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חנניכי,

ᐱᓄᕐ ᑭᓂᑦᑐᖅ ᐃᑦᐸᑦᔪᑦ, P.C., M.P. (il/lui/he/him)





Tammaqtailinahuarnirit anngutighat atuqhugit Inuit qaujimajatuqangillu ilihimaniillu ilitquhiannin
Conserving wildlife through the application of Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit and scientific knowledge

RESOLVED that, pursuant to Section 5.2.34(f) of the Nunavut Agreement, the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board approves the uplisting of Short-eared Owl from Special Concern to Threatened under the Federal Species at Risk Act.

Recommendation: The Board recommends that Environment and Climate Change Canada increase monitoring effort for migratory birds in Nunavut and sponsor an Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit study of migratory birds in Nunavut. Given the limited monitoring of migratory birds across Nunavut and the wealth of knowledge held by Inuit, the Board considers that it would be valuable for Environment and Climate Change Canada to sponsor an Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit study of migratory birds in Nunavut. Such a study would help define species distributions, changes in abundance and distribution over time, and provide other information that could be useful to future assessment and management of migratory birds in Nunavut.

In reaching its decisions to approve the proposed changes in status under SARA, the Board considered each species separately and took into account the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (Committee) assessment and status report (Committee Report) for each species, the threats faced by each species, and recent trends in abundance.

The Board also considered the consultations conducted by Environment and Climate Change Canada with affected hunters and trappers organizations and other co-management partners from January to October 2022 and responses to Environment and Climate Change Canada's consultations by co-management partners. The Board noted that the Whale Cove Hunters and Trappers Organization reported seeing red knot and short-eared owls in their area. The hunters and trappers organization stated that the recovery of red knot and short-eared owls would be a good thing but did not explicitly provide a position on the proposed listings. The Government of Nunavut provided detailed responses to each proposed change in status. They indicated that they supported the delisting of red knot *islandica*, had no position on the downlisting of barn swallow, and did not support the other five status changes.

Titigqap Turaarvia 1379
Iqaluit, NU X0A 0H0
 **(867) 975-7300**
 **(888) 421-9832**

Box 1379
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 (867) 975-7300
 (888) 421-9832



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Barn swallow

The Board approved the downlisting of barn swallow from threatened to special concern based on the Committee Report, which indicated that their abundance has been stable in Canada over the last three generations. However, they still face threats from declining populations of insect prey, increasing frequency of severe temperature fluctuations during spring migration and the breeding season, and loss of suitable nesting sites in some regions. Although Nunavut is outside the typical breeding range for barn swallow, they have been documented in the same areas year after year and as far north as Bathurst Island.

Lesser yellowlegs

The Board approved the listing of lesser yellowlegs as threatened based on the COSEWIC report that indicated there have been long-term declines, continuing threats, and uncertainty in the estimates of trends of abundance. Substantial long-term declines in abundance are congruent with the Board members' lived experience, where they have observed declines in the abundance of lesser yellowlegs. Lesser yellowlegs also face threats that are likely to become more pervasive or unlikely to cease, including loss of wetland and intertidal habitat used on migration and in winter range, increased risk of drought in breeding areas, coastal flooding and greater severity of hurricanes during fall migration due to climate change, and hunting for sport and subsistence in South America.



Box 1379
Iqaluit, NU X0A 0H0
 (867) 975-7300
 (888) 421-9832



Ottawa, Canada K1A 0H3

JUL 24 2023

Mr. Daniel Shewchuk
Chairperson
Nunavut Wildlife Management Board
P.O. Box 1379
Iqaluit NU X0A 0H0



Dear Mr. Shewchuk:

Thank you for your letter of December 20, 2022, in which you present the decisions of the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board on the listing proposals of seven wildlife species of birds under Schedule 1 (the List) to the *Species at Risk Act*. These decisions support the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada's assessments, and are as follows:

- Downlisting of Barn Swallow from threatened to special concern;
- Listing of Lesser Yellowlegs as threatened;
- Downlisting of the Red Knot *rufa* Northeastern South America wintering population from threatened to special concern;
- Uplisting of Red Knot *rufa* Southeastern USA/Gulf of Mexico/Caribbean wintering population from threatened to endangered;
- Uplisting of Ross's Gull from threatened to endangered;
- Uplisting of the Short-eared Owl from special concern to threatened; and
- Delisting of Red Knot *islandica* from the List.

I appreciate the time and care with which the Board considered the situations of these wildlife species, arriving at the decisions to accept these proposals. I am pleased to accept the Board's decisions. I acknowledge that the Board also considered the proposal of downlisting the Canada Warbler from threatened to special concern, electing not to make a decision for this species.

This completes the decision-making process under Article 5 of the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement. Over the coming months, I will take steps to implement the proposed status changes in my recommendations to the Governor in Council.

I note the Board recommendations regarding an Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit study of migratory birds in Nunavut, and for their improved monitoring. I also note the Board's recommendation regarding Environment and Climate Change Canada's approach to consultation with hunters and trappers organizations. I have shared these with the appropriate departmental officials for their consideration.

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I read with interest the observations of Board members regarding the long-term declines in the abundance of Lesser Yellowlegs.

Should the Governor in Council accept my recommendations and decide to make some or all of the changes to the List, Environment and Climate Change Canada officials will work collaboratively with the Board to develop recovery strategies for the Lesser Yellowlegs and the Short-eared Owl as well as management plans for the Barn Swallow, and the Red Knot *rufa* Northeastern South America wintering population.

Please accept my best regards.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Steven Guilbeault', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

The Honourable Steven Guilbeault, P.C., M.P. (il/lui/he/him)