

Skills PEI Year End Update

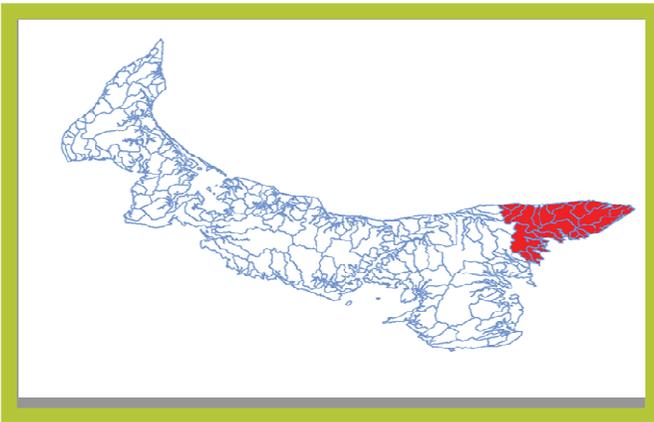
The Souris & Area Branch of the PEI Wildlife Federation (SAB) was pleased to partner with the Skills PEI Division of the Department of Innovation and Advanced Learning to accommodate 30 displaced Ocean Choice workers. This influx of workers has contributed greatly to making a positive difference in the environmental status in our management area.

We manage an area of approximately 62, 000 hectares encompassing approximately 30 watersheds. In the past, watersheds had to be prioritized as there was simply not enough staff to cover the entire area. With a higher than normal number of employees, we were able to maintain and enhance more kilometers of stream, more kilometers of trail, and remove record number of active beavers and dams. We feel through these efforts, we are at a point where we finally have our beaver populations under control, with the assistance of local trappers as well. This work was proven successful as seen with the high returns of Atlantic salmon this year in our Class 1 Wilderness Rivers.

With such a large management area, having sufficient numbers of workers is crucial to the upkeep of this work. We have been successful in opening many new tributaries in hopes that we are creating more areas for fish spawning and habitat.

Staff have been involved in many major clean ups, installation of diversion structures, the sand dune restoration pilot project, widening and grading of clay roads, brush matting at the Souris River salt marsh, digger log maintenance, gabion maintenance, and tree planting.

The work completed through this project was extremely beneficial to many aspects of preserving and enhancing the environment. We graciously thank these workers for their care and dedication in improving the environment.



The SAB management zone (indicated by solid fill) is approximately 12% of PEI



Displaced Ocean Choice workers installing brush mats at Souris River this past summer



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Local Schools Participate in Wildlife Snow Sculpturing Contest

A snow sculpturing contest took place on February 24, 2012 with students at Souris Consolidated School and Ecole La Belle Cloche participating. The students had to create snow sculptures of an animal, plant or another aspect of nature.

Over 80 children participated from both schools to create sculptures of elephants, polar bears, seals, flowers, ducks, turtles, igloos, pigs, dogs, platypus, caterpillars, starfish, penguins and many more. Obviously the children and their teachers had a great time experiencing fun in the outdoors.

The winning class from Souris Consolidated School was class 6A with their exhibit of a baby seal. The winning group from Ecole La Belle Cloche was the group named "Les Igloos" who constructed a wonderful polar bear.

Souris & Area Wildlife Branch and the Town of Souris were co-sponsors of this event and provided a "pizza party" for all students who participated. A huge thank you to teachers and students at both schools for your participation and enthusiasm.



A seal built by Mrs. Anne Marie MacDonald's Grade 6A class was the winning snow sculpture at Souris Consolidated School



A Polar bear constructed by the group named "Les Igloos" was the winning snow sculpture at Ecole La Belle Cloche

PEI Wildlife Federation Introduces Archery to Students at Souris Consolidated School

On Thursday, March 15, the PEI Wildlife Federation (PEIWF) hosted its first "Archery In The Schools" event at Souris Consolidated School, with students from Grade 6 participating.

PEI Wildlife Federation President Duncan Crawford spearheaded the event. Students learned about the traditional equipment used, safety precautions, and proper techniques. All students had the opportunity to practice their shot as targets were set up around the gymnasium. The PEIWF would like to increase exposure and interest in the sport of archery to youth all across schools in PEI.

Souris Consolidated School Phys. Ed. Teacher Graham Townshend, SAB coordinator Fred Cheverie and local volunteer Emery Gillan were on hand to assist Mr. Crawford with the event.



Interested in Becoming a Member of Souris & Area Wildlife?

2012 Souris & Area Branch of the PEI Wildlife Federation Memberships are now available. Membership fees are \$10 and were included with the purchase of a ticket to the 2011 Souris Wildlife Fundraising Dinner.

There are many benefits of becoming a member:

- Participate free of charge in SAB activities
- Free catch and release fishing at Rollo Bay Pond (in season)
- Receive electronic copies of recent newsletters
- Voting privileges on resolutions at annual meetings
- Enhance and preserve the environment in Eastern Kings through community support

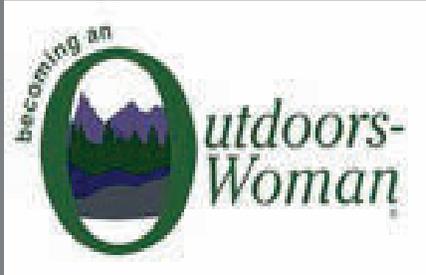
Memberships may be purchased at our office at the Souris Striders Ski Club or by mailing payment to:

Souris & Area Wildlife Branch
PO Box 692
Souris, PEI
C0A 2B0



Emery Gillan helps a student take a shot at the target at the Archery event at Souris Consolidated School

Becoming an Outdoors-Woman Planning to Host Event in Souris Area



Becoming an Outdoors-Woman (BOW) is a program designed to provide the opportunity for women to become more competent, more confident, and more aware in the outdoors.

BOW welcomes women of all ages and backgrounds to enjoy camaraderie with other women in a supportive, non-competitive learning environment. Participants span the ages of 18 to 80+. In addition to learning new activities, BOW participants could get the opportunity to participate in various events such as fishing, hiking, canoeing, plant and tree identification, outdoor yoga, outdoor photography, and archery to name a few.

Souris & Area Wildlife and BOW will partner in a week-end event in June with the base camp at the Souris Striders Ski Club. This event will be organized and led by women that belong to the BOW organization on PEI. They will bring in experts from various sectors for each event.

Souris & Area Wildlife Branch will provide more details regarding this week-end with a complete agenda in a later newsletter. We hope to see interest from locals as this will be an opportunity to explore wilderness areas in 'our own backyard'.



Left to right: Honorable Gail Shea, Daryl Guignion, Honorable Keith Ashfield

Guignion Receives 2012 Canadian Recreational Fisheries National Award

Retired professor, Daryl Guignion of UPEI, was recently honored by the Honorable Keith Ashfield, Minister of Fisheries and Oceans and Minister responsible for the Atlantic Gateway and the Honorable Gail Shea, Minister of National Revenue with a Canadian Recreational Fisheries Award.

Guignion received this award for his "tireless commitment to building sustainable fisheries in his home province". Souris & Area Wildlife Branch applauds the judges for selecting Mr. Guignion for his outstanding work across PEI.

Guignion is no stranger to the watersheds of Eastern PEI. He has walked every inch of most of our rivers doing assessments of fish populations, fish habitat or Atlantic salmon redd counts. He knows where every spring is located and can usually describe them as if he was standing beside them. In fact, the first time we heard of "Squeaky Head Spring" (which is on the North Lake system near the West Tarantum Road), was from Guignion and it was very easy to identify from his vivid description.

Souris Wildlife Branch frequently seeks advice from Guignion for suggestions in stream enhancement. His years of expertise always supplied us with the correct recipes to improve the stream habitat in any specific river.

Nova Scotia Agriculture College Studying the Economic Costs of Spring and Fall Ploughing

Souris & Area Wildlife Branch is the administrating organization in a research study attempting to determine if fall ploughing leaches more nitrates than spring ploughing. Nova Scotia Agriculture College (NSAC) is one of many key partners involved in this project.

One aspect of this project is to determine a cost – benefit analysis associated with both seasons of ploughing. An economic team from NSAC visited our three producers (Arthur Mooney & Sons, Lily Pond Farms and Rollo Bay Holdings) during the month of February to collect information from their operations that would assist them in this analysis.

This NSAC economic team consists of three economics professors, Steven Russell, John Stackhouse and Robert Lewis. Robert Lewis will lead a “case study” of each farm that will involve interviewing producers and collecting data on various aspects of their operations. John Stackhouse will conduct a full PEI potato farm survey. Steve Russell will lead the cost benefit analysis using a relevant costing approach with each of the project producers.

This economic aspect is just as important as the environmental benefits to the producers. Associated costs such as hiring extra employees, purchasing extra equipment, increased incidence of pests are just a few factors associated with the possibly of spring ploughing.



**Nova Scotia
Agricultural
College**



Souris & Area Wildlife Public Monthly Meeting

Souris & Area Wildlife Branch will hold our regular monthly meeting at **Eastern Kings Community Center on Wednesday March 28th at 7:00pm.**

This meeting will focus on recreational fishing policy and regulations with a short presentation by Fred Cheverie on activities of SAB within the rivers that are in the EKCC boundaries and plans for 2012. Rosie MacFarlane, Fisheries Biologist with PEI Fish & Wildlife Division will give an update on the proposed Rec Fishery Policy. Trevor MacKinnon, our area Wildlife Conservation Officer will also be in attendance to address the issue of the law and recreational fishing. The total presentations are designed not to exceed an hour and with ample opportunity for questions.

Souris & Area Branch has decided to take some of our meetings to various locations in our management zone to gain more input from interested residents. This will give them the opportunity to receive the latest information that is available and the opportunity to become more involved.



ASCF PEI Advisory Committee celebrating their 5th anniversary at a meeting in Charlottetown.

Atlantic Salmon Conservation Foundation

The Atlantic Salmon Conservation Foundation (ASCF) is a registered charity committed to supporting local community and environmental groups in Atlantic Canada and Quebec. Through the Atlantic Salmon Conservation Fund, the group hopes to enhance community partnerships in conservation of wild Atlantic salmon and their habitat.

The ASCF has provided SAB with funds over the past three years for habitat improvement projects and stream restoration in our rivers with known Atlantic salmon populations. The Atlantic salmon returns this past year were fantastic and credit can be given to the ASCF for their financial assistance for work on our salmon rivers.

One of our directors, Steve Cheverie serves on the PEI Advisory Committee. This committee just met to review and approve applications for the 2012 field season. The level of our commitment by our directors not only within our organization speaks volumes to the dedication of our directors.

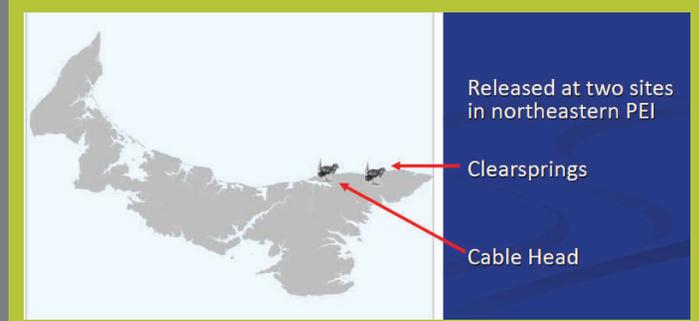
Brad Potter Gives Presentation on Sharp-Tailed Grouse

On Wednesday, February 22, Brad Potter from the Fish & Wildlife Division of the PEI Department of Environment, Labor and Justice gave a public presentation on Sharp-tailed Grouse and other wild birds on PEI to approximately 20 SAB members.

In the early 1980's, 40 Sharp-tailed Grouse were released in Clearsprings and Cable Head. These were live trapped in Manitoba and transferred to PEI by airplane. These birds were then released by Souris & Area Wildlife in conjunction with the PEI Wildlife Division in these sites.

The leader of this project was the late David Mullally, of Grant Road, past president of the Souris & Area Wildlife Branch. Many of our current directors were very much involved in this project and the release.

As part of his thesis, Potter studied the population distribution and habitat preferences of these birds on PEI. As of 2010, it was noted the populations on PEI were low but stable, with majority of the population in northeastern PEI spread over a 50 km range. Sharp-tailed Grouse will probably always remain but will probably not flourish. Some of the main limiting factors are that PEI lacks large tracts of open fields (400 acres or more) in cultivated crops that are suitable to their habitat. There is also a correlation between available blueberry land and population density. Blueberries are an important food source for these birds. If blueberry land is decreased, populations could potentially be adversely affected. Also, one of the most immediate threats to populations is coastal development.



Release sites of Sharp-tailed Grouse in the 1980's



Areas with frequent observations of Sharp-tailed Grouse on Prince Edward Island



Coordinator's Comments

In recent months I have received calls from concerned homeowners regarding water testing of private wells. Some people are receiving calls from firms out of province offering their services to come to their home take water samples and send them a report. Some people are unsure on what they should test for. I'll attempt to shed a little light on this subject, which is based on material from PEI Dept. of Environment, Justice and Labor's Website.

It is recommended that homeowners relying on their own well get their water tested on a regular basis. There are two types of tests; one for bacteria and another for general inorganic chemistry. The bacteria test measures both total coliform organisms and E. coli. These tests provide a general indication of the condition of the well and plumbing system (total coliform), as well as contamination by more serious sources of bacteria such as sewage or manure (E. coli). Generally it is suggested that private wells be tested at least once a year for bacteria, or any time you notice a significant change in the taste, odor or appearance of the water.

The chemistry test measures a total of 19 parameters that include the most common chemical constituents typically found in drinking water on PEI. They include both health based parameters such as nitrate, chloride and sodium; parameters that may affect the aesthetic quality of water such as pH, iron and manganese; and others that simply describe the basic characteristics of the water. It is normally recommended that wells be sampled for chemistry when they are first constructed, and then once every few years.

The bacteria test costs \$27.50 (\$28.88 including GST) and the chemistry test costs \$55 (\$57.75 including GST). The department maintains a policy of not charging for re-samples when such samples are collected in a timely fashion as part of an active investigation of a water quality problem.

To get either test done you simply obtain the proper sample bottle from Souris Access Site, take your sample (follow directions supplied) and return it with a fresh sample on Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday by 3:30pm.



Fred Cheverie – Watershed Coordinator of the Souris & Area Branch of the P.E.I. Wildlife Federation

President's Comments

Souris & Area Wildlife Branch is very pleased with the number of donations that it has been receiving in the past year. It is very gratifying that people appreciate the efforts of our organization and are very willing to support it. We attempt to reply to all and acknowledge donations with a membership card, a thank you card and a receipt for tax purposes.

Each year, many businesses, organizations, and individuals support us with monetary donations, door prizes and auction items for our wildlife dinner. We also attempt to acknowledge these donors with thank you cards and publication of names of our sponsors.

Recently, East Point Craft Shop, owned and operated by Nadine Robertson, donated a LCD projector to the Souris & Area Branch. This will be used with our laptop computers for presentations to private groups, general public and schools. It was something that was much needed and will be used on a regular basis.



Joe MacDonald – President of the Souris & Area Branch of the PEI Wildlife Federation

**Interested in making a donation to the
Souris & Area Branch of the PEI Wildlife
Federation?**

Simply fill out this form and mail it to us:

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/Province: _____

Postal Code: _____

Telephone: _____

E-mail: _____

Amount Enclosed: \$ _____

**Cheques may be made payable to the PEI
Wildlife Federation. This is important for
charitable tax purposes.**

**Cheques may be mailed to: PO Box 692
Souris, PEI
C0A 2B0**