

Response Statement - Western Bumble Bee *mckayi* subspecies

January 13, 2015

Common Name: Western Bumble Bee *mckayi* subspecies

Scientific Name: *Bombus occidentalis mckayi*

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 Western Bumble Bee *mckayi* subspecies to the Governor in Council as soon as possible after the close of the normal consultation period. The Minister of Environment will consult with the governments of British Columbia, Yukon and Northwest Territories, the Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board, Alek Renewable Resources Council, Carcross/Tagish Renewable Resources Council, Carmacks Renewable Resources Council, DanKeyi Renewable Resources Council, Dawson Renewable Resources Council, Laberge Renewable Resources Council, Mayo Renewable Resources Council, North Yukon Renewable Resources Council, Selkirk Renewable Resources Council, Teslin Renewable Resources Council, and Sahtu Renewable Resources Board, Aboriginal peoples, stakeholders, and the public on whether or not the Western Bumble Bee *mckayi* subspecies 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 as at risk 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 subspecies ranges in Canada from northern British Columbia (north of approximately 55-57°N) through southern Yukon and westernmost Northwest Territories; at least 50% of its global range is in Canada. Recent surveys in northwestern Canada and Alaska suggest that it is still common. However, the southern subspecies of the Western Bumble Bee is experiencing a serious, apparently northward-moving decline, and because the causes of this decline are unknown, the northern subspecies faces an uncertain future. Recent studies in Alaska suggest that this subspecies has among the highest parasite loads (particularly the microsporidian *Nosema bombi*) of any bumble bee species in North America. Other potential threats include the unknown transmission of disease from exotic bumble bee species introduced for pollination in greenhouses (ongoing in the Yukon), pesticide use (including neonicotinoid compounds), and habitat change.

Occurrence: British Columbia, Yukon, Northwest Territories

Competent Minister(s):
Minister of Environment

Province(s) and territory (territories) to be consulted:
British Columbia, Yukon, Northwest Territories