

# Response Statement - Barn Owl, Eastern population

**December 8, 2011**

**Common Name:** Barn Owl, Eastern population

**Scientific Name:** *Tyto alba*

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

**How the Minister of the Environment intends to respond to the assessment:** The above assessment confirms the classification of the Barn Owl, Eastern population, which is already on Schedule 1, the *List of Wildlife Species at Risk*. This species will thus remain on the List as Endangered and 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:** Eastern Canada supports a tiny fraction of the global population of this charismatic nocturnal raptor that preys on small rodents. Owing to its intolerance of cold climates and deep snow cover, populations in Canada are restricted to parts of southern British Columbia and southwestern Ontario, where the species is now close to being extirpated. Across the northern extent of its eastern North American breeding range, the species is declining and is threatened by ongoing loss and degradation of grassland and old field habitat and by the conversion of old wooden barns and other rural buildings to more modern structures. This owl is also exposed to increasing levels of road-kill mortality owing to expansion of the road network and increases in traffic volume.

**Occurrence:** Ontario

**Competent Minister(s):**

Minister of Environment

**Applicable federal legislation:** Where it occurs in a National Wildlife Area this species is subject to the *Wildlife Area Regulations* under the *Canada Wildlife Act*, which prohibits activities that could be harmful to species and to their habitat, unless a permit is issued indicating the permitted activity.

**Conservation activities underway:** A National Recovery Team has been put in place and a recovery strategy for the Eastern population of Barn Owl (*Tyto alba*) is under development.