

CALL FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST AS SPECIALIST SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS INCLUDING EARLY CAREER BIOLOGISTS

COMMITTEE ON THE STATUS OF ENDANGERED WILDLIFE IN CANADA (COSEWIC)

Expressions of interest are invited for individuals wishing to serve as volunteer members (four-year term) as Specialist Subcommittee of the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC).

Expressions of interest may be submitted between October 7, 2026, and November 12, 2026.

Deadline: November 12, 2026, at 3:00 pm Eastern Time. Late expressions of interest will not be accepted.

Following is the list of taxonomic groups for which a member is needed.

AMPHIBIANS REPTILES

Requirements: *In this search, the subcommittee is looking for dedicated persons with regional or national expertise in conservation or natural history of amphibians and reptiles to join our team. Individuals with knowledge of spatial analysis, population modeling, population genetics, or ecology are particularly welcome to apply to the subcommittee. All applications will be considered, but individuals with expertise on herpetofauna from Western Canada (Alberta and Saskatchewan), Quebec, or experience with diverse knowledge systems are encouraged to apply. The working language of the committee is English; however, bilingual (English & French) and francophone candidates are encouraged to apply.*

ARTHROPODS

Requirements: *In this search, we are looking for qualified individuals with expertise in the ecology, natural history, taxonomy, and conservation biology of non-marine arthropods. An understanding and ability to apply critical thought to arthropod conservation, at-risk ecosystems, conservation status, and threats assessment are important assets. Preference will be given to individuals with expertise that complements current members of the Arthropods Species Specialist Committee. Areas of expertise could include Orthoptera, Coleoptera, Hemiptera, arachnids, moths, wasps, Diptera, aquatic arthropods and regional knowledge of New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island and/or Newfoundland.*

BIRDS

Requirements: *In this search, we are looking for applicants who have a broad familiarity with the status, ecology, and conservation of Canadian birds throughout their annual cycle, and an ability to interpret quantitative information on population trends. We particularly encourage applications from individuals with expertise in biology of Canadian birds on their migratory and non-breeding grounds outside Canada, especially waterfowl, shorebirds, and inland waterbirds, and/or geographic expertise in Ontario, Quebec, the Arctic, or subarctic. We encourage applications from bilingual candidates fluent in French and English, women, and those from other under-represented groups.*

FRESHWATER FISHES

Requirements: *In this search, we are interested in individuals with significant knowledge and expertise in the biology and conservation of Canadian freshwater fishes—from a Western Science and/or Indigenous Science perspective—as well as a demonstrated ability to work constructively within a consensus-based decision-making process. Assets include knowledge and expertise in habitat requirements, population and community dynamics, zoogeography, population genetics, genomics, evolution of freshwater fishes, and/or experience with the practices and methodologies associated with Indigenous knowledge systems (e.g., Two- Eyed Seeing). Strong editorial skills and an ability to synthesize complex information in the context of the COSEWIC status assessment process are also important assets. We are encouraging applications from people with experience related to freshwater fishes in northern Canada, Indigenous knowledge holders and practitioners. Members of underrepresented groups are strongly encouraged to apply. If you are unsure if you qualify for the positions, please contact Margaret Docker or John Richardson via the Secretariat to discuss the possibilities.*

MARINE FISHES

Requirements: *In this search, we are seeking people with expertise in the conservation of Pacific, Arctic, and Atlantic marine fishes, including fishes migrating into fresh water (e.g., salmon, eulachon). We welcome experience in population structure, quantitative methods, ecosystem and habitat structure, ecology, and taxonomy as these are important to determining species status. People with experience working with Indigenous Knowledge Systems and place-based knowledge are particularly encouraged to apply. We believe a diversity of perspectives results in better conservation outcomes.*

MARINE MAMMALS

Requirements: *In this search we are interested in individuals with expertise of the marine mammals in Canada, and in one or more of the following specialties: social structure and culture; health, pathology and wildlife epidemiology. The expectation of members is to use their expertise and experience to aid the process of species assessment, which includes (but is not limited to) making valuable contributions to documents and discussions, and attending (in-person or virtually) the annual meeting usually held in September.*

MOLLUSCS

Requirements: *In this search, we are looking for individuals with regional or national expertise and/or Indigenous Knowledge of terrestrial and/or freshwater and/or marine molluscs to fill openings on the Subcommittee. Applicants with expertise in ecology or taxonomy or population genetics of terrestrial and/or aquatic molluscs from any region of Canada are especially encouraged to apply. Individuals holding Indigenous Knowledge of the relationships between molluscs and their habitat are particularly invited to apply.*

MOSSES AND LICHENS

Requirements: *In this search, the Mosses and Lichens Species Specialist Subcommittee (SSC) is filling several vacancies, to increase capacity, to share the work, and to represent bryology and lichenology across Canada. We recognise the importance of habitats and ecosystems in determining rare species trajectories and that a diversity of perspectives results in better conservation outcomes. We are especially interested in Indigenous knowledge holders, practitioners, and researchers with experience in the habitats, conservation, ecology, and/or taxonomy of bryophytes and lichens in Canada. We strongly encourage members of underrepresented groups including Indigenous Peoples and the 2SLGBTQIA+ communities to apply. If you are unsure if you qualify for the positions, please contact Nicole Fenton or André Arsenault via the Secretariat to discuss the possibilities.*

In addition, we are seeking at least one member who is at an early career stage: one who is currently a student or who was engaged in their formative, relevant education or training within the past 10 years. Early career individuals who are not selected for the reserved Early Career seat can still be considered for other positions on the SSC.

TERRESTRIAL MAMMALS

Requirements: *In this search, we are looking for qualified individuals to fill multiple vacancies on the subcommittee. Candidates should have a broad understanding of the ecology, biology, or conservation of terrestrial mammals from across Canada. Candidates with experience working with Indigenous knowledge systems are especially encouraged to apply. The committee will consider all outstanding applicants but is seeking expertise with the following methodological subject areas: population ecology; disease/epidemiology, population genetics/genomics, and phylogenetics. The committee is also seeking terrestrial mammal expertise with knowledge from Ontario, Quebec, and Eastern Canada.*

VASCULAR PLANTS

Requirements: *In this search, we are looking for individuals with a broad knowledge of ecology, conservation biology, conservation genetics, population biology, and/or taxonomy of vascular plants in Canada. Although preference may be given for experience with the flora of Ontario, Quebec, or British Columbia, all applicants will be considered.*

Diversity matters: COSEWIC is committed to having a skilled and diversified membership representative of the population we serve, and recognizes many benefits of a safe, inclusive environment where people with diverse perspectives can collaborate in support of wildlife species assessment. All qualified people are invited to apply. In recruiting members, preference may be given to qualified applicants self-identifying as women, Indigenous peoples, persons with disabilities, racialized persons, persons of diverse sexual orientations and genders, persons in other under-represented groups, early career individuals, and all qualified individuals with the skills and knowledge to engage productively with equitable, diverse, and inclusive communities. The application template (the self-identification section under item number 6) provides an opportunity to clearly state if you identify as a member of any of these groups. ***Please feel welcome!***

About COSEWIC

The principal functions of [COSEWIC](#) are:

- to assess the status of wildlife species considered potentially at risk in Canada, identifying existing and potential threats to the wildlife species
- to report the results of its assessments and the reasons for the designations to the federal Minister of Environment and Climate Change, the Canadian Endangered Species Conservation Council, and the Canadian public

COSEWIC carries out its functions on the basis of the best available information, including scientific knowledge, community knowledge, and Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge. The assessment process is independent, transparent, and based solely on evidence. COSEWIC status reports, while forming the basis for recommendations to the government under the Species at Risk Act (SARA), are also widely cited by scientific and environmental organizations, resource users, government agencies and media. COSEWIC reports provide information about the state of wildlife species populations, which are of concern to all Canadians.

Species Specialist Subcommittees

Species Specialist Subcommittees (SSCs) are fundamental to the COSEWIC process. SSC members review and ensure the quality of the wildlife species status reports under the responsibility of their respective SSC. They also recommend species status designations to COSEWIC based on those reports. Therefore, they should have expertise in the biology and conservation of the relevant taxonomic group, work effectively in a consensus-based team, and satisfy the other requirements of SSC membership (see the [Application Template](#) that follows).

Duties of SSC Members

Each SSC member typically serves for a four-year (renewable) term. Using their best judgement and knowledge, SSC members:

- meet annually, in person or by teleconference, to carry out the functions of the SSC, in a collaborative environment where knowledge and mentorship are readily shared
- contribute to the development and maintenance of a list of species that are candidates for assessment, within the relevant taxonomic group.
- review status reports for completeness, accuracy and reliability (from 4 to 10 status reports for each SSC in most years)
- recommend status designations through discussion at SSC meetings, based on [COSEWIC's assessment criteria](#).

SSC Meeting Travel

Travel expenses incurred by SSC members within Canada are covered by Environment and Climate Change Canada. **For an SSC member whose travel originates or terminates outside Canada, Environment and Climate Change Canada will provide support which is the equivalent of the average travel expenses incurred within Canada.**

APPLICATION PROCESS

Expression of Interest

We ask both new applicants and incumbent members to provide BOTH of the following:

- a CV or resume
- a cover letter that specifically addresses each of the criteria in the [Application Template, using the same headings and subheadings](#). Even if you feel your CV already addresses a question, please provide a brief summary for each element of the template.

Preference may be given to qualified applicants in groups that are under-represented in the SSC. If you wish, please include a clear self-identification in section 6 of your application if you identify as a woman, Indigenous person, person with a disability, racialized person, person of diverse sexual orientation and/or gender, person in other under-represented groups, or early career individual, providing further information as relevant. Please also feel welcome to describe your skills and knowledge to engage productively with equitable, diverse, and inclusive communities. Those making the selection will take self-identifications of qualified applicants into account in their evaluation of the applications.

E-mail your application with a subject line header indicating “Expression of Interest in [NAME of SSC] SSC Membership” to the COSEWIC Secretariat at cosewic-cosepac@ec.gc.ca.

The Secretariat will endeavour to acknowledge each application via email to each individual within two business days. **If you do not receive an acknowledgement within this time, please contact the Secretariat by telephone at (819) 307-7600.**

Submissions will be evaluated by a selection committee. Successful individuals will be notified by December 31, 2026, and will serve their terms of office from January 1, 2027, to December 31, 2030.

If additional information is required, please contact the COSEWIC Secretariat at cosewic-cosepac@ec.gc.ca.

APPLICATION TEMPLATE

1. Knowledge and Education Background

State your knowledge and education background.

For example:

- I have extensive ecological knowledge of the southern Okanagan area of British Columbia, specializing in reptiles and amphibians.
- I have a BSc in wildlife management, an MSc in salmon fisheries, and a PhD in systematics of North American salmon.
- I have an honours BSc in zoology, 5 years of experience in population biology and genetics of caribou and 12 years of experience in conservation biology of other ungulates.
- I have spent the past decade learning about Prairie plants from elders and knowledge-keepers in my community and sharing knowledge of plants among Indigenous communities across the province.

2. Expertise with Taxa

Outline your expertise and experience with respect to Canadian [insert SSC taxon].

For example:

- I am an Indigenous community member with 7 years' experience on programs and projects related to Species at Risk.
- I have an excellent knowledge of the ecology and systematics of freshwater molluscs in all of North America, with particular expertise in the Sphaeriidae in Canada, especially in Ontario.
- In the course of my MSc studies on the systematics of Pacific salmon, I became familiar with the use of genetic information to infer phylogenetic relationships within and among species.
- I have worked with Traditional knowledge holders in my Nation's communities for 3 years.
- I have recorded, with photos and/or specimens, more than 500 verified occurrences of terrestrial snail species in western Canada, most of which are now accessible on iNaturalist.
- I have identified over 5,000 moss specimens so far, during my training and in providing consulting services.

3. SSC Specific Requirements

Identify your suitability with respect the following specific requirements:

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For example: I have an excellent knowledge of the ecology of Canadian Arctic fishes and have conducted research on their life histories for the past 5 years in support of an integrated, Inuit-led research and stewardship program, which fits well with the specific requirements outlined in the Call for Expressions of Interest.

4. Expertise with Conservation Biology and Canadian Flora and Fauna

What is your level of knowledge of concepts and techniques related to the assessment and conservation of wildlife species at risk, and of the legal provisions for designation and protection of wildlife species at risk at the federal or provincial/territorial level? What is your experience formulating objective conclusions and recommendations about the biological status of wildlife species?

For example:

- For the past 5 years I have been gathering data on population biology and genetics of salmonids. These data will be used for developing recovery and management programs for Sockeye Salmon.
- Throughout my training to date, I have devoted my summers to assisting in conservation research and have contributed an average of 10 hours per month of volunteer work to the Wildlife Conservation Society.
- For the last 5 years I have been assisting the Haida Nation in drafting conservation plans for plant species.
- For the past 5 years I have been providing advice on the integration of local ecological knowledge into provincial wildlife management planning.
- I am a member of Ducks Unlimited and have participated in surveys to determine the condition of wetland habitats in Manitoba.

- I have extensive knowledge of federal/provincial/territorial species at risk legislation, and I have written three wildlife status reports.

Include a statement about your level of knowledge of other Canadian flora and fauna outside your primary area of expertise.

For example:

- Although my main focus is amphibians, I have developed solid plant identification skills to the point where I can confidently identify most eastern Canadian vascular plants and many lichens.

5. Writing, Reviewing, and Communication Skills

Describe your experience in writing and critically reviewing technical material (e.g., refereed papers, books, reports, websites, etc.), and in providing constructive feedback on such materials written by other people. Describe your experience communicating information in a group setting.

6. Personal Statements

Please provide the following statements (two are optional), each with its own subheading.

Personal interests and/or perspectives: Please describe your personal interest and/or perspective that leads to your wish to participate in the COSEWIC species assessment process. Please consider sharing the perspective and knowledge systems you bring to the COSEWIC species assessment process, and/or how your background, life experience, and/or perspectives could contribute to better decision making and problem solving with respect to COSEWIC's work.

Goals: Please describe the ways in which an opportunity to work with the SSC would align with your goals.

Self-identification (optional; the information is collected for selection purposes only): As COSEWIC strives to increase diversity in its membership, preference may be given to qualified applicants in groups that are under-represented in the SSC. If you wish, using the subheading "Self-Identification", please acknowledge the skills and knowledge you have to engage productively with equitable, diverse and inclusive communities, and/or self-identify as any of the following, providing further information as relevant.

- woman
- Indigenous person
- person with a disability
- racialized person
- person of diverse sexual orientation and/or gender
- person in other under-represented groups
- early career

Interruptions (optional; the information is collected for selection purposes only): Reviewers will consider legitimate career interruptions resulting from maternity, parental, medical, or family leaves. The time devoted to these types of leaves will not be included in the assessment of productivity. Please feel welcome to identify any personal circumstances that may have impacted you.

Early Career Applicants (applicants who wish to be considered for the reserved Early Career position on the SSC): Describe how you qualify as an Early Career applicant (that is, typically, one who has completed their formative education related to conservation biology, and Canadian flora and fauna, within the past 10 years).

7. References

Please provide the names and contact information of three references. Include at least one person with whom you have worked in a committee or team. These referees will be asked to provide examples and evaluations to the following criteria:

1. Your ability to work constructively within a consensus-based decision-making process and foster consensus among peers within a committee.
2. Your ability to take initiative.
3. Your reliability in meeting timelines and delivering products.
4. Your ability to demonstrate sound judgement.
5. *Early Career Applicants* (applicants who wish to be considered for the reserved Early Career position on the SSC): Your demonstrated interest in a conservation-oriented career.