

‘South Shore Wildlife Association’

2012 Annual Report

As I enter into my 15'th year of issuing our club's annual accounting, we can finally breathe a sigh of relief with respect to the notorious long gun registry. A huge weight has been lifted from our shoulders, and I am proud to say that from the beginning SSWA was as active as any club in the long uphill battle against that crippling and potentially fatal drive against civilian gun ownership. Our white elephant alone saw a lot of activity. So finally: good bye.....and good riddance!!

Now, please be informed of the following activities of SSWA in 2012:

Fraternity Involvement:

- To help promote a national organization protecting our rights as gun owners, we helped man a booth for the Canadian Firearms Institute at the Sport and RV Show, Exhibition Park, in March. An open invitation was extended from CFI, CEO Jim Newman, to “work with me anytime”.
- SSWA was again represented at the March NSFAH Convention by two delegates, and had 2 resolutions passed. Additionally we co-sponsored the local snack foods for an evening.
- In July we sponsored two participants to the Junior Guides Camp in Hibernia.
- In August we hosted our annual BB/pellet gun shooting booth for young people at the Trappers Rendezvous in Hibernia, Queens Co.
- We had four members attend the Fall Fund Raising Banquet for the Federation in Halifax, and donated a framed wildlife picture for auction that evening.
- Additionally, in March we attempted to again sponsor two young people to the Winter Youth Hunting Camp put on by Natural Resources. Unfortunately the courses were filled quickly and we were unable to send our own contacts. Still wanting to support this valuable and very popular event, SSWA paid for the registrations of two local young attendees. Checks were issued to the happy recipients after they finished the event.

- Community Involvement:** - Earth Day clean-up took on a different role this year for us. After taking part since 1999 and picking up the same amount of debris along the same stretch of roadway every spring we decided to boycott the clean-up, and take a different approach to combating the littering epidemic. A letter was drafted and forwarded to mayors of both the Town of Bridgewater, and the Municipality of Lunenburg, as well as to our two local NDP MLA's. The letter explained our position, and our reasoning to exempt ourselves from this annual event, and questioned why more emphasis was not being put on fines and enforcement, education, advertising and road signage as methods to curb this on-going issue. Replies and encouragement were received back from all four recipients.
- We hosted our annual booth at the Michelin Health and Safety Fair, trying to bring awareness to the public on various outdoor hazards such as wood and deer ticks and lyme disease, poisonous plants, coyotes, and various other topics.
 - In May we entertained a variety of people over the course of three fishing events at the MARC ponds again. In addition to other things, SSWA supplies all the fishing gear and bait, instruction and supervision. The first was for Big Brothers/Big Sisters. This continues to be their favorite event out of all their activities. Twenty-four children had a wonderful time catching a total of sixty-nine trout and two goldfish. Twenty-two of the trout caught were between 13 -18 inches, some over 2 lbs each! We once again provided a certificate, refreshments and lunch, and member Barry Kelly again supplied hats for each of the young attendees. Big Brothers Director Sandra Murray gave us a heartfelt thank you speech and presented us with a lovely plaque of appreciation after the event.

- Our second adventure was with the Community Services Support Group the following week on May 16'th. Everyone had a great time as always. Several nice trout were landed in addition to the dozens of smaller fish. CSSG did a hot dog barbecue for everyone, SSWA handed out some humorous prizes, and many pictures, including group shots, were taken.
- The third event, for a second year in a row and now appearing to be another annual, was with Bridgewater School Grade 3 class the following day on May 17'th. Three grade 3 classes consisting of about 78 students in total were introduced to fishing by SSWA as part of their outing activities. We entertained 3 groups of approx. 26 enthusiastic students for an hour each at the pond, supplying all the gear and bait in addition to our expertise and instruction. The teachers presented each SSWA member in attendance with a school mug and small box of chocolates, and presented the club with a very thoughtful thank you card which contained a \$60 gift certificate for the Home Hardware store. This was a really nice surprise and truly appreciated by us, as it expressed how grateful the teachers are to have us do this event for their students. It is the favorite part of their outing. One of the teachers told me that the Grade 4 classes (last year's participants) were disappointed that they weren't taking part again this year!
- We were contacted by a Halifax rep of the YNC to ask if we would give a presentation and perhaps a field trip for the South Shore chapter on local animal species. Due to conflicting circumstances we were unable to accommodate them this fall but have made arrangements to follow through with this in early 2013, and perhaps additional talks later in the year.

Guest Speakers: - At June's meeting, our guest speaker, Veterinarian Helene Van Doninck, gave an excellent presentation on the growing concerns over lead fragments found in game after being shot by lead bullets.

- At our August meeting DFO officers Mathew Fraser and Kevin Judo put on a very informative presentation for over 2 hours on the various types of salt water fishing - including ground fishing, dragger fishing, long line fishing and seine fishing. They answered questions from the floor and gave practical examples of their experiences and of different types of illegal fishing that go on everyday.

-At our Sept. meeting Pam Birdsall, NDP MLA for Lunenburg, spoke to our group and fielded questions for well over an hour. We were impressed with her keen interest in our club, and the fact she asked to sit in on our meeting prior to her presentation.

Fundraising and Donations: - In addition to the donations mentioned elsewhere, SSWA issued \$50 gift cards to three local food banks, gave \$100 to the Bonnie Lea Farm, and sent a \$100 donation to the CFI to show support in their efforts to protect our rights to the firearms sports.

- We held two ticket raffles, one in the spring and one in the fall to generate funds. We also held our annual giant flea market in July again which netted approximately \$850 for us in 4 hrs.

Other Notes: 1/Our Migratory Waterfowl Committee were very pleased to see some of their recommendations adopted for the upcoming season for the South Western half of N.S.

2/ SSWA maintains a steady core of members in the 170 – 180 range, continues to meet monthly eleven times a year, stays in contact with members through monthly minutes from the meetings, and is constantly looking for ways to promote our club through community events and organizations. We take particular pride in working with young people to encourage protection of our future in the outdoor sports.

Respectfully submitted
Stephen Joudrey
President, SSWA