

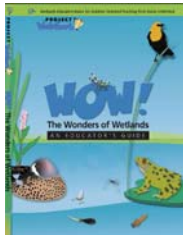


Ducks Unlimited Canada's Adopt-A-Class Wetland Education Program
School Year: 2004-2005

Final Report

Submitted to the Nova Scotia Habitat Conservation Fund

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Final Report

Project: Ducks Unlimited Canada's Adopt-a-Class Wetland Education Program School Year 2004-2005

1.0 Project Goal

To increase youth awareness about the importance of wetland habitats and wetland conservation in Nova Scotia (and abroad) by engaging 80 N.S. grade 4 classes in our Adopt-A-Class wetland education program during the 2004-05 school year. Where possible, classes will also receive a hands-on wetland field trip experience to compliment the "in-class" program.

2.0 Project Summary

In the 2004-2005 school year, 99 Nova Scotia grade 4 classes (2,434 students) from 51 schools were involved in the Adopt-A-Class wetland education program. The Adopt-A-Class program is a sponsorship based program that consists of two components, an in-class wetland resource kit (\$300/class) and a wetland field trip (\$200/class). Of the 99 classes registered in the AAC program, 58 classes received both the in-class resource kit and the spring field trip, 5 received only the field trip and 36 classes received only the resource kit. The Nova Scotia Habitat Conservation Fund adopted a total of 48 classes through their grant to this project.

Field trips occurred during the months of May and June 2005 and lasted from 2 to 2.5 hours. Field trip sites were located at the Tantramar Wetlands Centre (Sackville, NB), Shubenacadie Provincial Wildlife Park (Shubenacadie), Mount Uniacke Estate Museum (Mount Uniacke), Flemming Park (Halifax), and Oakdene Park (Kentville). Classes participated in hands-on activities such as bird watching, catching aquatic invertebrates with nets, nature hikes and playing ecological games. Feedback forms indicated a high level of student and teacher satisfaction, with 90% rating the field trip program as "good" or "excellent" and 100% rating the in-class component as "good" or "excellent". A total of 33 sponsors generously gave to this educational program to adopt all 99 classes.

3.0 Outline of Work Completed

2004-2005 School Year Program

- Dec. 2003 – Dec. 2004: -DUC staff and volunteers secured sponsorship funds to "adopt" 99 grade 4 classes in Nova Scotia during the 2004-05 school year and provide as many classes as possible with a spring field trip.
- Sept. 2004 – Jan. 2005: -Potential Adopt-a-Class schools were contacted by the DUC Atlantic Education Coordinator and the program discussed with the grade 4 teacher(s) and/or Principal and permission sought by the school before sponsors were matched with their classes.
- Sept. 2004 – Feb. 2005: - Once approval was given by a class/school, resource kits were mailed from our Head Office in Winnipeg and sent directly to the school teacher for use and distribution to students (a total of 94 kits were distributed).
- Sept. 2004 – June 2005: -Teachers used the resource material to help them deliver learning

- objectives related to “Habitats and Communities” under the Atlantic Science Curriculum.
- Nov. 2004 – Feb. 2005: - Field Trip delivery partners were established and a new Memorandum of Understanding was signed with each of our 5 partners that described responsibilities required of each party. The five field trip delivery partners were: *Tantramar Wetlands Centre*, *Shubenacadie Provincial Wildlife Park*, *Mount Uniacke Estate Museum*, *Halifax Earth Adventure Centre*, and the *Friends of the Cornwallis River Society*. DUC agrees to reimburse the partners for their staffing costs and equipment fees on a fee for service basis (as outlined in the MOU).
- May 2005: - A field trip training day was organized by DUC on May 2nd at the Shubenacadie Provincial Wildlife Park. Delivery partners were trained in how to effectively deliver the field trip activities and the group planned for the field trip season ahead.
- May – June 2005: - Two to two-and-a-half hour wetland field trips were delivered to the NS AAC classes at the five designated field trip areas: Halifax (Frog Pond, Mt. Uniacke), Sackville NB (Tantramar Wetlands Centre), Shubenacadie (Shubenacadie Wildlife Park), and Kentville (Oakdene Park) during May and June of 2003. A total of 63 classes were invited on field trips with 60 able to attend.
- May – June 2005: - Field trip feedback forms were distributed to class teachers who attended a field trip. A national DUC feedback form was randomly sent to teachers through out Canada to assess the satisfaction with the in-class resource kit. This later feedback form was distributed by our Head Office in Winnipeg.
- May – Sept 2005: - Teachers/Schools sent their bussing invoices to DUC to claim their 50% reimbursement subsidy for the travel costs to the field trip site. Bussing invoices were reviewed and paid.
- August 2005: - Thank you ads were produced and printed in the Chronicle Herald (Aug. 25th), The Truro Daily News (Aug 27th), and The Kentville Advertiser (Aug 23rd) to thank all DUC sponsors who contributed to the 2004-05 Adopt-a-Class program (See Appendix C.)
- July – Sept. 2005: -Project results were summarized and recommendations discussed between the Atlantic Education Coordinator, educational delivery partners and school teachers.
- Sept – Oct 2005: - Cancelled cheques received from our Head Office (Winnipeg) for the expenditures of the program. Final report to the N.S. Habitat Conservation Fund completed.

4.0 Project Results

In total, 99 classes were registered in the AAC program in the 2005-05 school year. Fifty-eight of these classes participated in both the in-class and field trip component of this program. Five classes choose only to be involved in the field trip component while 36 classes were only involved in the in-class component. Three classes who were invited on field trips were unable to attend due to class conflicts. The following tables summarize the registration and participation results of the Adopt-a-Class Wetland Education program in Nova Scotia. A list of all participating schools along with their sponsors can be found in the accompanying Financial Report.

Table 2.0 Nova Scotia Adopt-a-Class 2004-05 Registration Summary

| Target Region | # Classes Registered for in-class component only (resource kit) | # Classes registered for field trip component only | # Classes registered for both the in-class and field trip components |
|---------------------------|---|--|--|
| Annapolis Valley | 2 | 5 | 3 |
| Bridgewater/Lunenburg | 15 | - | - |
| Halifax/Dartmouth | 6 | - | 41 |
| Northumberland Plains | 4 | - | - |
| Upper Bay of Fundy | - | - | 5 |
| Windsor Lowlands | 2 | - | 9 |
| Yarmouth Region | 7 | - | - |
| Total (99 classes) | 36 | 5 | 58 |

Table 3.0 NS Adopt-a-Class 2005/2005 Field Trip Participation Summary:

| AAC Field Trip Delivery Site | # Classes Invited on Field trip | # Classes that Attended Field Trip | Class Cancellations | Reason for Cancellation | Field Trip Participation Rate |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Tantramar Wetlands Centre | 7 | 6 | 1 | Class conflict | 86% |
| Flemming Park (Halifax) | 17 | 17 | - | - | 100% |
| Shubenacadie Provincial Wildlife Park | 22 | 20 | 2 | Class conflict | 95% |
| Mount Uniacke Estate Museum | 8 | 8 | - | - | 100% |
| Oakdene Park (Kentville) | 9 | 9 | - | - | 100% |
| TOTAL | 63 | 60 | 3 | - | 95% |

5.0 Project Assessment

Field trip feedback forms (see Appendix A.) were issued to all class teachers who attended a field trip in the 2004-05 program (n=60). We received completed feedback forms from only 21 teachers (35% return rate). The feedback results indicated a high level of teacher and student satisfaction in the field trip program with 90% giving a rating of “good” or “excellent” on the educational value of the field trip. The National feedback form for the in-class program (see Appendix B), (n=18) found that 94% rated the overall education program as “excellent” with the remaining 6% rating it as “good”.

Teacher feedback, combined with personal insight and consultation with staff and delivery partners involved in this program, resulted in the following project assessment:

1. Oakdene Park (Kentville), the Tantramar Wetlands Centre (Sackville, NB), and the Shubenacadie Provincial Wildlife Park (Shubenacadie) are the most popular field trip sites with our classes. We attribute their success to their dedicated and experienced staff (and volunteers) and the quality of the wetland site. We will continue to use these sites and further develop these partnership for the 2005-06 program.
2. Mount Uniacke Estate Musuem had the lowest overall rating of any field trip site. Comments about the inexperience of their seasonal delivery staff and lack of organization during the delivery resulted in DUC terminating this delivery partner for the 2005-06 season. Schools that would have been invited to Mount Uniacke will now be invited to the new wetland centre that is currently being built at the Shubenacadie Provincial Wildlife Park (see section 6.0). This new facility and associated marsh restoration project will provide a much better field experience for classes in the Bedford to Sackville area of HRM.
3. There were some concerns about the lack of time to participate in bird watching and critter dipping at the Flemming Park site in Halifax. As a result, DUC staff will be working with delivery staff from the Earth Adventure Centre to reduce their “introductory games” and focus more time and attention on hands-on wetland exploration.
4. There is a great interest to include a wetland field trip component in the Bridgewater/Lunenburg area. DUC will work with local groups to try and secure a field trip site and delivery partnership in 2006 for use in the 2006-07 school year.
5. Finding sufficient field trip sponsorship continues to be a challenge. DUC will try to find larger, corporate sponsors who may be interested in pledging their support to fund a number of field trip classes throughout the province of Nova Scotia. Our aim is to provide every registered class within a one-hour’s drive of a field trip delivery partner with a field trip.
6. Several classes did not submit their bussing invoices to DUC for reimbursement. DUC will encourage more classes to do so in 2005-06 by creating a “How to Claim Your Bussing Subsidy” form.

6.0 Communication/Marketing and Media

Each Adopt-a-Class was made aware of their personal sponsor through a letter that went to the teacher. Classes were encouraged to thank their sponsor by signing a “Sponsor Thank You Certificate” which was included in each resource kit and/or by sending cards, pictures and letters. Sponsors were also personally thanked by our Atlantic Education Coordinator via a thank you letter and personalized DUC Sponsorship Certificate, and through a standard DUC thank you letter issued through our national office in Winnipeg. During field trips, our delivery partners displayed large sandwich boards where the sponsors’ names were written for the teachers, students and accompanying parents to see.

The logo of the N.S. Habitat Conservation Fund was included on all Field Trip Feedback Forms sent to school classes (see Appendix A).

In addition to this recognition, DUC produced newspaper thank you ads that thanked each individual sponsor who donated to the 2004-05 program. Ads were run in the Chronicle Herald (Aug. 25th), The Truro Daily News (Aug 27th), and The Kentville Advertiser (Aug 23rd) (See Appendix C). Sponsors who donated at the \$5000 level or greater also had their corporate logo included in the ads.

7.0 Financial

The 2004-05 AAC Wetland Education Program's final cost was \$53,638.98 from a budgeted \$59,050.00. The following table (4.0) summarizes the expenses for this program. A detailed summary of expenditures for the program along with proof of expenditures in the form of invoices and cancelled cheques can be found in the accompanying binder entitled *Ducks Unlimited Canada's Adopt-a-Class Wetland Education Program (2004-2005) Financial Report*.

Table 4.0 Budgeted and Actual Costs of the Adopt-a-Class Program 2004-05

| Item | Budgeted Cost | Actual Cost |
|---|----------------------|--------------------|
| Resource Kits (94 kits issued) | \$24,000.00 | \$28,200.00 |
| DUC Atlantic Education Coordinator Time @ \$500/day | \$7,500.00 | \$9,750.00 |
| Field Trip Training Day (travel, food, mileage) | \$0.00 | \$592.69 |
| Field Trip Delivery Partnership Fees (\$125/class) | \$7,350.00 | \$7,500.00 |
| Field Trip Bussing Costs: | \$6,650.00 | \$1,387.24 |
| Project pays for half of classes' bussing fees | | |
| School's portion of bussing fees | \$6,650.00 | \$1,218.20 |
| Marketing and Media Fees | \$6,900.00 | \$4,990.85 |
| | | |
| TOTAL | \$59,050.00 | \$53,638.98 |

8.0 Follow-up

Beginning in the 2005-06 school year, **Project Webfoot** (known as '**Sur la piste des marais**' in French) will replace the name **Adopt-A-Class**, and serve as the umbrella brand for all of DUC's formal education programs. All of our in-class learning materials in both languages have been redesigned with a consistent, fresh, and engaging look that will better appeal to Canadian teachers and students. We have worked together with our partner, DU Inc., who has recently undertaken a similar initiative in the United States, making Project Webfoot a wetland education program of continental scope. This collaboration has allowed us to share ideas and resources, while increasing our collective efficiency.

While the brand, and the look-and-feel of our education materials have been enhanced, the program remains the same. All of our initiatives remain curriculum-based, and the "adopting" of classes into Project Webfoot by sponsors continues to be a mainstay of funding the program. We rely on individuals, corporations and foundations to underwrite the cost of providing classes with Project Webfoot learning kits (at \$300 per class) and where available, hands-on field trips (at \$200 per class) to a local wetland led by trained interpreters.

Schools who were involved in the AAC program in the 2004-05 school year will be the first schools re-registered in the Project Webfoot program in the 2005-06 school year. As teachers become more familiar with the material in the resource kit and recognize the educational value of the field trip to compliment in-class activities, they will become more effective at communicating wetland messages to their class. As such, we want to maintain our current classes in the program and sign up new classes as funding allows. By re-registering past schools first, we ensure that both student and teacher enthusiasm for the program is not lost.

Another new initiative of Ducks Unlimited in 2005-06 is the construction of a brand new wetland centre and an associated marsh rehabilitation project at the Shubenacadie Provincial Wildlife Park. This new facility, entitled the Greenwing Legacy Project, will be the new field trip site for classes in the Dartmouth through to Truro region of N.S. Construction of the new building and associated marsh infrastructure will be complete by spring 2006 enabling us to invite many of our new project webfoot classes to this new wetland site.

To promote the new Project Webfoot brand name and associated revised resources, as well as our new field trip facility at the Shubenacadie Provincial Wildlife Park, DUC will be holding a teacher workshop at the N.S. Science Teacher Convention in Halifax on October 28, 2005. This workshop will introduce new teachers to the Project Webfoot program and provide them with activities and resources that they can use to include wetland topics into their science units.

Appendix A.



Nova Scotia Adopt-A-Class Field Trip 2005 Feedback Form

*To help us improve the organization and quality of our Adopt-A-Class Field Trips, we would appreciate it if you could complete this questionnaire and **fax it back to us at: 506-458-9921**. Most questions simply involve a tick response. Use additional sheets for written comments if you wish. Please be honest - constructive criticism helps us improve our programs!*

Name of school: _____ **Date of visit:** _____
Wetland Site Visited: _____

| <i>Please rate the following:</i> REGISTRATION | Rating Scale | | | | |
|--|---------------------|------|---------|------|---------|
| | Excellent | Good | Average | Poor | V. Poor |
| 1. Clarity of the information you received about the Adopt-A-Class field trip | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2. Ease of registering your class in the wetland field trip program | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| RESOURCE KIT | | | | | |
| 1. Did you use the material in the resource kit to help you teach about wetlands in your class prior/post your field trip? YES { } NO { } | | | | | |
| 2. If yes, how would you rate the value of this wetland education kit? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3. Did you download the web curriculum resource from the DUC website? YES { } NO { } | | | | | |
| 4. If yes, how would you rate this curriculum material? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 5. What was the most useful item(s) in the kit? Please explain why and/or give us suggestions of materials that would be more useful to you. | | | | | |

| <u>SITE/FIELD TRIP EXPERIENCE</u> | Rating Scale | | | | |
|--|--------------|---------|---------|------|---------|
| | Excellent | V. Good | Average | Poor | V. Poor |
| 1. How convenient was it for your class to visit the chosen wetland site? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2. How appropriate was the site in providing your students with a worthy wetland experience? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3. Did your school have any difficulties covering bussing costs to this site? If yes, explain | | | | | |
| 4. Effectiveness of the activities in teaching your students about wetland issues and wetland conservation | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 5. Effectiveness of the staff/partners/volunteers in delivering the wetland activities to your students | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 6. How would you assess the overall field day in terms of educational value? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 7. How did your students rate the visit? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 8. How well did the activities support or encourage wetland work in the classroom? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 9. Which activity was the <u>most useful</u> ? Why? | | | | | |
| 10. Which activity was the <u>least useful</u> ? Why? | | | | | |
| 11. Please provide us with additional comments about your wetland field trip experience: | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |

This program made possible through the support of:



Appendix B.



Wetland Education– Evaluation Form



Dear: «teacherfirstname» «teacherlastname»
«Schoolname»
«scity», «sstate»

Sponsor: «companyname»

As one of more than 1500 teachers involved in education programs offered by Ducks Unlimited Canada this year, you have been selected to receive this program evaluation survey. The feedback we have received in the past through these surveys has been very important in allowing us to make improvements to the program. Please complete this survey and **return it in the postage paid envelope provided or fax it to: Education at (204) 467-9028. Your input is very important!**

1. What grade did you teach this year? _____

2. Overall, how would you rate the wetland education program?

- excellent
- good
- neutral
- of little use
- poor

3. How important is it that the program includes a wetland field trip?

- very important
- somewhat important
- neutral
- of little use
- unnecessary

4. Did your class participate in a wetland field trip this year?

- Yes, I did one on my own
- Yes, with help from Ducks Unlimited Canada
- No

5. Did you send the letter we provided to you, home with your students, informing their parents about the program?

- Yes
- No

6. Did you and your class thank your sponsor?

- Yes
- No

7. Please rate the linkage of the resource kit/field trip to your curriculum requirements.

- very strong
- good
- weak
- none
- don't know

8. Did your class this year do an action related project on/about wetlands?

- No
- Wetland field trip
- Wetland garbage clean up
- removed purple loosestrife
- survey of frogs (or other species)
- put up nesting boxes
- wrote an essay or did art work
- participated in eco-games
- other _____
- collected or studied wetland species
- I could use more help from Ducks Unlimited Canada in developing an action related project for my class.

9. Do you have other suggestions on how we can improve the program?

10. Would you like your class to be part of the program again next year?

- Yes
- No

Please return this form in the postage paid envelope provided or fax it to: Greenwings at (204) 467-9028. Thank You!

Appendix C.