

Species At Risk

P.O. Box 7000, 300 Water Street
Peterborough ON K9J 8M5

Espèces en péril

C.P. 7000, 300, rue Water
Peterborough ON K9J 8M5

LANDOWNER
9939 OLD RIVER RD
MUNICIPALITY OF Lambton Shores
ON N0M 1T0

Re: Roll Number: **38454600905433300000**

Wednesday December 21, 2011

Dear Landowner,

Ontario is home to more than 30,000 species. Most have stable populations, but some plants and animals are disappearing and some are already extinct. Currently, more than 200 species in Ontario are considered “at risk” because of habitat loss, pollution, competition from invasive species, climate change and over-harvesting. The loss of a single species can have an effect on the entire ecosystem. If we all work to conserve Ontario’s biodiversity, we can protect the long-term health of our province, and improve the quality of life for all living things in Ontario.

The Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) is working with people across the province to protect and recover Ontario’s at-risk plants and animals. That is the aim of the *Endangered Species Act, 2007 (ESA)*, which came into force in June 2008.

Common Five-lined Skink (Carolinian population), which is an endangered reptile in Ontario, is one of the species that is protected under the ESA. In Ontario, this species can be found along shorelines of Lakes Erie, St. Clair, and Huron often under woody debris in open areas or edges associated with sand dunes, open forested areas, and wetlands.

We believe that Common Five-lined Skink (Carolinian population) may be found on or near your property. The MNR is developing a regulation that explains what the protected habitat is for this species, and we would appreciate your input on the content of the proposed regulation.

MNR is proposing that the following types of areas and features be protected in a habitat regulation for Common Five-lined Skink (Carolinian population):

- Important habitat features including natural or man-made hibernacula (overwintering sites) and nesting sites and 30 metres around those sites. Natural hibernacula and nesting sites would be protected until 3 years of documented non-use by a Common Five-lined Skink (Carolinian population) and for the current season for non-natural sites.
- Areas of natural habitat, in which a Common Five-lined Skink (Carolinian population) has occurred, that are suitable for it to carry out its life processes would be protected along with all adjacent and suitable natural habitat types until 3 years of documented non-use.
- Areas of non-natural habitat within 50 metres of where a Common Five-lined Skink (Carolinian population) exists that are suitable for it to carry out its life processes would be protected until 2 years of documented non-use.
- Natural and man-made cover objects in the areas described above.

The above provisions will apply to the following areas: the regional municipalities of Halton and Niagara; the Municipality of Chatham-Kent; Haldimand County; and the counties of Lambton, Middlesex, Elgin and Essex.

The proposed habitat regulation is based on the best available scientific information about the needs of the species, but we recognize that you as a landowner or land manager may have local knowledge or interests that may help us determine the content of the final regulation.

The proposed habitat regulation under the ESA for Common Five-lined Skink (Carolinian population), is currently available on the Environmental Registry for public comment at www.ebr.gov.on.ca (**Registry # 011-5306**). Comments may be made online through the Environmental Registry or you can submit them in writing to:

Glenn Desy,
Species at Risk Habitat Biologist, MNR,
300 Water Street, 2nd Floor South
Peterborough, ON, K9J 8M5
sar.habitat@ontario.ca

You may also send your comments by fax to (705) 755-5483 by **Monday February 6, 2012**.

We are particularly interested in hearing how the regulation may affect you and whether you support or have concerns about the proposed content.

To help us better understand the unique or shared concerns of different groups, please let us know whether you are a private landowner or a land manager when you submit your comments. The content of the habitat regulation may change as a result of comments we receive during consultation.

When an area is regulated as habitat under the ESA, it does not necessarily prohibit activities. If the activity does not damage or destroy habitat, then it may continue. If the activity will damage or destroy habitat, then it will require authorization. Examples of activities that can harm Common Five-lined Skink (Carolinian population), or damage or destroy its habitat include:

- Constructing buildings, other structures, or roads;
- Clearing or significantly reducing vegetation, or removal of soil;
- Removing or altering objects, such as logs, rock piles, wells, foundations, sheds or concrete slabs, where the species obtains shelter, nests or overwinters.

In some cases, you may be allowed to proceed with activities that could damage or destroy the habitat, if you first obtain authorization under the ESA. We recommend that you talk to local MNR district staff about activities you may be planning on your land, to help ensure they do not harm the protected species or its habitat, and if so, whether you can avoid harming the species or its habitat by modifying the way in which these activities are conducted.

Landowners who have endangered species habitat on their property may be eligible for funding programs that recognize and encourage stewardship activities to help protect and recover species at risk and their habitats. The Species at Risk Stewardship Fund and the Species at Risk Farm Incentive Program are intended to support eligible landowners, farmers, individuals and businesses for projects related to species at risk on their property.

For more information about these programs or to view species at risk fact sheets, please visit www.ontario.ca/speciesatrisk or contact your local MNR district office.

We appreciate your comments on this proposal and hope you share our interest in Ontario's species at risk. We will contact you again when a habitat regulation has been approved for the species.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. Casselman', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Stephen Casselman
A/Manager, Protection Section
Species at Risk Branch
Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources