



Species At Risk Natural Heritage Strategy

Summary Report



Prepared for:

Haliburton Highlands Land Trust
PO Box 792
Minden, ON
K0M 2k0

October, 2008

Prepared by:

Glenside Ecological Services Limited

2490 Horseshoe Lake Rd. R.R.#1
Minden, Ontario
Canada K0M 2K0

Phone: 705-286-3181
Fax: 705-286-6582
Email: pheaven@glenside-eco.ca
Web: www.glenside-eco.ca

SPECIES AT RISK NATURAL HERITAGE STRATEGY

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Species at Risk Natural Heritage Strategy.....2

 Table of Contents2

INTRODUCTION..... 1

 Background2

 Purpose and Scope of Study.....2

 SAR Habitat Preferences and Requirements 2

 Spatial Data Preparation 3

 SAR Habitat Availability and Quality 3

 Priorities for Stewardship and Securement..... 3

 Education and Community Mobilization 3

 Acknowledgements4

Species at Risk Habitat Requirements5

 Overview6

 Plants6

 American Ginseng (*Panax quinquefolius*) 6

 Engelmann’s Quillwort (*Isoetes engelmannii*) 7

 Birds8

 Peregrine Falcon (*Falco peregrinus anatum*)..... 8

 Golden-winged Warbler (*Vermivora chrysoptera*)..... 9

 Reptiles9

 Spotted Turtle (*Clemmys guttata*) 9

 Wood Turtle (*Clemmys insculpta*)..... 11

 Blanding’s Turtle (*Emydoidea blandingii*) 12

Stinkpot (*Sternotherus odoratus*)..... 13

Five-lined Skink (*Eumeces fasciatus*) 14

Eastern Hog-nosed Snake (*Heterodon platirhinos*) 15

Milksnake (*Lampropeltis triangulum*) 17

Eastern Ribbonsnake (*thamnophis sauritus*) 18

SAR Habitat Summary20

 Summary and Recommendations 21

Bibliography25

 Bibliography 26

Figure 2: Protected areas and areas of conservation interest for Species at Risk 24



BACKGROUND

Based on the Natural Heritage Information Centre (NHIC) database there are 12 Species at Risk (SAR) found in Haliburton County. However the location, availability, abundance, connectivity and quality of these habitats within the County have not been investigated. Planning applications are reviewed on a daily basis and land management practices are put into effect. In the absence of a Species at Risk Natural Heritage Strategy, both the species and their habitats are vulnerable. Furthermore, conservation cannot be guided without a Species at Risk Natural Heritage Strategy to prioritize efforts.

The Haliburton Highlands Land Trust recently completed a Natural Heritage Mapping project to document the types of habitat found within the County of Haliburton (Heaven, County of Haliburton Natural Heritage Mapping: A compilation and preliminary assessment, 2007). A preliminary investigation of habitat availability was conducted for a select few Species at Risk. The Haliburton Highlands Land Trust recognized the need to better delineate potential habitat for Species at Risk as this is one of the criteria for land acquisitions. The objective of this report is to expand on the Species at Risk component of the Natural Heritage Mapping project to complete a comprehensive Species at Risk Natural Heritage Strategy for Haliburton County.

This summary report is based on the Species at Risk Natural Heritage Strategy Final Report (Heaven, Species at Risk Natural Heritage Strategy, 2008). As such it does not include any of the process through which the Species at Risk potentially suitable habitat was derived, or the maps displaying the results, due to the sensitivity of the information. The summary report has been approved by the OMNR for public viewing.

PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF STUDY

This project has five components:

SAR HABITAT PREFERENCES AND REQUIREMENTS

Critical habitat has yet to be defined for the majority of the Species at Risk found in the County of Haliburton and habitat requirements and preferences of species can vary based on geographical locations. This component of the project reviewed the primary literature, Ontario



Ministry of Natural Resources (OMNR) reports, Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC) recovery strategies and other relevant and available literature; and compiles attributes of preferred and required habitat for the various life stages and activities of Species at Risk. Specifically this component focused on habitat structure and quality requirements and sensitivities.

SPATIAL DATA PREPARATION

Available spatial data was assessed for its relevance to the habitat requirements of each Species at Risk. Where required, spatial features were developed through satellite imagery interpretation and multi-feature analysis.

SAR HABITAT AVAILABILITY AND QUALITY

An assessment was conducted by correlating Species at Risk habitat requirements with existing digital spatial data. Available spatial data included but was not limited to, forest resource inventory (FRI) data, quaternary geology data, Natural Resource Values and Information System (NRVIS) waterbody coverage and the Enhanced Wetland Mapping developed by the OMNR in partnership with Ducks Unlimited Canada. NHIC element occurrences were used to desktop verify the Species at Risk potential suitable habitat mapping results.

The quality of available habitats was assessed based on Species at Risk sensitivities, spatial attributes (e.g. size, edge/core, fragmentation etc.), satellite imagery or other spatial datasets such as the Ontario Road Network (roadlessness), utility corridors, natural shorelines, etc.

PRIORITIES FOR STEWARDSHIP AND SECUREMENT

Optimal habitats of the individual Species at Risk were compiled to prioritize areas in Haliburton County for future land-use planning, private land stewardship, and securement of SAR habitat for the Haliburton Highlands Land Trust.

EDUCATION AND COMMUNITY MOBILIZATION

Periodically competent local naturalists are spotting Species at Risk yet failing to report such sightings to the NHIC, as demonstrated by the paucity of element occurrences in Haliburton



County. If captured, these data would be extremely valuable in a natural heritage planning exercise.

Although not addressed in this report a database was developed for the HHLT to record species observations in a format compatible with the NHIC database. A series of presentations were delivered to local schools to introduce SAR and stimulate public reporting of SAR observations. The HHLT also provided presentations to focal organizations with the intent of introducing the HHLT and its objectives, as well as providing these organizations with background information on the Species at Risk in Haliburton County.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This project was supported by the Haliburton Highlands Land Trust, The Land Between, Haliburton Highlands Stewardship Council and the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources Species at Risk Stewardship Fund. Paul C. Heaven of Glenside Ecological Services Limited conducted the literature review, spatial data analysis and is the principal author of the report.

