



**Project Webfoot
Wetland Education Program
School Year: 2011-2012**

Final Report

Submitted to:

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1. Executive Summary

During the 2011-2012 school year with the support of organizations such as the Nova Scotia Habitat Conservation Fund, Ducks Unlimited Canada was able to provide 90 grade 4 classes in Nova Scotia with the Project Webfoot experience. The Nova Scotia Habitat Conservation Fund enabled us to offer the field trip program to 45 classes, reaching over 1000 students along with their teachers and family members.

Field trips were scheduled during the months of May and June 2012 with each field trip session lasting from 2 to 2.5 hours. Field trips were offered at 6 sites this year and involved 1 full time Ducks Unlimited staff, 1 Ducks Unlimited summer student, and 4 delivery partners: Friends of the Cornwallis River Society (Kentville), Clean Nova Scotia (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. The hands-on element of the program gave youth the opportunity to fully experience a wetland while instilling 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 overall field trip program in terms of educational value as either "excellent" or "good".

A total of 11 sponsors generously contributed \$47,950 to the delivery of in-class kits and field trips. The Nova Scotia Habitat Conservation Fund contribution of \$18,650 represented 39% of the overall program revenue to cover the direct cost of kits and field trips for the grade four Project Webfoot program.

2. Project Goals and Objectives

Goal:

The goal of Project Webfoot is to increase youth awareness about the importance of wetlands and engage community environmental organizations to be involved in wetland conservation and education. Project Webfoot aims to instil an appreciation for wetlands in youth so that they will make sound choices as adults that will ensure the continued protection of wetland habitats.

Result: DUC increased youth awareness about the importance of wetlands by engaging 90 Nova Scotia grade 4 classes (over 2000 students) in DUC's Project Webfoot wetland education program. As a result, students were able to share their experiences and knowledge with teachers, administrators, family members and the greater community. DUC partnered with four local environmental organizations to deliver field trips in six locations in Nova Scotia.

2011-2012 School Year Objectives:

Objective 1) Register over 120 Nova Scotia Grade 4 classes in the Project Webfoot in-class program throughout Nova Scotia.

Result: DUC was successful in securing \$14,650 in funds for in-class resource kits. As a result, 45 classes of students as well as their teachers and family members were exposed to DUC's wetland conservation message.

Objective 2) Deliver wetland field trips to over 120 classes who are within travel distance to one of our six educational wetland areas across Nova Scotia.

Result: DUC was successful in securing \$28,300 in funds for wetland field trips whereby students participated in hands-on wetland activities delivered by local partner organizations. As a result, 90 classes of students as well as their teachers and family members were exposed to DUC's wetland conservation message.

3. Description of Activities Completed and On Going

2011-2012 School Year Program

<i>Task:</i>	<i>Period:</i>
Secured sponsorship funds to enroll grade 4 classes in the Project Webfoot program	August 2011 – March 2012
Schools were contacted by the DUC Atlantic Education Specialist and enrolled in the program	September 2011 – March 2012
Once enrolled, resource kits were mailed from our head office in Winnipeg and sent directly to the school teacher for use and distribution to students	September 2011 – May 2012
Field trip delivery partner relationships were affirmed and Memoranda of Understanding were signed with each partner that described the responsibilities of each party	March 2012
The field trip schedule was developed and invitations were sent to schools and classes were registered for field trips	March-April 2012

Field trip training with partners held at Shubenacadie Provincial Park.	May 2012
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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 NS Project Webfoot classes at the 6 designated field trip sites. - Field trip feedback forms were distributed to class teachers who attended a field trip. The results were recorded. 	May – June 2012
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teachers/schools sent their bussing invoices to DUC to claim their bussing subsidy of up to \$75/class to cover the costs of travel to the field trip site. - Bussing invoices are reviewed and paid accordingly. - Invoices for project expenses are paid. 	May – October 2012
Final reports prepared; cancelled cheques requested from head office.	October – November 2012

4. Project Results

In the 2011-2012 school year, Ducks Unlimited Canada came close to attaining their proposed qualitative objectives in delivering the “Project Webfoot Wetland Education Program”. By engaging 90 Nova Scotia grade 4 classes in Project Webfoot, Ducks Unlimited Canada increased youth awareness of wetland conservation. Of the 90 classes, 1 class participated in the in-class kit program only, 45 classes participated in the field trip program only, and 44 classes participated in both the in-class and field trip programs. In total, 11 sponsors generously sponsored \$47,950 towards the delivery of the in-class and field trip components of the 2011-2012 Project Webfoot program in Nova Scotia.

The in-class resource kits were distributed to 45 classes in Nova Scotia. The resources meet the learning outcomes for the grade four science curriculum unit “Habitats and Communities”. Through interactive, hands-on lessons and activities students develop an appreciation for wetlands and associated habitats and are encouraged to take action for their conservation.

The field trip program was offered to 89 classes through partnerships with local environmental organizations and provided students with the opportunity to participate in hands-on wetland activities at a local wetland site. The hands-on aspect of the program personalizes the experience for each student which helps to establish a lasting impression and appreciation for these natural habitats.

Support from the Nova Scotia Habitat Conservation Fund provided the means to supply 45 classes with a wetland field trip experience thus educating over 1000 students about the importance of wetland ecosystems and wetland conservation. Each class received a wetland field trip to one of the following sites: the Greenwing Legacy Interpretive Centre at the Shubenacadie Wildlife Park, the Tantramar Wetlands Centre in Sackville, NB, the Flemming Park Frog Pond in Halifax, Dagger Woods Marsh in Antigonish or the Kentville Research Station. Ducks Unlimited Canada partnered with the Province of Nova Scotia, Clean Nova Scotia, Friends of the Cornwallis River Society and the Tantramar Wetlands Centre to successfully deliver these field trips. DUC hired a summer student stationed at the Greenwing Legacy Interpretive Centre. The summer student delivered Project Webfoot field trips among other educational duties.

5. Project Assessment

DUC was successful in raising funds for 45 classes against the project objective of providing in-class resource kits to 120 classes thus attaining the goal to 38%. For field trip funding, DUC registered 89 classes against the project objective of 120 classes, attaining the goal to 74%. We were unable to raise the funds necessary to reach our goal. For next year, we will continue to seek new revenue sources and encourage our supporters to continue their generous level of support.

Feedback forms (see Appendix B) were issued to all of the 89 classes who attended a field trip. We received 21 completed feedback forms (24% response 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 overall field trip experience as either “excellent” or “good”. (Please see Appendix C for provincial results of teacher feedback).

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

1. Activities offered through the field trip program are engaging, interactive and memorable for students. The field trip component continues to be a positive educational experience for both students and teachers by complimenting school curriculum units and helping youth become more responsible citizens in the area of wetland management.
2. With funding throughout Nova Scotia DUC will register classes based on the following criteria:
 - a. Re-register classes enrolled in the previous year
 - b. Register new classes in the current year’s focus area: large urban centres where children might not otherwise have the opportunity to experience wetlands
 - c. Request from sponsors to adopt a specific class
 - d. Register all interested Grade 4 classes in one school before proceeding to a new school
 - e. Match classes sponsored for an in-class kit with a field trip sponsor (where field trips are available).
3. Positive feedback from the field-trip evaluation forms indicate that staff and delivery partners involved are both knowledgeable and well-organized in delivering the field-trip component of DUC’s education program.

6. Financial

The Nova Scotia Habitat Conservation Fund contribution of \$18,650 represented 39% of the overall program revenue for kits and field trips and 66% of the field trip delivery costs. The funds received by the NSHCF were used to pay partner delivery fees and bus subsidies for 45 field trips.

Please see Appendix D for expenditures covered under the NSHCF contribution of \$18,650.

7. Communication/Marketing and Media

Each Project Webfoot class was informed of their sponsor upon receiving the resource kit and included in their invitation to attend a field trip. Incorporated within the resource kit was a “Sponsor Thank You Certificate”; classes were encouraged to send it to their sponsor along with letters, cards, and pictures.

Sponsors were also personally thanked by the Atlantic Education Specialist via a thank you letter and personalized DUC Sponsorship Certificate that was sent out at the end of the field trip season.

When teachers were invited on a field trip, they received a one page sheet entitled 'Thanking Your Sponsors' to inform them of the number of people and organizations who contributed funds to enable their participation in Project Webfoot.

During field trips, delivery partners displayed large sandwich boards where the sponsors' names were written for the teachers, students, accompanying parents, and the public to see. The Nova Scotia Habitat Conservation Fund logo along with printing the NSHCF name in full was on a white board in the classroom and/or stand up board outside by the wetland (depending on site/location of field trip).

All donors are listed in DUC's Annual Report which is available online at www.ducks.ca/annualreport.

8. Conclusion

Project Webfoot remains a curriculum-based program that is enormously successful. Nova Scotia continues to be a priority area for the Project Webfoot program with over 400 grade 4 classes within the province. We are currently reaching 22% of these classes and will continue to expand with your assistance.

We are extremely grateful to have the continual support of the Nova Scotia Habitat Conservation Fund. Registration for the current school year is well underway and we are confident that the program will continue to build on its previous successes. As such, the Nova Scotia Habitat Conservation Fund has been integral to the success of the Project Webfoot goal to expose youth to wetlands and encourage their conservation.