

## Sonja Birr

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**From:** David Soeldner  
**Sent:** Thursday, September 04, 2014 11:27 AM  
**To:** Sonja Birr; Dan Koski; Greg Minikel  
**Cc:** Al Schema - D9  
**Subject:** FW: Dewey Street Park Retention Pond-Goose Flusher

Sonja,

Can we add this item to the agenda for Monday's PI meeting? It can be titled,

--Discussion of wildlife management strategies surrounding City-owned stormwater ponds

Thanks,

Dave Soeldner | Alderman, District 8 | City of Manitowoc | 920-629-6444 | [www.manitowoc.org](http://www.manitowoc.org)

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**From:** AL Schema [[aschema@sbcglobal.net](mailto:aschema@sbcglobal.net)]  
**Sent:** Friday, August 29, 2014 2:21 PM  
**To:** Gloria Shiraef; Dan Koski; David Soeldner  
**Subject:** Re: Dewey Street Park Retention Pond-Goose Flusher

Hi Dave and Dan,

Could this topic be revisited possible at streets because I have received complaints on the south 30th pond and south 10 pond also. I can see chasing the geese away in the early stages of growth on the ponds so the aqua plants and hills sides can take hold but where is the cut off line? The ponds on south 30th and south 10th are well established from what I can see and are attracting many nature adventurists wanting to see the positive wildlife its attracting. Thoughts or concerns?

Please Check out the Links Below

Wisconsin Speleological Society (WSS)  
[www.wisconsincaves.org](http://www.wisconsincaves.org)<<http://www.wisconsincaves.org/>>

Cherney Maribel Caves  
[www.maribelcaves.com](http://www.maribelcaves.com)<<http://www.maribelcaves.com/>>

WSS YouTube Channel  
[Wisconsin Caves](http://www.youtube.com/user/WisconsinCaves)<<http://www.youtube.com/user/WisconsinCaves>>

Allan Schema

On Friday, August 29, 2014 8:57 AM, Gloria Shiraef <[shiraev@lsol.net](mailto:shiraev@lsol.net)> wrote:

Dear Mr. Schema-

I live in your District 9 with my husband, Rick Rott, who has worked at Manitowoc Cranes as a welder and welding instructor for nearly 38 years. We have lived adjacent to the area of the Dewey Street Retention Pond (formerly a detention pond) for the last 10 years as of this month.

My husband and I have issues and questions regarding the use of hunter Mr. Chris Thomas to scare away Canada Geese from the pond. Our next door neighbors have issues with it as well, although specifically related to the .22 starter pistol that Mr. Thomas uses in addition to his dogs, as it sets their small dogs into a serious panic mode, I understand.

While we also detest the use of that gun, (it is very unsettling on a an otherwise quiet day when you aren't expecting it, to hear sudden, loud gunshots and it frightens our indoor-only cat), but that is not the the main thrust of our issues, which deals with the potential effects of the 'goose-flushing' on other birds that frequent this pond.

As we begin to study the situation, I am advised by a person who works intimately with wildlife in the area that as our Alderman, you would be able to supply us with a copy of the permit obtained for this man to perform his duties, so the purpose of this contact today is to ask for that copy, and to ask you what you might be able to do as our representative.

Yesterday we had a relatively minor shouting incident with Mr. Thomas from a distance, as I was joined by our neighbor who was frankly quite angry. She related to me that her husband has previously complained to the city in this regard since Mr. Thomas first was hired last fall.

Thomas says he is now doing this as a volunteer, but I know it said in the paper that he was hired and paid by the city previously. While I verbally made a case to him for protecting the other bird species from this activity, this man not only didn't believe me, he actually became insulting to me, despite the fact that I made it very clear that I did not hold him responsible for just doing what he was being asked to do.

However, if he is now doing this strictly as a volunteer, he is now also complicit in the potential damage, and now with cognizance of what he may be doing beyond his objective.

I fully understand why this man's services have been employed, and that the city feels this will protect the newly planted growth, but there are a number of other factors that have been damaging the plant growth in and around the pond. The biggest factor is probably the extended time we had very little rain for the outside growth, and ironically, the flooding after rain has adversely affected the 'inside' growth. We are currently poised for another possible 'torrential' rain event.

What the city and Mr. Thomas fail to understand, believe, or even care about, is the number of incredible birds that have visited this pond, or even made it a home, and that they can all be affected by this goose harassment. If it was just the geese, I wouldn't object (except for the use of that pistol), but we know it will not just be the geese!

Since April 2014, besides the Canada Geese, there's been Bufflehead Duck, Blue-winged Teal, Pied-Billed Grebe, Greater and Lesser Scaup, Double-crested Cormorant, Hooded Merganser, Green Heron, Great Blue Heron, Lesser Black-backed Gull, Caspian Tern, Belted Kingfisher, Killdeer, Spotted Sandpiper, Tree Swallow, Barn Swallow, and Mallard Duck (including a rare juvenile female who is a light brown mutation, that was reared in this pond, and has remained a daily visitor since June).

At your request, I'd be glad to expand on my observations, and as an amateur photographer, I have daily photographic proof of each of the species I have named, in the pond or next to it or both. For the vast majority of the summer, a family of 6 goslings and their 2 fiercely protective parents were the extent of the goose population on this pond, and most of what were daily visitors in any quantity were the numerous mallards. Goose impact on any growth was at best minimal, and yet nearly the entire swath around the pond failed to flourish. While much of the planting done inside the pond did survive, when the rains finally did come in, these plants were all underwater for days, and I watched as some yellowed, withered and died without any wildlife intervention. I can outline for you exactly why I don't think the geese

are even responsible for the lack of planting success at this pond. I don't really feel this hunter's services will help, especially now that the grasses around this pond have failed and stand as (uneaten) dry, dead stalks. (Mind you, intact dead growth means that it grew successfully to a certain height and died from other causes)!

Now as the geese begin flocking for migration, their numbers have increased, but I can attest to the fact that every time this hunter and his dogs scare the geese away, they would always return within an hour. There's little to no impact on their habits even over the longer term, which I observed after his twice daily visits concluded last fall. I didn't formally complain last year, since the pond was new and not yet established as the current wildlife magnet that it has become now.

Unfortunately the more exotic of the bird species is far more timid, and in all likelihood, will be adversely affected by this practice. It is coming into migration time for them as well, and this fall will be the prime time for fleeting and rare appearances of an even greater variety of species than I have previously documented. I would hate to see that be ruined with this ineffective way of dealing with the geese, and nearly worse than that, I am hating to learn that the city just doesn't care about these magnificent birds they have attracted by creating this pond. In my mind, if you attract them, you become responsible for their welfare, but so far it appears we are in the minority in that way of thinking in Manitowoc.

Besides being a joy to observe, the frequent presence of the Great Blue Heron also cuts down on the rodent population, which is at least locally quite beneficial. Not everyone realizes that these herons hunt on dry land as well as in the pond (where legally there should not be any non-native fish, and without a permit, legally should be no fish of any kind. And yes, I have photographic evidence of the GB Heron enjoying a meal of what is likely Koi, that 'migrated' from another connected pond via overflow after the spring rains).

As I offered, I would be happy to provide you with more information and/or pictures, but today I just wanted to give you an overview of the situation and ask to see a copy of the permit.

Thank you for your time, thanks in advance for your anticipated assistance, and I look forward to hearing from you.

Kind regards-  
Gloria Shiraef

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