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## MEDIA RELEASE

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### MUNICIPAL COUNCIL CONGRATULATES LAWRENCETOWN ON BEING THE FIRST CANADIAN WILDLIFE FEDERATION “BACKYARD HABITAT” COMMUNITY

ANNAPOLIS COUNTY, NOVEMBER 22, 2011 – Municipal Council was very pleased to learn the Village of Lawrencetown has received the Canadian Wildlife Federation’s (CWF) *Backyard Habitat Certification*. The Village is the first to be certified in Canada.

The Backyard Habitat Certification Program has three key areas of focus:

- *Wildlife-friendly gardening* - welcome wildlife by meeting their four needs – food, water, shelter and space.
- *Earth-friendly gardening*- avoidance of chemical pesticides (both insect and herbicides)
- *Naturalized habitat* – regionally native plants

Lawrencetown residents, Diana and William Ackroyd, were recognized by CWF in 2009 for creating a backyard habitat that supported wildlife, but she thought it was something that the entire community should enjoy. Although CWF admitted they had never certified an entire community before they were intrigued by the concept so the organization met to figure out what would be a reasonable number of certified properties. It was determined 30% of residents’ properties in Lawrencetown would need to be certified in order for the Village to receive *The Backyard Habitat Certification* as a community. This meant Diana would need to get 94 homes to participate. She successfully brought 96 residents on board.

“What a wonderful honour for the Village of Lawrencetown,” said Annapolis County Warden Reg Ritchie. “The certification itself is to be congratulated. The fact it is the first community in Canada is to be celebrated. This tells a story of determination and dedication; especially of Mrs. Ackroyd who oversaw the project and made sure the certification came to fruition.”

Diana noted that the Lawrencetown Village Commission was supportive in this initiative, but admits it wasn’t an easy undertaking. She had to go to numerous properties identifying plants, taking photos, and drawing property diagrams, but she was determined to make this happen. “People were very supportive giving me free range of their property”, she said. “I can’t tell you how excited I am that all this has worked out.”

“Council sends big congratulations to Lawrencetown residents,” said Warden Ritchie. “Not only have they created a nature-friendly habitat in the County of Annapolis, they have brought national recognition to our beautiful region.”

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