



Species at Risk Research Fund for Ontario 2016/17 Guidelines

CONTACT INFORMATION

For questions regarding the Species at Risk Research Fund for Ontario (SARRFO), please contact: Kim Jaxa-Debicki at SAR.stewardship@ontario.ca or 705-755-5506

DEADLINE

Applications must be submitted via email to SAR.stewardship@ontario.ca by midnight/11:59pm (EST) on **Tuesday, December 15, 2015**

There is no template application form for SARRFO. Please follow the instructions in these guidelines.

You will receive a confirmation email within two business days of receiving your application. If you do not receive this email please contact us at 705-755-5506.

Applications received after the deadline or without mandatory information will not be considered.

All applicants must refer to the Legal Authorizations section of the Guidelines before submitting an application.

APPLICANTS

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

The SARRFO is open to individuals and organizations undertaking high-caliber scientific research activities that will address key threats or knowledge gaps and inform the protection and recovery of species at risk in Ontario.

All SARRFO applications must clearly identify a Principal Investigator for the proposed project. The Principal Investigator (PI) must be a recognized expert in the area of proposed research who is charged to conduct objective research that generates independent, high quality, and reproducible results. The PI is responsible for the design, delivery, and reporting of the research

project and for monitoring, and ensuring the integrity of any collaborative relationships. Additionally, the PI is responsible for project management including oversight of compliance, financial, personnel, and other related administrative aspects of the research project. In the case of graduate students (Master's or PhD), the supervisor should be designated as the PI rather than the student.

Successful applicants must be individuals or incorporated legal entities and will be required to provide proof of incorporation and proof of appropriate insurance upon signing a funding agreement.

NON-ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

- Provincial government ministries
- Federal government departments

ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES

Applications for the 2015/16 SARRFO should focus on innovative scientific research that addresses topics contained in the priority categories below which will answer questions that are relevant to the protection and recovery of species at risk.

Only proposed activities occurring between April 1, 2016 and February 28, 2017 (for the 2016-2017 fiscal year) and April 1, 2017 and February 28, 2018 (for the 2017-2018 fiscal year) are eligible for funding consideration.

Applications will be considered that focus on:

- scientific research actions
- acquiring and analyzing a new dataset or meta-analysis of existing datasets
- undertaking new research projects or adding a new component to an on-going project
- Inventory and monitoring actions associated with a defined scientific question and methodology may also be considered. Long-term monitoring projects without a defined scientific question are not eligible for SARRFO funding but are encouraged to apply to SARSF if applicable.

If you are applying for work that builds on a previously funded SARRFO / SARSF work, please explicitly state what has been accomplished so far, what deliverables you achieved, and how this work is different from or builds on past work. Do not assume reviewers know of your previous work or have access to your project files.

MULTI-YEAR REQUESTS

We are accepting funding requests for research projects extending over one or two years, to a maximum of **\$30,000** per year per project.

Research activities must occur between April 1, 2016 and February 28, 2017 (for the 2016-2017 fiscal year) and April 1, 2017 and February 28, 2018 (for the 2017-2018 fiscal year) to be eligible. Multi-year requests will be evaluated on an individual basis and will be considered based on demonstrated need and available funds. Funding for the subsequent years will be

dependent on availability of funds and/or whether the necessary appropriation is provided from the Ontario Legislature.

PRIORITIES

Although all project proposals that target species listed on the Species at Risk in Ontario List are eligible for funding, targeted priorities have been established for the 2016/17 funding year.

Applications that address any of the priorities listed below will be considered before remaining applications.

During the evaluation of applications, additional weighting will be given to applied research proposals that address an impending on-the-ground threat or knowledge gap.

2016/17 PRIORITIES

1. **Research that contributes to meeting recovery actions as outlined in a final or draft Government Response Statement (GRS), with preference given to research that supports identified high priority GRS actions.** See appended list of species at risk with GRS.
2. **Research activities that address the needs or knowledge gaps for Species at Risk as described below:**
 - 2a. **Threat / Action Specific Priorities**
 - Studies that investigate the management and ecology of species at risk whose survival, habitat, range, and/or behaviour is most likely to be vulnerable to **climate change**. How best can we manage these species in light of a changing climate?
 - Investigating methods to effectively **create or enhance habitat** for American ginseng, Blanding's turtle, or Eastern Whip-poor-will. Can include habitat use studies if addressing an identified knowledge gap is necessary to inform habitat creation.
 - Projects that help determine **detection probabilities** of SAR for which this information is lacking, or establishing more effective detection methods (e.g. eDNA studies) for SAR believed to have low detectability using established methods.
 - Investigating the effect of **invasive species** (e.g. phragmites) or **emergent pathogens** (e.g. fungal disease) on species at risk, and researching appropriate and effective prevention, control and removal mechanisms.
 - Investigating the effects of **pesticides** (e.g. neonicotinoids) with respect to their impacts on species at risk.
 - Studies related to threats, population trends and management of at-risk **pollinators**, and studies on pollination of at-risk plants where knowledge gaps exist.

- Research into the causes of newly documented **recruitment failure / population declines** of American chestnut or Loggerhead Shrike.

2b. Species/Taxa Specific Priorities

- **American Eel or Lake Sturgeon:** Investigation and assessment of new or innovative mitigation techniques and technologies for safe fish passage both upstream and downstream.
- **SAR Aerial Insectivores:** Investigating causes of population decline in aerial insectivores and/or investigating and evaluating recovery approaches to improve foraging habitat quality.
- **SAR Bats:** Investigating threats and threat mitigation for SAR bats, including white-nose syndrome mitigation/abatement, hibernacula and roost protection, and effectiveness of habitat creation/enhancement methods (e.g., bat boxes, artificial hibernacula). Additionally, determining use of habitat by Eastern Small-footed Bat.
- **SAR Fish or Mussels:** Research into the specific habitat requirements for juvenile life stages.
- **SAR Plants (without a GRS):** Research on population viability and causes of low recruitment, propagule dispersal, pollination biology, seed bank ecology, distances at which threats adversely affect habitats (especially non-forested habitats such as open fens, alvars, prairie or savannah), and research on genetics related to threats, limitations on reproduction and opportunities to promote recovery.

SPECIES RECOVERY DOCUMENTS

To access the following provincial recovery documents, please refer to the [Species at Risk in Ontario List](#) website and click on the appropriate species at risk:

- COSSARO Assessment Report
- Recovery Strategy
- Management Plan
- Government Response Statement

To access federal recovery documents, please refer to the following websites:

- [Federal draft or final Recovery Strategies](#)
- [Federal draft or final Management Plans](#)
- [National Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada \(COSEWIC\) Status Reports](#)

ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

- Projects or studies that are required by law are not eligible for support through the SARRFO. This includes activities that are being undertaken to fulfill legal requirements/conditions identified in an ESA permit, authorization or regulation
- While provincial and federal governments are able to support projects through in-kind and financial contributions, they are not able to receive any direct funding from an approved SARRFO project
- Projects focusing on multi-species, ecosystems or single-species may all be considered for funding
- Where applicable, successful applicants are encouraged to submit species, habitat, and location information to the Natural Heritage Information Centre
- If a number of applications are received on related topics applicants may be contacted and asked to consider working together on a joint project. Applicants are reminded to contact experts in their field of research; proposed work which duplicates or overlaps with existing work without bringing added value is discouraged.
- The Crown is not bound to take any action based on any recommendations that may be produced during the course of a project. Any mapping products that result from a project are for the voluntary use of the organization only and the methods and results of a project will not necessarily be endorsed by MNRF or the Government of Ontario for use in future SAR habitat identification or land use decisions.

COSTS

SARRFO funding requests are limited to a maximum of **\$30,000** per year per project.

Requested funds must be appropriate and reasonable for activities proposed.

Recipients may be reimbursed for expenses related to the project that are incurred from April 1, 2016 to February 28, 2017 (for the 2016-17 fiscal year) and April 1, 2017 to February 28, 2018 (for the 2017-18 fiscal year)

ELIGIBLE COSTS

Costs must be reasonable for activities proposed. Following the formal review and approval of applications, recipients may be asked to provide documentation of a competitive quoting process for costs over \$5,000. Funding through the SARRFO may be applied toward the following types of project costs:

- Human Resources Costs:** includes wages and mandatory benefits (as required by law) for human resources that will be directly involved in the implementation of the project, including professional and technical personnel, project assistants and consultants.
- Equipment Costs:** includes the lease and/or rental of equipment required for the completion of the project. In some cases, equipment purchase may be considered with proper justification.
- Field, Laboratory and Supply Costs:** includes costs for scientific analysis, analytical support tools (including computer programs), and materials (e.g., field supplies) other than equipment.

- d) **Vehicle Rental, Travel and Fieldwork Expenses:** includes vehicle leases, operational costs (e.g., fuel, insurance), mileage, accommodations and meals. Mileage cannot exceed \$0.41/km. Meal allowances are limited by meal per day and with receipts; Breakfast: \$8.75, Lunch: \$11.25, Dinner: \$20.
- e) **Student stipend or funding for post-doctoral students:** each to a maximum of \$10,000 per student per project for graduate student stipend per year and \$25,000 per post-doc per project for post-doc support per year.
- f) **Documentation of results:** including preparation/design/printing of reports associated with the project, photographs and /or video footage of research in progress.
- g) **Communications costs:** press releases or public notices in newspapers and magazines, and distribution costs.

Note: The amount of MNRF's contribution includes the reimbursement for HST. MNRF will not reimburse for HST beyond the approved contribution level.

NON-ELIGIBLE COSTS

The following are examples of expenses that do not qualify for funding through the SARRFO:

- a) Salary and benefits of the Principal Investigator or staff already employed by the sponsoring organization;
- b) Large capital expenses, such as buildings and vehicles;
- c) Costs of purchasing or leasing property, including municipal service fees and property taxes;
- d) Administrative overheads (e.g., office space, office supplies, phone, computer, fax and photocopy and auditing costs, as well as any project management expenses);
- e) Rental fees for research facilities or office space (where relevant the sponsoring organization is expected to provide, without charge to the SARRFO, research and office space and facilities, and accounting and administrative services. These items can be counted however, toward matching funds);
- f) Costs incurred or paid prior to or after the SARRFO funding periods identified.

MANDATORY APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

Applications shall not exceed 10 pages in length (excluding CV's).

Applications must include:

1. A detailed research outline
2. A clear and detailed workplan table (for each year of funding requested) identifying planned activities, expected outcomes/milestones and specific timelines in the following table format:

2015-16			
Activity Description	Outcomes/Milestones	Start Date	End Date
Genetic analysis of X...	Summary of results, raw data...	June 1, 2016	Sept 25, 2017

3. Identification of the Principal Investigator (see description under Eligible Applicants) and research team, including CV's for all. Signed letters of commitment for any collaborators contributing matching funds, either in-kind or cash support to the proposed project
4. A clear statement of how the proposed project will meet one or more of the priorities listed above and, where appropriate, clear links to actions/activities as outlined in a GRS and recovery strategy
5. SARRFO funding can be requested for the 2016-17 and 2017-18 fiscal years. However, SARRFO funding may cover a component of a larger research initiative. If the request is part of a longer term research proposal you must indicate how the current funding request fits into this larger project plan including workplans and budgets for previous or subsequent years.
6. A clear and detailed budget (for each year of funding requested) indicating both the full project budget and what SARRFO will cover in the following table format. Please note that Ontario Species at Risk Stewardship Funding (SARSF) will not count towards your matching cash contributions.

2015-16				
Project Expense	Amount requested from SARRFO	Matching Funds: In-kind	Matching Funds: Cash	Total Cost
<u>Human Resources</u>				
-Grad Student Stipend	\$5,000	-	\$4,000	\$9,000
-Field Assistant (\$440/week X16 weeks)	\$5,000	-	\$2,040	\$7,040
<u>Equipment</u>				
-GPS (2 @ \$200)	-	\$400	-	\$400
-headlamps (3 @ \$60)	\$180	-	-	\$180
-digital calipers (3@ \$88)	\$264	-	-	\$264
Total:	\$10,444	\$400	\$6,040	\$16,884

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

Applications will be assessed according to the following criteria:

- Project Design: The study is designed and undertaken according to the scientific method and final conclusions are supported by the accumulated evidence/data, there is demonstrated expertise and a high likelihood of success
- Priorities: Links to one or more of the identified priorities as outlined above
- Experience, expertise (including familiarity with the taxa being studied and the proposed methods) and capacity of principle investigator and research team to complete the project
- Informational need that is directly tied to the protection and recovery of the species
- The study leads to results that are intended to be available and broadly disseminated in the public domain (i.e., peer reviewed scientific journal)

- Amount of matching funds: What % of the total project cost is coming from SARRFO? Matching contributions from the applicant's institution and external sources is essential and is expected to be both direct (matching cash –a minimum of 1:1) and additional in-kind support
- Relevance: The study addresses, at an appropriate spatial and temporal scale, an important informational need that is directly tied to the protection and recovery of the species
- For multi-year projects: is there a demonstrated need?, does the subsequent year build on the previous year?

OTHER CONTRIBUTIONS OR FUNDING

Project proposals that include matching contributions (in-kind and cash) from a variety of sources are encouraged. Matching funds can either be matching dollars or in-kind donations; however a balance of both is recommended. The amount of matching funds is a criterion that will be considered when applications are reviewed, whereby project proposals with matching dollars will be evaluated more favourably. If applicants indicate in-kind and/or cash contributions, they are required to describe how they are valued. For guidelines on valuing in-kind human resource contributions, consult

<http://volunteercalculator.imaginecanada.ca/eng/default.asp?tabset=4>. Land values cannot be used as in-kind matching funds.

NOTIFICATION

The SARRFO uses a competitive process to evaluate all applications. All applicants will be notified of the funding outcome of their proposal in writing. Not all applications will be funded. Should an applicant proceed with a project on the expectation of funding through the SARRFO, the applicant does so at their own risk.

AGREEMENT AND PAYMENT

In order to be eligible to receive funds, successful applicants will be required to enter into a standard legal agreement with the Province which includes the terms and conditions of grant acceptance, expenditure and reporting requirements. In the case of multi-year projects, funds from one funding year cannot be transferred to another subsequent funding year.

The terms and conditions of the funding will be set out in detail in the agreement. Generally, those terms and conditions will be consistent with the following:

- The SARRFO is a reimbursement program. Payments will be made following the completion of milestones, and the submission of interim/final reports and documentation of incurred expenditures in accordance with the terms of the agreement.
- Activities receiving funding must be completed and invoices submitted within the year of receipt of funding.
- Recipients approved for multi-year funding will be required to submit year-end reports and financial documentation in accordance with their funding agreements. Successful applicants will have up to 30 days from the date of the project completion to submit final reporting requirements for year of funding.

- The final date to submit all final reporting and financial documentation is **February 29, 2017** for the 2016-17 fiscal year and **February 28, 2018** for the 2017-18 fiscal year. Recipients approved for funding will be required to submit certificates of insurance to confirm insurance coverage

LEGAL AUTHORIZATIONS

LEGAL AUTHORIZATIONS

(All applicants must review this section before submitting an application)

If your project involves a species listed as Extirpated, Endangered or Threatened under the ESA, please contact your local MNRF district office; they can provide advice on whether an authorization or registration under the ESA is required. It is important to contact your local MNRF district office early during your project planning process, as you may be able to avoid the need for an authorization or registration under the ESA by amending your project plan. Your local MNRF district office will also provide advice on which of the following applies to your project:

- (i) Notice under ESA regulation 242/08 s.23.17 will be submitted before undertaking the funded activity;
- (ii) An ESA 17(2)(b) permit is required and will be obtained before undertaking the funded activity; or,
- (iii) The proposed activity does not require an authorization under the ESA.

All funded projects must avoid and/or minimize adverse effects to SAR and their habitat. An ESA authorization is not required for activities that do not kill, harm or harass a SAR, damage or destroy their habitat or otherwise require authorization under section 9 or section 10 of the Act. For greater detail, please refer to section 9 (species protection) and section 10 (habitat protection) of the ESA.

Due to section 23.17 of Ontario Regulation 242/08 under the ESA, many activities supported by the SARSF may no longer require an ESA 17(2)(b) permit but rather require the recipient to register and follow the requirements set out in the Regulation. For information on the regulatory requirements please refer to the MNRF Registry website under "Help protect or recover a species at risk" and consult O. Reg. 242/08 (s. 23.17) on e-laws.

Most projects that involve activities prescribed in Government Response Statements, Recovery Strategies, or addressing priorities outlined in these guidelines are eligible under s. 23.17 of O. Reg. 242/08 provided all the regulatory requirements can be met. However, projects involving any of the following activities are not eligible under O. Reg. 242/08 s. 23.17:

- Possession of a living SAR for longer than necessary (in no case longer than seven days);
- Release or introduction of a SAR outside of the area from which it was taken; or
- Lethal sampling as described in subsection (3) of O. Reg. 242/08 s 23.17.

If your project involves any of the above activities or fails to meet all eligibility criteria outlined in O. Reg. 242/08 s.23.17, you require ESA 17(2)(b) permit and you must contact your local MNRF district office.

Please refer to s. 23.17 of O. Reg. 242/08 for more detail regarding eligibility under that section. Applicants are responsible for identifying and obtaining any permits, licences or other approvals required for the project. **Projects cannot proceed until the required authorizations are obtained.** MNRF staff can assist in determining the need for provincial authorizations administered by MNRF including authorizations under the ESA, *Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act* and the *Provincial Parks and Conservation Reserves Act*.

If your project will be occurring in a Provincial Park or Conservation Reserve you may require additional authorization. You can apply for an authorization online at <http://www.ontarioparks.com/email/research> or if you have any questions about working in Provincial Parks and Conservation Reserves please email PAScience@ontario.ca.

Under section 23.17 of O. Reg. 242/08 an Animal Care Protocol approved by the MNRF Wildlife Animal Care Committee or a university is required for projects involving amphibians, birds, reptiles or mammals. Protocols for the detection and handling of fish and mussels that include animal care considerations have been published by the Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada: detection of fish protocol and the detection and relocation of freshwater mussel protocol.

RECOGNITION

If applicable, the successful applicant may be required to acknowledge the receipt of financial assistance from the Government of Ontario.

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION AND PROTECTION OF PRIVACY

Personal information collected in the application will be used for the proper administration of the Species at Risk Research Fund for Ontario.

Personal information will only be used or disclosed in accordance with the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*. If you have any questions about the collection of this information contact the Species at Risk FIPPA Coordinator at 99 Wellesley St W, 5th Floor Whitney Block, Toronto ON M7A 1W3, Telephone 416-314-1918.

AUDITING

To ensure integrity in the use of funds, the Province of Ontario reserves the right to require independent verification of reported information as required in the terms of the funding agreement. Payment claim forms and invoices must be submitted in order to receive payments. The successful applicant shall provide, if requested by the Province, any necessary permissions to access the property and make available any records, documents and/or information that may be required for this purpose.

TERMS OF REFERENCE

- This call for applications is not intended to be a formal legally-binding procurement process.
- MNRF reserves the right to seek clarification and supplementary information from any applicant.

- MNRF may elect not to consider an application containing misrepresentations or any inaccurate, misleading or incomplete information.
- Once a project proposal has been submitted, it cannot be substantially modified or changed.

APPENDIX 1

Species at Risk with final or draft Government Response Statements (GRS)

1. Allegheny Mountain Dusky Salamander
2. American Badger (Northwestern Ontario population)
3. American Badger (Southwestern Ontario population)
4. American Chestnut
5. American Columbo
6. American Water-willow
7. American White Pelican
8. Bald Eagle
9. Barn Owl
10. Barn Swallow
11. Beluga
12. Bent Spike-rush
13. Bird's Foot Violet
14. Black Tern
15. Bobolink (DRAFT)
16. Bogbean Buckmoth
17. Broad Beech Fern
18. Butternut
19. Cherry Birch
20. Common Five-lined Skink (Carolinian population)
21. Common Five-lined Skink (Southern Shield Population)
22. Common Hoptree
23. Cucumber Tree
24. Cutlip Minnow
25. Deerberry
26. Drooping Trillium
27. Dwarf Hackberry
28. Eastern Flowering Dogwood
29. Eastern Foxsnake (Carolinian population)
30. Eastern Foxsnake (Georgian Bay population)
31. Eastern Hog-nosed Snake
32. Eastern Meadowlark (DRAFT)
33. Eastern Prairie Fringed-orchid
34. Eastern Prickly Pear Cactus
35. Eastern Sand Darter
36. Engelmann's Quillwort
37. Few-flowered Club-rush
38. Forked Three-awned Grass
39. Four-leaved Milkweed
40. Fowler's Toad
41. Gray Ratsnake (Carolinian population)
42. Gray Ratsnake (Frontenac Axis population)
43. Green Dragon
44. Heart-leaved Plantain
45. Hill's Thistle
46. Hine's Emerald
47. Hoary Mountain-mint
48. Horned Grebe
49. Horsetail Spike-rush
50. Hungerford's Crawling Water Beetle
51. Jefferson Salamander
52. Kidneyshell
53. Lake Chubsucker
54. Lakeside Daisy
55. Large Whorled Pogonia
56. Laura's Clubtail
57. Nodding Pogonia
58. Northern Barrens Tiger Beetle
59. Northern Dusky Salamander
60. Northern Madtom
61. Northern Riffleshell
62. Ogden's Pondweed
63. Pale-bellied Frost Lichen
64. Peregrine Falcon
65. Piping Plover
66. Pitcher's Thistle
67. Prothonotary Warbler
68. Pugnose Shiner
69. Pygmy Snaketail
70. Queensnake
71. Rapids Clubtail
72. Rayed Bean
73. Red Mulberry
74. Redside Dace
75. Round Hickorynut
76. Round Pigtoe
77. Rusty-patched Bumble Bee
78. Salamander Mussel
79. Showy Goldenrod (Boreal population)
80. Shumard Oak
81. Slender Bush-clover
82. Small Whorled Pogonia
83. Snuffbox
84. Spotted Wintergreen
85. Virginia Goat's-rue
86. Virginia Mallow
87. Wavy-rayed Lampmussel
88. West Virginia White
89. Wild Hyacinth
90. Willowleaf Aster
91. Wood Turtle
92. Woodland Caribou (Forest-dwelling Boreal population)
93. Wood-poppy