

**Ducks Unlimited Canada's Project Webfoot (Adopt-A-Class)
Wetland Education Project
School Year: 2005-2006**

Final Report

Submitted to:

Nova Scotia Habitat Conservation Fund

Submitted by:

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1. Executive Summary

In the 2005-2006 school year, Ducks Unlimited secured sufficient funds to deliver Project Webfoot field trips to 63 grade 4 classes in Nova Scotia (approximately 1,492 students). More specifically, 62 classes (1,492 students) received the in-class resource kit and 45 classes (1,104 students) participated in the field trip component. The Nova Scotia Habitat Conservation Fund enabled us to offer the program to 27 classes (25 classes received both a kit and a field trip and 2 classes received an in-class kit only). Please recall that Project Webfoot 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/class¹).

Field trips were scheduled to occur during the months of May and June 2006 with each field trip session lasting from 2 to 2.5 hours. Field trips were offered at 4 sites this year and involved 1 full time Ducks Unlimited staff and 4 delivery partners: Friends of the Cornwallis River Society (Kentville), HRM Adventure Earth Centre (Halifax), Shubenacadie Provincial Wildlife Park (Shubenacadie), and Tantramar Wetlands Centre (Sackville, NB). Classes participated in hands-on activities, such as bird watching, catching aquatic invertebrates with nets, nature hikes and playing ecological games. This hands-on element of the program gave youth the opportunity to experience wetlands first-hand and instill in them an appreciation for these natural habitats.

Feedback forms indicated a high level of student and teacher satisfaction with the program. On a 5 point rating scale (excellent, good, average, poor, very poor) 95% of respondents rated the field trip program as either "excellent" or "good" and 98% rated the in-class component as "excellent" or "good".

A total of 32 sponsors generously sponsored this program. The total cost of the project was \$44,400.29 from an estimated budget of \$ 78,450.00. *Please note that the discrepancy between budget and actuals is due to the fact that the budget was based on the delivery of 110 classes but we actually only delivered programming to 63 classes because of insufficient funding.* The Nova Scotia Habitat Conservation Fund contribution of \$10,000 represented 23% of the total project cost.

We are also excited to report that the new Greenwing Legacy Centre and a marsh rehabilitation project at Shubenacadie Wildlife Park, a partnership between Ducks Unlimited, the Province of Nova Scotia, and numerous generous sponsors are now complete. This new facility will be the new field trip site for classes in the Dartmouth through to Truro region of Nova Scotia, beginning in May 2007.

¹ Please note, as of April 1, 2006, field trip costs have increased to \$300/class.

2. Project Objective

1. To increase youth awareness about the importance of wetlands by engaging 110 Nova Scotia grade 4 classes (~2,750 students) in DUC's Project Webfoot field trip program whereby students will participate in hands-on wetland activities at a local wetland site.
2. To instill in these youth an appreciation for wetlands so that they will make sound choices as adults that will ensure the continued protection of these wetland habitats.

3. Description of Activities Completed

2005-2006 School Year Program

- Spring 2005 – February 2006: -DUC staff and volunteers secured funds to “sponsor” 63 grade 4 classes in Nova Scotia during the 2005-06 school year.
- Sept. 2005 – February 2006: -Schools were contacted by the DUC Atlantic Education Specialist and enrolled in the program.
- Sept. 2005 – February 2006: -Once enrolled, 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 62 kits were distributed).
- Sept. 2005 – June 2006: -Teachers used the resource material to help them deliver learning objectives related to “Habitats and Communities” under the Atlantic Science Curriculum.
- March 2006 – April 2006: - Field trip delivery partner relationships were affirmed and Memoranda of Understanding were signed with each partner that described the responsibilities of each party.
- April 2006: - The field trip schedule was developed and invitations were sent to schools and classes were registered for field trips.
- May – June 2006: - Field trips are delivered by delivery partners; feedback forms are distributed to participating teachers.
- Two to two-and-a-half hour wetland field trips were delivered to the NB Project Webfoot classes at the 4 designated field trip sites. 45 classes participated in the field trip component.
- Field trip feedback forms were distributed to class teachers who attended a field trip. The results were then collated.
- May – Sept 2006: - Teachers/schools sent their bussing invoices to DUC to claim their bussing subsidy of \$75/class to cover the costs to the field trip site. Bussing invoices were reviewed and paid accordingly.
- Invoices for project expenses were paid.
- August 2006: - Thank you ads were produced and printed in the Halifax Chronicle Herald (Aug. 24th) to thank all sponsors who contributed to the 2005-06 Project Webfoot program.
- July – August 2006: -Feedback from delivery partners was solicited from field trip delivery partners and recommendations were reviewed in DUC's ongoing effort to ensure goals were met and to enhance program quality.
- Sept – Nov 2006: - Cancelled cheques were received from our Head Office (Winnipeg) for the expenditures of the program. Final report to the Nova Scotia Habitat Conservation Fund was completed.

4. Project Results

In the 2005-2006 school year, Ducks Unlimited secured sufficient funds to deliver Project Webfoot field trips to 63 grade 4 classes in Nova Scotia (approximately 1,492 students). More specifically, 62 classes (1,492 students) received the in-class resource kit and 45 classes (1,104 students) participated in the field trip component. The Nova Scotia Habitat Conservation Fund enabled us to offer the program to 27 classes (25 classes received both a kit and a field trip and 2 classes received an in-class kit only). Please recall that Project Webfoot 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/class²). Appendix A provides a list of classes that were sponsored by the Nova Scotia Habitat Conservation Fund.

5. Project Assessment

Field trip feedback forms (see Appendix B) were issued to all teachers who attended a field trip. We received completed feedback forms from 41 teachers (65% return rate). The feedback results indicated a high level of teacher and student satisfaction in the field trip program. On a 5 point rating scale (excellent, good, average, poor, very poor) 95% rated the field trip program as either “excellent” or “good” and 98% rated the in-class component as “excellent” or “good”. A total of 32 sponsors generously sponsored this program (please see Appendix C for provincial results for teacher feedback).

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

1. Field trips are a highly valued and much appreciated component of this program. Wherever possible, DUC will promote class sponsorship at the \$300 level to ensure that all registered classes receive a field trip.
2. Due to limited funding for this program, DUC will have to be very strategic as to where we register classes for field trips. We will have to focus our attention in areas that are conservation priority areas for our organization and also areas that have large urban centres where children might not have experienced wetlands before.
3. 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 with a field trip.

6. Financial

7. Communication/Marketing and Media

Each Project Webfoot class was made aware of their sponsor when they were sent the resource kit and when they were invited to attend a field trip. Included in the resource kit was a “Sponsor Thank You Certificate”; classes were encouraged to send it to their sponsor along with letters, cards, and pictures.

² Please note, as of April 1, 2006, field trip costs have increased to \$300/class.

Sponsors were also personally thanked by the Atlantic Education Specialist via a thank you letter and personalized DUC Sponsorship Certificate that was sent out upon receipt of the sponsorship. DUC national office also issued a standard DUC thank you letter.

During field trips, our delivery partners displayed large sandwich boards where the sponsors' names were written for the teachers, students and accompanying parents, and the public to see.

When teachers were invited on a field trip, they also received a one page sheet entitled 'Thanking Your Sponsors' to enlighten them about the number of people and organizations who contributed funds to enable their participation in Project Webfoot. The Nova Scotia Habitat Conservation Fund logo appeared there as well (please see Appendix E).

In addition to this recognition, DUC produced newspaper thank you ads that thanked each individual sponsor who donated to the 2005-06 Project Webfoot program. An ad was run in the Halifax Chronicle Herald on August 24, 2006 (please see Appendix F). Sponsors who donated at the \$5000 level or greater also had their corporate logo included in the ads. As such, the Nova Scotia Habitat Conservation Fund logo appeared in this ad. Unfortunately, the Atlantic Marketing and Media Coordinator position was vacant during the 2006 field trip season, which left DUC with insufficient staff resources to ensure that local media covered the field trips.

8. Conclusion

Project Webfoot remains a curriculum-based program that is enormously successful. "Adopting" classes by sponsors continues to be the primary way this program is funded. Nonetheless, it is becoming increasingly difficult to raise the requisite funds to meet past goals and surpass them. We are extremely thrilled to have once again received a grant from the Nova Scotia Habitat Conservation Fund and look forward to your continuing support so that we can overcome our funding barriers and ensure Project Webfoot's continuing success.