

Pine Marten Education Program - Phase 1



Submitted by:

Western Newfoundland Model Forest

Submitted to:

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ABSTRACT

This Pine Marten Education Program was designed to educate and inform a variety of audiences on the current situation regarding the endangered Newfoundland Pine Marten on insular Newfoundland. The direction for this program was provided by a subcommittee which has representation of the key players concerned about pine marten education and survival issues. This committee was formulated as a result of discussions between the Pine Marten Recovery Team and the Pine Marten Working Group (an initiative of the Western Newfoundland Model Forest).

During 1999 - 2000 (Phase 1), this education subcommittee developed an action plan which saw the implementation of many of the activities identified in its proposal (1998 - 1999) to the World Wildlife Fund. These activities address the main goal and objectives identified on page 2 and 3 of this report.

Specific examples of initiatives undertaken are as follows: the construction and distribution of over 30 three dimensional modified snare models; the revision, formatting, printing and distribution of 10,000 copies of an updated pine marten brochure and poster; the design and distribution of shelf talkers which promote the use of the modified snare in retail stores; the design and development of a modified snare education pamphlet; the implementation of an intensive public awareness strategy in central Newfoundland.

These initiative were co-ordinated with provincial and federal government departments, research facilities, national parks, all of which have an interest or initiatives pertaining to the endangered pine marten. Funding was received from the World Wildlife Fund, the provincial Department of Forest Resources and Agrifoods and Human Resources Development Canada.

This project will result in a number of positive effects in terms of its impact on the pine marten population and the public's perception of its role in survival of this species. The profile of the Newfoundland pine marten and its current situation has been enhanced and a variety of tools produced which can be used in the long term to educate the general public. Through increased understanding of the species and the impacts that human use of the forest on the marten's habitat poses, accidental snaring can be reduced and human pressure on the ecosystem can be lessened. A greater respect for species diversity and its role in the greater ecosystem can be increased which will promote these developments.

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1.0 Introduction

Few people have ever seen a pine marten on the island of Newfoundland. This is because there are very few left to be seen. The species was listed as *threatened* in 1986, and *endangered* in 1996 due to declining numbers. It is estimated that about 300 marten remain on the Island. Out of all 11 strategies put forth by the National Recovery Plan for the Newfoundland Marten (RENEW Report No. 14) in 1995, information and education is one of the least addressed issues. Public response to the implementation of certain actions has noted a discrepancy amongst Newfoundlanders toward recovery efforts. It has been noted that the general public in the Western Newfoundland region of the province understand more readily the concerns around the endangered Pine Marten. The public in this region are more understanding and accepting of limitations to their activities (e.g. snaring, limited timber cutting, and limited access) than people in central and eastern Newfoundland due to localized educational programs by the Model Forest and other agencies.

This proposal focused on the development of a 2 year action plan which was developed by the Education Subcommittee of the Pine Marten Working Group. This Subcommittee consists of individuals from the Department of Forest Resources and Agrifoods, Wildlife Division, Terra Nova National Park and the Salmonier Nature Park and the Western Newfoundland Model Forest. This subcommittee has worked with the (RENEW) REcovery of Nationally Endangered Wildlife team and has formulated a plan to address the recovery plans' objective of developing and implementing public information and education programs regarding the Newfoundland marten.

2.0 Project Goal

The Pine Marten Education Subcommittee has stated one main goal and three subsequent objectives:

To make information regarding the endangered Newfoundland Pine Marten available to target audiences, which include: the domestic snaring community; the trapping community; school programs (elementary, junior and senior high students, colleges and universities); forest based industries, front line forestry workers and contractors; and the general public, particularly in central and eastern Newfoundland.

The three main objectives of the Pine Marten Education Proposal are outlined in the following section.

Objective 2.1

To educate target audiences on the endangered Newfoundland Marten including factors influencing its vulnerability, its role in the ecosystem, and the measures needed for the species to recover.

Specific activities undertaken to achieve this objective include: updating and formatting the pine marten brochure and poster. 10,000 copies of each were printed. Both the brochure and the poster were designed to be distributed to inform and educate the general public. It gives a general description of the species, its present status, its habitat and food sources, research and management initiatives, and a summary of the recovery plan for the pine marten.

Objective 2.2

To raise awareness of the personal actions these audiences can take to help in the recovery of the species.

Key among specific actions which can be undertaken by the public to reduce accidental Marten mortality is the use of the modified snare. This modified snare was developed and field tested in Alberta by the. In 1997 the provincial government in this province made the use of this snare mandatory in several areas (Northwest Grand Lake area, Terra Nova area, Charlottetown enclave). The awareness plan proposed to highlight concerns primarily around snaring, and show the public and students how they play a role in protection of habitat.

Several initiatives were undertaken to raise awareness of the public's personal actions and how they can impact marten populations. Over 50 3-dimensional (3-D) modified snare models were constructed and distributed around western and central Newfoundland. Shelf talkers were designed, printed and distributed to sporting goods stores. Exhibits were also set up at local exhibitions in Western Newfoundland.

Objective 2.3

To measure the extent of how supportive the public is for the implementation of these recovery efforts.

In January 2000, an intensive public awareness strategy will be concentrated in central Newfoundland targeting schools and the general public. The support of the public will be determined by; level of interest in attending public meetings and information sessions; compliance to the use of the modified snare; and modified snare sales.

3.0 Outline of Work Completed

A Pine Marten Education Subcommittee was developed from the Pine Marten Working Group and the Pine Marten Recovery Team. It is made up of individuals from the Department of Forest Resources and Agrifoods, Wildlife Division, Terra Nova National Park and the Salmonier Nature Park and the Western Newfoundland Model Forest. To date, three subcommittee meetings have been held. These meetings have focused on developing an awareness and education plan, having input into the development of educational tools and developing proposals for funding.

Several funding sources have been accessed to provide funding for this position. \$ 10,000 has been approved by the World Wildlife Fund. A \$ 10,500 contribution to this project has been received from the provincial Department of Forest Resources and Agrifoods. A proposal was submitted and approved by Human Resources Development Canada for a four month Pine Marten Education Assistant position (\$ 7,980). This contribution was received to employ an individual who would concentrate efforts on educating the general public in central and eastern Newfoundland on the Pine Marten. An office for the Education Assistant has been set up in the Department of Forest Resources and Agrifoods (Wildlife Division) building in Gander to give easier access to central and eastern Newfoundland.

An individual who was currently working on planning initiatives with the Western Newfoundland Model Forest was seconded from the Sustainable Forest Management project on which she was working in early June.

Individual activities that have been undertaken since this project's inception and meet the specific project goals are as follows. A brief description of each activity is also included.

- **Pine Marten Brochure and Poster**

In 1994, a Pine Marten brochure and poster were developed by the provincial Wildlife Division. This information was quite detailed and described the marten, its appearance, its recent decline and present status, its habitat and food, its mating habits, research and management efforts, and impacts on this species. This information was revised, updated and 10,000 copies of each of were printed. Distribution of the posters and brochures will be done through the Department of Forestry and Agrifoods, Wildlife Division, main office in St. John's and regional district offices and by the Western Newfoundland Model Forest. This information will also be made available to non-government organizations who have like-minded objectives. Copies of both of these information bulletins are appended in Appendix I.

- **3- D Modified Snare Models**

Over fifty 3-D modified snare models were constructed by a Green Team and a Model Forest employee (funded through another source) for distribution to sporting goods stores, wildlife division's district offices, several community colleges/universities, and timber industrial partners. These snares demonstrate how to successfully set the modified snare to catch the snowshoe hare while allowing the ensnared marten to escape without serious injury.

- **Modified Snare Pamphlet**

A modified snare pamphlet is currently being designed and will be printed in the new year. It explains what a modified snare is, how to set the snare (step-by-step), how to release a marten from the snare if it is not able to release itself, and explains the legislation and penalties around not using a modified snare in designated areas. 5,000 copies of this brochure will be printed and it will be distributed to sporting goods stores and establishments who are selling modified snares to the general public (See Appendix 2 for draft copy of pamphlet).

- **Shelf Talkers**

A number of different shelf talkers have been designed and 2000 color copies printed. The shelf talkers have been distributed to sporting goods stores in western and central Newfoundland and are being displayed on shelves marketing modified coils for the snares. These shelf talkers convey a variety of messages encouraging potential buyers to consider the plight of the endangered marten in their trapping activities. One example of these messages is "Give Pine Marten a fighting Chance - Use A Modified Snare!" etc. (See Appendix 3).

- **Public Events, Exhibitions and Mall Displays**

The pine marten education assistant has attended several exhibitions and set up a mall display in conjunction with an anniversary celebration. The 3-D modified snare model, a mounted pine marten and the pine marten educational display was set up at the Humber Valley Agricultural, Home and Handicraft Exhibition in Deer Lake in September 99. Over 4000 people attended the exhibition during the two day show. As well, the same display and information was exhibited at the Fall Fair in Port au Port during late October (over 2000 people attended). In mid-October, the display was exhibited at the Corner Brook plaza in conjunction with the mall's anniversary celebration. Significant numbers of local residents dropped by the booth to ask questions and to read the information presented.

- **School Presentations and Public Meetings**

As previously mentioned, an office has been set up in the Department of Forest Resources and Agrifoods in Gander (central Newfoundland). Meetings and discussions have been held with staff from Terra Nova National Park and the Salmonier Nature Park. Both of these agencies have been involved in public education and awareness programs in the central/eastern region. Efforts are underway to co-ordinate public awareness and education activities to avoid duplication. Sharing of educational resources used is also ongoing. In January 2000, an intensive public awareness strategy will be concentrated in central Newfoundland targeting schools and the general public. The support of the public will be determined by assessing; level of interest in attending public meetings, compliance in the use of the modified snare; and modified snare sales. The provincial Department of Forest Resources and Agrifoods will be able to assist in this assessment.

4.0 An Assessment of the Success in Achieving the Project's Objectives

As of December 1999, this project has been successful in meeting its objectives. Not only has the profile of the Newfoundland pine marten and its current situation been enhanced through various public displays and discussions, but also a variety of tools have been produced which can be utilized in the long term to educate the general public. An increased understanding of the species itself, its role in the ecosystem, and the impacts of habitat loss and accidental trapping will encourage a more judicious approach to the preservation of the pine marten.

Support given to local store owners in their marketing efforts of the modified snare are being very well received. Brochures and shelf talkers and 3-D modified snares provide an informational basis for retailers to inform and educate their clientele (trappers and snarers) in the proper use of the modified snare and the rationale for its use.

It is anticipated that the public awareness strategy concentrated in central Newfoundland through January to March 2000 will result an increased level of interest in the endangered Newfoundland pine marten, a higher rate of compliance in the use of the modified snare, and an increase in modified snare sales. Precedents have been set in Western Newfoundland for this assumption, as the general public in this region has proven to be more accepting of changes in their activities (snaring, limited timber cutting and access to certain protected areas). This higher level of understanding of pine marten issues and concerns has been attributed to localized education programs by the Western Newfoundland Model Forest and other agencies.

5.0 The Conservation Significance of the Project Results

In terms of the future of the Newfoundland Pine Marten, anticipated results of this pine marten education project should significantly affect the future viability of this species. Through increased understanding of the species itself and the impacts that human use of the forest and the marten's habitat poses, accidental snaring can be reduced. This will reduce human pressure on the species. An understanding of the pine marten's habitat requirement will also cause humans to view and approach the forest ecosystem with more consideration and respect. This will hopefully translate into less pressure on the marten's environment.

Recovery efforts for the endangered pine marten are dependent on the participatory role taken by forest resources users and the general public. Public support for the recently established Pine Marten Reserve area in Little Grand Lake shows the level of understanding and awareness in western Newfoundland to the plight of this species. This strong level of public support will be facilitated in central Newfoundland through a public awareness campaign slated to begin in January. Efforts of the pine marten education assistant will build on the base of awareness already established by agencies like Terra Nova National Park, the Department of Forest Resources & Agrifoods, and Salmonier Nature Park. Support and use of the modified snare should increase during this process, again lessening the impact of accidental snaring.

Educational materials produced during this undertaking, such as the pine marten brochure and poster, the modified snare brochure, the 3-D modified snare models and shelf talkers will be used in the long term to promote the conservation message and raise the level of knowledge and understanding of the Newfoundland pine marten.

The Western Newfoundland Model Forest is currently developing local level indicators of a sustainable forest management to ensure our forests are being managed sustainably. The population of the Newfoundland Pine Marten is one of the key parameters measured in this framework to determine if we are maintaining viable populations of this native species. The ultimate impact of this project will be to heighten the profile of this endangered species to a level where conservation efforts will be understood and accepted by forest users.

6.0 Conservation Success of this Project - Future Steps to be Taken

The Pine Marten Education Sub-committee has identified a number of directions in which this project should move to ensure its conservation message is heard, understood and has a positive impact. These directions are itemized in point form below:

- Continued emphasis on the promotion of the modified snare and its use with the goal of decreasing accidental mortality in pine marten populations. To increase awareness of penalties applicable to using standard snaring techniques in restricted areas.

- The establishment of a pine marten image bank in this province which would see a compilation of slides and images available of the species. These images would be used for education, awareness and conservation purposes.
- The development of uniform, consistent educational kits which would draw together all tools currently being used in the province. These edu-kits would consist of games, slides, photos, activities, brochures, etc. aimed at different educational levels.
- Promotion of advancements in the province of Newfoundland and Labrador which see the probability of marten survival as a species increasing, e.g. establishment of the Pine Marten Reserve in Little Grand Lake area.
- The review of the modified snare design and research on a new, improved model.
- Increased diligence in enforcement of modified snare usage in approved areas.

World Wildlife Fund Canada could be of assistance to this effort in a number of these areas which would ultimately affect the conservation success of this project.

7.0 Detailed Budget

The attached breakdown details the projected revenue and expenditures for the Pine Marten Education Program for the period of April 1, 1999 to March 31, 2000. This revenue breakdown is based on funds committed and/or received. Expenditure projections are based on actual expenditures to December 31, 1999 and projections to March 2000.

Revenue

World Wildlife Fund	\$10,000	
Dept. of Forest Resources & Agrifoods	10,500	
Human Resources Dev. Canada	7,980	
Total Projected Revenue		\$28,480

Expenditures

Salaries and Benefits	\$13,000	
Materials and Supplies	2,000	
Travel & Accommodations	4,000	
Advertising	2,000	
Printing Promotional Material	7,500	
Total Projected Expenditure		\$28,500
Balance Remaining		0

Appendix 1

Pine Marten Poster and Draft Copy of the Pine Marten Brochure

The Modified Snare

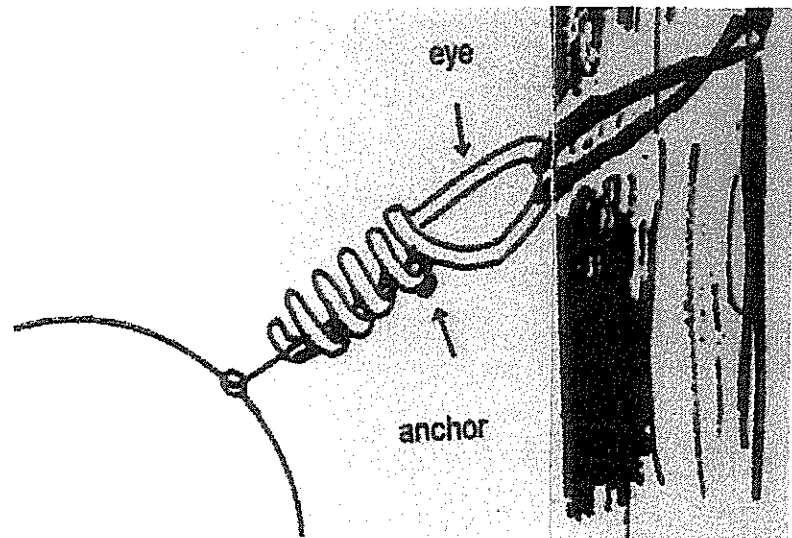


*Help Save
an Endangered Species*

What is a modified snare?

A modified snare is a device that was developed by the Alberta Research Institute for the Inland Fish & Wildlife Division of the Department of Forest Resources and Agrifoods. The concept behind the modified snare is to permit the capture of snowshoe hare and other small game while allowing the escape of the endangered pine marten.

The modified snare consists of two components, a 5-coil spiral and a traditional stainless steel snare. The coil devices used in the modified snare can be purchased at many sporting good stores and are also available at other locations that sell the stainless steel snaring wire.





Why should you use a modified snare?

You should use a modified snare to reduce the chances of catching an endangered pine marten. It is estimated that fewer than 300 remain on the island. A number of factors are thought to have contributed to the decline of the pine marten they include habitat loss, disease and accidental trapping and snaring.

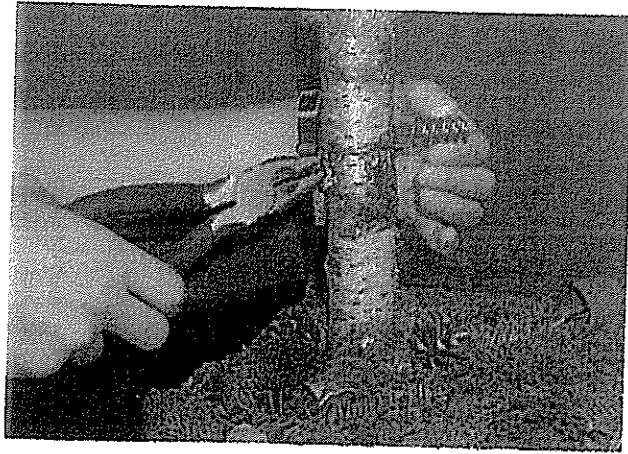
Legal trapping of pine marten has been banned since 1934 however, accidental capture of marten in rabbit snares and some trapping devices is a concern. Modified snares and floating mink boxes have been developed and are being used on the island to reduce the possibility of accidentally capturing marten.

How do you set a modified snare?

To set a modified snare you must follow these three steps.

Step 1: Make sure that the outside end of the run, opposite to the coil device, is clear and free of debris. The distance of clearing should be equal to the length of the strung up snare.

Step 2: Using heavy wire, attach the coil device firmly to a tree located next to the run . Wrap the wire at least two times through the eye of the coil device to ensure that it stays firmly attached. Make a small loop at the anchor end of the snare wire. Place the loop or anchor over the outer end of the coil device and rotate it up through until it reaches the inner portion of the coil. **To work properly, the portion of the snare wire between the anchor end and the snare loop must be inside the coil device.**



Step 3: Set the snare in its normal fashion making sure that the outside run is free and clear of debris.



Where do you have to use a modified snare?

There are two areas on the island that require the use of modified snares to harvest small game. They are the Northwest Grand Lake area and the Terra Nova area. These two areas can be seen on the map on the reverse side of this page.

Can I get a fine for not using a modified snare in the two required areas?

Yes, you can get a fine if you do not use a modified snare in the Northwest Grand Lake and Terra Nova areas. In fact, any person found guilty is subject to a fine not exceeding \$500 and in default of payment to imprisonment for a period not exceeding 6 months.

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