

James R. Good, Chairman
Urban Wildlife Committee
2719 Harney Plc.
Rapid City, SD 57702

November 13, 2012

RECEIVED

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MAYOR'S OFFICE

Mayor Sam Kooiker
300 6th Street
Rapid City, SD 57701

Mayor Kooiker:

This letter is in response to your request that the Urban Wildlife Committee be made aware of recent complaints your office has received from citizens concerning problems with skunks and our recommendations for handling skunk problems within Rapid City.

The Urban Wildlife Committee had discussions at our November 7, 2012 meeting with Mike Kintigh, Regional Supervisor for GF&P, and John Kanta, Regional Wildlife Manager for GF&P. Skunk populations, much like rabbits and other wildlife species are cyclic. Mike and John noted a marked increase in skunk numbers and complaints throughout South Dakota this year. That would infer the good news should be that numbers of skunks and resultant complaints should subside as a natural occurrence.

Our committee is aware that many complaint telephone calls come into a variety of city, county, and state offices requesting aid in dealing with wild animal problems. Currently, Rapid City has no specific ways to deal with these problems. There is no individual nor single office in Rapid City which deals with the problems. Various agencies including the Rapid City Police Department, South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks Department, South Dakota Highway Patrol, Pennington County Sheriff's Department, Rapid City Parks and Recreation Department, and previously the County Extension Service and have dealt with wildlife disturbance calls. Disturbance and damage by skunks and other wildlife species will no doubt continue. In that there is no distinct protocol for handling these problems, no one agency has taken a lead in this area. People with complaints feel like no one cares about their wildlife problems. It is a situation Rapid City has an obligation to remedy.

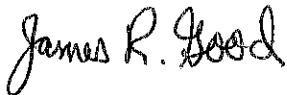
With the establishment of the new city Wildlife Hotline at Parks & Rec (791-4945), these problems will be directed to one office where data is now being collected to determine the number and nature of wildlife problems. The recording on the Hotline directs callers to 911 or GF&P if they have a problem where a person or domestic animal is in danger from a wild animal.

Because of the continued and growing need to handle wild animal disturbances in a timely manner, our Committee recommends that the City consider creating and filling a position (Wildlife Enforcement Officer?) to be the initial contact for handling/coordinating actions in these situations. An alternative, before hiring this individual, would be to identify a current City employee whose responsibilities would include these duties.

In the interim, our Committee just learned that a new type of trap is available through G,F&P which individuals can check out to trap problem skunks. GF&P staff will explain how to use the trap to capture and euthanize the problem animal in an expedient manner. Also, there is a local private company, All Seasons Pest Control, which can be contacted and hired by the individual with the problem to trap and dispose of the problem animal.

We hope these ideas and recommendations will be of help to you in answering inquiries and handling future skunk and related wildlife problems. We are here to serve the community and look forward to any comments or questions you might have.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "James R. Good". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "J" and "G".

James R. Good
Chairman, Urban Wildlife Committee