

# The Species at Risk Act

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# Why We Need SARA

- Many species have become threatened or endangered by human activities
- Moral and legal obligations to protect species at risk

# Purpose of the Act

- ! To prevent wildlife species from:
  - ! becoming extinct or lost from the wild
  - ! to secure their recovery
- ! Covers all wildlife species at risk nationally and their critical habitats.

# Ministerial Responsibility

Environment: lead Minister; accountable for overall SARA administration of listed species except:

- ! species managed by Parks Canada Agency (Heritage Minister)
- ! aquatic species managed by DFO (Fisheries and Oceans Minister)

# Species at Risk Act

## Basic Elements:

- ! Science-based Species Assessment
- ! Legal Listing Process
- ! Immediate Species Protection
- ! Recovery & Management Planning
- ! Stewardship Measures (with prohibition as a backstop)
- ! Enforcement Measures

# **Species Assessment**

- ! Gives COSEWIC legal basis**
- ! Independent, arm's length expert status assessments**
- ! Governor-in-Council to make a decision on legal listing within nine months**

# Status of BC & Yukon-based Species

## 150 Species on COSEWIC:

- ! **BC:** 55 endangered; 32 threatened; 41 special concern; 9 extirpated or extinct
- ! **Yukon:** 2 endangered; 2 threatened; 9 of special concern
- ! Majority of these exist on federal lands or are transboundary (CWS leads)

# Immediate Species Protection

- ! Automatic Prohibitions
- ! Provinces and territories given first opportunity
- ! Safety Net Approach and Emergency Authority
- ! SARA emphasizes cooperative efforts

# Recovery and Management Planning

- ! Mandatory recovery strategies and action plans for endangered, threatened and extirpated species
- ! Management plans for species of special concern
- ! Recovery strategies: identify threats to listed species and critical habitat; include actions plans
- ! Implementation: Ministerial reporting every 5 years

# Stewardship

- ! Conservation agreements with any government, organization or person
- ! Funding agreements to help cover cost of conservation actions
- ! Stewardship has been shown to make good business sense

# Stewardship

Ecosystem Approach:

n South Okanagan

! Georgia Basin

Multi-species Approach

Species Approach

# Critical Habitat Protection

- ! Critical habitat identified in recovery process
- ! Ineffective voluntary measures? Each jurisdiction to use its legislation
- ! Act requires protection on federal lands and for aquatic species

# Project Review

- ! Environmental assessments for projects required by an Act of Parliament
- ! Amendment to the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act* definition of “environmental effect”

# Governance

! Shared Approach

! Collaboration and Cooperation

# Governance

## n Bilateral Agreements

- ! Healthy socio-economic balance between needs of communities and the needs of species at risk under SARA.

# What Happens if the Cooperative Approach Doesn't Work?

- ! Critical habitat not protected?
- ! If not protected by provincial legislation or voluntary measures, then prohibitions under SARA apply as a backstop

# Enforcement

- ! Approach along the same lines as other federal environmental legislation
- ! Close cooperation with other enforcement agencies

# Compensation

- ! Provision for compensation
- ! Restricted losses
- ! Authority to provide compensation implemented through regulations

# Public Involvement

- ! Open and transparent process
- ! Public registry
- ! A Citizen's Right: COSEWIC species assessment

# Next Steps

- ! Period leading up to Proclamation of the Act
- ! Post-Proclamation activities
- ! Collaboration with partners, affected parties

# Orders and Regulations

- ! Initial Orders necessary to provide for transition period
- ! Consultations on general compensation regulation

# Public Outreach and Communications

- ! Workshops with NGOs
- ! Presentation to industry associations and other organizations
- ! Cross-country public info sessions and ongoing communications & outreach

# Goals

- 1) Species at risk recover
- 2) Stewardship measures prevent other species from declining
- 3) Cooperative action minimizes the need for the Safety Net and/or enforcement actions