

SARPAL Update

The purpose of the Species at Risk Partnership on Agricultural Land (SARPAL) project is to develop beneficial management practices to benefit prairie species at risk. The aim is to use the most up-to-date research information available to develop beneficial management practices that are easily understood, based on common accepted agronomic practices and scaled to normal producer practices.

The implementation of beneficial management practices is an accepted approach to avoiding or minimizing environmental impacts of human land use while maintaining and enhancing productivity. They are foundational for the environmental farm plan programs in each province. Beneficial management practices are also becoming the basis for verification programs being developed to demonstrate stewardship of Canada's agriculture sector.

In the context of the Species at Risk Act, beneficial-management-practice implementation may help producers reduce risks to habitat for species at risk and to farm and ranch operations by reducing legal liabilities under the Act.

A systematic review of the academic literature pertaining to species at risk on the prairie agricultural landscape is almost complete. This approach guards against both unintentional and intentional bias in the selection of what literature to include.

Hundreds of papers will be reviewed and information pertaining to agriculture management selected and added to appropriate fields in a searchable data base. The *Species at Risk Partnerships on Agricultural Lands Access Database 2016* will be used by this project and others in the future. The searchable function means people will be able to look up search terms such as soil type, ecozone, grazing type, range or riparian health for any one of the 60 species currently listed as being at risk on the prairie landscape.

CFGa is currently creating a template for synthesizing the data found in the literature to inform the selection of the beneficial management practices that look like they are the right ones for producers and the species. In the future CFGa will discuss the model with experts in agriculture and conservation then it out to producer focus groups for their views.

The SARPAL project is supported by Environment and Climate Change Canada. For more information, contact CFGa's SARPAL project coordinator Peg Strankman at strankmanp@gmail.com.