



**Project Webfoot  
Wetland Education Program  
School Year: 2009-2010**

**Final Report**

**Submitted to:**

***Habitat Conservation Fund***  
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**1. Executive Summary**

During the 2009-2010 school year with the support of organizations such as the Nova Scotia Habitat Conservation Fund, Ducks Unlimited Canada was able to provide 106 grade 4 classes in Nova Scotia (2,501 students) with the Project Webfoot experience. The Nova Scotia Habitat Conservation Fund enabled us to offer the field trip program to 50 classes, reaching 1,178 students along with their teachers and family members.

Field trips were scheduled during the months of May and June 2010 with each field trip session lasting from 2 to 2.5 hours. Field trips were offered at 5 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) 100% of respondents rated the overall field trip program in terms of educational value as either "excellent" or "good" and 80% rated the in-class component as "excellent" or "good".

A total of 21 sponsors generously contributed \$44,300 to the delivery of in-class kits and field trips. The Nova Scotia Habitat Conservation Fund contribution of \$10,000 represented 22% of the overall program revenue to cover the direct cost of kits and field trips 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 in youth an appreciation for wetlands 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 106 Nova Scotia grade 4 classes (2,501 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 five locations in Nova Scotia.

### **2009-2010 School Year Objectives:**

**Objective 1)** To secure over \$36,000 in funds and register over 120 Nova Scotia Grade 4 classes in the Project Webfoot in-class program (engaging over 3,000 youth and 120 teachers) throughout Nova Scotia.

**Result:** DUC was successful in securing \$26,700 in funds for in-class resource kits. As a result, 89 classes representing 2,100 students, their teachers and family members were exposed to DUC's wetland conservation message.

**Objective 2)** To secure over \$25,000 in funds and deliver wetland field trips to over 100 classes who are within travel distance to one of our five educational wetland areas across Nova Scotia.

**Result:** DUC was successful in securing \$17,600 in funds for wetland field trips whereby students participated in hands-on wetland activities delivered by local partner organizations. As a result, 88 classes representing 1,834 students, their teachers and family members were exposed to DUC's wetland conservation message.

## **3. Description of Activities Completed and On Going**

### ***2009-2010 School Year Program***

<b><i>Task:</i></b>	<b><i>Period:</i></b>
Secured sponsorship funds to enroll grade 4 classes in the Project Webfoot program	August 2009 – March 2010
Schools were contacted by the DUC Atlantic Education Specialist and enrolled in the program	September 2009 – March 2010
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 2009 – May 2010
Field trip delivery partner relationships were affirmed and Memoranda of Understanding were signed with each partner that described the responsibilities of each party	March 2010

The field trip schedule was developed and invitations were sent to schools and classes were registered for field trips	March-April 2010
Field trip training with partners held at the Tantramar Wetlands Centre.	May 2010
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Field trips are delivered by delivery partners; feedback forms are distributed to participating teachers.</li> <li>- Two to two-and-a-half hour wetland field trips were delivered to the NS Project Webfoot classes at the 5 designated field trip sites.</li> <li>- Field trip feedback forms were distributed to class teachers who attended a field trip. The results were then recorded.</li> </ul>	May – June 2010
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Teachers/schools send 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.</li> <li>- Bussing invoices are reviewed and paid accordingly.</li> <li>- Invoices for project expenses are paid.</li> </ul>	May – October 2010
Final reports prepared; cancelled cheques requested from head office.	October – November 2010

#### 4. Project Results

In the 2009-2010 school year, Ducks Unlimited Canada attained their proposed qualitative objectives in delivering the “Project Webfoot Wetland Education Program”. By engaging 106 Nova Scotia grade 4 classes (2,501 students) in Project Webfoot, Ducks Unlimited Canada increased youth awareness of wetland conservation. Of the 106 classes, 18 classes participated in the in-class kit program, 17 classes participated the field trip program, and 71 classes participated in both the in-class and field trip programs. Due to unforeseen circumstances, three classes were not able to attend their field trip. In total, 22 sponsors generously sponsored \$44,300 towards the delivery of the in-class and field trip components of the 2009-2010 Project Webfoot program in Nova Scotia.

The in-class resource kits were distributed to 89 classes (2,100 students) 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 88 classes (1,834 students) 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 50 classes with a wetland field trip experience thus educating 1,178 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, Shubie

Park in Dartmouth, 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. For the first time, 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 89 classes against the project objective of providing in-class resource kits to 120 classes thus attaining the goal to 74%. In terms of field trip funding, DUC registered 88 classes against the project objective of 100 classes, attaining the goal to 88%.

Feedback forms (see Appendix B) were issued to teachers at the 45 schools who attended a field trip. We received completed feedback forms from 10 schools (22% 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) 100% rated the overall field trip experience as either “excellent” or “good”. 80% rated the overall value of the in-class component as “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. 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 upon initial receipt of sponsorship. DUC national office also issued a standard DUC thank you letter.

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](http://www.ducks.ca/annualreport) Major regional donors are listed on the back cover of DUC's Fundraising Event program covers which are distributed to all attendees at the approximate 70 events held in Atlantic Canada each year. As such, the Nova Scotia Habitat Conservation Fund logo appeared as a regional partner.

In the past, DUC has purchased newspaper thank you ads to thank sponsors who donated over \$1,000 to the Project Webfoot program in Atlantic Canada. Due to the high cost to produce such advertisements and the lack of funding available, it was not possible to purchase ads to thank the 2009-2010 school year sponsors.

## **7. 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 25% of these classes and will continue to expand with your assistance. A new field trip location is confirmed for Nova Scotia in Antigonish for area schools and we will be offering field trips in spring 2011.

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.