



December 8, 2010

BACKGROUND

BCWF OUTDOOR PASSPORT PROGRAM

What

The Outdoor Passport program is the BC Wildlife Federation's (BCWF) newest education program aimed at working cooperatively with landowners to improve access to private lands for hunting, angling and other outdoor activities. The program was developed in cooperation with the BC Agriculture Council.

The program's goal is to help build and promote better relationships between BCWF members and landowners. The Outdoor Passport program will assist landowners to manage access to private land and offers potential benefits to the agriculture industry to help reduce wildlife conflicts that may result in crop damage and loss of revenue.

Who

The Outdoor Passport Program is only available to BCWF members after they successfully complete an online orientation. Landowner participation is voluntary.

To apply for an Outdoor Passport, a member must complete an application form and pay a fee. Through the online orientation members gain an understanding of the concerns of landowners and the terms and conditions of the Program. Members must score 80% or greater on the evaluation portion of the program to receive a passport.

The Passport

The passport includes an identity card to introduce members and landowners.

Passport Access Pass

The program includes an access pass: a form which outlines conditions to access private property and holds members accountable for their actions. The form has two parts:

1. Introduction: introduces the BCWF member to the landowner. The conditions for allowing access are stated in this part of the form. The landowner keeps this part of the form.
2. Proof of permission: this is a tear-off section that the BCWF member retains as proof of permission from the landowner.

Funding provided by:



Landowners Concerns Addressed

Landowners are concerned about legal liabilities and risks associated with allowing access to their property. Concerns range from their rights as landowners, to safety, to possible damage to property, equipment, crops and livestock.

With the Outdoor Passport program, landowner's concerns are addressed:

1. By working with the passport holder to outline conditions of access (complete the passport access form); and
2. By enrolling in the \$2,000,000 third party liability insurance provided by the BCWF to members and landowners. Landowners must notify the insurance company of their participation in the program. There is no additional cost to the landowner for this insurance.

BCWF Member Responsibilities

By participating in the Outdoor Passport program BCWF members demonstrate a willingness to act as good stewards of the environment and the land. Members learn to be more responsible and accountable.

The online orientation reviews:

- safety concerns
- reporting hazards
- using Report All Poachers and Polluters (RAPP) hotline to report illegal activities
- leave no trace camping
- managing fire
- managing access such as closing gates and repairing fences
- reporting damage to land owner
- being careful around livestock
- respecting landowner's wishes for the use of motor vehicles and ATVs
- accessing private forest lands.

At the end of the online orientation members understand that access to private land is a privilege, and agree to advocate and practice leadership in outdoor ethics.

Accountability/Complaint Process

The Outdoor Passport program is built upon a voluntary compliance model. Members are expected to follow all laws and regulations as well as any conditions outlined by landowners as part of the access permission. Any complaints or issues are expected to be resolved by Outdoor Passport holders with landowners. The information on the access pass allows both parties to be contacted quickly.

BCWF members are legally accountable under federal and provincial laws such as the *Criminal Code*, *Wildlife Act*, *Trespass Act*, and *Motor Vehicle (All Terrain) Act*. It is expected that any

Funding provided by:



contravention of laws by Outdoor Passport holders will be dealt with fairly by the applicable enforcement agency (such as conservation, fisheries or police officer).

If there are reports of abuse or disregard of the program to the BCWF there is a provision for review by the Outdoor Passport Review Board. The board will be made up of three BCWF members in good standing. At least one member will have law enforcement experience. At the end of the process, the review board is authorized to flag, suspend or revoke an individual's Outdoor Passport.

Next Steps

The BCWF welcomes feedback and requests for presentations on the Outdoor Passport program by contacting the regional office at 604.291.2990 or by visiting their website at <http://www.bcwf.bc.ca>.

–30–

Media Contacts:

Patti MacAhonic, Executive Director, BCWF
604.291.9990 ext 230 office or 604.308.1941

Mel Arnold, Past President, BCWF
250.833.1155 office or
m.arnold.bcwf@sunwave.net

Funding provided by:

Canada

