

To: Chair and Members of the Trees and Forests Advisory Committee

From: Florine Morrison and Marie Blosch, AWAC Wildlife Sub-Committee

At your last meeting Marie Blosch and I appreciated the opportunity to speak with you regarding the draft Humane Urban Wildlife Conflict Policy: Forestry Operations Wildlife Protocol which was presented to CAPS in July with a recommendation for it to be referred to the Animal Welfare Advisory Committee and the Trees and Forests Advisory Committee.

The importance of urban trees and forested areas cannot be overemphasized and the humane treatment of animals who rely on these trees for their food and shelter are an equally important factor in promoting a healthy environment.

The draft Protocol as written includes many of the recommendations offered by the AWAC wildlife sub-committee, however, there are a few areas where we feel additional clarification is required:

**Recommendations** under "Background:" the last paragraph refers to a third party training facilitator who will develop a specialized training course to compliment this protocol.

AWAC has advised that the qualifications and/or name of the facilitator, details of the course content and the staff who are to receive this training be included here.

The **Protocol** is broken down into 3 sections.

2) requires that staff report wildlife to the Forestry Supervisor, however step 3) fails to provide adequate direction and clarification to support the primary goals of the protocol.

AWAC recommends that step 3 include:

- a definition of pre-stressing
- a wait time after pre-stressing - no less than 1 day and no more than 2 days.
- details of additional steps for staff direction by the Forestry Supervisor such as relocate nests and animals in adjacent limbs or trees install nesting boxes to relocate wildlife

call an authorized wildlife custodian for advice and assistance (contact list to be compiled) when necessary remove juvenile or injured animals and transport to the care of an authorized wildlife custodian.

Convenience, logistics and financial considerations should not be a deciding factor when it comes to the trimming or removal of trees that are not an immediate threat to public safety.

AWAC recommends that there be a 4th protocol added.

4) In accordance with the Governing Principle of the Protocol, trees on public property including street trees will be assessed for public safety and prioritized by TRAQ personnel for trimming or removal with focus on trimming any potentially dangerous branches rather than removal of the entire tree.

The Trees and Forest Committee voiced some concern that this protocol may require a new department and additional expertise to implement. Please consider that The Forestry Department already does inspections of trees that may require attention and it is their expectation that wildlife be treated humanely. The draft protocol we are asked to consider already includes a requirement for "Forestry Operations to include a third party training facilitator to develop a specialized training course to compliment this protocol." With the few additional recommendations listed above the City's current expectations for the humane treatment of wildlife by forestry staff will become a written protocol.

We hope that your Committee will support the AWAC recommendations regarding the draft Forestry Operation Wildlife Protocol and we look forward to discussing recommendations to protect urban wildlife.