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PRESS RELEASE - FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Bristol Parks Seeks Peace with Geese, Encourages No Feeding

Bristol, CT – [July 24, 2025] – Bristol Parks, Recreation, Youth and Community Services (BPRYCS) urges community members not to feed the local Canadian Goose population at Bristol parks. The call to action is part of a larger awareness initiative aimed to improve the community relations and conservation efforts with local geese in an effort to manage local populations in non-lethal ways.

BPRYCS' two phased approach includes modifying habitats and spreading awareness. With the goal of managing the population and educating the community about the harms and impacts of feeding wildlife and geese, BPRYCS has installed educational signs throughout the Bristol parks system, around ponds, and along waterways. In addition to posted signs and asking community members not to feed the geese, BPRYCS is implementing habitat changes to deter resident populations and encourage healthy migration patterns.

Habitat modifications slated to commence in 2026 include plans to install a physical deterrent. BPRYCS partnered with the Farmington River Watershed Association (FRWA) and was awarded a River Smart Grant to aid in the planning, design and installation of a riparian buffer along the Veterans Memorial Boulevard ponds. Superintendent Dr. Joshua Medeiros explained, "Experts indicate that you must change the physical environment to make the ponds less desirable for geese. Riparian buffers impede sight lines of water for Canadian Geese, making them unwilling to occupy the habitat."

In response to extensive wildlife advocacy efforts from the Bristol community in 2024, BPRYCS and the Board of Parks Commissioners engaged in research to determine alternate solutions that are humane and impactful to geese management. Management efforts and needs are the result of damage and human health and safety threats related to Canadian Geese throughout Bristol's parks. The Board of Park Commissioners allocated proceeds from the Friends of Bristol Parks and Recreation Fund to support non-lethal approaches to geese management and clean-up.

After a year of research and consultation, the Board of Park Commissioners adopted a formal Geese Management Plan in April 2025. The plan, to be revisited annually, includes educational outreach efforts, habitat modification, and ongoing monitoring and consultation with state and federal agencies.

Previous solutions that yielded temporary results in deterring geese from Bristol's parks include harassing the geese with dogs, scaring the geese with decoys and flashing lights, and addling eggs through a CT DEEP approved process. Despite these efforts, the resident Canadian Geese population has continued to grow in Bristol. Non-migratory geese pose health and safety concerns to humans and cause issues such as fecal contamination, overgrazing, and disease transmission.

"Our hope is that by showing the community that we're doing our part to physically modify geese habitats in the park, post signage, and increase awareness, that they will in-turn help our efforts by not feeding any wildlife in the park, including geese," Deputy Superintendent Sarah Larson summarized.

To learn more about how you can help improve conservation efforts with local Canadian Geese and what BPRYCS is doing to manage local populations, please visit BristolRec.com.

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About the City of Bristol Department of Parks, Recreation, Youth and Community Services
It is the mission of the City of Bristol Department of Parks, Recreation, Youth and Community Services (BPRYCS) to deliver high-quality services and facilities that enhance the community's quality of life, meet the diverse needs of all citizens, and build a sustainable future.

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