



Oathill Lake Winter Rainbow Season Lost

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...and a whole lot more.

To receive a copy of the NSFAH monthly E-Newsletter simply fill out the contact form at the Federation website, include your name and email address...it really is that simple!

When we met with the Minister of Fisheries, Sterling Belliveau, in June of this year one of the issues on our agenda was access to angling waters. This was prompted by a resolution we passed at our 2011 AGM expressing concern with the number of lakes that were being surrounded by private land owners, many of whom felt that the lake now belonged to them. The Minister and his officials felt they needed to do a better communications job explaining to everyone about angler right of access to waters.

The issue resurfaced again recently when an angler contacted me to ask if I was aware that Oathill Lake had been removed from the winter rainbow trout fishery and that it would not be stocked with rainbow trout this fall. These changes were not included in the regulatory changes for 2012 or at the recent RFAC meeting.

Oathill lake is part of the "put-and-take" fishery located in Dartmouth and has been a controversial issue for several years. There is a local group, lead by one individual, which has been lobbying Inland Fisheries to stop stocking the lake with speckled trout for the open water season and rainbow for the winter season for a number of years. There have been public meetings which we have attended along with the local residents group to discuss the issues and from our perspective it seemed their agenda was to simply stop "outsiders" from using the lake.

I followed up with Inland Fisheries and they advised me that they had in fact decided not to stock rainbow trout this fall and that since there were no rainbow there was no sense having a fishing season for them on Oathill this winter.

To offset the loss of Oathill for the winter fishery they have opened seasons on Lewis and Round so the fish formerly stocked in Oathill will be used there. They assured me they would be stocking Oathill twice this spring with speckled trout for the open water season.

They pointed out the difficulty of managing a public resource in the face of competing interests and said their decision was reached only after an exhausting round of consultations with the public, MLA's, City Counsellors and interested parties.

I assume fisheries thought this was the best compromise they could reach for the anglers. However I'm confident we have not heard the last of the residents group. Nor have we given up on this issue and we will continue to lobby for continued access to Oathill Lake for all anglers in the Province, not just the local residents.

This is only another "Access" issue, and highlights the need for all of us to be vigilant and involved in the ongoing struggle to maintain our heritage of angling the waters of Nova Scotia, "WHICH BELONG TO ALL OF US".

Wilf Woods (Woody)

President

Nova Scotia Federation of Anglers & Hunters



“the timeline is not looking good for a Christmas passing of the bill”

End to the Long Gun Registry

The final dying breaths of the NDP and Liberals could be heard in the federal public safety committee meetings as they both pleaded with the majority conservative government to keep the infamous long gun registry or at least make changes that would allow the provinces to set up their own.

It was satisfying to hear the painful statements of the opposition who only now realize that if they had passed a previous bill to end the long gun registry C-391 a private members bill last fall that they would not find themselves with a much tougher bill to swallow.

Provisions to destroy the records of the long gun registry did not exist in C-391 as they do in this new government Bill C-19 along with a few other changes.

The Bill has now gone through 1st and 2nd reading. The public security committee has heard from witnesses for and against the bill and the committee has completed clause by clause study of the bill.

The next step is to send it back to the House of Commons for 3rd reading. After that it will be sent to the senate.

The time line is not looking good for a Christmas passing of the bill.

It is more likely that it will be passed in February. That time line takes in the early closure for Christmas of Parliament and the long holiday period and by the time it takes in the senate. There is always a chance that the Liberals in the senate may try and drag this out.

However, after 17 years to living with this legislation I can wait until February. Merry Christmas everyone. And remember the old rules still apply until C-19 has finished the full course of legislation.

For additional information on the long gun registry contact:

Tony Rodgers
Executive Director
 Nova Scotia Federation of
 Anglers & Hunters
 902-477-8898

Hunters Helping the Hungry in its Sixth Year

Nova Scotians using food banks are once again getting help feeding their families from the Hunters Helping the Hungry program. For the sixth year in a row, hunters can donate deer and moose meat to the province's food banks.

"Government is proud to be a partner in this program with Feed Nova Scotia and others as we work to make life better for families," said Charlie Parker, Minister of Natural Resources.

"On behalf of the province, I thank the hunters for helping to make a real difference in people's lives."

Hunters have donated 3,553 kilograms of meat to Feed Nova Scotia over the past five years.

"Many hunters appreciate the opportunity to share the bounty of their wildlife harvests with others and they feel good knowing their donations of meat are helping families in need," said Tony Rodgers, executive director of Nova Scotia's Federation of Anglers and Hunters.

For more information on this program and other ways Feed Nova Scotia is helping hungry families, visit:

www.feednovascotia.ca



The Future of Polletts Cove Moose Hunting

Tony Rodgers and I had a conference call with Bob Petrie, Director of Wildlife, DNR on the afternoon of 1 Dec 2011, concerning the future of moose hunting in the wilderness area designated as zone 5 for the past 2 years.

As you will recall when the Polletts Cove/ Aspey Fault wilderness area was designated there was an exemption for the use of ATV's during the moose hunt to allow local guides and haulers to assist license holders harvest and retrieve their moose from this extremely challenging terrain. Subsequent changes to legislation dictated that the use of ATV's would not be allowed after Dec 2011.

When this occurred we strongly expressed concerns to both Environment & DNR on three levels. First there was the health of the moose herd within the wilderness area. If the level of harvest was to drop significantly we were concerned that the herd would eat itself into a starvation situation. Secondly there was a loss of hunting opportunity. Thirdly there was a loss of economic activity for the guides and haulers in an area of very low economic opportunity. The Department of the Environment and the Department of Natural Resources implemented a two year pilot "Non-Motorized, Primitive Hunt" to test the potential to continue hunting the wilderness area without the use of ATV's. The intention was to assess the results of these two hunts and based on the results make recommendations to the two Ministers involved regarding the future of the moose hunt in the wilderness area.

The reason for our conference call on the 1st of December was to convey the decision reached by the two Ministers involved that as of 1 Jan 2012 the use of AVT's for moose hunting in the wilderness area would no longer be allowed.

This decision was reached before all the data from the 2011 pilot hunt was received or analyzed. The reason offered was that the time lines were so restrictive a decision had to be reached to allow all interested parties to plan for the future of this hunt.

Several discussions concerning this decision have already taken place. The Regional Development Authority has been initially consulted about the potential economic opportunities such a primitive hunt might offer and how they might assist local guides and haulers take advantage of these opportunities. The first nations community has also been initially contacted in the same light.

In the near future the guides and haulers will be consulted and the Federation has been invited to participate in these discussions. We have also been invited to discuss Regulatory changes that might facilitate the transition to a non-motorized hunt and the changes that might be required to seasons and bag limits to ensure adequate harvest to forestall a crash of the herd. All of these discussions are formative and the exact format is still taking shape.

We will continue to focus on the three key issues; Herd Health, Hunting Opportunities and Economic Opportunities for the local Guides and Haulers.

As this process unfolds we will keep you informed.

Wilf Woods (Woody)
President
 Nova Scotia Federation of
 Anglers & Hunters



"The intention was to assess these two hunts and based on the results, make recommendations to the two Ministers"



*"The NSACH Online
Wildlife Observation
Survey runs from
Jan 01 – Dec 31, 2012"*

Nova Scotia Association of Crossbow Hunters

The Nova Scotia Association of Crossbow Hunters is asking for your help in monitoring the relative abundance and distribution of whitetail deer and other wildlife species found in Nova Scotia's wilderness.

The wildlife we are most interested in are: whitetail deer, black bears, moose, raccoon, skunk, porcupine, fox, ruffed grouse, coyote, bobcat, or other wildlife normally seen in your area. Since big game hunters often spend many hours in the woods, throughout the entire calendar year, you can provide valuable information about species that are often very difficult to measure.

The wildlife observation data you provide will be a valuable asset to future game management strategies, policies and programs put forward by the NSACH. Thank you to the entire hunting community for participating in our Online Observation Survey.

Survey link here:

<http://www.nsach.ca/help/2012survey.html>

Wildlife Observation Guidelines and Procedures are as follows:

1. Be sure to record your name, address, the date, activity, Wildlife Management Zone, weather conditions, and the type and number of animals for each observation.
2. Use one survey form for each day of big game sightings during both open and closed hunting seasons.
3. It is important that all of your big game hunting efforts be recorded, even if nothing is seen. Please record all of your hunting activity throughout the big game seasons, even if you have no wildlife sightings.
4. ***A valid email address is required to fill out the survey.** If you want to receive updates, reminders to report your observations, or want to have the results of the survey e-mailed to you, please select either option while completing the survey.

Hnatiuks Supper and Awards Banquet

As a way to show their appreciation to all Hnatiuks customers, there will be a Supper and Silent Auction on December 10, 2011, out at the Stewiacke Fire Hall.

Proceeds from the silent auction will go to The Nova Scotia Federation of Anglers & Hunters.

The doors open at 6:00PM, for refreshments, with the dinner beginning at 7:00PM.

After dinner sit back and enjoy the awards presentation for Hnatiuks Big Buck Contest.

If you can help out during the silent auction, contact Woody or Tony as soon as possible.



\$15.00 at the door

Customer APPRECIATION Night
And Our FIRST ANNUAL Year End
Supper & Awards Night

Saturday, December 10th, 2011
Stewiacke Fire Hall

6:00 pm - Doors open for drinks
7:00 pm - Supper Buffet is served! Moose and/or Turkey served with potatoes, carrots and dressing
8:00 pm - Award presentations for the winners of
Hnatiuk's Big Buck Contest!!

We are paying for half the cost of your evening!
You pay only \$15.00

Silent Auction in support of Federation of Anglers and Hunters

Door Prizes!
Including a Ruger 10/22!!

Meet the Reps! WOW!
Perfect opportunity to ask them your questions!

Contact us for more details! 902.883.8890

Shed Hunting

Shed hunting is a great way to get outdoors during the winter off season and provides hunters with valuable information on the age class of bucks that made it through the hunting season. It's a good idea to bring a backpack with a bottle of water and some snacks to keep hydrated and restore energy on these cold winter walks. It's also important to dress warm, wear layers, and bring a good hat that will cover your ears and a warm pair of gloves. Now that you don't have to worry about going hungry and getting cold, here are 10 tips for your next shed hunting adventure.

1) Walk through bedding and feeding areas deer frequent searching for any piece of an antler. Much like deer hunting, when you're shed hunting you might only see a piece of the antler sticking out of the snow or grass.

2) Travel routes also work well for finding sheds. With some fresh snow on the ground it should be easy to locate deer tracks and follow them through the woods. This will also greatly aid the hunter in learning how the deer travel through an area and use the terrain to their advantage.

3) Creek crossings also offer shed hunters the possibility to score. Vegetation is usually thicker along the creek which can help pull an antler off a buck. It is also sometimes necessary for a deer to jump across a creek or jump up on a steep creek bank, which could cause an antler to come loose and fall off.

4) Carry a GPS to mark the location of the sheds you find. Looking back on this information later could help you pattern the bucks in the area and give you more insight on a buck's core area.

5) If you find a shed don't move on to the next area until you've

thoroughly searched the surrounding 75+ yard area for the other side. Often times a buck will lose both antlers within a short distance from the first shed found. Walking a grid pattern often works best for locating the second antler.

6) If it looks like a shed, then it very well could be a shed, but you'll never know unless you look. Don't pass by that sticks in the ground if you're not 100% sure it's a stick. Bucks can grow some strange looking antlers so grab that stick off the ground, just in case it turns out to be an antler.



7) Just because deer tend to travel in the same area doesn't mean you should take the same route every time you walk through the woods in search of sheds. Make sure you always walk the property from different directions and don't give up until you've searched every inch of the property from every direction. You could easily miss an antler walking one way and find it later by walking the same area from another direction.

8) Deer tend to travel along transition cover. I like to walk the edges where swamps meet hardwoods and where grassy fields meet cedars.

9) Take a child and/or hunting buddy out shed hunting with you, it helps pass the time and it never hurts to have an extra set of eyes when you're looking for sheds.

10) Sheds or no sheds, the most important thing is to **HAVE FUN!**



Nova Scotia Federation of Anglers & Hunters

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The NSFah Journal is published monthly, except during hunting season. If you or your club has an article to submit, send along before the 25th of each month to ensure your information is inserted.

We're on the Web!

See us at:

www.nsfah.ca

NSFAH Board of Directors Meeting

The Board meets 4 times a year;

1. During the AGM
2. The second Saturday in June.
3. The second Saturday in Sept.
4. The second Saturday in Dec.

The next regularly scheduled Board meeting will take place on December 10, 2011.

Directors are notified of the agenda and location individually.

Report Fires, Poaching or Emergency Wildlife Situations 1-800-565-2224

Youth Hunting and Trapping Camp – March 2012

Department of Natural Resources staff and local experts will present the 2nd two-day overnight hunting and trapping camp this winter.

This hands-on camp will give participants the chance to learn skills and gain experience in hunting, snaring, and participating in outdoor recreation safely.

The camp will take place at the Chaswood Educational Woodlot where participants can make and set individual snares, construct survival kits, practice outdoor cooking and learn the basics of wilderness navigation and interpreting the environment.

Day two will have students travelling to the local rifle range to fire long bows, cross bows and .22 rifles.

Class size is small to permit hands-on experience. Boys and Girls between the ages of 12 and 15 are encouraged to signup; there is a limit of 12 participants so register soon!

Contact the Natural Resources Education Centre at 384-3420 / nrec@gov.ns.ca to request a registration package.

If you have any further questions regarding this matter, please contact your local DNR office.

Nova Scotia Federation of Anglers & Hunters Affiliate Club Listing

1. All Terrain Vehicle Association of Nova Scotia
2. Archery Association of Nova Scotia
3. Bowhunters Association of Nova Scotia
4. Bowhunters Instructors Association of Nova Scotia
5. Bras D'or Wildlife Association
6. Cape Breton Wildlife Association
7. Conservation Enforcement Officers Association of Nova Scotia
8. Delta Waterfowl Association
9. Digby East Fish & Game Association
10. Halifax Wildlife Association
11. Hants West Wildlife Association
12. Kings County Fish & Game Association
13. Lunenburg County Wildlife Association
14. Nova Scotia Association of Crossbow Hunters
15. Nova Scotia Guides Association
16. Nova Scotia Houndsmen Association
17. Port Morien Wildlife Association
18. Queens County Fish and Game Association
19. Shelburne County Fish & Game Association
20. South Shore Wildlife Association
21. The Big Game Society of Nova Scotia
22. Traditional Archers Association of Nova Scotia
23. Trappers Association of Nova Scotia
24. West Pictou Wildlife Association
25. Nova Scotia Bear Hunters Association