



Promote and Educate New Trappers on Sustainable Natural Renewable Resources From Nova Scotia's Fur Bearing Animals

Final Report



Summary

During the 2015-2016 years with the support of the Nova Scotia Habitat Conservation Fund, The Trappers Association of Nova Scotia (TANS) was able to provide 50 new trappers with hands on experience and knowledge of wildlife management and ethical trapping methods. The Nova Scotia Habitat Conservation Fund enabled us to offer these field trips across the province of Nova Scotia from Yarmouth to Sydney.

Mentoring days were scheduled between June and December 2015 with each day lasting from 7 to 9 hours. Mentoring was offered at various sites this year and involved 10 trapping educators, two project managers and one administrator. Each student participated in hands-on activities, such as setting traps, making sets, wildlife behavior, habitat management, dog proofing, landowner relations, personal safety and current up-to-date trapping equipment and techniques. The hands-on element of the program gave students the opportunity to fully experience how to manage a trapline while instilling an appreciation for the natural environment.

Pre and post surveys indicated a high level of student and instructor satisfaction with the program. On the question on the value of the overall program, 100% of respondents in Nova Scotia rated the program as excellent.

Project Goals

Goal

The goal of the Mentoring Program was to increase knowledge of young trappers on humane and current trapping methods and dog proof equipment/sets. Increase trapper participation through a highly functional Mentoring Program focusing on natural renewal products from Nova Scotia's fur bearing animals. Make young trappers aware of sound habitat and wildlife management for constant renewal resources for today, tomorrow and future generations. The program also aimed to instil an appreciation for wildlife habitat in youth so they will make sound trapping choices as adults and will ensure the continued protection of wildlife habitat.

Result

TANS increased student awareness about the importance of wildlife habitat by engaging 50 Nova Scotia students through the TANS Mentoring Program.

Project Objectives

1. To increase young trapper participation

Result

TANS was able to expose 50 students to hands on trapping experience and based on the survey results the majority of respondents said they plan to trap in the next two trapping seasons.

2. To educate young trappers on trapping humanely, using correct methods and equipment and stress the importance of dog proofing traps. General knowledge about trapping and sustainable use of natural renewable products from Nova Scotia's fur bearing animals.

Result

TANS instructors were given an instructors manual, which included the following outcomes: Dog proofing, Land owner relations respect other user groups (public relations; i.e., keep dead animals out of sight), trapping ethics, trap setting (i.e., conibear safety, colony, leghold and snare), trapping safety, set making (2-3 sets or more) and how to manage a trapline.

3. We will educate young trappers on safety methods, trapping ethics and how to set traps for several target species.

Result

Instructors were instructed to allow time for each student to practice making each set by themselves. During the set making process, students were prompted to identify safety risks and how to reduce those risks (i.e., conibear safety, PFD, warm cloths etc.)

Description of Activities

Task:	Period:
Secured funding from TANS and the Nova Scotia Habitat Conservation Fund	June 2015
Hired an Administrator	June 2015
Administrator contacted instructors and provided training	June-December 2015
Administrator contacted students	June-December 2015
Safety kits were made up and sent to instructors	June-July 2015
Cheques were mailed to all parties	June-March 2016
Final report prepared, cancelled cheques were compiled	March 2016

Project Results

In the 2015-2016 Mentoring year, TANS completed all proposed qualitative objectives in delivering the Mentoring program. By engaging 50 Nova Scotians in our new Mentoring Program, TANS increased trapper participation and awareness of trapping safety, ethics and has provided lifetime knowledge. Of the 50 students, all participated in the field day and demonstrated to the instructor the sets they learned. In total two sponsors generously sponsored \$39 8844.12 (Appendix 3)

towards the delivery of the 2015-2016 TANS Mentoring Program in Nova Scotia. Students developed an appreciation for trapping, wildlife management and associated habitats and are encouraged to take action for protecting these resources for today, tomorrow and forever.

The trapping safety kits were given out to each student. Instructors showed each student how to properly use equipment through an interactive and hands on activity.

Support from the Nova Scotia Habitat Conservation Fund provided the means to mentoring 50 students, supply safety kits and teaching students the importance of wildlife management and habitat conservation. Students were mentored in one of the following areas: Richmond County, Antigonish County, Colchester County, Cumberland County, Pictou County, Hants County, Halifax County, Kings County, Queens County, and Shelburne County. TANS hired an administrator to facilitate instructors and students.

Project Assessment:

Feedback forms were given issued to all of the 50 participants who attended the Mentoring Program before and after being mentored. We received 50 completed feedback forms (100% response rate). Students responded that their age groups ranged from 10-15 years old to 31 years and up. We mentored eight females and 42 males. The majority of students heard about the Mentoring Program from the Trapper Education Course and by TANS e-mail. 60 % of respondents indicated they would be buying traps for the upcoming trapping season. 80 % of respondents indicated they enjoyed the hands on portion of the program. 100% of respondents indicated the program to be excellent and 100% said they would recommend it to someone else. The habitat fund was acknowledged on all correspondence to instructors and students. The feed back forms can be found at the end of this report Appendix 1 and Appendix 2.

Financial:

The Nova Scotia Habitat Fund contribution of \$10, 000 represented 25.1% of the overall program budget of \$39844.12 and 74.9% of the funds came from the TANS either as in-kind donations or cash contributions. Please see Appendix 3 for expenditures covered under the Nova Scotia Habitat Conservation Fund contribution of \$ 10, 000.

Communication and marketing:

The TANS has a booth program and the Mentoring Program has been advertised at each of the eight booths held throughout the year. The TANS also promoted the Mentoring Program in their quarterly newsletter and at each of the Trapper Education Courses.

Conclusion:

The TANS Mentoring Program was enormously successful this year and educated students from Yarmouth to Sydney. The TANS continues to see education as a priority area within this province. We are currently reaching 25% of new trappers 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 year is underway and we are confident that the Mentoring Program will continue to build on its previous successes. As such, the Nova Scotia Habitat Conservation Fund has been integral to the success of this Mentoring Program to expose new trappers to wildlife and habitat management and encourage for the long-term use of this resource.