

'Goats On The Go' to help clear New Castle property

Road closures
approved for
downtown events

By KATIE CLONTZ

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The New Castle Board of Works approved an unusual request during its Sept. 15 meeting. An animal exemption was granted to Christi Brock, who intends to hire "Goats On The Go" to clear a portion her land on Deer Run Drive in New Castle.

Goats On The Go is a national organization that allows individuals to hire a herd of goats for targeted

grazing to accomplish "defined vegetation or landscape goals."

The goats eat a variety of nuisance or invasive species including poison ivy, honeysuckle, garlic mustard, thistle and more.

Brock, who sits on the Red-Tail Land Conservancy Board, owns about five acres of land. She said 30-40 goats would come to her property for five to 10 days and graze down about one acre that has an invasive species problem. The targeted grazing area is difficult for tractors and equipment to access.

"These goats are specifically designed for

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eating anything and everything," Brock said.

According to Brock, the Red-Tail Land Conservancy has used Goats On The Go before as a way to give landowners another option to clear land without using herbicides or equipment that pollutes the air with carbon monoxide.

"The whole time that they're out there, they are fenced in," Brock said of the goats. "The people who do the whole process bring out temporary fencing and monitor and clean up. They come out with the goats every day and they supply water and keep an eye on things."

New Castle Mayor Greg York expressed concern about coyotes since the goats would be kept on the property overnight. Brock said fencing keeps the goats in their targeted area and coyotes out.

"These are not the cute little pigmy goats that you would do yoga with," Brock said. "These goats are more like the size of horses. They eat anything and everything. They eat thorny bramble bush, they eat poison ivy, they take it all down. I think these goats, from what I've observed and what I've been told...they would give the coyotes a run for their money."

Brock said the Goats On The Go herd that would be coming to her property is based in Selma. The organization is familiar in working on rural and environmental properties where coyotes are common.

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In addition to appearing before the New Castle Board of Works, Brock submitted a copy of her project proposal to the Henry County Animal Control and the New Castle Building Inspector's Office. Neighbors were notified through certified mail. No one opposed the project, Brock said. In fact, some neighbors asked if the goats could come take care of the weeds, too.

The board of works approved Brock's exemption 2-0. Board of works member Joel Harvey sustained from voting because Brock is a member of his family.

For more information about Goats On The Go, visit <https://www.goatsonthego.com/>.