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Non-profits offer solutions to Oak Bay residents

OAK BAY, B.C.: A collection of British Columbian non-profits are teaming up to help Oak Bay residents see that there are other – and better – options than their existing plan to cull deer.

The Association for the Protection of Fur-Bearing Animals (APFA) is voicing concerns and offering alternative solutions to the municipality that has declared a need to kill as many as 25 deer.

“Communities have been conducting culls on wildlife for hundreds of years in Canada,” explained Lesley Fox, Executive Director of APFA. “Yet the concerns of municipalities – be it damage to gardens or vehicular collisions – have not abated. Continuing with a cull will only give residents a short-reprieve from their concerns; but it will not last.”

The rationale offered by Oak Bay to hunt down and kill 25 deer does not properly add up, and many questions remain. Why 25 deer? Which 25 deer will be killed? Is the municipality protecting the area’s natural predators? Are they properly enforcing feeding by-laws? Are residents being provided education to assist in protecting key gardens or properties?

Further, the unnatural removal of a native animal from the eco-system can have long-ranging consequences that are difficult to predict.

“When there are other solutions available that will provide long-term relief to the concerns of Oak Bay residents, we truly must ask why the municipality wants to take such drastic action,” added Fox. “This is not a time to follow in the footsteps of failed history; it is an opportunity to lead an environmentally-sound, green path into the future.”

A booklet being developed by APFA in conjunction with Friends of Animals, DeerSafe Victoria and the BC SPCA will be distributed to Oak Bay residents, which will help them find simple and long-term solutions to living with deer in their community.

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