

Written by

Wednesday, 20 July 2005 04:21 - Last Updated Wednesday, 20 July 2005 04:21

Canada's Environment Minister To Add 39 Species For Protection Under The Species At Risk Act

Canada - OTTAWA, July 20, 2005 - The Honourable Stéphane Dion, Minister of the Environment, and the Honourable Geoff Regan, Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, today announced the addition of 32 terrestrial species and 7 aquatic species to Schedule 1, the list of species protected under the Species at Risk Act (SARA). This is the second group of species added to the list since the Act was proclaimed in 2003.

www.speciesatrisk.gc.ca

www.sararegistry.gc.ca/050720a_e.cfm - The 39 species being added to the Species at Risk Act

Date: Wed, 20 Jul 2005 13:16:36 -0400

From: ecmedia@ec.gc.ca

Subject: Environment Canada News Release - ENVIRONMENT MINISTER TO ADD 39 SPECIES FOR PROTECTION UNDER THE SPECIES AT RISK ACT

Environment Canada News Release

"ENVIRONMENT MINISTER TO ADD 39 SPECIES FOR PROTECTION UNDER THE SPECIES AT RISK ACT"

OTTAWA, July 20, 2005 - The Honourable Stéphane Dion, Minister of the Environment, and the Honourable Geoff Regan, Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, today announced the addition of 32 terrestrial species and 7 aquatic species to Schedule 1, the list of species protected under the Species at Risk Act (SARA). This is the second group of species added to the list since the Act was proclaimed in 2003.

"Canada's biological diversity plays an important part of our country's natural resources," said Environment Minister Stéphane Dion. "The Government of Canada recognizes that protecting Canada's natural legacy is vital to our country's long-term economic sustainability. Protecting species is a responsibility that we take very seriously."

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To date, 345 species are protected under the Species at Risk Act. The Government of Canada is committed to ensuring the protection of species at risk and consequently, recovery strategies and action plans are developed for species listed as threatened or endangered, while management plans are prepared for species of special concern. These plans and strategies are prepared in cooperation with affected provinces, territories, Aboriginal organizations, wildlife management boards, landowners and affected parties.

?Listing seven aquatic species under SARA is part of the Department of Fisheries and Oceans? (DFO) commitment to protecting and recovering aquatic species at risk and preventing species of special concern from becoming endangered or threatened,? added Minister Regan. ?DFO works with stakeholders to ensure any new protective measures are practical, effective and environmentally sustainable.?

The addition of new species to SARA is based on scientific assessments by the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC), and on consultations with Canadian governments, wildlife management boards, landowners, conservationists, Aboriginal peoples, stakeholders and the Canadian public. The decision to list a species under SARA also includes an analysis of the costs and benefits to Canadians.

The Plains Bison will not be listed under SARA at this time because of the inability to genetically distinguish wild and domestic Plains Bison and the potential economic implications for the Canadian Bison industry. Successful Plains Bison recovery initiatives are already underway in some of Canada?s National Parks.

The Peary Caribou, the Dolphin-Union population of Barren-Ground Caribou and the moss, Porsild?s Bryum, will also not be listed under SARA at this time, in order for Environment Canada to consult further with the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board.

Aboriginal peoples in Northern Canada have been responsible stewards of the environment for thousands of years, and it is because of their responsible conservation efforts that we have the populations of species in the North that we do today. Unfortunately, because of global issues like climate change, we are concerned about the long term survival of these species.

Environment Canada?s Canadian Wildlife Service will work with Aboriginal peoples to develop

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management plans to achieve our shared objectives of maintaining healthy populations of the Peary Caribou, the Dolphin-Union population of Barren-Ground Caribou and the Porsild's Bryum. Wildlife management boards and the territorial governments are closely monitoring the caribou and harvesting restraints were set in place over a decade ago. Colonies of Porsild's Bryum will continue to be protected in Provincial Parks.

The Polar Bear and the plant species of Dwarf Woolly-Heads are being referred back to COSEWIC for further review. The Polar Bear was proposed to be listed as a species of special concern under SARA in October 2004. On the recommendation of the Minister of the Environment, the Governor-in-Council decided not to list the Polar Bear at that time in order to consult further with the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board. Following the completion of the consultations, the Polar Bear is being referred back to COSEWIC for additional analysis. Given that Dwarf Woolly-Heads have recently been discovered in locations other than British Columbia, COSEWIC has requested to re-assess its level of risk.

The implementation of the Species at Risk Act reinforces the Government of Canada's commitment to ensure the protection of species at risk and is a component under the Government of Canada's Project Green initiative for environmental sustainability and a competitive economy.

Under the Species at Risk Act, stewardship is the first response to habitat protection. Hundreds of stewardship projects are underway across Canada, many of them funded by the Habitat Stewardship Program. The Accord for the Protection of Species at Risk endorsed by provinces and territories is also part of the comprehensive strategy to protect species at risk.

The announcement of the listing of 39 species will appear in the July 27, 2005 edition of the Canada Gazette, Part II.

More information regarding the Species at Risk Act is available on the SARA Public Registry on the Internet at: www.sararegistry.gc.ca.

Information on the Habitat Stewardship Program for species at risk, and on Canada's Strategy for the Protection of Species at Risk, can be found on the Internet at: www.speciesatrisk.gc.ca.

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Related Backgrounders:

? What the Government of Canada does to Protect Species at Risk (http://www.ec.gc.ca/press/2004/041022_b_e.htm)

? Species at Risk Act Listing Process (http://www.sararegistry.gc.ca/species/listing_e.cfm)

? The list of the 39 species being added to the Species at Risk Act
(http://www.sararegistry.gc.ca/050720a_e.cfm)