

# HUMANE SOCIETY of CANADA

Protecting Animals and the Earth

19 September 2011

Ron Casey  
Mayor  
Town of Canmore  
902 7<sup>th</sup> Ave  
Canmore, AB T1W 3K1

## Re: Culling of Canmore Rabbits

Dear Mayor and Members of Council,

I am writing to you in my capacity as Chairman & CEO of The Humane Society of Canada and on behalf of the millions of Albertans and Canadians who share our views of protecting animals and their environment to ask you once again to work with us for a humane effective solution for the rabbits of Canmore. Our staff has worked across Canada and around the world to design and implement solutions that help animals and those who care about them and which reflect well upon everyone involved.

Let us speak plainly in saying that the matter of the Canmore rabbits is not one of public health or safety; instead it is one of politics. Like all political solutions applied to challenges facing interactions between animals and people they result in a miserable failure because they are intended to solve a political problem and not an animal welfare issue.

The suggestion by your administration that the rabbits could be killed and then fed to other animals is pure sophistry inflaming the debate, rather than offering up any meaningful solutions. No matter how hard you try, you will not succeed in eliminating all the rabbits; in the end it will have the effect of stimulating the surviving population and producing even more rabbits.

Currently, the rabbit population is in flux, held in check by the amount of available food, water, shelter and the way in which they adapt to an encroaching urban environment. At present, for example, in Canmore, a doe rabbit, in competition with other females, may produce only two kits, six times a year, held in check by the available resources for her and her offspring.

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Humane Society of Canada for  
the Protection of Animals and  
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However, if you kill large numbers of rabbits, dramatically reducing the competition for food, water, shelter and habitat, then because nature abhors a vacuum, the same doe may start producing up to seven kits every single month, stimulating the rabbit population and producing even more rabbits.

For example, we were contacted by a company, who tried to twist our words in an effort to misrepresent our position: namely that we are opposed to the killing of the Canmore rabbits, because it is inhumane, doomed to failure, and that we will mount a legal challenge against your administration should you attempt to move forward. The company officials said they were applying for a public tender to kill the rabbits and wanted us to support the "humane euthanasia for these rabbits and then use these rabbits as food for raptors."

If they or others have suggested that we are in support of their tender or your administration's proposals in this regard, you should regard this for what it is, a bald faced lie.

In closing, we are willing to work with the people of Canmore to do whatever we can to implement a proactive humane long term solution for the rabbits and the people who care about them.

Awaiting your reply, I remain yours

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Michael O'Sullivan". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized 'M' and 'S'.

Michael O'Sullivan  
Chairman & CEO