

Response Statement - Dolly Varden, Western Arctic populations

December 8, 2011

Common Name: Dolly Varden, Western Arctic populations

Scientific Name: *Salvelinus malma malma*

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

How the Minister of the Environment intends to respond to the assessment: The Minister of the Environment will forward the COSEWIC assessment of the Dolly Varden, Western Arctic populations, to the Governor in Council within three months. The Minister of Fisheries and Oceans will consult with the governments of Yukon and Northwest Territories, the Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board, the Gwich'in Renewable Resources Board and the Fisheries Joint Management Committee, Aboriginal peoples, stakeholders, and the public on whether or not the Dolly Varden, Western Arctic populations, should be added to the *List of Wildlife Species at Risk* (Schedule 1) under the *Species at Risk Act* as Special Concern.

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 fish from freshwater and marine habitats of Canada's western Arctic has a very limited area of occupancy associated with a relatively small (17) number of locations that are key for spawning and overwintering. Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge suggests declines in some populations, and the small area and number of key habitats make the species particularly susceptible both to point source (e.g., overexploitation, stochastic events) and broader-scale events (e.g., climate change) that may eliminate or degrade habitats.

Occurrence: Yukon, Northwest Territories

Competent Minister(s):

Minister of Fisheries and Oceans

Minister responsible for the Parks Canada Agency

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

Yukon

Northwest Territories

Applicable federal legislation: Fisheries are managed and fish and fish habitat are protected under the *Fisheries Act*. When the species is found within national parks of Canada or other lands administered by the Parks Canada Agency, it is protected or managed under the *Canada National Parks Act* or through measures or management tools available to the Parks Canada Agency under other legislation.

Conservation activities underway: A management plan was prepared in 2010 and signed off on by the Fisheries Joint Management Committee and the Gwich'in Renewable Resources Board. It outlines a monitoring program, preferred fishing gear and methods, closed locations as well as recommending that people participating in the fishery abide by volunteer quotas identified in the Rat River Fishing Plan and other Northwest Territories area fishing plans. The plan is set for review in 2015. Ivvavik National Park has a catch and possession of one fish per day and recreational fishing is closed in areas of spawning and overwintering.