

OIR: 2223/463

16 February 2023



Request for Information under the Local Government and Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 (the Act) (the LGOIMA)

Thank you for your email of 1 February 2023 requesting the following information, our response is below:

I'm seeking the total amount of money the council has spent on culling and/or controlling Canada geese in the past three years.

The Council has spent \$9,470.58 on Canada geese management and control in the past three years.

This comprises three separate culls at a total cost of \$8,473.58, the application of 'Flockoff' avian repellent in trials at a cost of \$800.00 and the supply and installation of signage related to all previously mentioned activities at a total cost of \$197.00. We have also investigated the use of other deterrents such as egg oiling, mock coyotes and shiny moving objects, however none of these are believed to be effective.

The cost above does not include staff time, which is a fixed cost.

Controlling Canada geese has proved a very divisive issue for Kāpiti (and other areas) for several years. It is more complex than it might appear, and late in 2021 the Wellington Region's Mayors wrote to the Ministers for Conservation and Biodiversity seeking Government leadership to help address the issue.

Canada geese were introduced to New Zealand by the Acclimatisation Society, and until 2011 they were controlled by Fish & Game under the Wildlife Act 1953. At that point, their status changed to "unprotected", and no single organisation was responsible for managing populations to sustainable levels. At the time the Department of Conservation committed to monitoring the "arrangements developed by the farming community", and the need or otherwise for regulation. To our knowledge, no such monitoring has occurred.

Since then, anyone has been able to control Canada geese, as long as they do it humanely. With no single point of leadership, no-one has done it effectively. These highly mobile and intelligent birds now consume large quantities of grass and foul wetlands, paddocks, sports fields, parks and amenity areas (see attached images). Despite public concern at these obvious impacts, control measures often generate public backlash.

As a result, councils are now faced with very significant technical and social challenges in the control of Canada geese, and it is unviable at local level.

Early in 2022 the Ministers advised that Biosecurity New Zealand and the Department of Conservation would look to advance managing Canada geese at a national level. It is not known if this occurred, but in any case, it has not made a difference in Kāpiti.

We are happy to provide further context should you wish, please feel free to contact us via our communications team.

Yours sincerely



Mike Mendonça

Acting Group Manager Place and Space
Te Kaiwhakahaere roopu, Takiwa me te Waahi

