

# Response Statement - Round Hickorynut

**December 18, 2013**

**Common Name:** Round Hickorynut

**Scientific Name:** *Obovaria subrotunda*

**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 Round Hickorynut 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 of, and according to the timelines identified in, the *Species at Risk Act*.

**Reason(s) for status designation provided by COSEWIC:** The Canadian population of this species has declined by 75-95% over the last 10 years, with an estimated 99% decline over the last 30 years. Populations in the Grand and Thames rivers are extirpated and populations in the Sydenham River and Lake St. Clair have declined to very low levels. Losses and declines are due to the combined effects of pollution from agriculture and residential runoff, and the impacts of invasive species like the Zebra Mussel.

**Occurrence:** Ontario

**Competent Minister(s):**

Minister of Fisheries and Oceans

**Other applicable legislation:** Fisheries are managed and fish habitat is protected under the *Fisheries Act*.

**Conservation activities underway:** The Round Hickorynut is currently listed as Endangered under SARA. A recovery strategy for this species has been in place since 2006 and was updated with the identification of critical habitat in 2013. Numerous recovery actions have been implemented since 2006 for the Round Hickorynut and include population monitoring, surveys and habitat improvement projects. The Round Hickorynut has also benefited from the ongoing aquatic ecosystem-based recovery program for the Sydenham River which focuses on stewardship and awareness activities; funds for this work has been provided annually by the Habitat Stewardship Program to the St. Clair Region Conservation Authority. Activities supported under this program focus on increasing landowner awareness of species at risk as well as the reduction of sediment and nutrient loading through the promotion of Best Management Practices to improve habitat conditions. In addition, the Round Hickorynut is one of several mussel species that will benefit from soon to be completed Sydenham River Action Plan - a document which will guide future recovery activities within this nationally significant watershed.