

Saskatchewan Activity Restriction Guidelines for Sensitive Species Background Information

- Activity Restriction Guidelines have been provided by the Federal Government for most species identified through data requests and other directed queries.
- The Activity Restriction Guidelines reflect current knowledge of each species. Saskatchewan's guidelines are currently under review to ensure consistency and provide effective protection for sensitive species.
- The 0 m set-back distance is for foot traffic only (FTO). ATV and other small vehicles would fall under the medium disturbance category.
- The guidelines have been posted on the [Ministry of Environment website](#).
- See the [Species List - Species at Risk Public Registry website \(http://www.registrelep-sararegistry.gc.ca/species/default_e.cfm\)](http://www.registrelep-sararegistry.gc.ca/species/default_e.cfm) for a complete listing of species at risk in Canada.
- For the Saskatchewan Ministry of Environment's guidelines see <http://www.environment.gov.sk.ca/Default.aspx?DN=f0dd4bc1-84aa-4d7e-8ca1-ba3cb8d4e044>
- For the Government of Alberta's wildlife land use guidelines see <http://esrd.alberta.ca/fish-wildlife/wildlife-land-use-guidelines/default.aspx>
- For Environment Canada's industry activity guidelines for wildlife species at risk see <http://www.gov.mb.ca/conservation/eal/registries/5526provident/attach1.pdf>
- For Environment Canada's activity set-back distance guidelines for plant species at risk see <http://www.ec.gc.ca/Publications/BA6052B1-136B-45C6-9BCD-38F160A80475/ActivitySetBackDistanceGuidelinesForPrairiePlantSpeciesAtRRisk.pdf>
- The scope of human activities in the environment is a continuum and cannot be easily classified. Three categories of disturbance (low, medium and high) have been adopted by Environment Canada. If in doubt about the level of disturbance, use the precautionary principle and move up a category.

AMPHIBIANS

- Federal guidelines were adopted for Great Plains Toad and Northern Leopard Frog which are listed under the Species at Risk Act (SARA).
- Current set-back distances used by Grasslands EcoRegion for wetlands, water bodies and watercourses were adopted (0-90 m) for species of provincial concern (Canadian Toad and Plains Spadefoot).

REPTILES

- The Eastern Yellow-bellied Racer is a federally listed species which has been added to the provincial guidelines. Federal set-back distances have been adopted for this species.

BIRDS

- The set-back distances are not only to address auditory disturbances but also permanent alteration in habitat.
- For Piping Plover, the high water mark is used, as it is typically the same as the outer edge of suitable habitat. This is a globally rare species (G3) therefore permanent habitat loss is of major concern.
- Nesting habitat of bird species that use the same nest site year after year (e.g. Loggerhead Shrike, Ferruginous Hawk and colonial nesting birds) should not be destroyed at any time.
- Canada Warbler, Chimney Swift, Common Nighthawk, McCown's Longspur, Olive-sided Flycatcher, Red Knot, Whip-poor-will, Whooping Crane, Rusty Blackbird, and Chestnut-collared Longspur are federally listed species which have been added to the provincial guidelines. Federal set-back distances have been adopted for these species with the exception of Red Knot where Ministry of Environment set-back distances were adopted in the absence of federal guidelines. Species which are newly listed under COSEWIC or SARA will be added to the ARGs on a regular basis.

MAMMALS

- Ord's Kangaroo Rat inhabits highly sensitive active dune areas. This species is listed under SARA; therefore, federal guidelines were adopted.
- Swift Fox have been re-introduced in Saskatchewan. This species is listed under SARA; therefore, federal guidelines were adopted.
- Black-footed Ferrets have been re-introduced in Saskatchewan; therefore, they have been added to the provincial guidelines. Set-back distances of Black-tailed Prairie Dogs were applied to Black-footed Ferrets.

PLANTS

- Plants make up the bulk of the species of concern and a standard approach applies to most S1 to S3 species. However, federal guidelines have been adopted for federally listed species in Saskatchewan (Henderson 2011).
- Small White Lady's-slipper and Alkaline Wing-nerved Moss are listed under SARA and were added to the list, following federal guidelines.
- The 0 m set-back distance is for foot traffic only (**FTO**). ATV and other small vehicles would fall under the medium disturbance category.

DATA SUBMISSIONS

- Data and reports submitted through the research permit process should be directed to ENV.researchpermit@gov.sk.ca. This includes surveys where a permit is not required but notification is requested. See the [Government of Saskatchewan Research Permit website](#) for details. Please note that this data will be forwarded to the Saskatchewan Conservation Data Centre (SKCDC), and therefore you only have to submit your data once.
- If data is not to be submitted through the research permit process, please submit wild species observations to the SKCDC at SKCDC.data@gov.sk.ca. For details, see the [Saskatchewan Conservation Data Centre website \(www.biodiversity.sk.ca/OnlineRep.htm\)](http://www.biodiversity.sk.ca/OnlineRep.htm).

Literature Cited

- Environment Canada. 2009. Petroleum Industry Activity Guidelines for Wildlife Species at Risk in the Prairie and Northern Region. Canadian Wildlife Service, Environment Canada, Prairie and Northern Region, Edmonton Alberta. 64 pp.
- Henderson, D.C. 2011. Activity set-back distance guidelines for prairie plant species at risk. Prepared for: Environment Canada, Prairie and Northern Region, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. 17 pp.
- Wright, J. and A. Didiuk. 1998. Status of the Plains Hognose Snake (*Heterodon nasicus nasicus*) in Alberta. Alberta Environmental Protection, Fisheries and Wildlife Management Division, and Alberta Conservation Association, Alberta Wildlife Status Report No. 15, Edmonton, AB. 26 pp.