

Response Statement - Savannah Sparrow princeps subspecies

December 2, 2010

Common Name: Savannah Sparrow princeps subspecies

Scientific Name: *Passerculus sandwichensis princeps*

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 above assessment confirms the classification of this wildlife species in Schedule 1, the *List of Wildlife Species at Risk* as Special Concern. Activities will continue to be undertaken in a manner consistent with the purposes, and according to the timelines identified in, the *Species at Risk Act*.

Reason(s) for status designation provided by COSEWIC: This songbird is largely restricted to the sandy dune systems of Sable Island, NS. The population has increased over recent decades and now shows signs of stability because the island has reached carrying capacity. The bird is not prone to human disturbance because the breeding location is well protected. The subspecies is also multi-brooded and currently experiences good nesting success, which confers good reproductive potential to cope with potential catastrophic events. Nevertheless, its breeding range is restricted to a very small area of Canada, and it has a relatively small population. It is also exposed to ongoing threats associated with development of its shoreline wintering habitat in the eastern U.S., and is vulnerable to sea-level rise and increasing frequency and intensity of Atlantic storms that are projected to occur as a result of climate change.

Occurrence: Nova Scotia

Competent Minister(s):

Minister of Environment

Applicable federal legislation: This species is protected under the *Migratory Birds Convention Act, 1994*.

Conservation activities underway: The final Management plan for the Savannah Sparrow, princeps subspecies (*Passerculus sandwichensis princeps*), in Canada (2006) is posted on the Species at Risk Public Registry.