

---

**Subject:** FW: Submission Markham Council Sept 30 2020 - Item 8.2.1 Geese Management at Swan Lake  
**Attachments:** Markham Council\_Item 8.2.1\_Concerns About Strobe Lights \_Sept 30.pdf

---

**From:** Fred Peters <  
**Sent:** September 29, 2020 5:32 PM  
**To:** Clerks Public <  
**Cc:** Mayor Scarpitti; Regional Councillor, Jack Heath - Markham; Councillor, Andrew Keyes - Markham; Fu, Phoebe; Grech, Rob  
**Subject:** Submission Markham Council Sept 30 2020 - Item 8.2.1 Geese Management at Swan Lake

**CAUTION:** This email originated from a source outside the City of Markham. DO NOT CLICK on any links or attachments, or reply unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

The attached submission is for the Council Meeting on Sept 30.  
It is a follow up in response to questions raised by members at the General Committee on September 21.  
I would require 5 minutes to present these findings.

Fred Peter





# Addressing Concerns About The Use of Strobe Lights For Geese Management

Markham Council – Item 8.2.1  
September 30, 2020

# AGENDA

## **General Committee - September 21, 2020**

- The General Committee and Friends of Swan Lake Park supported the staff plan for an enhanced hazing program for Swan Lake
- Members requested clarification on impact of “strobe lights” on wildlife before approving use of strobe lights

**Summary of our findings related to the question**

# Concerns Expressed About Strobe Lights

## 1. Don't scare geese away - true

- Not designed to “scare” them. Objective is to disrupt sleep patterns, encouraging them to find quieter resting area

## 2. Work for awhile but geese get use to them

- Perhaps a valid concern for full season use – resident birds have reason to tough it out
- Perhaps migratory birds less reason to persist and will move on

## 3. Negative impact on other wildlife

- Perhaps a valid concern for full season use (best all season alternative)
- Proposal is to use strobes for fall migration period (Oct./Nov.).
- May trigger earlier departure of other migrating birds
  - Wild trumpeter swans have already left the lake
  - Regular mute swans are not on the lake this year, in future could be removed to co-ordinate timing with the program.

# Strobe Lights and Laser Lights

## Floating Strobe Lights

- Perpetual
  - work from dusk to dawn
- Need 7 for Swan Lake
- Low intensity, short distances
- Little information



## Laser Guns

- Labour intensive
  - only work when you are there
- High intensity, long distances
- Widely used – airport control etc.
- Some research on impact on wildlife



# Pigeon Control Resource Center (UK)

The “Consumer Reports” source on products for hazing all types of birds (for warehouses, bridges, water etc.)

<https://www.pigeoncontrolresourcecentre.org/>

## **Guidance on the Use of Strobe Lights**

- Some success reported with waterfowl
- Doesn't work for all species
- Species can get used to them
- Best to use in combination with other hazing techniques
- **Impact on wildlife**
  - No commentary provided

# Pigeon Control Resource Center (UK)

## **Guidance on the Use of Laser Lights**

- Widely used – particularly for bird control at airports
- Needs to be narrowly focused or it will disrupt other than targeted species
- Species can get used to them
- Best to use in combination with other hazing techniques

U.S. National Wildlife Research Center

## Research Findings On Laser Lights

Source: Pigeon Control Center

- “... even when eyes were exposed to long periods of uninterrupted exposure to laser beams **there appeared to be no physical damage to the eye ....**”
- “The avian eye generally filters the most damaging radiation (short wave radiation from the sun) very effectively and **therefore exposure to laser beams should not damage the avian eye.**”
- More research required to determine if extended exposure over long periods leads to eye damage.



September 2020

# Waterfowl on Swan Lake

Number	Species	Roosting Habits
1000+	Canada Geese	On water
200+	Ducks (mallards)	On water
0	Mute Swans (captive)	On water or land
2 (come & go)	Trumpeter Swans (wild)	On water or land
2-3	Great Blue Herons	In the trees
2+	Cormorants	High perches

# Bill From Border Control Bird Dogs



This works but how long to they stay away?

# Perpetual Hazing Proposal

- Add strobe lights for Dusk to Dawn harassment.
- Trial for 2020, if some success repeat in 2021

## GOALS:

- **Short term**
  - move geese off the lake in 2020
- **Long term**
  - establish Swan Lake as a not “friendly destination” and alter migration patterns.



# FOCUSED ON RESTORING SWAN LAKE AND SWAN LAKE PARK

FROM THIS



BACK TO THIS



## Thank You For Your Support!