

Do Not Feed the Geese at Woodrow Wilson High School

Woodrow Wilson High School and the Raleigh County Board of Education have been cited the last two years by the Raleigh County Health Department for problems associated with non-indigenous geese on the campus. The fecal chloroform count in the pond exceeds levels which can be measured by standard scientific methods and there are goose droppings all over the campus.

ROTC Instructor Charles Carpenter reports, "When we do our marching we track goose poop out in the building. It is a sanitation issue for our group and damages our uniforms." Football Coach Chad Sarrett states, "In football you are always on the ground. The goose poop carries viruses and disease. The people that keep feeding them encourage them to stay around."

Principal Ronald Cantley has contacted the West Virginia Department of Natural Resources who in turn referred the school system to the United States Department of Agriculture. The school system is entering into an agreement with the USDA that will culminate in the removal of geese that do not leave the campus after harassment by the USDA. "As I understand the process, they initially will harass the geese to re-instill a fear of people in the hopes that they will relocate. Hopefully that will be sufficient. Ironically the very people that say they like the geese will be endangering them if they continue to feed them. A single goose can defecate every 20 minutes up to 1.5 pounds each day. If you do the math on the total number of geese on our campus, any reasonable person can see why the Raleigh County Health Department is concerned. Our children have to attend school and athletic practices in that environment. This process will hopefully solve that problem. Can you imagine this in your home? We at Woodrow Wilson love animals and pleasant pastoral experiences as much as the next person; I would suggest though we need to take care of our children first."