



## **SOOFSTOCK August 23 - August 24 2024**

### **FESTIVAL OVERVIEW**

#### **ABOUT THE ORGANISERS**

The Save Our Old Forests (SOOF) Association is a registered non-profit organisation based in Hampton, Nova Scotia that was established with two goals: 1) engage the public in helping to protect the forests in keeping with the Government of Nova Scotia's commitment to protect 20% of Nova Scotia's lands and waters by 2030; and 2) raise awareness of the ecological importance of protecting forests over 80 years old in particular.

The SOOF Executive and Board includes Nina Newington (President), Debbie Stultz-Giffin (Vice President), Laura Bright (Secretary & Treasurer), Crystal Veinot (Director), and Robert Bright (Director).

#### **ABOUT THE SOOF CAMPAIGN**

The government of Nova Scotia has made a legal commitment to protect 20% of Nova Scotia's lands and waters by 2030. Fortunately there is more than enough publicly owned land to do this and still have ample Crown land available for forestry and other uses. But the way things are going, the remaining old forests will be logged before they can be protected. This is why the SOOF campaign is asking the Premier for a pause on logging and road-building in forests over 80 years old on Crown land until 20% of Nova Scotia has been protected.

The SOOF campaign was launched to a standing room only crowd on March 25, 2023 at the Bridgetown Legion and included the launch of the petition for Annapolis County. Over the last year petitions have been launched in Kings, Lunenburg, Colchester, Pictou, Cumberland, Hants, Digby, Yarmouth, and Halifax.

Along the way, the campaign has been endorsed by other nonprofits who are helping to spread awareness about SOOF and the petition in their own County. These include Nature Nova Scotia, the Blomidon Naturalists Society (BNS), the South Shore Chapter of the Council of Canadians, Tusk River Environmental Protection Association (TREPA), the North Shore Chapter of the Council of Canadians, the Eastern Shore Forest Watch Association, and the Nova Scotia Chapter of the Canadian Association of Retired Persons (CARP).

In addition to the petitions SOOF has hosted a number of presentations and events, both within Annapolis County and beyond. The intent is to engage people in learning about the campaign, and get people involved doing what they love to do.

## Artists & Makers

In May and June 2023 the *For the Love of Lichens and Old Forests* art and citizen science exhibit was held at ArtsPlace Gallery in Annapolis Royal. The exhibit featured work by local artists and photographs taken by Citizen Scientists of Southwest Nova Scotia, and was curated by local artists, Susan Tooke and Nikki Clark. As part of the exhibit SOOF hosted a “conversation” featuring artists Tim Wilson, Susan Tooke, Lorne Julien and citizen scientist Nina Newington. There was also a special poetry reading on a rainy Sunday afternoon with Basma Kavanagh and shalan joudry.

In October 2023 the SOOF campaign hosted a Makers Auction which featured donations of handmade items ranging from paintings, ceramics, prints, sewn goods, crocheted toys, wooden carvings, baked goods and much more.

## Theatre

ArtsPlace Gallery hosted a one-night work-in-progress sharing of a participatory interactive theatre game “Moving A Forest” on November 4, 2023. Participants had a fun time working together to create and protect an interconnected old forest and reimagining their relationship with the Wabanaki-Acadian forest. The original piece was created by South Korean media artist and director of the creative group *Untitled Road*, Borahm Kim. The Nova Scotia experience was incorporated into the piece and reworked by *Untitled Road*, in collaboration with SOOF and international theatre company (Korea, UK and Canada) *Blooming Ludus*.

## Citizen Science

From the beginning SOOF has been collaborating with the *Citizen Scientists of Southwest Nova Scotia* to highlight their discoveries and help engage people through workshops. Of particular note is the work that the Citizen Scientists have done since 2022 working in the forests around Goldsmith Lake (Annapolis County). This small team of over 20 enthusiastic citizens have discovered areas of old-growth that have now been officially confirmed and recognised by the Department of Natural Resources & Renewables, and have discovered over 40 species at risk in the old forests around the lake.

In 2023 a number of educational workshops (e.g. Tree Identification, learning iNaturalist, etc) were hosted at the proposed *Goldsmith Lake Wilderness Area*. All of the workshops were fully booked with waiting lists, and people made a special trip from other areas of the province in order to attend the workshops.

## ABOUT SOOFSTOCK

SOOFSTOCK is a music festival celebrating the Save Our Old Forests campaign and its primary goal is to raise awareness about the campaign. The festival is a family friendly, alcohol-free and community building event in support of a great cause. This year, SOOFSTOCK will run from Friday, August 23 to Saturday August 24 at the West Dalhousie Community Hall.

The first SOOFSTOCK festival was held at the same venue in August 2023 with over 30 volunteers helping with the event. Fortunately the Hall has an indoor stage that allowed organisers to move the event indoors because of bad weather. The weather had a definite impact on the turnout, but there were over 125 people that attended over the weekend, all of the bands showed, and we made a positive impact on the local community.

The program of events for 2023 included 14 music acts by 30 local musicians who volunteered their time and talents, a market featuring 10 local vendors, a Kids Corner with supervised activities, and a forest walk at the nearby proposed *Goldsmith Lake Wilderness Area* hosted by Bob Bancroft and Donna Crossland from Nature Nova Scotia. The 2024 festival will follow the same program of events, and we are currently working on securing bands and have already confirmed 8 bands.

## COMMUNITY FOCUS

Since the launch of SOOF in March 2023, the campaign organisers have actively sought opportunities to engage with community groups across Annapolis County. We believe it is important to host events in community halls and participate in local markets and festivals.

SOOF events have been held in a variety of spaces including the West Dalhousie Community hall, Centrelea Community Hall, Bridgetown Legion, and ArtsPlace (Annapolis Royal). SOOF has also had tables at Upper Clements' Earth Day Celebrations, Clean Annapolis River Project's RiverFest, Tupperville School Museum's Ice Cream Social, Medway's Forest Market, West Dalhousie Community Christmas Market, and Round Hill Hall Christmas Market.

When SOOFSTOCK 2023 wrapped up the West Dalhousie Community Hall volunteers kept asking if we would come back for a second festival. They were proud to have been part of the event, and are eager to be part of SOOFSTOCK 2024.

Starting in January 2024 SOOF has been hosting *SOOF Soup Sunday* events at the Centrelea Community Hall. Hosted on the third Sunday of the month (January to April) these events offer the public a free lunch and an opportunity to hear about SOOF, meet Citizen Scientists and engage in conversations about old forests.

## PEOPLE FOCUS

SOOF relies on volunteers. From the initial launch we have been overwhelmed by the number of people that just want to help and get involved. We now have a network of individuals across

Annapolis County (and beyond) who step in to help with whatever needs to get done. Sometimes it means coming in early to set up, or staying late to tear down after an event, or cleaning dishes and mopping floors. Sometimes it just means putting up posters, or baking cookies.

SOOFSTOCK 2023 had over 30 people volunteering on the crew, and all have said they would like to come back for the next festival.

## REGIONAL BENEFIT

SOOF events in Annapolis County are always well attended, and we consistently have people travelling from Lunenburg, Halifax, Windsor, Truro, Digby and Yarmouth to attend.

Early ticket sales for SOOFSTOCK 2023 showed that almost 50% of tickets purchased were from people outside of Annapolis County. People spent money at the Hall, either purchasing meals or buying something from the market, or ordering food from local chef, Fiona Genevieve of Molotov Cuisine. We heard from many people that left after the event that they were going to head to another community in Annapolis to grab a bite to eat, or visit some shops before heading back home.

SOOF has also engaged local businesses to sign on as [Supporters and Friends](#) of SOOF by allowing us to display their business logos on our website. To date we have received over 90 logos from local businesses who stand behind the Save Our Old Forests campaign.