

Backgrounder - Media Opportunities:

The 30th annual North American Wildlife Enforcement Officers Association (NAWEOA) Conference officially begins at 9.00 am, Wednesday, July 20, 2011 with a Grand March led by the RCMP and Ministry of Environment Honour Guards. The full colour guard of over 200 uniformed officers from across North America will march from the Radisson Hotel through the streets of Saskatoon to the opening ceremonies at Teachers Credit Union Place. The media and public are invited to observe the Grand March.

During the opening ceremony, tribute will be given to fallen officers, who in the previous year paid the ultimate sacrifice while protecting our natural resources. An awards program and motivational speaker will follow the officer memorial service.

Following the opening ceremony there will be a 5.6 kilometre Law Enforcement Torch Run and BBQ. The Torch run and walk will start at 5:00 pm on Wednesday. The Torch Run route will follow the Meewasin Valley Trail, under the University Bridge and along the University of Saskatchewan campus, turn west over the Canadian Pacific Railway bridge and south along the west shore of the South Saskatchewan River. The 11th Annual Torch Run will help raise funds and support the North American Game Warden Museum, located on the United States - Canada border at the International Peace Gardens.

The NAWEOA Conference will also provide the opportunity for SACO and the Ministry of Environment to unveil their new "Hooked on Fishing Not on Drugs" display trailer. The program promotes youth and family values through fishing and is instructed by trained conservation officers. This showcase event will take place at the Saskatoon Wildlife Federation clubhouse on the morning of Thursday, July 21. The program originated from the Future Fisherman Foundation in the United States and Saskatchewan was the first province in Canada to host it.

The Warden Skills Competition will be held at the Saskatoon Forestry Farm Park and Zoo on Friday, July 22. This is a social event for all including officers' families and retired officers. The day will end with a BBQ and evening entertainment.