



Species at Risk Act (SARA) Consultation, Cooperation
and Accommodation Project

Project Overview & Terrestrial Species at
Risk Funding Information Sessions:

Participant Summary Report



CIER

Centre for Indigenous
Environmental Resources

Acknowledgments

The Centre for Indigenous Environmental Resources (CIER) and Environment and Climate Change Canada Canadian Wildlife Service (ECCC-CWS) would like to thank the participants that attended the virtual “Species at Risk Act (SARA) Consultation, Cooperation, and Accommodation Project” information sessions.

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Introduction

This multi-year project will facilitate Indigenous communities' and organizations' participation in ECCC-CWS listing and recovery planning processes for terrestrial species at risk as part of implementation of the federal Species at Risk Act (SARA). Each region will focus their resources on an area of study and development that maximizes efforts for each species (see the [regional lists](#)).

CIER's role is to support a range of activities between Indigenous communities and organizations, and ECCC-CWS on developing recovery documents, sharing knowledge and language, addressing threats to terrestrial species at risk survival and recovery, and land use planning for species at risk on reserve lands and within traditional territories.

As part of the project, CIER facilitated two duplicate Information Sessions on November 9th and 18th. These sessions provided an overview of the project, specific funding available to support Indigenous communities' and organizations' involvement in this project (e.g., Expression of Interest (EOI)), as well as other species at risk related federal funding opportunities (e.g., Aboriginal Fund for Species at Risk, Indigenous Guardians, Nature Smart Climate Solutions). There were 114 attendees from Indigenous communities and organizations at these two sessions combined. Participants were from at least 91 different Indigenous communities and organizations. The following provides a summary of the presentations and discussion.

Presentation Overview

Note: the presentation is available [online](#).

Overview of the Species at Risk Act (SARA) and the SARA Consultation, Cooperation and Accommodation Project (SARA-CCA project)

After a brief introduction to the CIER and ECCC-CWS project team, Danielle Prevost (ECCC-CWS) began the presentation with an overview of the Species at Risk Act (SARA) and the SARA-CCA project. The purpose of the SARA is to:

1. Prevent species from becoming extinct or extirpated (locally extinct)
2. Recover wildlife species that are Extirpated, Endangered or Threatened
3. Prevent Special Concern species from becoming further at-risk

Over the years, ECCC-CWS has heard from Indigenous communities and organizations that the protection of SAR is very important and an inherent responsibility, with substantial information and knowledge that can be shared with ECCC-CWS. While ECCC-CWS had heard improving relationships, partnerships, co-development, and leadership on SAR work is fundamental, ECCC-CWS has also heard that Indigenous communities and organizations require increased capacity to meaningfully engage in this work.

This project is a step towards improving SARA consultation, cooperation, and accommodation for terrestrial species at risk and will help us work together to meaningfully address what we have heard and what Indigenous communities and organizations want to share. ECCC-CWS and CIER have formed a partnership on this project with the goal of:

- Providing information and increasing knowledge of SARA and species at risk;
- Supporting capacity and skills development to incorporate species at risk conservation into land use planning, management, and stewardship;
- Enhancing opportunities to contribute meaningfully to listing and recovery planning under SARA for terrestrial species at risk – including capacity funding; and,
- Providing funding for targeted recovery actions focused on species in the SARA legislated framework for this year and next.

Funding Overview

There are three types of ECCC-CWS funding that is being administered by CIER to support involvement of Indigenous communities and organizations in species at risk recovery.

1. Funding to support participation in species-specific workshops and/or meetings organized by CIER/ECCC-CWS.
 - This funding is provided to community members, staff, Elders and Knowledge Holders to share their time and cover meeting expenses.
 - CIER/ECCC-CWS will advise on this participation funding, as it will vary depending on the particulars of each session (e.g., length, format).

2. Capacity funding to support involvement in terrestrial SAR listing and recovery planning.
 - This funding is meant to help address and support possible capacity challenges relating to the sharing of data, knowledge, and other information about terrestrial species at risk for SARA listing and recovery planning. This funding can also support reviewing existing recovery documents and cooperating on developing new recovery documents.
 - ECCC-CWS is open to exploring approaches to formalize the information sharing process through Memorandums of Understanding (MOU's), protocol agreements, and/or data sharing agreements.
 - Funding can support honorariums, travel, room rental, hospitality, professional services, Indigenous Knowledge collection, document review, and written comments.

3. Expression of Interest funding.
 - This funding is meant to support targeted short-term projects that will help address terrestrial species at risk recovery actions, immediate threats to species at risk, and to provide information that will fill knowledge gaps in listing considerations and recovery document development.
 - Projects can include any terrestrial species at risk, but priority will be given to proposals focusing on the species undergoing listing consultation and recovery planning within the next two years.
 - Applicants may submit more than one expression of interest per intake.
 - The deadline for Expression of Interest applications was December 10th, 2021, however, should funds allow, additional calls for Expressions of Interest may be made later in the year.
 - Project amounts should be between \$5,000 - \$15,000.
 - All applicants will be notified of their application status in January 2022.
 - Funds will be administered to awarded recipients either in January 2022 or April 2022 depending on project timelines and annual budgets. However, associated activities may continue into the 2022-2023 fiscal year.

Danielle also presented a number of other ECCC-CWS funding opportunities for conservation of terrestrial species at risk and their habitat, as listed below.

- Directed Funding
- Aboriginal Fund for Species at Risk
- Habitat Stewardship Program
- Critical Habitat Interdepartmental Program
- Species at Risk Partnerships on Agricultural Lands
- Canada Nature Fund
 - Indigenous Guardians
 - Priority Places
 - Community Nominated Priority Places
 - Challenge / Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas
- Nature-Smart Climate Solutions
- Ecological Gifts Program

Discussion Summary

The following is a summary of the comments or questions that came up during these sessions:

- Can funding be used to collect feedback for SARA documents that have already been published?
 - Response: focus is on species that are currently being worked on but if there are available funds, they can go towards other species.

- One of the intentions of this funding is to support activities that can be completed in a relatively short timeline, to address immediate concerns.
- We know that community staff have so many roles and capacity is limited; this funding, for example, can help with capacity for communities to review large ECCC-CWS documents and provide comments.
- We encourage communities to apply for funding, regardless of which funding source they think is most suitable; ECCC-CWS can then contact you if your proposal could be a better fit for one of the other funding programs (e.g., AFSAR).
- Can communities submit multiple funding applications? Is there a limit on the amount of money allocated to a given Indigenous group or region?
 - Response: There is no cap or limit on the amount of funding a particular group or region could receive. Proposals including the species we are focusing on through this project will be given priority for funding.
- Why are elements of the SARA-CCA project being delivered by CIER and not by the federal government?
 - Response: ECCC-CWS delivers the projects, funding and information, while CIER helps us with organization, administering funding, providing support for workshops, and enhancing ECCC-CWS' capacity to do the work.
- Is this funding available for marine species at risk as well?
 - Response: ECCC-CWS's mandate is terrestrial species at risk and migratory birds. So aside from SARA listed seabirds, this funding is specifically for terrestrial species. Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) has funding programs for aquatic species at risk (e.g., AFSAR).
- How does this funding differ from AFSAR (Aboriginal Fund for Species at Risk)?
 - Response: The funding opportunities in the SARA-CCA project are meant for projects with shorter timelines and that are more species-specific. The funding is meant to provide funds through a more simplified and timely process that can help increase Indigenous communities' and organizations capacity to participate in SARA work. While AFSAR can support species-specific projects, AFSAR projects tend to be more holistic, include many species, involve multiple project partners, and have longer timelines. There is only one intake for AFSAR each year and the application process is more comprehensive.
- There is a significant need for more focus on Indigenous Knowledge and non-western scientific approaches to species recovery to change the status quo. We are doing the same thing repeatedly with minimal impact. Although ECCC-CWS acknowledges the importance of Indigenous Knowledge in this work, there needs to be more effort towards considering Indigenous Knowledge perspectives as equal to Western Science perspectives on species recovery.
 - Response: ECCC recognizes the need for Indigenous Knowledge and perspectives in species recovery; this project is one step to achieving this goal.