

Status report on nuisance bird control issues
Iowa City Landfill and Recycling Center
Due June 1, 2023
Submitted March 31, 2023



Observed Bird Populations

Landfill staff has completed Landfill Bird Survey Forms on a regular basis. Twenty-nine total surveys were completed by four landfill staff since March 1, 2023. Staff reported varying levels of birds from early March to mid-April, when populations dwindled and very few birds have been noted since. Changes in the numbers of birds were noted in forms for the following days:

- March 1 through March 19: more than 2,000 starling and gulls were noted on dirtied, tarped and sprayed areas
- March 20: 200 to 2,000: starling and gulls were noted sprayed areas
- March 22: 20-200 gulls and starlings were noted on dirtied and sprayed areas
- March 24: 200-2,000 starlings and gulls were noted on noted on dirtied, tarped and sprayed areas
- March 27: more than 2,000 starling and gulls were noted on dirtied, tarped and sprayed areas
- April 3: 200-2,000 starlings and gulls were noted on dirtied, tarped and sprayed areas
- April 10: more than 2,000 starling and gulls were noted on dirtied, tarped and sprayed areas
- April 12 through April 25: zero to 20 birds were noted on all areas
- April 26 through May 1: 20-200 gulls were noted on dirtied areas
- May 3 to present: zero to 20 birds were noted on all areas

Actions

- Regular bird surveys were performed in March through late May, as noted above.
- Landfill staff dirtied, sprayed or tarped trash daily, as required by our permit.
- Staff has regularly utilized Odor Sergeant, the grape-scented spray cover additive.
- The hand-held bird deterrent “Agrilaser Handheld 500” laser (“laser”) was used on occasion. Effectiveness seems questionable but it may be based on inconsistency of use.

Other Items of Note

- Jordan corresponded with Ernie Colboth at the USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) and received a draft contract to hire APHIS to assist in lethal control.
- Jordan, Colboth, Ron Knoche (City of Iowa City Public Works Director) and several DNR staff (Leat, Levetzow, Stouder) met via Zoom on May 15 to discuss logistics and expectations for lethal control.

Next Steps

- As required in this final quarterly status report, recommendations for longer-term nuisance bird control methods include:
 - Staff will continue to complete regular bird surveys, approximately twice weekly.
 - Staff will continue to utilize Odor Sergeant additive and the laser to deter birds as needed.
 - The City of Iowa City is working through the draft contract from APHIS regarding lethal control and discussing next steps. Any lethal control measures would occur over winter and early spring 2024.
- The City proposes continuing to provide quarterly updates to IDNR through June 1, 2024 (September 1 and December 1, 2023, and March and June 1, 2024).

Prepared by Jennifer Jordan, Resource Management Superintendent

