

# Species at Risk Act



## Loi sur les espèces en péril

### The Habitat Stewardship Program 2003-2004

The Habitat Stewardship Program (HSP) for Species at Risk is a partnership-based conservation initiative sponsored by the Government of Canada that helps Canadians protect species and their habitats. The Program is administered by Environment Canada and is managed cooperatively with Parks Canada Agency and Fisheries and Oceans Canada.

The goal of the Habitat Stewardship Program is to contribute to the recovery and protection of species listed as endangered, threatened or of special concern. The Program has three key objectives:

1. To secure important habitat to protect species at risk and support their recovery;
2. To mitigate threats to species at risk caused by human activities; and,
3. To support the implementation of priority activities in recovery strategies or action plans, where these are in place or under development.

Budget 2003 provides \$33 million over two years for the implementation of the *Species at Risk Act*. This is in addition to the Government of Canada's Budget 2000 commitment of \$180 million for the National Strategy for the Protection of Species at Risk, of which \$45 million has been committed over five years to the Habitat Stewardship Program.

In the Program's first year (2000-2001), \$5 million was distributed to 37 projects. In the second year (2001-2002), the Program was expanded, with \$10 million going to 148 projects. In the third year (2002-2003), \$10 million in HSP funding was allocated to 166 projects.

The Program is now in its fourth year of operation with \$9 million in HSP funding allocated to 164 projects across the country. Funding is being directed to aquatic projects, Aboriginal projects, environmental non-government organizations, projects in the resource sector and to a variety of other projects.

The Habitat Stewardship Program is one of three components in the Government of Canada's Strategy for the Protection of Species at Risk. The other two components are the *Accord for the Protection of Species at Risk* endorsed by provinces and territories and the *Species at Risk Act*.

The following are examples of HSP projects being funded in 2003/2004:

**Haida Gwaii Northern Abalone Stewardship Project** This project, led by the Haida Gwaii First Nation, has several components to help prevent or reverse the decline of abalone, a highly valued shellfish species located on the coasts of British Columbia. The first stewardship activity is the construction of "condos" which attract young abalone by mimicking their natural hiding place. These condos allow for increased adult population and enable monitoring as a means of providing feedback about the changes in abalone population. Stewards gather mature abalone

close to the condos to improve reproductive success. A Coastwatch Program aimed to reduce illegal harvest has also been implemented to maintain enforcement of the abalone fisheries closures.

#### **Prairie Conservation Action Plan**

##### **Implementation and Stewardship Education**

**(PCAP)** The purpose of this project is to help in the recovery of native grassland-dependent species at risk in Saskatchewan. The project delivers youth and adult species at risk stewardship and education programs throughout Saskatchewan's Prairie Ecozone. One of the goals of the PCAP is to reach out to every single school in the Prairie Ecozone of Saskatchewan. The result will be a generation of future land stewards who will understand the importance of protecting and conserving Saskatchewan's native prairie for all species including species at risk.

**Walpole Island First Nation (WIFN)** The Walpole Islands First Nation's lands are located along the northeastern shores of Lake St. Clair at the mouth of the St. Clair River in the Great Lakes Basin. Walpole Island First Nation has 45 species at risk, one of the largest concentrations of species at risk in Canada. This HSP project will support the Walpole Island Heritage Centre in increasing the community's understanding of species at risk, their habitat needs, issues and conservation principles, the importance of healthy habitats and the benefits of protection and stewardship.

Several measures are being implemented to protect species at risk in this area. Examples of these measures include updating and analyzing data to help in the development and implementation of management strategies for various ecosystems and species, increasing awareness of species at risk on the Island by educating youth through science and the elder's traditional knowledge.

They also include conducting interviews to increase participation in stewardship initiatives, and protecting significant natural areas on the Island by means of land acquisition and having the Chief and Council designate the lands as ecologically significant.

##### **Conservation of Species at Risk in the**

**Appalachian Corridor** The project aims to implement a transboundary conservation strategy under the initiative of the Fiducie Foncière de la Vallée Ruisseau in cooperation with The Nature Conservancy of Quebec and several other local organizations. The goal is to protect the habitat of species at risk in the Appalachian Corridor, which extends from the Sutton Mountains region in Quebec to Vermont's Green Mountains.

The Sutton Mountains region is mainly privately owned, and its integrity is threatened by logging and resort development. This project will raise landowners' awareness regarding the importance of conserving species and open the door to negotiations and various environmental protection measures that are being put forward to encourage the conservation of thousands of hectares of forest.

##### **The Labrador Species at Risk Stewardship**

**Program** This project will help in the recovery of Wolverine and Woodland Caribou. It will seek partnership opportunities on the entire Labrador landscape. A strong foundation of stewardship is integral to the conservation of Wolverine and Woodland Caribou in Labrador. The program also promotes ownership by the Innu and Inuit.

Further information on the Habitat Stewardship Program for species at risk, the *Species at Risk Act*, and on Canada's Strategy for the Protection of Species at Risk, can be found on the Internet at: [www.speciesatrisk.gc.ca](http://www.speciesatrisk.gc.ca); or call Environment Canada's Inquiry Centre at: 1-800-668-6767.