

**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**

**Approved by COSEWIC in November 2018**

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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 10 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 assigns status to wildlife species as defined by Canada's *Species at Risk Act* (E3 – COSEWIC process, categories and guidelines) which includes “subspecies, varieties, or geographically or genetically distinct population(s)”. COSEWIC recognizes these taxonomic entities as designatable units (DUs) and may assess DUs when a single status designation is thought not to reflect the extent of evolutionary diversity with a species (see F5 – DU guidelines).

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 (Appendix F5)

- *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 explanation of why the wildlife species might be considered to be at risk is required. If the species has already been assessed by COSEWIC, strong evidence demonstrating a likely change in status since the last assessment must be provided. 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**

Writers and owners of Wildlife Species Status Reports as well as any report and information provided in support of a application must grant permission to COSEWIC and to Environment and Climate Change Canada to use, edit, reformat, reproduce, modify, distribute, and share the Wildlife Species Status Report and other reports and information supplied and any subsequent revisions to the Wildlife Species Status Report by the author. Writers furthermore must provide Environment and Climate Change Canada with a waiver of their moral rights to the Wildlife Species Status Report. A separate waiver is required from each contributing writer. The permission to use the Wildlife Species Status Report and the waiver of moral rights enable COSEWIC and Environment and Climate Change 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 writer of the original Wildlife Species Status Report.

Accordingly, legal owners of a Wildlife Species Status Report and other reports and information supplied must sign a copy of Annex II (Permission To Use Wildlife Species Status Report) and each writer 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. Failure to sign and return Annex II for reports, other than Wildlife Species Status report, and information provided with the application will delay the treatment of the application by COSEWIC until such time as this formality is fulfilled.

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](mailto:cosewic-cosepac@ec.gc.ca)). Report writer(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 or demonstrating why the species’ status has changed since the last COSEWIC assessment.
- 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 writers) with regards to the Status Report
- Copies of Annex III (Waiver of Moral Rights) signed by each of the writers 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 and Climate Change 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., 16<sup>th</sup> floor - 351 St. Joseph blvd,  
Gatineau, Quebec, J8Y 3Z5)

## **Process for Non-emergency Applications for Assessment**

Applications for Assessment, including Applications that are either accompanied by an unsolicited Wildlife Species Status Report or not accompanied by an unsolicited Wildlife

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 10 SSCs, an *ad hoc* subcommittee struck by the Chair of COSEWIC.

If the application relates to a species not yet assessed by COSEWIC and is unaccompanied by an unsolicited Wildlife Status Report, upon recommendation by the appropriate SSC or *ad hoc* SSC, the application will be referred to COSEWIC for consideration of placement on the COSEWIC Candidate List and assigned a priority level for commissioning a Status Report.

A Wildlife Species Status Report for a species not yet assessed by COSEWIC 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 the unsolicited 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.

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.

If the application relates to a species already assessed by COSEWIC and is either accompanied or unaccompanied by an unsolicited Wildlife Status Report, it too is first evaluated by the appropriate SSC. If the application is accompanied by an unsolicited Wildlife Status Report that is determined to be complete and conforms to the guidelines for status reports, the SSC in consultation with the Chair of COSEWIC will, based on the application, the unsolicited Wildlife Status Report, and other readily available information, decide that either a change in status is very unlikely and to only review the species' classification when the terms of SARA section 24 are met or else to update the status report for reassessment at a Wildlife Species Assessment Meeting once the

report is deemed acceptable. In this case the updated unsolicited report would be circulated for review at the six-month stage.

COSEWIC will be informed of these decisions at a Wildlife Species Assessment Meeting.

### **Process for Emergency Applications of Assessment**

An Application for Assessment that requests an emergency assessment is first examined by the Chair of COSEWIC in consultation with others including the relevant SSC and ATK Co-chairs, COSEWIC members from the appropriate jurisdictions, and outside experts. 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 and Climate Change, CESCC, 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, the SSC, and external experts 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 Climate Change and advise COSEWIC.

Decisions are made by the Emergency Assessment Subcommittee by consensus, or if necessary, by two-thirds majority vote. Voting procedures for an Emergency Assessment Subcommittee will follow those as outlined for a Wildlife Species Assessment Meeting (Appendix B3) with the following exceptions: electronic voting can be used and quorum for the Emergency Assessment Subcommittee business is two thirds of voting Emergency Assessment Subcommittee members. If no individual has been appointed as member for a given voting position, that voting position is not counted in the determination of the quorum. 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 considered for placement 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 using the process outlined in Appendix E1 (Species' Prioritization), 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;
  - in the case of species reassessment, be accepted by COSEWIC and result in the commissioning of an updated 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 federal Minister of Environment and Climate Change 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 (<https://cosewic.ca>):**

- Assessment Process and Criteria
- Guidelines for Recognizing Designatable Units
- Instructions for the Preparation of COSEWIC Status Reports

**Attachments:**

Application Form “Request for Wildlife Species Assessment”

Annex I: Declaration of Conflict of Interest (Required for all applications) (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):

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#### 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 writer(s) agree(s) that the status report may be reviewed and edited by COSEWIC and the corresponding Subcommittee Co-chair, that the writer(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 and other report and information submitted with the application

I/We \_\_\_\_\_ as legal owner(s) *name(s)*

of the intellectual property in the Wildlife Species Status Report and other report and information submitted with the application entitled

**Status report on the \_\_\_\_\_ in Canada [or other title]**  
*name of wildlife species*

hereby grant permission to COSEWIC and to Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC) to use, edit, reformat, reproduce, modify, distribute, and share the Wildlife Species Status Report and other report and information submitted with the application, copies of which are attached to this Permission, in whole or in part, in support of the COSEWIC wildlife species status assessment process.

I/we understand that EC (ECCC) will be using the Wildlife Species Status Report and other report and information submitted with the application 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 (ECCC) and that I/we have no rights to them.

I am/we are submitting, with this Permission, waivers of Moral Rights from all writers 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 writer.

I

declare that I

*name of writer*

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 are 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 and Climate Change 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

