

AGENDA DESCRIPTION:

Consideration and possible action to resume the City's Peafowl Trapping Program for 2018.

RECOMMENDED COUNCIL ACTION:

- (1) Receive and file a final summary report on the 2017 Peafowl Trapping Program; and,
- (2) Review the 2018 Peafowl Census Report, and direct Staff to resume the humane trapping and relocation of up to 150 peafowl for 2018.

FISCAL IMPACT: Resuming the trapping of peafowl for 2018, which will occur after July 15, 2018, has been included in the draft FY18-19 budget under the Code Enforcement program.

Amount Budgeted:	\$136,000 (\$37,000 for Peafowl Trapping Program)
Additional Appropriation:	N/A
Account Number:	101-400-4180-5101

ORIGINATED BY: Kevin Le, Code Enforcement Officer *KL*

REVIEWED BY: Ara Mhuranian, AICP, Director of Community Development *AM*

APPROVED BY: Doug Willmore, City Manager *DW*

BACKGROUND AND DISCUSSION:

On August 4, 2015, the City Council adopted the Peafowl Management Plan (PMP), which is a City-initiated plan to humanely manage the peafowl population within the City. This is achieved by reducing and maintaining the peafowl population to the levels identified in the 2000 Peafowl Census Report (134 total birds, citywide). The PMP supports the coexistence of peafowl within the semi-rural character of the City by:

- Encouraging public education and deterrent measures; and,
- Humanely trapping and relocating up to 150 birds per year in order to maintain the 2000 peafowl population.

At that same meeting, in response to the uptick in the City's peafowl population (based on the 2014 census) and the increase and tenor of residents' complaints, the City Council directed Staff to begin the trapping of up to 150 peafowl within the following five neighborhoods: *Portuguese Bend, Crestridge, Sunnyside Ridge, Grandview, and Vista Grande*. The trapping and relocation of peafowl has subsequently occurred annually.

2017 Peafowl Trapping Program

On September 14, 2015, the City began implementing its Peafowl Trapping Program. The five City-owned traps, one for each of the five neighborhoods participating in the program, are placed in the enclosed rear yard of a private residence for approximately a two-week period, and afterwards relocated to another property within the same neighborhood. For 2017, trapping occurred between July 2017 and March 2018, and included the *Monaco* neighborhood in response to resident requests and the high number of birds observed in the area. The table below summarizes and compares the number of birds trapped by neighborhood between the 2015 and 2017 trapping periods.

Peafowl Trapping Summary Count							
Year	Grandview	Vista Grande	Crestridge	Portuguese Bend	Sunnyside Ridge	Monaco	Total
2015	24	48	27	27	24	0	150
2016	1	82	7	8	54	0	152
2017	0	44	0	0	20	48	112
Total	25	174	34	35	98	48	414

The 112 birds trapped during 2017 included 42 males, 51 females, 16 juveniles, and 3 broods. This year's program resulted in fewer birds trapped partly because the City was unable to secure volunteer properties to set up traps, as well as the effectiveness of the program over the past 2 years and some trapping occurring in neighboring cities. As stated in the PMP, the birds trapped were collected by the City's vendor (Wildlife Services) within 24 hours and relocated to ranches in San Diego, Ventura, and Santa Barbara counties. Per the City Council-adopted PMP, Staff approved the locations to which the birds were relocated.¹

2018 Peafowl Census Report

Pursuant to the PMP, each year the City is required to conduct a census survey to assess the current peafowl population trends, and based on past census reports, determine whether trapping should resume. This year's peafowl census survey was conducted between April 1 and April 8, 2018, by Wildlife Services. The census was conducted based on two types of observations. The first was counting roosting peafowl in trees at sunrise, and the second was using a systematic grid pattern during the late afternoon to evening hours. Attached to this report is a detailed description of the census count (Attachment A). It should be noted that there may be an undercount of approximately 10% due to breeding females and limited physical access. Similar to last year, this year's census includes the *Monaco* neighborhood because of the volume of peafowl-related complaints in this area. The table below summarizes the results of the

¹ This information is kept confidential to protect the privacy of the property owners receiving the relocated birds.

recent census, tracks the annual census results since 2014, and compares the 2018 census with the 2014 baseline census.

2018 Peafowl Census Summary Table							
	Grandview	Vista Grande	Crestridge	Monaco	Portuguese Bend	Sunnyside Ridge	Total
2018 Males	1	20	1	1	28	24	75
2018 Females	0	20	2	2	18	13	55
2018 Total	1	40	3	3	46	37	130
2017	0	42	9	22	40	37	150
2016	4	82	13	n/a	52	57	208
2014 Census	17	71	41	n/a	85	64	278
Difference b/n 2014 and 2018	- 16	-31	-38	3	-39	-27	-148
% Difference b/n 2014 and 2018	-94%	-44%	-92%	n/a	-46%	-42%	-53%

As depicted above, there has been an overall 53% reduction in the City’s peafowl population, compared to the baseline census conducted in 2014 (a census did not occur in 2015). The reduction can be attributed to the trapping that occurred last year.

Due to the current peafowl population in the surveyed neighborhoods, the anticipated increases after the mating season, and the concerns expressed by residents in these neighborhoods, Staff recommends that the Council resume trapping for 2018 up to the 150-bird cap². If resumed, the humane trapping will begin on August 15th, after the nesting and hatching season has ended, and when chicks are able to function on their own. Similar to the program conducted for 2017, the City will reach out to the community for volunteer properties where the traps can be located. The City will also resume its public outreach and education program, including attending a Rancho Palos Verdes Council of Homeowners’ Associations (CHOA) meeting in the near future. Lastly, the trapping services will continue to be provided by the Wildlife Services, who has been extremely cooperative and responsive to the City’s needs. The City’s contract with Wildlife Services expires on December 31, 2018, at which time the City Council will be asked to consider either renewing the contract or seeking new proposals.

It should be noted that the City continues to receive requests from both the *Monaco* and *Mira Vista* neighborhoods for trapping occur in these neighborhoods. The City intends

² The trapping cap cannot be increased unless additional environmental review is conducted, in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

to continue to trap in these neighborhoods intermittently during the trapping period to help control the overall peafowl population in the City.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

In the past, the City Council inquired about using a form of avian birth control as an alternative to trapping and managing the peafowl population. The referenced birth control is known in the industry as “OvoControl.” According to Wildlife Services, this product is only approved for use in pigeons, and there may be some major issues that would make this product ineffective for peafowl birth control and potentially detrimental to native bird species. In addition to the fact that the pellets are only meant to be consumed by pigeons, the product must be consumed on a daily basis during breeding season, which would be difficult to control. Further, according to the manufacturer, the pellets can only be placed on a flat cement surface. For these reasons, it is still not recommended as an alternative to trapping peafowl.

CONCLUSION:

The success of the 2017 peafowl trapping program and the collection of data for the 2018 peafowl census was largely the result of the community participation. Based on the 2018 census count and continued resident concerns in affected neighborhoods, Staff recommends resuming trapping for 2018 up to the 150-bird cap.

ALTERNATIVES:

In addition to the Staff recommendations, the following alternative actions (or some combination thereof) are available for the City Council’s consideration:

1. Identify alternatives to trapping for Staff to research, and for the City Council to consider at a future meeting.
2. Direct Staff to initiate an amendment to the City Council-adopted Negative Declaration in order to increase the 150-bird trapping cap.
3. Reduce the number of birds to be trapped for 2018 to fewer than 150.
4. Direct Staff not to trap birds for 2018.