

Bill C-5 – SARA SPECIES AT RISK ACT, AS PASSED BY THE HOUSE OF COMMONS OCTOBER 9, 2002

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Abstract

The *Species at Risk Act* (SARA), was introduced and deemed to have passed all stages as Bill C-5, in the House of Commons on October 9th, 2002. The purposes of the *Species at Risk Act* are to prevent wildlife species from becoming extirpated or extinct; to provide for the recovery of wildlife species that are extirpated, endangered or threatened as a result of human activity; and to manage species of special concern in order to prevent them from becoming at risk. It covers all wildlife species at risk nationally, their critical habitats and applies to all lands in Canada. SARA, as well as complementary provincial and territorial legislation as provided for under the Accord for the Protection of Species at Risk, will protect species everywhere in Canada.

More specifically, SARA:

- provides for a rigorous scientific and expert process, operating at arm's length from the federal government, to assess the status of wildlife species;
- prohibits the killing of extirpated, endangered or threatened species and the destruction of their residences;
- provides authority to prohibit the destruction of critical habitat anywhere in Canada;
- includes time lines for the production of recovery strategies or management plans for each of these species;
- provides emergency authority to list species that are in imminent danger;
- provides emergency authority to prohibit destruction of critical habitat of a listed wildlife species in imminent danger;
- provides funding and incentives for conservation and stewardship actions;
- creates the mechanisms and powers to help species recover; and
- provides for compensation where it is deemed necessary.

Responsibility for SARA rests with: 1) the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans for aquatic species; 2) the Minister of Heritage for species in national parks, national historic sites and other protected heritage areas; and 3) the Minister of the Environment for all other species and for the overall administration of the Act. However, the Government of Canada's overall strategy to protect species at risk is designed to reflect the roles of each jurisdiction. It also encompasses the interests and needs of Aboriginal peoples, ranchers,

conservation groups, fishing interests, resource industries and individual Canadians. The three-part strategy involves, building on the Accord for the Protection of Species at Risk, a federal-provincial/territorial agreement; complementary stewardship and incentive programs; and the *Species at Risk Act*.

Background materials:

Species at Risk: (<http://www.speciesatrisk.gc.ca/>)

Environment Canada "Species at Risk Guide":

http://www.sararegistry.gc.ca/the_act/SARA_guide_e.pdf

SARA Registry: http://www.sararegistry.gc.ca/default_e.cfm

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

Recovery of Nationally Endangered Wildlife (RENEW):

<http://www.speciesatrisk.gc.ca>

Provincial Endangered Species Act:

<http://www.gov.nf.ca/hoa/statutes/e10-1.htm>

Key Words: Species at Risk, Bill C-5, federal legislation, recovery strategies, action plans