

COSEWIC
Committee on the Status
of Endangered Wildlife
in Canada



COSEPAC
Comité sur la situation
des espèces en péril
au Canada

COSEWIC

**Applications for Wildlife
Species Assessment
and Unsolicited Wildlife Species
Status Reports**

November 2009

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All of COSEWIC's actions are directed towards assessing the biological status of native wildlife species suspected of being at risk of extinction or extirpation across their range in Canada. COSEWIC uses the best available information relevant to assessing a wildlife species' risk of extinction or extirpation, which it may obtain from credible sources of knowledge of the wildlife species and its habitat. The evaluation process is independent and transparent, and the results are reported to the Canadian Endangered Species Conservation Council (CESCC) and the Canadian public. COSEWIC is established under Section 14(1) of the federal Species at Risk Act (SARA) and its assessments form the foundation for the List of Wildlife Species at Risk under that legislation. Sections 21, 22 and 28 of SARA direct that COSEWIC will consider applications for the assessment of wildlife species and wildlife species status reports accompanied by applications for the assessment of wildlife species, subject to regulations. Any such application constitutes a request for assessment.

COSEWIC maintains and continually updates a Candidate List of wildlife species for commissioning Status Reports. Before preparing a request for assessment, potential applicants are asked to contact, via the COSEWIC Secretariat, the appropriate COSEWIC Species Specialist Subcommittee (SSC) or, in the case of a wildlife species not covered by any of COSEWIC's ten SSCs, the Chair of COSEWIC. Potential applicants will be advised concerning the estimation of threats to the wildlife species in question, the imminence of the threats, the wildlife species' current standing on COSEWIC's Candidate List for assessment, valuable sources of information, and other advice concerning the preparation of a request for assessment and/or status report.

Requests for Assessment

Scope of Applications

Applications to COSEWIC may consist either of:

- a request to COSEWIC to consider a particular wildlife species for assessment, or;
- a request to COSEWIC to consider a particular wildlife species for assessment accompanied by Wildlife Species Status Report that has not been solicited by COSEWIC.

COSEWIC's usual approach to assigning status is, first, to examine a species as a whole. If deemed appropriate in cases where a single status designation for a wildlife species is not sufficient to accurately portray probabilities of extinction within the wildlife species COSEWIC will examine the status of entities below the level of species, be they subspecies, varieties, or geographically or genetically distinct populations (i.e. Designatable Units).

Designatable Units should be discrete and evolutionarily significant units of the taxonomic species, where “significant” means that the unit is important to the evolutionary legacy of the species as a whole and if lost would likely not be replaced through natural dispersion. Further guidance is provided in the Guidelines for Recognizing Designatable Units.

- *Requests for Assessment* - A Request for Assessment application may propose an eligible wildlife species for assessment. A request for assessment of a subspecies, variety, or geographically or genetically distinct population must contain a clear explanation of the validity of the Designatable Unit(s).
- *Wildlife Species Status Reports* - A Wildlife Species Status Report must normally consider the whole of a species’ occurrence within Canada. Should a Wildlife Species Status Report propose separate status designations for putative Designatable Units within the wildlife species in question, the report must contain clear explanations of the validity of the Designatable Units.

Wildlife Species’ Eligibility

To be eligible for assessment, a wildlife species must meet certain criteria regarding taxonomic validity, native origin, regularity of occurrence, and dependence on Canadian habitat. COSEWIC normally only considers wildlife species and subspecies or varieties that have been established as taxonomically valid. They must be native to Canada, occur regularly in Canada (thus excluding vagrants), and require habitat in Canada for at least one key life history stage. Any case that is an exception to these rules must be justified with supporting information; this should normally be reviewed and agreed to by COSEWIC before a status report is prepared. Ineligible wildlife species (for example domestic, feral, or artificially introduced wildlife species of animals and plants, or bacteria and viruses which are specifically excluded by SARA) cannot be assessed by COSEWIC.

Imminence of Threat

Wildlife species for which the threat of extinction or extirpation is extreme (e.g., greater than 50% probability of loss within 10 years) and for which immediate action is required if the wildlife species is to survive may be subject to emergency assessment. If an emergency assessment is requested, a full justification for considering the threat to be extreme must be provided. A status report is not required to accompany a request for an emergency assessment but is recommended. *Applicants who wish to request an emergency assessment are strongly urged to contact COSEWIC and the appropriate SSC Co-Chair beforehand to determine if the emergency assessment is warranted.*

Justification for the Request and Sources of Information

An explication of why the wildlife species might be considered to be at risk is required. This should indicate the nature of the particular threats to the wildlife species, population and distribution trends of the wildlife species, evidence of decline, and other estimations of its status in Canada including General Status of Species in Canada rankings and provincial or territorial rankings, etc. If there is more information than can be contained in three pages of text, a wildlife species status report should be prepared. Sources for the information contained in the justification for the request, be they published literature, unpublished reports, personal observations, or the observations of others, must be listed.

Conflict of Interest

Applicants for Wildlife Species Status Assessment and suppliers of Wildlife Species Status Reports for COSEWIC must declare any conflicts of interest pertaining to the application for assessment and its possible outcome (Annex I). Failure to do so may cause applications and reports to be returned unreceived by COSEWIC.

Wildlife Species Status Reports

A Wildlife Species Status Report for COSEWIC is a comprehensive, fully documented technical compilation and analysis of the best available information on a wildlife species' status in Canada that indicates the threats to that wildlife species. A Wildlife Species Status Report for COSEWIC must conform to the guidelines for preparation of Status Reports.

Waiver of Moral Rights and Permission to use Wildlife Species Status Report

Authors and owners of Wildlife Species Status Reports must grant permission to COSEWIC and to Environment Canada to use, edit, reformat, reproduce, modify, distribute, and share the Wildlife Species Status Report and any subsequent revisions to that Report by the author. Authors furthermore must provide Environment Canada with a waiver of their moral rights to the Wildlife Species Status Report. A separate waiver is required from each contributing author. The permission to use the Wildlife Species Status Report and the waiver of moral rights enable COSEWIC and Environment Canada to treat the final COSEWIC Assessment and Status Report as a living document subject to periodic updates as may be required without having to specifically name the author of the original Wildlife Species Status Report.

Accordingly, legal owners of a Wildlife Species Status Report must sign a copy of Annex II (Permission To Use Wildlife Species Status Report) and each author of a report must sign a copy of Annex III (Waiver of Moral Rights). Failure to include signed copies of Annexes II and III with a Wildlife Species Status Report that accompanies an Application for Assessment may cause the report to be returned unreceived by COSEWIC.

Employees of the Government of Canada who prepare Wildlife Species Status Reports are not required to tender the permission in Annex II as the report is automatically the property of the Crown. Employees of a province or territory who prepare Wildlife Species Status Reports may or may not be required to provide Annex II and should contact the COSEWIC Secretariat (Cosewic/Cosepac@ec.gc.ca). Author(s) who are government employees are, however, still required to sign the waiver in Annex III.

Completeness of Applications

An Application for Assessment that is incomplete cannot be considered by COSEWIC and will be returned. An application must contain:

- A completed application form “Request for Assessment”, signed and dated, that includes a justification for why the wildlife species may be at risk of extinction
- Annex I (Conflict of Interest), completed and signed separately by all applicants

If the Application also includes a Wildlife Species Status Report, it must also include:

- A Copy of Annex II (Permission To Use Wildlife Species Status Report), signed by all copyright owners (ordinarily the authors) with regards to the Status Report
- Copies of Annex III (Waiver of Moral Rights) signed by each of the authors of the Status Report

An Application for Assessment that is complete but is accompanied by a Wildlife Species Status Report that is not acceptable may be considered by COSEWIC only on its merits as a request for assessment of a particular wildlife species.

Submission of Applications

Applications for Assessment should be mailed to:

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

attn: the Chair of COSEWIC or the appropriate Species Specialist
Subcommittee Co-chairs, with a cc to the Chair of COSEWIC

(courier address: Vincent Massey Bldg., 4th floor - 351 St. Joseph Blvd, Gatineau, Quebec, J8Y 3Z5)

Process

Applications for Assessment, including Applications that are accompanied by an unsolicited Wildlife Species Status Report, will initially be considered by the appropriate SSC or, in the case of a wildlife species not covered by one of COSEWIC's ten SSCs, an *ad hoc* subcommittee struck by the Chair of COSEWIC.

An Application for Assessment that is not accompanied by a Wildlife Species Status Report may be forwarded to COSEWIC by the SSC or *ad hoc* subcommittee with a recommendation and may be received by COSEWIC for consideration at a Wildlife Species Assessment Meeting. If accepted, the application will be referred to COSEWIC for placement on the COSEWIC Candidate List and assigned a priority level for commissioning a Status Report.

A Wildlife Species Status Report that accompanies an Application for Assessment is first evaluated by the appropriate SSC or *ad hoc* subcommittee. A Status Report that is complete and in conformity to the guidelines for completion of Status Reports, as judged by the SSC or *ad hoc* subcommittee, will be subjected to review in compliance with normal COSEWIC procedure for all status reports. A valid Status Report will be forwarded to the relevant jurisdictions (including, as necessary, any relevant Wildlife Management Boards) and the COSEWIC ATK Subcommittee for review during the draft and interim report stages. The report will be distributed to all members of COSEWIC two months prior to a Wildlife Species Assessment Meeting accompanied by a copy of the Application, a Technical Summary prepared by the SSC or *ad hoc* subcommittee, and a recommendation from the SSC or *ad hoc* subcommittee. Throughout this review process, the writer(s) of a Wildlife Species Status Report may be asked to make editorial changes, add available information, and/or delete inapplicable sections of the report. Failure to comply with such requests may result in a report being deemed unacceptable.

The application and report will only be received for consideration by COSEWIC at a Wildlife Species Assessment Meeting.

An Application for Assessment that is complete but is accompanied by an unsolicited Wildlife Species Status Report that is incomplete or not in conformity to the guidelines for completion of status reports as judged by the SSC or *ad hoc* subcommittee, or is unaccompanied by a waiver of moral rights and a grant of permission to use the Wildlife Species Status Report may be considered by COSEWIC as though only a Request for Assessment without a status report. In this case, the Wildlife Species Status Report will be returned unreceived by COSEWIC. The Applicant will have the option either to proceed with the Request for Assessment without the Status Report or withdraw the Application in order to revise the report.

An Application for Assessment that requests an emergency assessment is first examined by COSEWIC through a subcommittee consisting of the Chair of COSEWIC and others including the appropriate SSC, and COSEWIC members from the appropriate jurisdictions. If there is unanimous agreement that there is insufficient evidence that emergency conditions exist or that the Application is otherwise unsuitable, then the application is declined. If the application is acceptable, the Chair notifies the Federal Minister of Environment, CESSC, and COSEWIC members that an emergency assessment is being undertaken. The Chair then establishes an ad hoc Emergency Assessment Subcommittee consisting of the Chair of COSEWIC, the appropriate Subcommittee Co-chair(s), the relevant jurisdictional member(s) of COSEWIC, and other member(s) of COSEWIC at the Chair's discretion. Representatives from relevant Wildlife Management Boards may sit on the subcommittee as non-voting members. The Emergency Assessment Subcommittee will consider the imminence of the threats to the wildlife species and whether a status listing on an emergency basis is warranted. If the emergency listing is warranted, the Emergency Assessment Subcommittee will forward its recommendation to the federal Minister of Environment and advise COSEWIC. If the emergency listing is not warranted, the Application will be considered in the same manner as a regular request for assessment.

Outcomes

1. An Application for Assessment that is not accompanied by a Wildlife Species Status Report or is accompanied by a Wildlife Species Status Report that has been rejected (see 2 below) will either:
 - be accepted by COSEWIC and result in the wildlife species in question being placed on the Candidate List and assigned a priority level for commissioning a Wildlife Species Status Report. Priority level will be determined by COSEWIC on advice from the appropriate SSC or *ad hoc* subcommittee, or;
 - be accepted by COSEWIC and result in the wildlife species in question being assigned a new level of priority for commissioning a wildlife species status report, or;
 - be rejected by COSEWIC either:
 - through a subcommittee of COSEWIC consisting of the Chair of COSEWIC and the members of the appropriate SSC following unanimous agreement that the application is unsuitable, or;
 - at a Wildlife Species Assessment Meeting.
2. An unsolicited Wildlife Species Status Report that accompanies an Application for Assessment will either:
 - be accepted by COSEWIC and result in the wildlife species in question being assessed by COSEWIC at a Wildlife Species Assessment Meeting, or;
 - be rejected by COSEWIC either:
 - through a subcommittee of COSEWIC consisting of the Chair of COSEWIC and the members of the appropriate SSC following unanimous agreement that the application is unsuitable, or;

- at a Wildlife Species Assessment Meeting.
3. An Application for Assessment that requests an emergency assessment may either:
- be rejected by COSEWIC through a subcommittee of COSEWIC consisting of the Chair of COSEWIC and others including members of the appropriate SSC and COSEWIC members from the appropriate jurisdictions, following unanimous agreement that the application is unsuitable, or;
 - be accepted by the *ad hoc* Emergency Assessment Subcommittee and forwarded to the Minister of Environment with a recommendation, or;
 - be rejected by the *ad hoc* Emergency Assessment Subcommittee and considered in the same terms as any other request for assessment.

Applicants will be informed of the decision(s) made through the Chair of COSEWIC. For Applications resulting in an assessment or emergency assessment, COSEWIC will notify the applicant of the assessment and the reasons. For all rejected Applications, the reason for the rejection will be given. In these matters, the decision(s) as communicated by the Chair will be final for any particular Application.

Additional Information on the COSEWIC Website

(<http://www.cosewic.gc.ca/index.htm>):

- Assessment Process and Criteria
http://www.cosewic.gc.ca/pdf/assessment_process_e.pdf
- Guidelines for Recognizing Designatable Units
http://www.cosewic.gc.ca/eng/sct2/sct2_5_e.cfm
- Instructions for the Preparation of COSEWIC Status Reports
http://www.cosewic.gc.ca/pdf/Instructions_e.pdf

Attachments:

- Application Form "Request for Wildlife Species Assessment"
- Annex I: Declaration of Conflict of Interest (To accompany all applications)
- Annex II: Permission To Use Wildlife Species Status Report (To accompany submission of a status report)
- Annex III: Waiver of Moral Rights (To accompany submission of a status report)



COSEWIC

Request for Wildlife Species Assessment

Date of Application: _____

Name(s) of applicant(s):

Address:

telephone, fax, email:

Status report: attached not attached

Wildlife Species (Scientific name, English and French common names):

Wildlife Species' Distribution

Globally:

In Canada:

Imminence of Threat:

extreme very high high moderate not known not applicable

Is the threat of extinction or extirpation from Canada sufficiently grave as to warrant an emergency assessment? yes no

Justification for Request for Assessment (maximum 3 pages)

(i.e. evidence of decline, threats to the wildlife species, other reasons to suspect the wildlife species is at risk of extinction or extirpation from Canada)

Sources of Information:

The applicant(s) attest that the information in this request for assessment is, to the greatest extent possible, accurate and true. Furthermore, if a Wildlife Species Status Report is attached, the author(s) agree(s) that the status report may be reviewed and edited by COSEWIC and the corresponding Subcommittee Co-Chair, that the author(s) will receive no royalty or other compensation from the Government of Canada or from COSEWIC, and that the manuscript contains no matter that is libellous, invades individual privacy, or infringes upon any proprietary rights.

Signature(s): _____



Annex I

Declaration of Conflict of Interest
To accompany all applications

A separate copy of this form must be completed by each applicant.

Pursuant to the Request for Assessment of:

(Wildlife species) _____,

I, (name) _____, hereby declare any and all proprietary or commercial interest or conflicts of interest I may have that relate directly or indirectly to the subject of this application.

Details:

Signature _____

Date: _____



Annex II

Permission To Use Wildlife Species Status Report
To accompany submission of a status report

I/We _____ as legal owner(s)
name(s)

of the intellectual property in the Wildlife Species Status Report entitled

Status report on the _____ in Canada
name of wildlife species

hereby grant permission to COSEWIC and to Environment Canada (EC) to use, edit, reformat, reproduce, modify, distribute, and share the Wildlife Species Status Report, a copy of which is attached to this Permission, in whole or in part, in support of the COSEWIC wildlife species status assessment process.

I/we understand that EC will be using the Wildlife Species Status Report to produce a COSEWIC Assessment and Status Report and future updates to this latter report. I/we also understand and agree the COSEWIC Assessment and Status Report and future updates shall be the intellectual property of EC and that I/we have no rights to them.

I am/we are submitting, with this Permission, waivers of Moral Rights from all authors who contributed to the Wildlife Species Status Report.

Signature _____
Name _____
Address _____

Signature _____
Name _____
Address _____

Signature _____
Name _____
Address _____



Annex III

Waiver of Moral Rights

To accompany submission of a status report

A separate copy of this form must be completed by each author.

I _____ declare that I
name of author

have contributed to the creation or production of the Wildlife Species Status Report entitled:

Status report on the _____ in Canada
name of wildlife species

(hereinafter referred to as the "Work") and briefly described as a report containing the best available information on the wildlife species status in Canada that will form the basis for a status assessment by the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC). I recognize that:

name(s) of copy right owner(s)

is/are the lawful owner(s) of the copyright in the Work.

I am fully aware that my moral rights, as defined by the Copyright Act, include a) the right of having my name associated with the Work, where reasonable in the circumstances; and b) the right to the integrity of the Work such as preventing the Work from being changed, corrected or amended.

I hereby waive in whole all moral rights which I may have in the Work in favour of the Government of Canada (Environment Canada), including the right to the integrity of the Work, the right to be associated with the Work in all contexts and in connection with all products and/or services.

For purposes of this Waiver, "Work" shall include without limitation all multimedia presentations, software, documentation, data, designs, reports, flowcharts, specification and source code listings, and of any related works, including any enhancements, modifications, or additions to the software and hardware products owned, marketed, or used by the Government of Canada.

Signed, sealed and delivered in the presence of

Witness (signature)

Author (signature)

Name of Witness (printed)

Name of Author (printed)

Date