

Consultation on Amending the List of Species under the *Species at Risk Act*

Terrestrial Species

January 2008



Environment
Canada

Environnement
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Canada

Library and Archives Canada Cataloguing in Publication

Consultation on Amending the List of Species under the *Species at Risk Act*: Terrestrial Species, January 2008.
Annual

Text in English and French on inverted pages.

Title on added t.p.: Consultation sur la modification de la liste des espèces de la *Loi sur les espèces en péril* : espèces terrestres, janvier 2008.

Available also on the Internet: www.sararegistry.gc.ca/public/default_e.cfm

ISSN: 1710-3029

ISBN: 978-0-662-05203-6

Cat. no.: En1-36/2007

1. Endangered species—Law and legislation—Canada—Periodicals.
2. Biological diversity conservation—Law and legislation—Canada—Periodicals.
- I. Canada. Environment Canada.
- II. Title.
- III. Title: Consultation sur la modification de la liste des espèces de la *Loi sur les espèces en péril* : espèces terrestres, janvier 2008.

KE5210.C66

346.7104'69522'05

C2005-701252-0E

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Please submit your comments by

- **April 18, 2008**, for species undergoing **normal** consultations

and by

- **March 27, 2009**, for species undergoing **extended** consultations.

Please e-mail your comments to the SARA Public Registry at:

SARAreistry@ec.gc.ca

Comments may also be mailed to:

Director General
Canadian Wildlife Service
Environment Canada
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0H3

For more information on the *Species at Risk Act*, please visit the SARA Public Registry at:

www.sarareistry.gc.ca

For more information on species at risk, please visit Environment Canada's Species at Risk website:

www.speciesatrisk.gc.ca

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ADDITION OF SPECIES TO THE *SPECIES AT RISK ACT*

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

Background

As part of its strategy for protecting wildlife species at risk, the Government of Canada proclaimed the *Species at Risk Act* (SARA) on June 5, 2003. Attached to the Act is Schedule 1, the list of the species that receive protection under SARA, also called the List of Wildlife Species at Risk.

Originally, there were 233 species on Schedule 1. Since proclamation, another 192 species have been added. These 425 species make up the current List of Wildlife Species at Risk. The complete list of species currently on Schedule 1 can be viewed at:

www.sararegistry.gc.ca/species/schedules_e.cfm?id=1

Recent COSEWIC species assessments

On August 30, 2007, the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC) submitted to the Minister of the Environment, 63 assessments of species that it had recently assessed or re-assessed:

- 11 species assessed as data deficient or not at risk (including one Schedule 1 species assessed as not at risk and proposed for de-listing)
- 52 species assessed as being at risk
 - 25 aquatic species (including one species whose status was unchanged and one species proposed for down-listing of its current Schedule 1 risk status)
 - 27 terrestrial species
 - 16 newly assessed species
 - 11 species already on Schedule 1 that were re-assessed (seven species whose status was unchanged and four species status proposed for up-listing or down-listing of their current Schedule 1 risk status).

The seven terrestrial species with status unchanged are not included in the current consultations.

The Minister of Fisheries and Oceans is conducting separate consultations for the 24 aquatic species at risk. For more information on the consultations for aquatic species, please visit the Fisheries and Oceans Canada website at:

www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/index.htm

Approximately 38 percent of the recently assessed terrestrial species at risk occur in national parks or other lands administered by Parks Canada. Parks Canada shares responsibility for the recovery of these terrestrial species with Environment Canada.

Purpose of the current consultations

COSEWIC bases its assessments solely on its evaluation of the biological status of each species. Before making informed listing decisions, the Minister of the Environment needs to weigh the potential consequences, including the socioeconomic impacts, of accepting the COSEWIC status assessments and amending Schedule 1.

Governments cannot act alone to ensure the conservation of biodiversity; therefore, the Government of Canada invites and encourages the public to become involved. Of particular significance is the engagement of Aboriginal peoples, acknowledging their role in the management of the extensive traditional territories and reserve and settlement lands that contribute substantively to the support of Canada's biodiversity.

The best way to secure the survival of species at risk and their habitats is through the active participation of all those concerned. Accordingly, the Government of Canada has designed SARA to ensure the protection and recovery of Canadian wildlife species and the habitats that support them, while embracing Canadian values of participation.

To that end, this publication, *Consultation on Amending the List of Species under the Species at Risk Act – Terrestrial Species*, marks the launch of consultations on the potential impacts of the acceptance of the COSEWIC status assessments.

Of particular interest to Environment Canada in conducting these consultations is the identification of the benefits and costs of amending Schedule 1 according to the COSEWIC assessment for each of these species. Their assessments are considered in relation to the potential impacts on these species and on society of not doing so, recognizing that Canada's

natural heritage is an integral part of our national identity and history.

The involvement of those affected is integral to the process, as it is to the ultimate protection of Canadian wildlife. Your comments matter and will be given serious consideration.

Legislative context of the consultations

The Minister of the Environment, having received the COSEWIC species assessments, will forward them to the Governor in Council for receipt. Following public consultation on the addition of species to Schedule 1, the Minister will recommend to the Governor in Council one of the following possible courses of action, as set out in SARA:

- a) that the COSEWIC assessment be accepted and the species added to Schedule 1, reclassified or removed from the list accordingly;
- b) that the species not be added to Schedule 1; or
- c) that the species be referred back to COSEWIC for further information or consideration.

The Government of Canada is obligated to take one of these actions within nine months of the Governor in Council receiving the COSEWIC assessment. If, in that time, no government action has been taken, the COSEWIC species assessment must be accepted and Schedule 1 must be amended accordingly, by a governor in council order.

The results of these consultations will inform the recommendation of the Minister of the Environment as to which of the three possible courses of action would be the most appropriate.

Process of public consultations

Before the government makes decisions concerning the addition or reclassification of these terrestrial species (Tables 1 & 2), Environment Canada is inviting the public to comment.

To facilitate public consultations, Environment Canada will distribute this document to a number of identified stakeholders and post it on the SARA Public Registry. More detailed information on these species can be found in the COSEWIC status reports, which are used by COSEWIC members as a basis for discussion

and for the status assignments. The status reports for each of these species are available on the SARA Public Registry.

In addition to consulting with the public, Environment Canada will consult with the governments of the provinces and territories responsible for the conservation and management of these wildlife species.

Where existing land claims agreements apply to eligible terrestrial species, such that they fall under the authority of a Wildlife Management Board, the Minister of the Environment will consult with the relevant Board. Aboriginal peoples identified as being affected by the listing or de-listing of these species will also be contacted.

Environment Canada will also consult with other federal departments and agencies.

Environment Canada will send notice of this consultation to recognized stakeholders, identified concerned groups and individuals who have made their interests known. These include, but are not limited to, industries, industry groups and resource users, landowners, land users and environmental non-government organizations.

Role and impact of public consultations

The results of the public consultations are of great relevance to the process of listing species at risk. Environment Canada will carefully review and evaluate comments.

Environment Canada will document these comments in a Regulatory Impact Analysis Statement (RIAS). The RIAS, a description of the regulatory proposal, including an analysis of the expected impact, is an integral part of the federal regulatory process. A draft Order (an instrument that serves notice of a decision taken by the executive arm of government) proposing to list all or some of the species under consideration will then be published, along with the RIAS, in *Canada Gazette* Part I for a comment period of 30 days.

The Minister of the Environment will take into consideration comments and any additional information received following publication of the draft Order and the RIAS in *Canada Gazette* Part I. The Minister will then recommend, for each species,

that the Governor in Council (a) accept the species assessment and amend Schedule 1 accordingly, (b) not add the species to Schedule 1 or (c) refer the species assessment back to COSEWIC for further information or consideration. The final decision will be published in *Canada Gazette* Part II and on the SARA Public Registry.

The consultation period

The Minister reports on which consultation path a species will follow in the species' response statement. During normal consultations, the Minister of the Environment forwards the species assessments to the Governor in Council within a short time of the posting of the response statements on the SARA Public Registry. Receipt by the Governor in Council starts the nine-month timeline within which the Government of Canada must act (see above under "Legislative context of the consultations").

Under some circumstances, the Schedule 1 listing of a COSEWIC species could have significant and widespread impacts on the activities of Aboriginal peoples, industry or Canadians at large. In such cases, affected citizens need to be informed of the pending decision and, to the extent possible, its potential consequences. They also need the opportunity to express their opinions and share ideas on how best to approach the protection and recovery of the species. Accordingly, extended consultations will be undertaken for some terrestrial species.

For those species undergoing extended consultations, identified in Table 2, the Minister of the Environment will not forward the assessments to the Governor in Council until the consultation requirements have been met.

PROCESS OF IDENTIFYING AND LISTING SPECIES AT RISK

The species listing process under SARA is summarized in Figure 1.

Process and role of COSEWIC

COSEWIC comprises experts on wildlife species at risk. Their backgrounds are in the fields of biology, ecology, genetics, Aboriginal traditional knowledge

and other relevant fields, and they come from various communities, including academia, Aboriginal organizations, government and non-government organizations.

Initially, COSEWIC commissions a status report for the evaluation of the conservation status of a species. To be accepted, status reports must be peer-reviewed and approved by a subcommittee of species specialists. In special circumstances, assessments can be done on an emergency basis.

COSEWIC then meets to examine the status report, discuss the species, determine whether or not the species is at risk and, if so, assess the level of risk.

For more information on COSEWIC, visit:

www.cosewic.gc.ca

Terms used to define the degree of risk to a species

Categories for the degree of risk to a species are Extirpated, Endangered, Threatened and Special Concern. COSEWIC assesses a species as Extirpated when it no longer occurs in the wild in Canada but still exists elsewhere, and as Endangered if it is facing imminent extirpation or extinction. An assessment of Threatened means that the species is likely to become Endangered if nothing is done to reverse the factors leading to its extirpation or extinction. COSEWIC assesses a species as being of Special Concern if it may become a Threatened or Endangered species because of a combination of biological characteristics and identified threats.

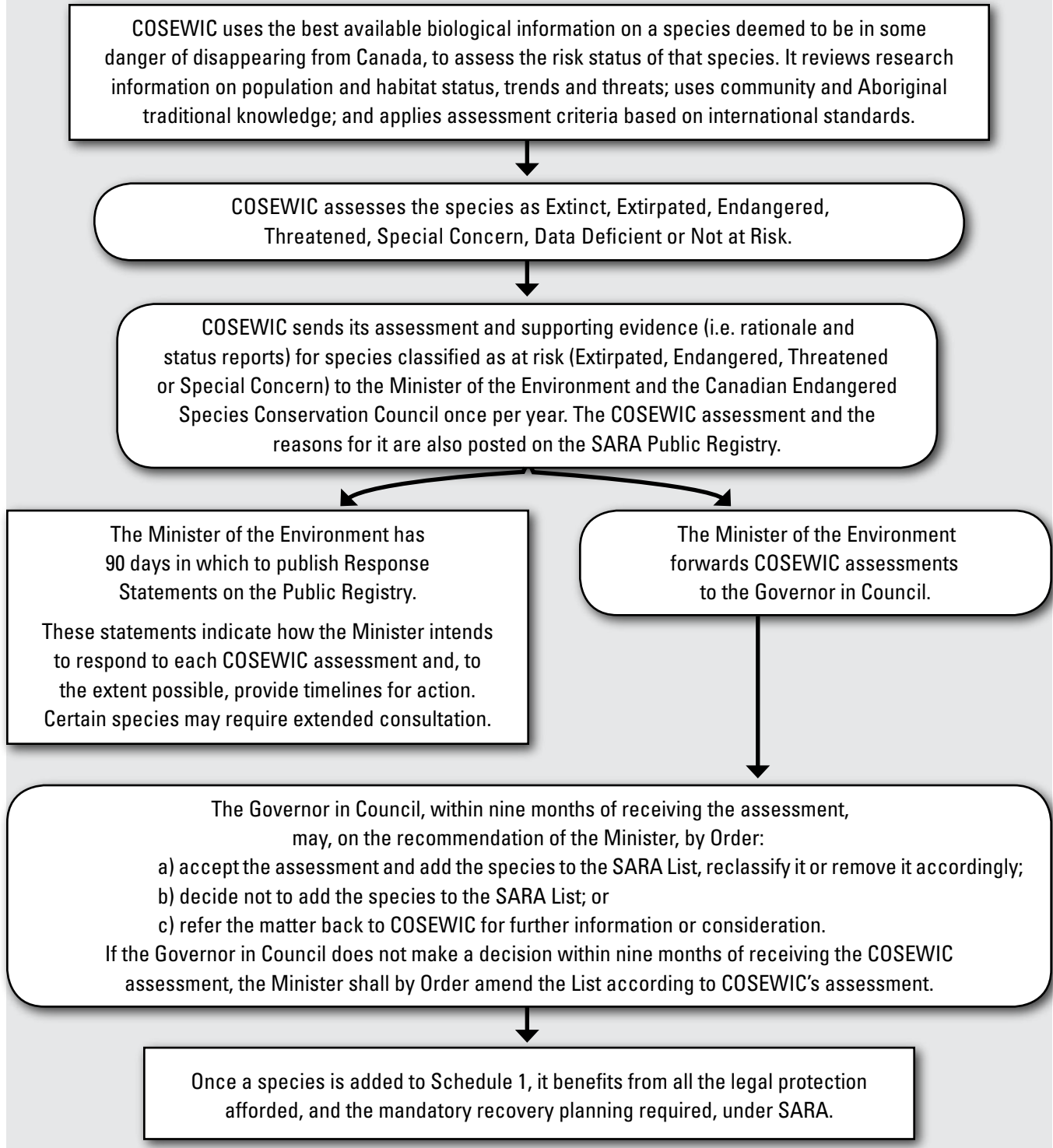
The Minister of the Environment's response to the COSEWIC assessment of a species at risk

SARA strengthens and enhances the Government of Canada's capacity to protect Canadian wildlife species and distinct populations at risk of becoming extinct or extirpated. As the Act applies only to those species and distinct populations on Schedule 1, the transparency and openness of the listing process are of paramount importance.

COSEWIC, having assessed a species as being at risk, forwards the assessment to the Minister of the Environment. Upon receipt of this assessment, the

Figure 1: The species listing process under SARA

SARA separates the scientific assessment process from the listing decision. This approach ensures that scientists can provide fully independent recommendations, and that decisions affecting Canadians are made by elected officials who can be held accountable for those decisions.



Minister of the Environment has 90 days to report on how he intends to respond and, to the extent possible, provide timelines for action.

The Minister reports on which consultation path a species will follow in the species' response statement, posted on the SARA Public Registry. Those assessments that do not require extended consultations are forwarded to the Governor in Council for receipt. This step initiates the nine-month time period within which the Minister will make a recommendation to the Governor in Council on whether or not to accept the species assessment and modify Schedule 1 accordingly, or to refer the assessment back to COSEWIC. Once a species is added to Schedule 1, specific actions must be taken within specified times to help ensure its protection and recovery.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE ADDITION OF A SPECIES TO SCHEDULE 1

The protection that comes into effect following the addition of a species to Schedule 1 depends upon a number of factors. These include the degree of risk assigned to the species, where it occurs and, most significantly, whether it already receives protection under the *Migratory Birds Convention Act, 1994*.

Protection for listed Extirpated, Endangered and Threatened species

Under the Act, prohibitions protect individuals of Extirpated, Endangered and Threatened species. These prohibitions make it an offence to kill, harm, harass, capture or take an individual of a species listed as Extirpated, Endangered or Threatened or to damage or destroy the residence of one or more individuals of an Endangered or Threatened species. The Act also makes it an offence to possess, collect, buy, sell or trade an individual of a species that is Extirpated, Endangered or Threatened.

The focus of protection is on those species on federal land and those for which the federal government has responsibility under other legislation (i.e. the *Fisheries Act* and the *Migratory Birds Convention Act, 1994*).

For all other listed Extirpated, Endangered and Threatened species, the provinces and territories

have the responsibility to ensure that they receive protection comparable to that provided under SARA. Should these species not be effectively protected, there are provisions in the Act that allow for the general prohibitions under SARA to be extended to provincial or territorial lands. The federal government would consult with the jurisdiction concerned before invoking these provisions.

The Minister of the Environment or the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans may authorize exceptions to the prohibitions under SARA. These ministers can enter into agreements or issue permits only for research relating to the conservation of a species conducted by qualified scientists, for activities that benefit a listed species or enhance its chances of survival or for activities that incidentally affect a listed species. They can make these exceptions only when it is established that all reasonable alternatives have been considered and the best solution has been adopted, when all feasible measures will be taken to minimize the impact of the activity and when the survival or recovery of the species will not be jeopardized. In such a case, the Minister of the Environment or the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans must include an explanation of the permit or agreement on the SARA Public Registry.

Protection for listed species of Special Concern

The prohibitions of SARA for species listed as Extirpated, Endangered and Threatened do not apply to species of Special Concern; however, any existing protections and prohibitions, such as those provided by the *Migratory Birds Convention Act, 1994* or the *Canada National Parks Act*, continue to be in force.

Recovery strategies and action plans for Extirpated, Endangered and Threatened species

The addition of an Extirpated, Endangered or Threatened species to Schedule 1 triggers the requirement for the preparation of a recovery strategy and an action plan, both of which are the subject of separate consultations.

Recovery strategies for newly listed species will be completed and made available on the SARA Public Registry (allowing for public review and comment)

within one year of their addition to Schedule 1 for species assessed as Endangered and within two years of their addition to Schedule 1 for species assessed as Threatened or Extirpated.

Each recovery strategy will aim to mitigate the known threats to the species and its habitat. It sets population and distribution objectives. Depending on the situation of the species, other objectives can be appropriate as stewardship (to establish protection for existing population) or education (to increase the awareness of the public). Recovery strategy has to identify, at least partially, the critical habitat of the species. It also will include a statement of the time frame for the development of one or more action plans. Action plans will identify measures to implement the recovery strategy. They also will include measures to address threats, and complete the identification of the critical habitat to protect the species.

The recovery strategies and action plans for these species will be prepared in cooperation with Wildlife Management Boards and directly affected Aboriginal organizations, as well as with the jurisdictions responsible for the management of the species. Landowners and other stakeholders directly affected by the recovery strategy will also be consulted.

Management plans for species of Special Concern

For species of Special Concern, management plans will be prepared and made available on the SARA Public Registry within three years of their addition to Schedule 1, allowing for public review and comment. Management plans will include appropriate conservation measures for the species and for its habitat.

Management plans will be prepared in cooperation with jurisdictions responsible for the management of the species, including directly affected Wildlife Management Boards and Aboriginal organizations. Landowners, lessees and others directly affected by a management plan will also be consulted.

PUBLIC COMMENTS SOLICITED ON THE PROPOSED AMENDMENT OF SCHEDULE 1

The 28 terrestrial wildlife species that appear in Tables 1 & 2 have been assessed or re-assessed by COSEWIC as at risk or not at risk. Sixteen of these species are being considered for addition to Schedule 1 and four are eligible for up-listing or down-listing of their current Schedule 1 risk status. One species listed on Schedule 1 has been re-assessed as not at risk, and is now proposed for de-listing. The remaining seven have had their Schedule 1 status confirmed by the recent re-assessment and are not included in the current consultations.

To ensure that your comments are considered, they should be submitted by

- **April 18, 2008**, for species undergoing normal consultations

and by

- **March 27, 2009**, for species undergoing extended consultations.

Please e-mail your comments to the SARA Public Registry at:

SARAreistry@ec.gc.ca

By regular mail, please address your comments to:

Director General
Canadian Wildlife Service
Environment Canada
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0H3

Environment Canada will review and use your comments when considering the addition of each of these species to Schedule 1.

SPECIES PROPOSED FOR AMENDMENT TO SCHEDULE 1

STATUS OF THE RECENTLY ASSESSED SPECIES AND CONSULTATION PATHS

Schedule 1 status confirmations, status revisions and newly eligible species

Of the 28 terrestrial species assessments submitted by COSEWIC to the Minister of the Environment in August 2007, 16 are for species that are newly eligible for addition to Schedule 1 and one is for a species already listed on Schedule 1, that has been re-assessed as not at risk, and is now eligible for de-listing. The other 11 are already listed on Schedule 1. Four of these 11 species are being considered for up-listing or down-listing (revision of the status of a Schedule 1 species to a higher risk category or lower risk category respectively). The assessments of seven other species have confirmed their current Schedule 1 status. These seven species are not included in the current consultations.

Please refer to Tables 1 and 2 for the species, their COSEWIC status, the provinces and territories in which they occur and the consultation path they will be undergoing.

Normal and extended consultations

For species for which the acceptance of the COSEWIC assessment could have significant and widespread impacts on the activities of Aboriginal peoples, industry or Canadians at large, an extended consultation path is indicated (Table 2). Extended consultations will provide those concerned with the opportunity to be informed of the potential impacts of a listing decision, to express their opinions or to share ideas on how best to protect or recover the species. The Minister of the Environment will not forward the COSEWIC assessments for these select species to the Governor in Council until these extended consultation requirements have been met.

The assessments for those species undergoing normal consultations will be forwarded to the Governor in Council early in 2008.

The results of normal and extended consultations on the 21 terrestrial species eligible for listing, for a change to their current Schedule 1 status, or for de-listing will inform the Minister of the Environment's decision as to which of the possible courses of action set out in SARA to recommend for each of these species. The Minister will then make the appropriate recommendations to the Governor in Council.

Comments for species undergoing normal consultations must be received by **April 18, 2008**.

Comments for species undergoing extended consultations must be received by **March 27, 2009**.

For more details on submitting comments, see above under "Public comments solicited on the proposed amendment of Schedule 1."

DETAILED INFORMATION ON THE RECENTLY ASSESSED SPECIES

For a brief summary of the reasons for the COSEWIC status designation of individual species, please refer to the response statements posted on the SARA Public Registry. For a more complete evaluation of the conservation status of an individual species, please refer to the COSEWIC status report for that species, also available on the SARA Public Registry at:

www.sararegistry.gc.ca/status/default_e.cfm

or contact:

COSEWIC Secretariat
c/o Canadian Wildlife Service
Environment Canada
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0H3

Table 1: Terrestrial species on Schedule 1 recently re-assessed by COSEWIC (species status confirmations, reclassifications and de-listings)

Taxon	Species	Scientific name	Range	Consultation path
Status confirmation (7)				
Extirpated				
Reptiles	Pygmy Short-horned Lizard	<i>Phrynosoma douglasii</i>	BC	None; status confirmation
Endangered				
Birds	Prothonotary Warbler	<i>Protonotaria citrea</i>	ON	None; status confirmation
Threatened				
Birds	Ross's Gull	<i>Rhodostethia rosea</i>	NU, MB	None; status confirmation
Amphibians	Allegheny Mountain Dusky Salamander ¹ , Great Lakes/ St. Lawrence population	<i>Desmognathus ochrophaeus</i>	QC	None; status confirmation
Amphibians	Great Basin Spadefoot	<i>Spea intermontana</i>	BC	None; status confirmation
Reptiles	Gray Ratsnake ¹ , Great Lakes/ St. Lawrence population	<i>Elaphe spiloides</i>	ON	None; status confirmation
Special Concern				
Birds	Peregrine Falcon <i>pealei</i> subspecies	<i>Falco peregrinus pealei</i>	BC	None; status confirmation
Up-list to Endangered (2)				
Amphibians	Allegheny Mountain Dusky Salamander ¹ , Carolinian population (currently Threatened)	<i>Desmognathus ochrophaeus</i>	ON	Normal
Reptiles	Gray Ratsnake ¹ , Carolinian population (currently Threatened)	<i>Elaphe spiloides</i>	ON	Normal
Down-list to Threatened (2)				
Mammals (terrestrial)	American Marten, Newfoundland population (currently Endangered)	<i>Martes americana atrata</i>	NL	Normal
Vascular plants	Blunt-lobed Woodsia (currently Endangered)	<i>Woodsia obtusa</i>	ON, QC	Normal
De-list from Threatened (1)				
Vascular plants	Scouler's Corydalis (currently listed as Threatened)	<i>Corydalis scouleri</i>	BC	Normal

1. Species currently listed on Schedule 1 as a single species. Re-assessed in April 2007 and split into two populations.

Table 2: Terrestrial species recently assessed by COSEWIC and eligible for addition to Schedule 1

Taxon	Species	Scientific name	Range	Consultation path
Endangered (7)				
Mammals (terrestrial)	Western Harvest Mouse <i>dychiei</i> subspecies	<i>Reithrodontomys megalotis dychiei</i>	AB	Normal
Birds	Red Knot <i>rufa</i> subspecies	<i>Calidris canutus rufa</i>	NT, NU, BC, AB, SK, MB, ON, QC, NB, PE, NS, NL	Extended
Reptiles	Greater Short-horned Lizard	<i>Phrynosoma hernandesi</i>	AB, SK	Normal
Reptiles	Five-lined Skink, Carolinian population	<i>Eumeces fasciatus</i>	ON	Normal
Mosses	Nugget Moss	<i>Microbryum vlassovii</i>	BC	Normal
Vascular plants	Eastern Flowering Dogwood	<i>Cornus florida</i>	ON	Normal
Vascular plants	Ogden's Pondweed	<i>Potamogeton ogdenii</i>	ON	Normal
Threatened (4)				
Birds	Chimney Swift	<i>Chaetura pelagica</i>	SK, MB, ON, QC, NB, NS, NL	Normal
Birds	Common Nighthawk	<i>Chordeiles minor</i>	YT, NT, BC, AB, SK, MB, ON, QC, NB, PE, NS, NL	Extended
Birds	Red-headed Woodpecker	<i>Melanerpes erythrocephalus</i>	SK, MB, ON, QC	Normal
Birds	Red Knot <i>roselaari</i> type	<i>Calidris canutus roselaari</i> type	YT, NT, BC	Extended
Special Concern (5)				
Mammals (terrestrial)	Western Harvest Mouse <i>megalotis</i> subspecies	<i>Reithrodontomys megalotis megalotis</i>	BC	Normal
Birds	Black-footed Albatross	<i>Phoebastria nigripes</i>	Pacific Ocean	Normal
Birds	Peregrine Falcon <i>anatum/tundrius</i>	<i>Falco peregrinus anatum/tundrius</i>	YT, NT, NU, BC, AB, SK, MB, ON, QC, NB, NS, NL	Extended
Birds	Red Knot <i>islandica</i> subspecies	<i>Calidris canutus islandica</i>	NT, NU	Extended
Reptiles	Five-lined Skink, Great Lakes/St. Lawrence population	<i>Eumeces fasciatus</i>	ON	Normal

GLOSSARY

Canada Gazette:

The *Canada Gazette* is one of the vehicles that Canadians can use to access laws and regulations. It has been the “official newspaper” of the Government of Canada since 1841. Government departments and agencies as well as the private sector are required by law to publish certain information in the *Canada Gazette*. Notices and proposed regulations are published in *Canada Gazette*, Part I, and Official regulations are published in *Canada Gazette*, Part II. For more information, please visit:
canadagazette.gc.ca

Canadian Endangered Species Conservation Council:

The council is made up of federal, provincial and territorial ministers with responsibilities for wildlife species. The Council’s mandate is to provide national leadership and coordination for the protection of species at risk.

COSEWIC:

The Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada. The Committee comprises experts on wildlife species at risk. Their backgrounds are in the fields of biology, ecology, genetics, Aboriginal traditional knowledge and other relevant fields. These experts come from various communities, including, among others, governments and academia.

COSEWIC assessment:

COSEWIC’s assessment or re-assessment of the status of a wildlife species, based on a status report on the species that COSEWIC either has had prepared or has received with an application.

De-listing:

The removal of a species from Schedule 1 of SARA in response to an assessment of not at risk by the COSEWIC.

Governor in Council:

The Governor General of Canada acting on the advice of the Queen’s Privy Council for Canada (i.e. Cabinet).

Order:

Order in Council (OIC). An instrument that serves notice of decisions taken by the executive arm of government; for example, an Order in Council accompanies all regulations.

Response statement:

A document in which the Minister of the Environment indicates how he or she intends to respond to the COSEWIC assessment of a wildlife species. A response statement is posted on the SARA Public Registry within 90 days of receipt of the assessment by the Minister, and provides timelines for action to the extent possible.

RIAS:

Regulatory Impact Analysis Statement. A description of a regulatory proposal that provides an analysis of the expected impact of each regulatory initiative and accompanies an Order in Council.

SARA Public Registry:

Developed as an online service, the SARA Public Registry has been accessible to the public since proclamation of the *Species at Risk Act* (SARA). The website gives users easy access to documents and information related to SARA at any time and location with Internet access. It can be found at:
www.sararegistry.gc.ca

Schedule 1:

A schedule of the *Species at Risk Act* (SARA); also known as the List of Wildlife Species at Risk, the list of the species protected under SARA.

Up-listing:

A revision of the status of a species on Schedule 1 to a status of higher risk. A revision of the status of a Schedule 1 species to a lower risk status would be down-listing.

Wildlife Management Board:

Established under the land claims agreements in northern Quebec, Yukon, Northwest Territories, British Columbia and Nunavut, Wildlife Management Boards are the “main instruments of wildlife management” within their settlement areas. In this role, Wildlife Management Boards not only establish, modify and remove levels of total allowable harvest of a variety of wildlife species, but also participate in research activities, including annual harvest studies, and approve the designation of species at risk in their settlement areas.

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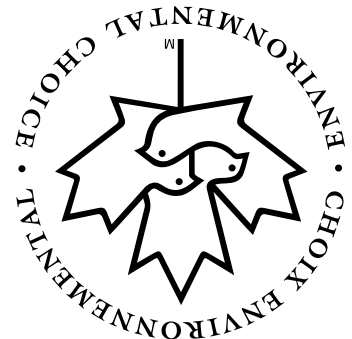
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