

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

Overview Recovery Document: Participant Summary Report

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Created by:

The Centre for Indigenous Environmental Resources (CIER)



CIER

Centre for Indigenous
Environmental Resources

Acknowledgments

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

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Introduction

This multi-year project will facilitate Indigenous communities’ and organizations’ participation in ECCC’s listing and recovery planning processes for terrestrial species, as part of implementing the Federal Species at Risk Act (SARA). Each region will focus their resources on an area of study and development that maximizes efforts to each species (see regional lists posted on CIER’s websites respective provincial pages).

CIER’s role is to provide support in an administrative capacity to Indigenous communities, and organizations, and ECCC in their collaborative work including 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. CIER also manages the provision of funds on behalf of ECCC for SARA participation, funding requests and EOIs.

Depending on the region, key project components will include:

- Information sharing sessions
- Engagement workshops
- Nation-to-nation dialogues
- Training sessions
- Modest capacity funding
- Project evaluation and reporting

Agenda Overview of Recovery Documents

Time (EST)	Agenda Item & Who	Notes
9:00-9:15	<p>Introduction Lynn Mallett</p> <p>Welcoming and Polling Question Lynn Mallett/Anita Murdock</p> <p>Acknowledgements, Agenda and Housekeeping Items Lynn Mallett</p>	<p>Introduction Activity:</p> <p><u>Polling Questions:</u></p> <p>What organization or territory are you from?</p> <p>Acknowledgements: Victoria Leck, Consultations Biologist with the Canadian Wildlife Service under ECCC</p> <p>Ken Tuininga, John Brett, Burke Korol, Jennifer Thompson, Wildlife Biologists with the Canadian Wildlife Service under ECCC</p> <p>Alexia Goodswimmer and Anita Murdock– Research Associates at CIER.</p>
9:15 – 9:40	Presentation and Q and A by Victoria Leck	ECCC – Species at Risk introduction and overview.
9:40-10:40	Ken Tuininga – Polar Bear, Chimney Swift, Eastern Meadowlark, Bobolink	Slide presentations with Q&A
	John Brett – Eastern Wood-Pewee, Louisiana Water thrush	
10:40-10:55	Break	
10:55-11:35	Burke Korol – Dwarf Lake Iris	Slide presentations with Q&A
	Jennifer Thompson – Jefferson Salamander and Unisexual Ambystoma, Small Mouthed salamander and Unisexual Ambystoma, Salamander	
11:35 – 12:00	Closing and wrap up: Victoria Leck & Lynn Mallett	

Figure 1: What organization or territory are you from?



Presentation Overview

The purpose of the Species at Risk Act (SARA) is to:

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

Species at Risk Act Process.

*Figure adapted from ECCC SARA101 presentation by Victoria Leck.



ECCC presented key information from the draft recovery documents for several species for which consultations were currently ongoing. ECCC indicated that they would be happy to offer individual community presentations for any interested Nations in order to facilitate additional discussions.

The species and recovery documents presented were:

- Polar Bear (draft Management Plan).
- Bobolink (draft Recovery Strategy).
- Eastern Meadowlark (draft Recovery Strategy).
- Chimney Swift (draft Recovery Strategy).
- Eastern Wood-pewee (draft Management Plan).
- Louisiana Waterthrush (draft Recovery Strategy).
- Dwarf Lake Iris (draft Management Plan).

- Jefferson Salamander and Unisexual Ambystoma (Jefferson Salamander dependent population) (draft multi-species Recovery Strategy).
- Small-mouthed Salamander and Unisexual Ambystoma (Small-mouthed Salamander dependent population) (draft multi-species Recovery Strategy).

Some of the information that ECCC is seeking in order to inform their recovery documents was:

- Where the species and its habitat have been found.
- What the species needs to survive and/or recover.
- Threats (current and historical) and which activities might destroy their habitat.
- What could be done to recover/manage the species and what actions are already underway.
- Population and distribution objectives for recovery/management.
- Indigenous Knowledge that knowledge holders would like to see included in a recovery document.
- Anything else that may aid in the survival and recovery of the species.

Discussion Summary

The Recovery Documents session presentation was shared between Biologists, Victoria Leck, Ken Tuininga, John Brett, Burke Korol, and Jennifer Thompson of Canadian Wildlife Service (CWS), a branch of Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC), and was facilitated by Lynn Mallett, Project Manager at CIER.

1) Presenter Ken Tuininga with the Canadian Wildlife Service (CWS) reviewed the Polar Bear, Chimney Swift, Eastern Meadow and Bobolink. The following are some of the questions and answers (Q&A) from his presentation.

Q: Is herbicide application a concern?

A: There was some concern with some of the pesticides, with respect to the birds taking in toxic chemicals, but the threat of pesticides has not come out in recent information and reports released, as being a high threat in Canada at this time.

Q: From my understanding herbicides have more of an impact on the insects which are the food for the birds.

A: Yes, that is the case for some species of insects.

Q: Is there a fund that First Nation communities can access to enhance and protect endangered species habitat?

A: (Victoria) Yes, the *Aboriginal Fund for Species at Risk*. Applications are due January 25, 2022. The link for the funding is at <https://www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/environmental-funding/programs/aboriginal-fund-species-risk.html>.

Q: Is there a large amount of site fidelity either for foraging or nesting? I have observed the use of nest boxes (more for chimney swift)?

A: Yes, there has been some, but not a lot of success with creating artificial chimneys. More research needs to be done for that.

2) John Brett with the Canadian Wildlife Service (CWS) reviewed the Eastern Wood-peewee, Louisiana Waterthrush. The following are some of the questions and answers (Q&A) from his presentation.

Q: CWS asked participants if there has been anyone who have seen the Eastern Wood-peewee?

A: One participant indicated that they have seen them on their lot on Wasauksing.

Q: (Victoria) Is there any on-going conservation work that would benefit the species?

A: It is mainly just included and mentioned in management plans for threats and mitigations. Due to the limited capacity in the community, we have not been able to focus on birds yet. This is an area where our community wants to get more involved with Species at Risk.

3) Burke Korol from the Canadian Wildlife Service (CWS) reviewed Dwarf Lake Iris. The following are some of the questions and answers (Q&A) from his presentation.

Q: Has anybody seen this species in and around their communities?

A: Comments from participants:

- Several participants responded yes.
- This species has been identified in Wasauksing
- Plenty of these have been seen on the Bruce Peninsula

Participants received suggestions on how to protect Dwarf Lake Iris which included:

- Having signage and fencing if the Iris is present in areas open to tourists so they don't get trampled.
- Depending on location using trail signs and using avoidance and mitigation.
- One participant noted that Singing Sands doesn't have enough protection. The location is right beside a parking lot and there's a lack of signage. CWS commented that they agree. It is difficult when there is a lot of traffic in an area, and sometimes there is higher volumes of people during different times of year. More signage and increased awareness would help to avoid destroying the Dwarf Lake Iris and its habitat

4) Jennifer Thompson from the Canadian Wildlife Service (CWS) reviewed the Jefferson Salamander and Unisexual Ambystoma, Small Mouthed Salamander and Unisexual Ambystoma. The following are some questions and answers (Q&A) from this presentation

Q: Will ECCC be adopting or implementing any of the Calls to Action according to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRCC)? Which ones? Also, will there be more consultation and involvement with Multi species plans and actions with multiple partners (Indigenous Communities)?

A: ECCC explained that the way the SARA process is designed is to focus on individual species rather than habitats. One way to address this is to use a multi species approach when developing action plans. Parks Canada uses this approach for park specific action plans.

For any multi species action plans and recovery documents, ECCC is looking to get more Indigenous communities involved, starting straight from the beginning of the plan. ECCC would like to encourage any Indigenous communities to reach out and become involved in the development of the action plans and other recovery documents, and how they would like them to proceed. Feedback and collaboration is always welcomed, and everybody is encouraged and invited to reach out to ECCC.

Q: ECCC- CWS asks if anyone knows the Salamander species that were discussed?

A: Comments from participants.

- One participant indicated that they have Salamanders, but they don't know what they are.
- One participant on the chat indicated that there were a lot of knowledge gaps, and that education was essential.

Q: How was the wild turkey introduction decided on and authorized?

A: The introduction was made by the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources

- Comment: I wonder if they consulted Indigenous communities?

Q: Why is turkey management not included in the management approaches, especially since they are not native to Pelee island. Will habitat creation and restoration be appropriate if turkeys are continuing to modify this habitat?

A: ECCC does not have a lot of data on the pressure of turkeys on the island. Turkey population numbers are unknown and as such, the data related to how much predation pressure there is on the salamander species is unknown. There is still more to learn. Small studies into the Turkey populations have been completed but the numbers are not exact. As a result, this is certainly something to consider when putting together wildlife management plans.

- Comment: Community member commented on the influence of lobby groups like Ducks Unlimited which claims to protect habitat can skew government policy.

Q: Which TRCC calls to action will be adopted or implemented within each Action (management) plan? If this has not been a consideration, I am recommending that ECCC might want to look at this.

A: Currently recovery documents do not identify any direct ties to the TRCC calls to action, however we will look into this and connect with any communities who had questions about this.

5) General questions and comments:

- Comment from one community: Insect management should be included in the management plans for the bird species.

Q: CWS was asked to speak to whether insect management is included in any of the management or recovery plans for species for which it is identified as a threat?

A: Insect management such as reduction of pesticides and preserving wetland breeding areas for insects have been included in management plans and recovery strategies. There are a wide variety of strategies that aim to create a balance between agriculture and habitat, with a long-term strategy being encouraged, and a reduction of pesticides that target certain types of insects. Progress has been made, however there is still a long way to go. One objective is to increase the forage base, to make it more productive for the birds.

Q: Are neonicotinoids being used in Ontario agriculture a direct cause of insect decline? For example, glyphosate in roundup-type chemicals? These are used in clearcutting as well.

A: Yes, they are widely used and have various impacts, that create many concerns when it comes to protecting habitat and species.

Q: Does the pesticide glyphosate, being used during clear cutting have the same harsh effects on species at risk?

A: There are various pesticides being used. The pesticides being used for phragmites, such as glyphosate, has been successful. Ongoing survey and monitoring have been done on water species and vegetation in the sprayed area. In most cases, the negative impacts are outweighed by the pesticide being used to control the invasive phragmites in that local habitat.

Q: There is a risk of misidentification in the Salamander species, how is the recovery strategy acknowledging this, is there public outreach, I know there is genetic testing however what else is being done?

A) Public outreach and education are both important. For example, Pelee Island keeps things relatively simple as there are only 3 salamander species there.

Information available to assist with continuing to learn to identify and participants are encouraged to follow up with ECCC – CWS to discuss further species at risk

Submitting Species Observations

- Report species observations to conservation data centres, including:
 - The Ontario Natural Heritage Information Centre (<https://www.ontario.ca/page/natural-heritage-information-centre>)
 - eBird (<https://ebird.org>)
 - iNaturalist (<https://www.inaturalist.org/>)
 - eButterfly (e-butterfly.org)
 - Mission Monarch (mission-monarch.org)
 - EDDMapS (www.eddmaps.org) – report invasive species records
 - Invasive Species Centre (<https://www.invasivespeciescentre.ca/>)

Comment: Victoria Leck invited Communities to identify the best way to move forward based on their needs. Species at Risk consultation is an ongoing learning process and ECC is always looking to improve upon their processes. Any feedback is welcomed. Please reach out to Victoria Leck with Environment and Climate Change Canada.