



## Species At Risk and Canada's Mountain National Parks



*In the olden times man and creature walked as friends who carried the beauty of the land in their hearts. Now each one of us is needed to make sure the salmon can find a place to spawn and the bear cub a tree to climb. There is little time left and much effort needed! Chief Dan George*

### What is a Species At Risk?

A Species At Risk is one that requires special considerations for its conservation. Some species have slipped onto the path toward local and perhaps, global extinction and require immediate help. Others need attention to ensure they don't start down this path.

### Why worry about Species At Risk?

Protecting biological diversity (or biodiversity) sustains the health and beauty of our planet. Biodiversity is the full range of life on earth. This includes the evolutionary processes that result in new species and the genetic diversity that exists within species.

The global decline of biodiversity is now recognized as one of the most serious environmental issues facing humanity. Protecting biodiversity helps:

- Reduce rates of extinction
  - Sustain productive ecosystems
  - Retain future options (intergenerational)
  - Retain economic opportunities
- (Bunnell, 1998)

### What is Canada doing to help Species At Risk?

In 1992, Canada was the first Signatory to the *Convention on Biological Diversity* – a legally binding international treaty. As part of this commitment, Canada developed the *National Accord for the Protection of Species At Risk* – a cooperative agreement between the federal, provincial and territorial governments.

Canada's *Species At Risk Act* (SARA) came into full force in June, 2004. It provides the legal framework needed to accomplish federal commitments under the Accord. The goal is to protect and recover native species, sub-species and distinct populations at risk in Canada.

### What wildlife does SARA specifically protect?

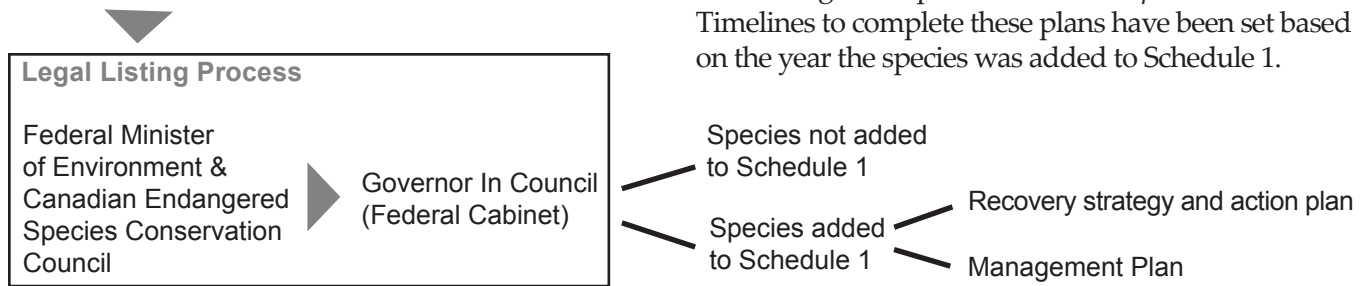
The Act protects all animals, plants or other organisms (wildlife species), except bacteria and viruses, that are native to Canada and listed on "Schedule 1" of SARA. "At risk" species are categorized as either: special concern, threatened, endangered, or extirpated. Species designated prior to the end of 2001 are being reassessed for addition to Schedule 1.



## Who decides which species are at risk?

The Committee On the Status of Endangered Wildlife In Canada (COSEWIC), a scientific advisory committee, assesses the status of species based on scientific evidence of risk. COSEWIC then advises the Federal Minister of the Environment and the intergovernmental Canadian Endangered Species Conservation Council of its assessment. After public consultation, the Minister then makes recommendations to the Governor In Council (Federal Cabinet). The Governor In Council decides if a species will be listed under SARA.

COSEWIC assessment



## Where does the Parks Canada Agency fit in?

The Agency currently manages close to 265,000 km<sup>2</sup> of land. SARA applies to all lands administered by Parks Canada such as national parks, national historic sites, national marine conservation areas, and historic canals.

Parks Canada works with other government, non-government and private sector partners to provide for the recovery of species that are most “at risk” on federal lands (*extirpated, endangered or threatened*). It also promotes management of species of *special concern* so as to prevent their becoming endangered or threatened.

This entails development of recovery strategies and action plans for endangered and threatened species and management plans for those of *special concern*. Timelines to complete these plans have been set based on the year the species was added to Schedule 1.

## For conservation purposes, Species at Risk are categorized as follows under SARA

<b>Special Concern</b>	Sensitive to human activities or natural events but not an endangered or threatened species
<b>Threatened</b>	Likely to become endangered if nothing is done to reverse the factors leading to extirpation or extinction
<b>Endangered</b>	Facing imminent extirpation or extinction
<b>Extirpated</b>	Locally, regionally or nationally extinct, but still exists elsewhere in the wild
<b>Extinct</b>	Gone forever

## Species At Risk in Canada found in Banff, Jasper, Kootenay, Yoho, Waterton Lakes, Mt. Revelstoke or Glacier National Park

\*COSEWIC assessed and in process for SARA listing  
\*\*COSEWIC assessed only

### Special Concern

Coeur d’Alene salamander (MR/GNP)  
Rubber boa (KNP)  
Northern leopard frog (WLNP)  
Western toad (Mtn. Parks)  
\*Westslope cutthroat trout - B.C. population (YNP, KNP, MR/GNP)  
Yellow rail (JNP, YNP, KNP, BNP)  
Lewis’ woodpecker (JNP, BNP, MR/GNP, WLNP)  
\*Rusty blackbird (BNP, JNP, MR/GNP)  
\*Short-eared owl (JNP, WLNP)  
\*\*Grizzly bear (Mtn. Parks)  
\*\*Wolverine (Mtn. Parks)

### Threatened

Woodland caribou (JNP, BNP, MR/GNP)  
Haller’s apple moss (JNP)  
Bolander’s quillwort (WLNP)  
Sprague’s pipit (WLNP)  
\*Common nighthawk (Mtn. Parks)  
\*Olive-sided flycatcher (Mtn. Parks)  
\*Westslope cutthroat trout - Alberta population (BNP, JNP, WLNP)  
\*Canada warbler (BNP)  
\*Ferruginous hawk (BNP, JNP, WLNP, YNP)  
\*\*Plains bison (BNP, JNP, WLNP)

### Endangered

Banff springs snail (BNP)  
American badger, *jeffersonii* subspecies (KNP)  
Half-moon hairstreak butterfly (WLNP)

### Extinct

Banff longnose dace (BNP)

## Find out more

**Parks Canada:** [www.pc.gc.ca/speciesatrisk](http://www.pc.gc.ca/speciesatrisk)  
**Environment Canada:** [www.speciesatrisk.gc.ca](http://www.speciesatrisk.gc.ca)

**Alberta:** [www.srd.gov.ab.ca/fishwildlife/speciesatrisk/default.aspx](http://www.srd.gov.ab.ca/fishwildlife/speciesatrisk/default.aspx)  
**British Columbia:** [www.env.gov.bc.ca/atrisk/](http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/atrisk/)



*We are as much alive as we keep the earth alive.*  
Chief Dan George

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