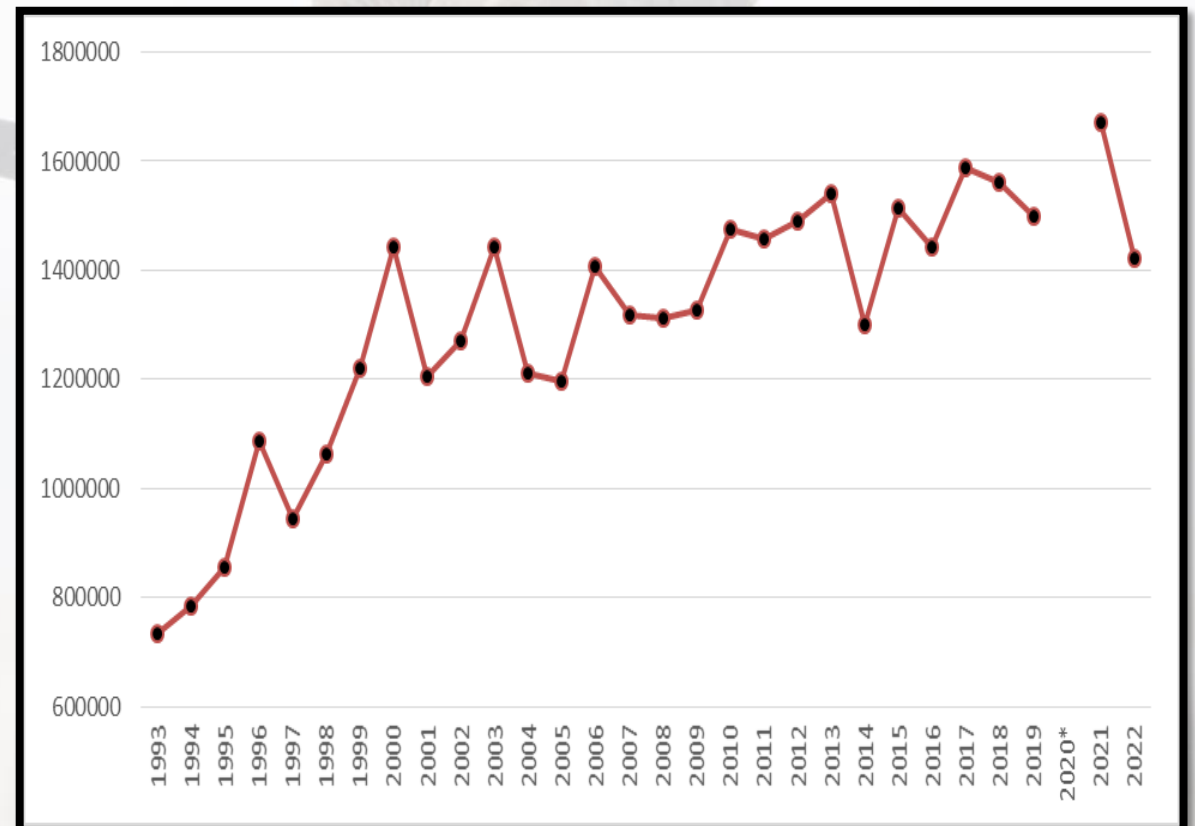


# Population Estimates

## Illinois



## Mississippi Flyway



Background

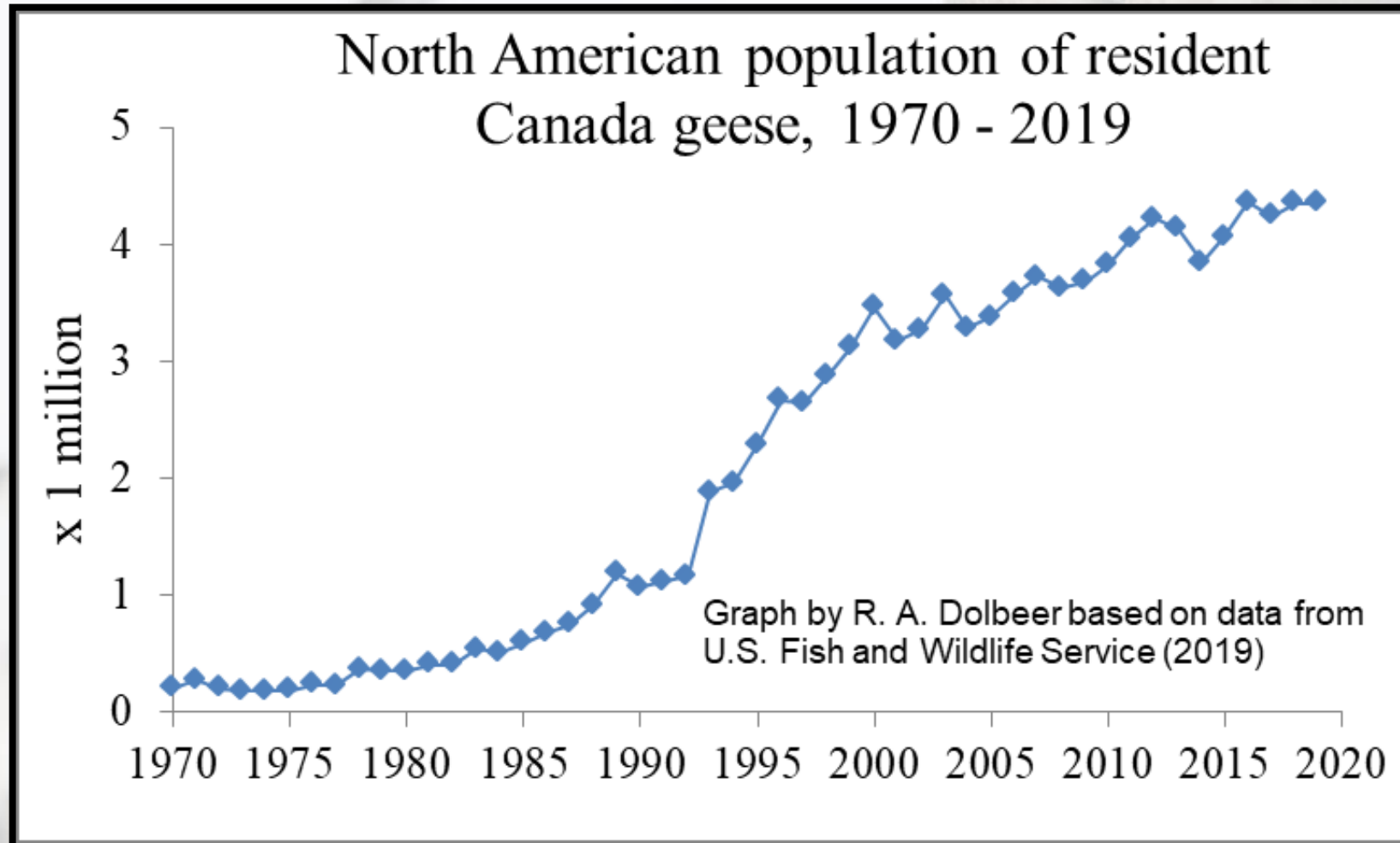
Conflicts

Strategies

Implementation

Resources

# Population Estimates



# Legal Protections

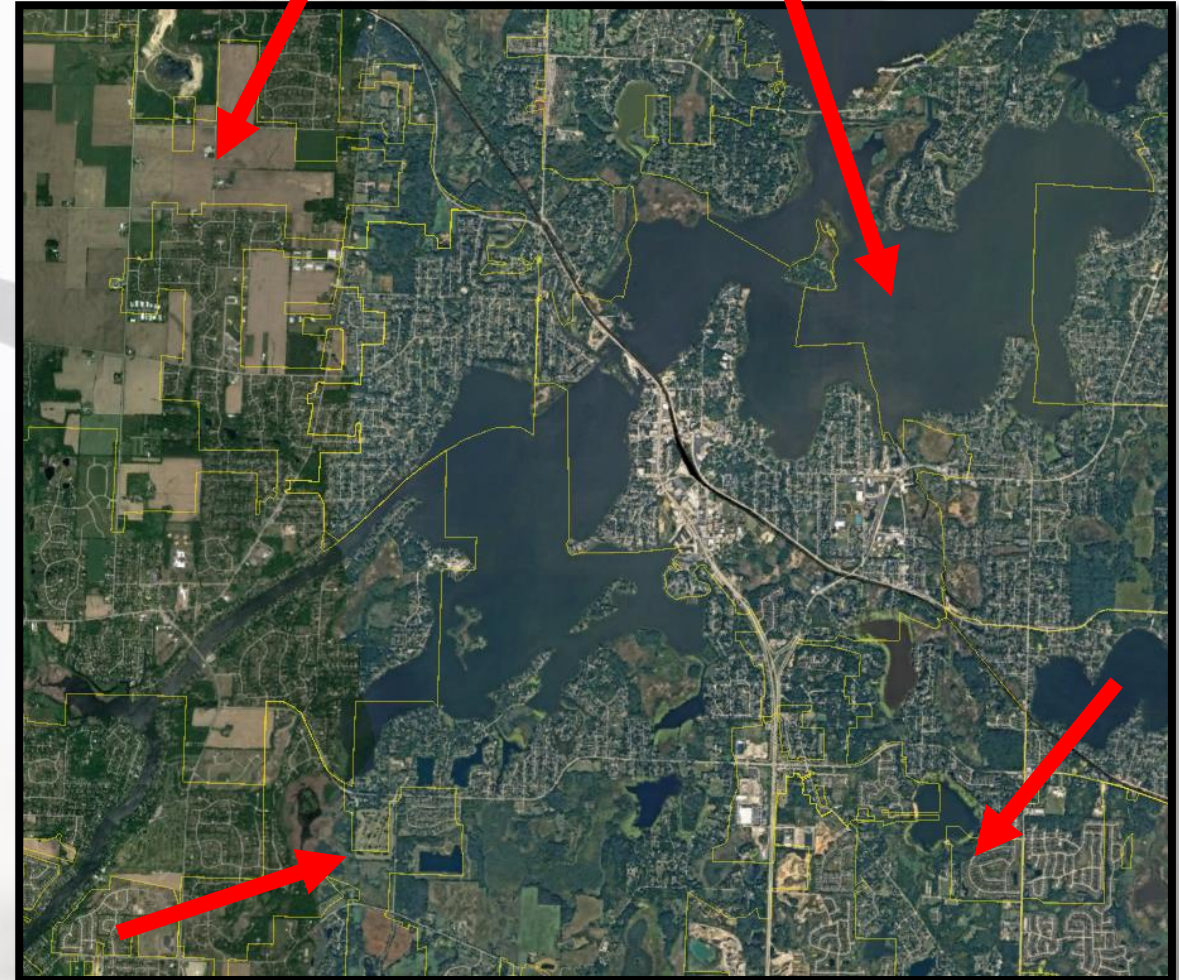
- Federal
  - Migratory Bird Treaty Act (1918)
- State
  - Illinois Wildlife Code





# Human-Goose Conflicts

- Urban/Suburban areas create ideal Canada goose habitat
- Canada geese are adapting well to living near humans
- Canada geese are long-lived birds, compounding the issue





# “Nuisance” is Subjective

- Excessive fecal matter accumulation
- Damage to turf, ornamental plantings, agricultural crops, structures, or vehicles
- Risk to human safety (aggressive birds, risk of vehicle collisions)
- Risk to human health
- Excessive, bothersome noise in residential or commercial areas
- Excessive damage to other wildlife species

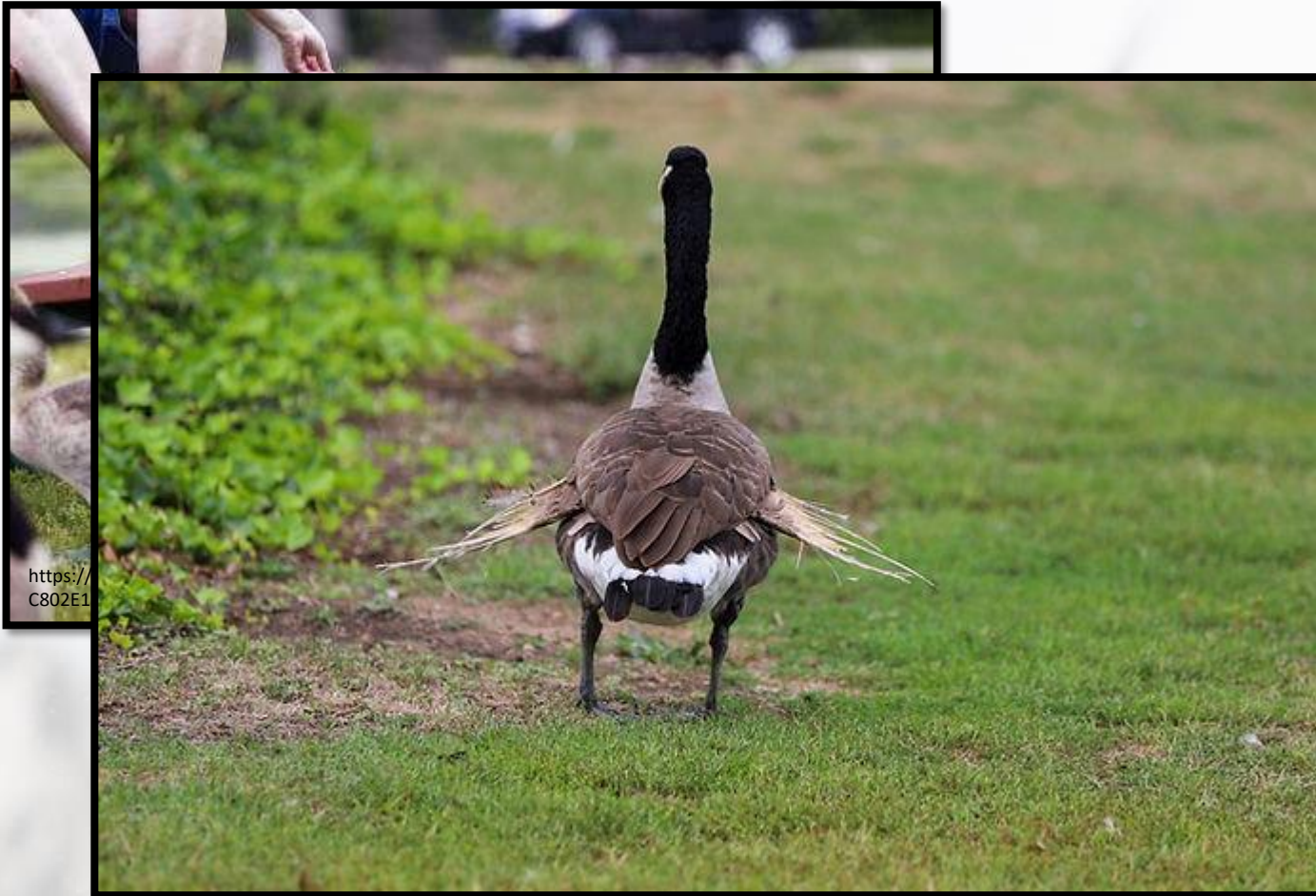
# Strategies for Goose Management

- Realistic goals and objectives
- Make site unappealing for geese
- Likely not going to “force migration”, but can get them to use other areas
- Preventative strategies vs. active strategies





# Education



- Feeding geese encourages the problem
- Nutritional deficiencies lead to deformities
- Feeding makes issue almost impossible to solve

Background

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# Habitat Management



Background

Conflicts

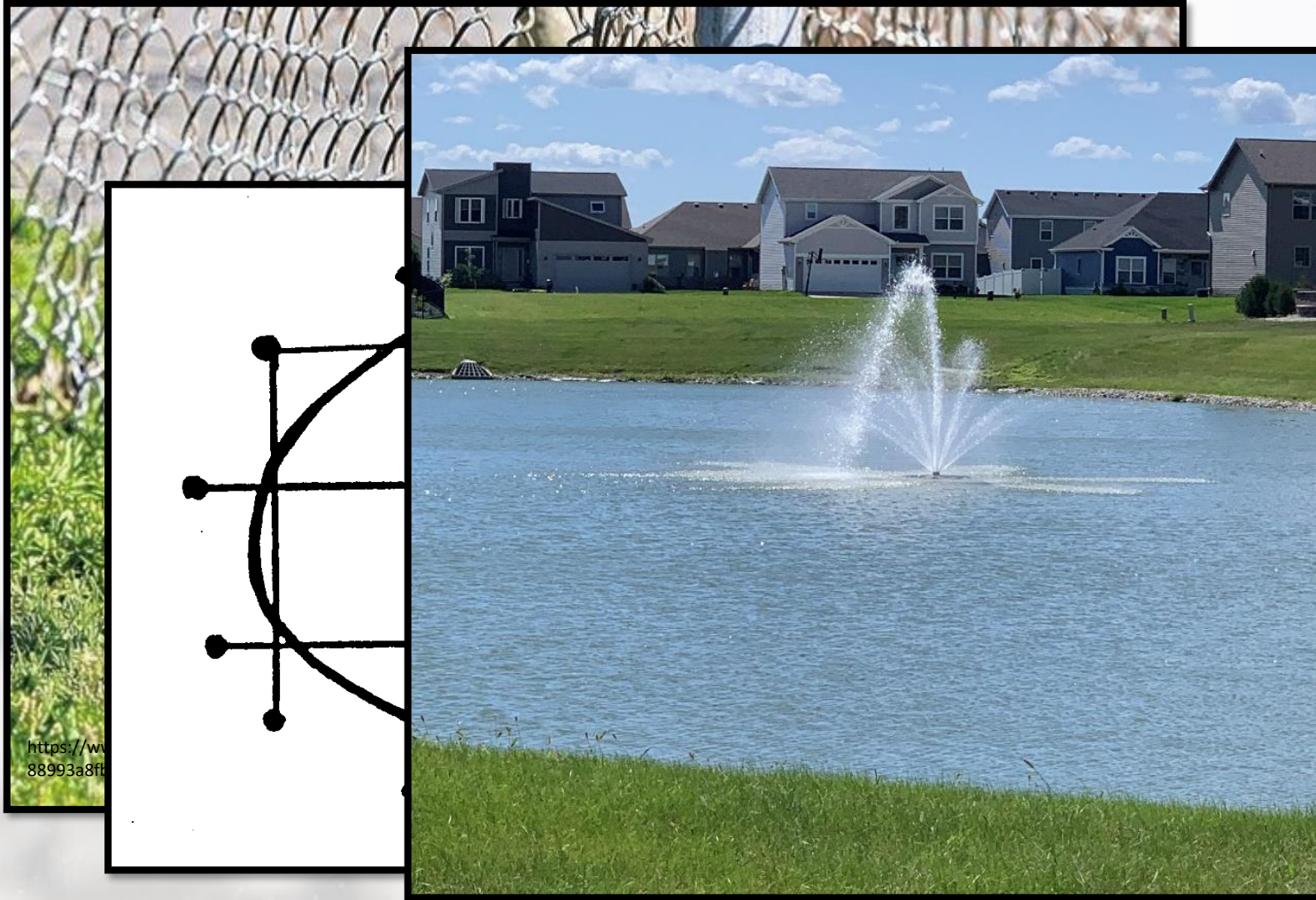
Strategies

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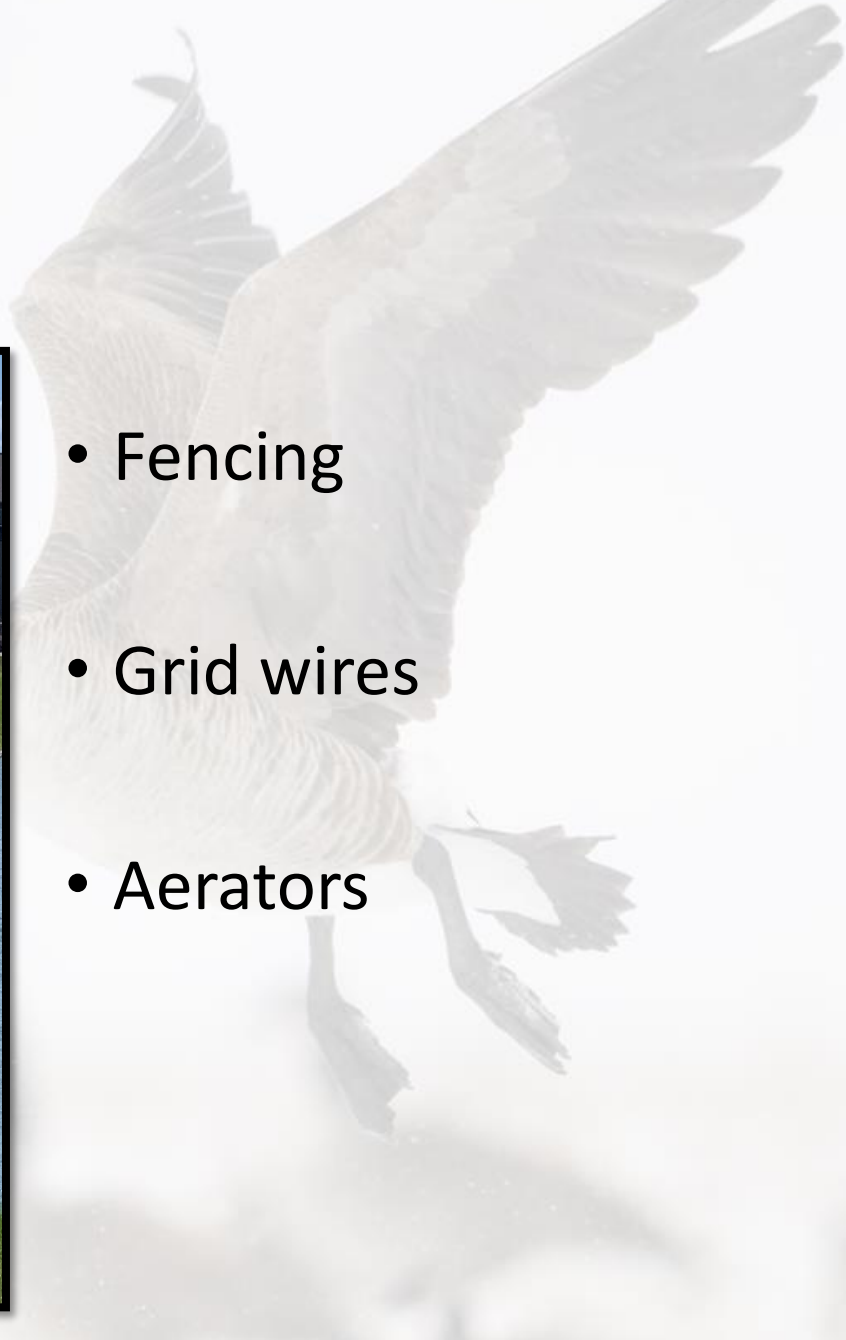
Resources



# Exclusion



- Fencing
- Grid wires
- Aerators



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# Conflict Management



- Active Harassment and dispersal
- Lasers
- Dogs
- Propane Cannons
- Decoys
- Repellents
- Hunting
- Nest/Egg Destruction
- Relocation
- Charity Harvest

Background

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Strategies

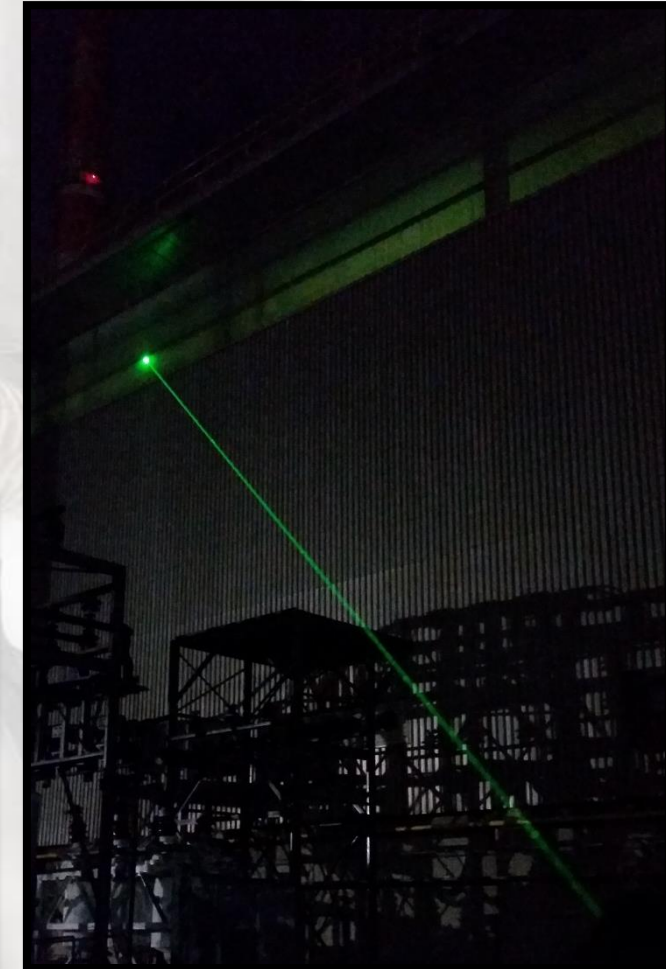
Implementation

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# Light and Laser Harassment

- Low-light conditions (dusk)
- Roost sites



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# Dogs

- Can be very effective if used appropriately
- Handler is still responsible for dog's actions
- Good reinforcement



# Vehicles and Drones



- Remote control cars and boats used to chase/harass geese
- Geese HATE RC boats
- Drones not legal for harassment



# Noisemakers

- Propane Cannons
- Legal Pyrotechnics
- Firearms



# Live Animals and Decoys



- Swans can have their own sets of issues including aggression and habitat degradation
- Coyote decoys need to be moved often and reinforced with live canines

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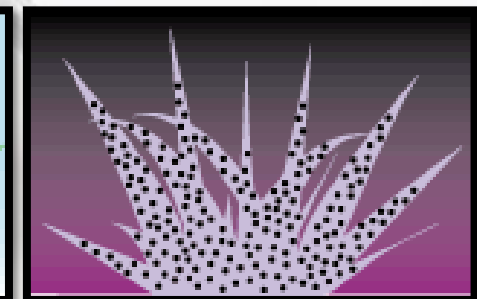
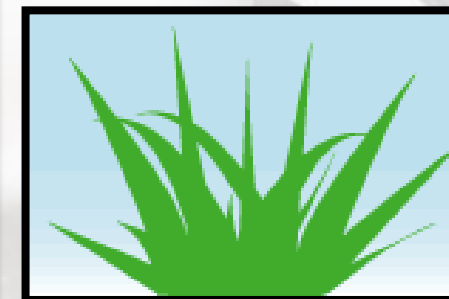
Implementation

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# Repellents

- Anthraquinone is approved active ingredient
- Needs to be reapplied each time lawn is cut



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# Hunting

- Early September season specifically targets local populations
- Can be useful near edges of suburban-rural areas



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# Nest and Egg Management

- With permits, nests/eggs can be managed to prevent additional growth



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# Relocation

- Attempted by IDNR in the past
- Ineffective at any feasible scale
- Moving the problem



# Charity Harvest



- “Reset the clock” on non-lethal management
- Entities work with IDNR and USDA Wildlife Services
- Application process; eligibility requirements; post-harvest obligations
- Meat products donated

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# Integrated Approach

- No “silver bullet” management method
- Combining approaches works best
  - Habitat modification, harassment, nest/egg management, hunting, etc.
- Consistency is key
- Adjust and adapt
- Document



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# Professionals

- Nuisance Wildlife Control Operators
  - Class D – Migratory Birds
- USDA Wildlife Services
  - Consultation
  - Management
- IDNR
  - Consultation
  - Permitting





# Contacts



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# Questions?

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