



# CUTLIP MINNOW

## Consultation on listing under the *Species at Risk Act*



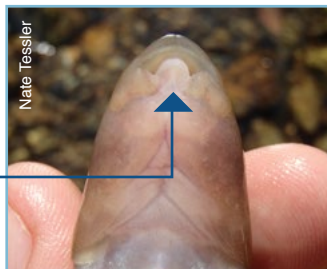
E. Edmonson, New York State Department  
of Environmental Conservation

The **Cutlip Minnow** has been assessed by the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC) as a species of special concern. A species of special concern is a species that is at risk of becoming threatened or endangered because of a combination of biological characteristics and identified threats.

Before deciding whether this species will be added to the List of Wildlife Species at Risk of the *Species at Risk Act* (SARA), Fisheries and Oceans Canada would like your opinion, comments and suggestions regarding the possible environmental, cultural and economic impacts of listing or not listing this species. The purposes of SARA are to prevent wildlife species from becoming extinct, to provide for their recovery and to conserve biological diversity.

**Please provide your input by February 27, 2015.**

The **Cutlip Minnow** is a small freshwater fish in the Cyprinidae family (minnow). It can reach a length of about 160 mm. It can be distinguished from all other fish species by its stout body, silvery sides with a greenish purple sheen and tri-lobed lower lip.



In Canada, the **Cutlip Minnow** is found in the St. Lawrence River watershed, from Ivy Lea, Ontario to Saint-Pascal, Quebec. In Ontario, the species is now found in only three of the seven waterbodies where it was historically present. The species is more widespread in Quebec but, since 2002, it has been collected in only 79 of 206 waterbodies where it was historically present. It is difficult to determine if this is the result of a decline in the species, of a lack of sampling in more recent times, or a combination thereof.





During a survey, this fish was captured and then released unharmed back into the water.

## WHAT HAPPENS IF THE SPECIES IS ADDED TO THE LIST OF WILDLIFE SPECIES AT RISK?

In 2013, the **Cutlip Minnow** was assessed by the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC) as a species of special concern. This committee of specialists assesses Canadian wildlife species based on the best available information, which includes scientific data, community knowledge and Aboriginal traditional knowledge.

If the species is added to the List of Wildlife Species at Risk of the *Species at Risk Act*, a management plan will be developed. The plan will define the measures to be implemented to reduce the threats caused by human activities. Given the special concern status of the **Cutlip Minnow**, automatic prohibitions (for example, killing, harming, catching) in the *Species at Risk Act* do not apply.

## PROVINCIAL STATUS

In Ontario, the **Cutlip Minnow** is designated as a threatened species under the *Endangered Species Act, 2007*, and a provincial recovery strategy has been prepared. In Quebec, the species is not on the province's list of threatened or vulnerable species under the *Act respecting threatened or vulnerable species*.

## FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE CUTLIP MINNOW

### HABITAT AND LIFE CYCLE

The **Cutlip Minnow** is found primarily in clear rivers and streams with slow current and channel substrate composed of cobbles, gravel, sand, mud and aquatic vegetation. During the spawning period, in spring or early summer, the male builds a nest by moving small stones one by one. When the nest is ready, he lets one female lay her eggs, which he simultaneously fertilizes. After spawning, he maintains the nest and defends his eggs and fry. The **Cutlip Minnow** is a bottom feeder, consuming a variety of aquatic invertebrates.

### THREATS

Little is known about threats that are specific to the **Cutlip Minnow**. The species may be intolerant of persistent turbidity and excessive siltation, both potential consequences of some agricultural and urban activities. The Round Goby and the Tench, two invasive species known to negatively impact native fishes, may also have adverse effects on the **Cutlip Minnow**.

### SPECIAL SIGNIFICANCE

The **Cutlip Minnow** possesses several characteristics that make it unique. For example, it is the only North American minnow to have a tri-lobed lower lip, and one of the few minnows that demonstrate post-hatching care of fry. It is also known to attack and consume the eyes of other species of fish, which is the source of its slang common name, "eye picker."

To submit your comments, please complete the form below or go to the **Species at Risk Public Registry** site under "Get Involved."

## Questionnaire on the listing of Cutlip Minnow under the *Species at Risk Act*

The purpose of this questionnaire is to obtain your comments on adding the **Cutlip Minnow** to the List of Wildlife Species at Risk included under the federal *Species at Risk Act*.

1. Do you support adding the **Cutlip Minnow** to the List of Wildlife Species at Risk? Why?  
Yes  
No
2. What would be the **positive impacts** of listing the **Cutlip Minnow** on your activities, the community, the environment, the culture and economy?
3. What would be the **negative impacts** of listing the **Cutlip Minnow** on your activities, the community, the environment, the culture and economy?
4. Do you have any other comments on listing the **Cutlip Minnow**?
5. Indicate your background (e.g. fisheries, environment). If you are answering on behalf of an Aboriginal community, an industry, a small business<sup>1</sup>, a community or organisation, please specify.
6. In what province or territory do you live? In what province or territory does your organization operate?
7. If the **Cutlip Minnow** is listed, do you want to help with its recovery or survival?

Your name, your email address (optional – if you want a follow-up from us).

<sup>1</sup>Defined as any business, including its affiliates, that has fewer than 100 employees or between \$30,000 and \$5 million in annual gross revenues.

*Thank you for filling out this questionnaire. To send this questionnaire, click on Submit or save the completed form and send it to us by email. You may also print this questionnaire (if necessary, add extra pages) and send it to us by mail. Do not hesitate to contact us for any inquiries.*

**Quebec**  
Species at Risk Management  
Fisheries and Oceans Canada  
Maurice Lamontagne Institute  
850 route de la Mer, P.O. Box 1000  
Mont-Joli, Quebec, G5H 3Z4  
Phone: 1-877-775-0848  
Email: [lep-sara-qc@dfo-mpo.gc.ca](mailto:lep-sara-qc@dfo-mpo.gc.ca)

**Ontario**  
Species at Risk Program  
Fisheries and Oceans Canada  
Freshwater Institute  
501 University Crescent  
Winnipeg, Manitoba, R3T 2N6  
Phone: 204-984-0599 or 1-866-538-1609  
Email: [fwisar@dfo-mpo.gc.ca](mailto:fwisar@dfo-mpo.gc.ca)