

Response Statement - Eastern Sand Darter, Quebec populations

December 2, 2010

Common Name: Eastern Sand Darter, Quebec populations

Scientific Name: *Ammocrypta pellucida*

Status assessment by the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC): Threatened

How the Minister of the Environment intends to respond to the assessment: The Minister of the Environment will forward the COSEWIC assessment of the Eastern Sand Darter, Quebec populations, to the Governor in Council within three months. The Minister of Fisheries and Oceans will consult with the government of Quebec, Aboriginal peoples, stakeholders, and the public on whether or not the Eastern Sand Darter, Quebec populations, should be added to the *List of Wildlife Species at Risk* (Schedule 1) under the *Species at Risk Act* as Threatened.

Once a species has been assessed by COSEWIC, further steps must be undertaken before it is added to Schedule 1 of the *Species at Risk Act*. For more information on this process, please view [The Species Listing Process Under SARA](#).

Reason(s) for status designation provided by COSEWIC: This species prefers sand bottom areas of lakes and streams in which it burrows. There is continuing decline in the already small and fragmented populations; three (of 18) have probably been extirpated, and the fate of five others is unknown due to lack of recent sampling. The extent of occurrence of this species in Québec is approximately two-thirds of what it was in the 1970s, despite records at five new sites in two locations. There is continuing habitat loss and degradation from historic and ongoing urban and agricultural development, stream channelization and competition with invasive alien species.

Occurrence: Quebec

Competent Minister(s):

Minister of Fisheries and Oceans

Province(s) and territory (territories) to be consulted:

Quebec

Applicable federal legislation: Fisheries are managed and fish habitat is protected under the *Fisheries Act*.

Conservation activities underway: In 2007, a draft recovery strategy for the Canadian population was published on the SARA public registry. In 2009 the province of Quebec designated the species as being threatened, under the Act respecting Threatened or Vulnerable Species, and a recovery strategy (2007-2012) was developed. A number of knowledge acquisition, stewardship and habitat improvement activities are underway. For example, an impact assessment has determined that baitfishing does not pose a significant threat to the Eastern Sand Darter. Targeted inventories are underway to improve our knowledge of the species' distribution in Quebec. Education and awareness activities for shoreline property owners are also being conducted by watershed organizations and other not-for-profit organizations.