

ETP-E3-1

REFERRAL TO \_\_\_\_\_  
RECOMMENDED \_\_\_\_\_  
DIRECTION REQUIRED \_\_\_\_\_  
RECEIPT RECOMMENDED



Ministry of  
Natural Resources

Ministere des  
Richesses Naturelles

Southern Region  
Aurora District Office  
50 Bloomington Road West  
Aurora, ON L4G 3G8

May 20, 2009

THE REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF PEEL  
10 PEEL CENTRE DR,  
BRAMPTON ON L6T 4B9

Roll Number: 212412000215510

COPY TO:	
CAO	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Corporate Services	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Environment, Transportation and Planning Services	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Employee and Business Services	<input type="checkbox"/>
Human Services	<input type="checkbox"/>
Peel Living	<input type="checkbox"/>
Council	<input type="checkbox"/>

Dear Landowner,

The Endangered Species Act, 2007 (ESA) came into force on June 30, 2008. In accordance with this Act and its Program, the Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) is working with people across the province to protect and recover Ontario's at-risk plants and animals.

Our records indicate that the Jefferson Salamander, a threatened species, may occur on or in the immediate area of your property. The Jefferson Salamander is restricted to a small portion of Southern Ontario anchored on Niagara Escarpment and is protected under the ESA.

In order to protect the habitat of Jefferson Salamander, the MNR is proposing a regulation that would, if passed, describe the area protected as "habitat" under the ESA. We are writing to advise you of the regulation process and to seek your comments on the proposed content of a habitat regulation.

MNR is proposing that the following type of areas be protected in a habitat regulation for the Jefferson Salamander:

- wetlands, pools and ponds that are being used by Jefferson Salamanders or that were used in the past 3 years in certain geographic locations. It is proposed that the area that is within 300 meters of these wetlands, pools and ponds that would provide suitable conditions for foraging, dispersal, migration or hibernation would also be protected as habitat. In addition, areas that provide suitable conditions for dispersal to other suitable breeding areas up to 700 meters away from protected breeding ponds would be protected.

The proposed habitat description was developed based on the best available scientific information about the needs of the species, but we recognize that you as a landowner or land manager may have local knowledge or interests that could affect the content of the proposed regulation.

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MAY 20 2009

REGION OF PEEL  
CLERKS DEPT.

The proposal for a habitat regulation under the ESA is being posted on the Environmental Registry (ER) for public comment at [www.ebr.gov.on.ca](http://www.ebr.gov.on.ca) [Registry # 010-6490]. In addition, comments on this proposal can be submitted in writing to Andrew Jobes, Species at Risk Biologist, MNR, 300 Water Street, Peterborough, ON, K9J 8M5 or faxed to (705) 755-1788 by **Monday June 15<sup>th</sup>, 2009**. Specifically, we are interested in hearing from you on whether you support or have concerns with the proposed content of the regulation and how the regulation may affect you. In order to help us better understand the unique or shared concerns of different groups, please identify yourself as a private landowner/land manager when commenting. This proposal may change as a result of comments received during consultation.

In an area prescribed as habitat in a regulation made under the ESA, you would be able to undertake activities as long as they do not damage or destroy the habitat. Some activities can harm the species or its habitat, for example activities that eliminate, diminish, impair or alter ground and / or surface water contributions that affect water quality and quantity over the short or long term of Jefferson Salamander breeding habitat and activities that eliminate, destroy, damage, impair or fragment terrestrial habitat could damage or destroy the habitat of the Jefferson Salamander. In some cases, activities that could damage or destroy the habitat may be allowed under permits or agreements issued by the MNR under the Act. Please contact us for advice on how to avoid harming the species or its habitat when you wish to undertake activities in or around the habitat.

The Species at Risk Stewardship Fund provides opportunities for landowners to obtain funds to help with stewardship protection. The enclosed brochure provides more information. Also enclosed are a fact sheet on the species and a brochure about the ESA.

You are welcome to call Melinda Thompson-Black, Species at Risk Biologist at (905) 713-7425 if you have any questions about the proposed habitat regulation content, the ER process or advice on how to avoid activities that may damage or destroy the habitat.

We appreciate your comments on this proposal and hope you share our interest in Ontario's species at risk. We will contact you again when a habitat regulation has been approved for this species.

Sincerely,



Deb Pella Keen  
District Manager  
Ministry of Natural Resources, Aurora District

Enclosures: Species at Risk Stewardship Opportunities fact sheet  
Jefferson Salamander Fact Sheet  
Endangered Species Act 2007 brochure

*By working together, we can help Ontario's species at risk*

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## Jefferson salamander (*Ambystoma jeffersonianum*)

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Jefferson salamanders have a grey or brown-coloured back, with lighter underparts. Blue flecks may be present on the sides and limbs. Adults are 12-20 cm long. The long tail makes up half this length!

Young salamanders (larvae) look like miniature adults, but with external gills. It is difficult to distinguish between Jefferson salamander larvae and that of its close relatives, because adult colouration does not develop until the salamanders leave the breeding ponds.

### Habitat

Adults live in moist, loose soil, under logs or in leaf litter. Your best chance of spotting a Jefferson salamander is in early spring when they travel to woodland ponds to breed. They lay their eggs in clumps attached to underwater vegetation. By midsummer, the larvae lose their gills and leave the pond and head into the surrounding forest. Once in the forest, Jefferson salamanders spend much of their time underground in rodent burrows, and under rocks and stumps. They feed primarily on insects and worms.

### Range

The Jefferson salamander lives in deciduous forests. Its range extends across parts of the northeastern U.S. In Canada, it is found only in southern Ontario, mainly along the Niagara Escarpment.

### Threats

This species requires intact deciduous forest with an undisturbed forest floor. These salamanders also need unpolluted breeding ponds that do not dry up in the summer. Habitat loss and degradation caused by urban development, draining of wetlands and some resource extraction activities are the cause of the decline in salamander numbers in southern Ontario.

Today, the Ontario populations are small, isolated pockets, each with a few hundred salamanders. Small populations are at risk of local extinction due to floods, fire or other catastrophes. Road mortality as they travel between breeding, nesting and overwintering sites is also a major concern for Jefferson salamanders.

### Protection

The Jefferson salamander is a threatened species both in Ontario and Canada. Ontario's *Endangered Species Act* protects this species.

**Status:** threatened provincially and nationally



*Did you know?*

Jefferson salamanders rely on "vernal pools" (temporary water bodies that fill with water from melting snow, storm water or groundwater. These pools or "ponds" usually dry up by midsummer). To learn more about vernal pools and the species that depend on them, visit the Ontario Vernal Pool Association's website: <http://www.ontariovernalpools.org/index.html>

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### What you can do to help Jefferson salamanders

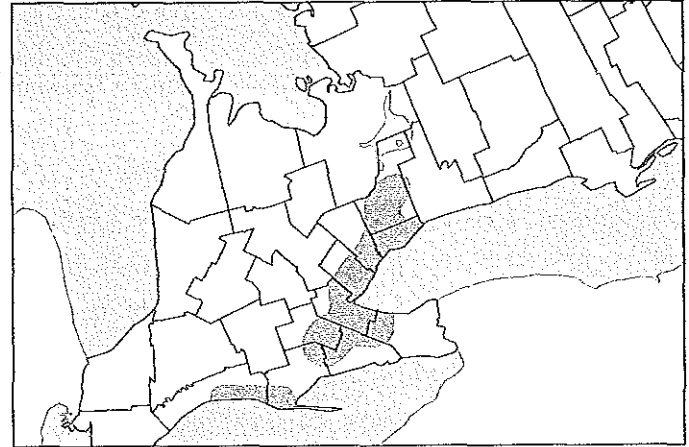
- Maintain salamander habitat on your property. This can be as simple as preserving vernal pools and leaving fallen logs on the forest floor. When conducting work near vernal pools or other wetlands avoid migration and breeding seasons.
- Consult the MNR for information on provincial regulations and best management practices when working around wetlands and in forests. Call toll free 1-800-667-1940 or visit the MNR's website at <http://www.mnr.gov.on.ca>
- The Ministry of Natural Resources tracks species at risk such as the Jefferson salamander. You can use a handy online form to report your sightings to the Natural Heritage Information Centre.  
[http://nhic.mnr.gov.on.ca/species/species\\_report.cfm](http://nhic.mnr.gov.on.ca/species/species_report.cfm)

### *Did you know?*

Jefferson salamanders breed in late March or early April. During breeding season, they travel from their overwintering sites to breeding ponds. They generally make this journey on the first warm rainy spring night of the year.

Unlike most small animals, Jefferson salamanders can live a very long time; up to 30 years of age!

Jeffersons spend the winter in old rodent burrows or cracks in the rocks below the frost line. They need to find a spot deep in the ground so they don't freeze over the winter.



Ontario Jefferson salamander distribution

### For additional information:

Visit [www.ontario.ca/speciesatrisk](http://www.ontario.ca/speciesatrisk);  
Contact your local MNR District office; or  
Contact the Natural Resources Information Centre  
1-800-667-1940  
TTY 1-866-686-6072  
[www.ontario.ca/mnr](http://www.ontario.ca/mnr)  
E-mail inquiries: [mnr.nric.mnr@ontario.ca](mailto:mnr.nric.mnr@ontario.ca)

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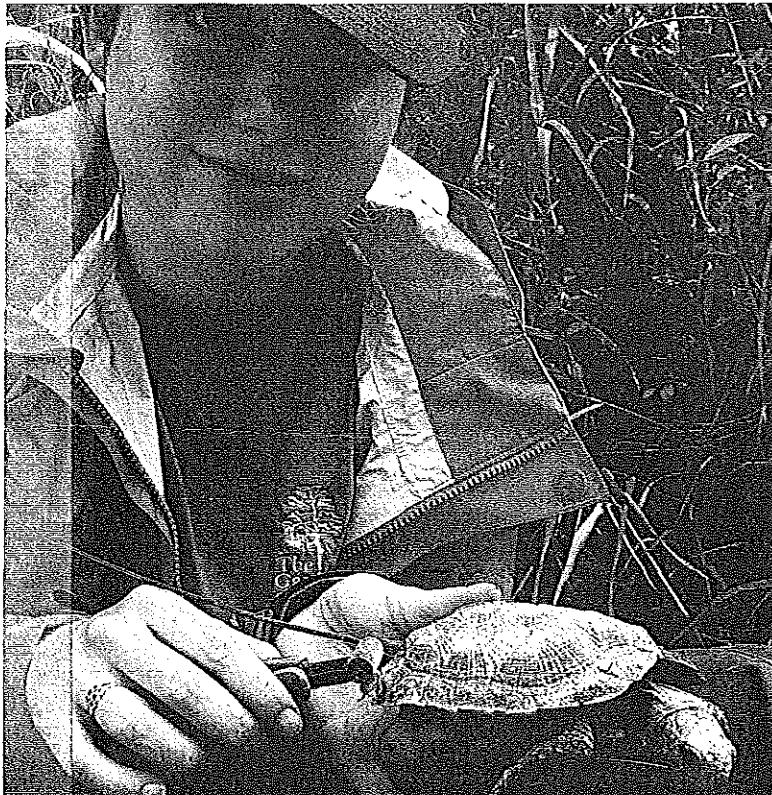
MNR # 52217

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## Species at risk stewardship opportunities Endangered Species Act, 2007

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The *Endangered Species Act, 2007* came into force on June 30, 2008. This legislation makes Ontario a North American leader in the protection of species at risk and their habitats. It protects three times as many species at risk as before and provides flexibility that allows businesses to operate and grow while still protecting species at risk.



The act recognizes the important role voluntary stewardship plays in protecting important habitat.

The Ministry of Natural Resources supports groups and individuals who voluntarily take part in activities to protect or recover species at risk and their habitats.

### Species at risk stewardship opportunities

Stewardship refers to decisions and actions by people who choose to play a role in the responsible management and use of our natural resources. For example, a landowner may voluntarily decide to maintain a buffer strip along a creek running through his/her farm field to protect habitat for aquatic species at risk.

The ministry offers a number of programs for landowners, organizations and businesses that help protect species at risk and habitat. These include:

- the Species at Risk Stewardship Fund;
- a Species at Risk Incentives Program; and
- the Conservation Land Tax Incentive Program.

### Species at Risk Stewardship Fund

The Species at Risk Stewardship Fund is a competitive, application-based program that provides grants to eligible groups and individuals for activities that support the protection and recovery of species at risk and habitat, use multi-partner approaches, and engage people in stewardship.

Priorities under the fund are:

- Recovery actions and habitat improvement or protection activities (e.g. building nesting structures, installing protective nest covers)
- Surveys, inventories and monitoring (e.g. gathering Aboriginal traditional knowledge, population assessments)

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Essex County Stewardship Council

- Education and outreach activities that increase awareness and knowledge of species at risk (e.g. promoting best management practices, youth internships opportunities).

The application package for the fund explains the eligibility criteria and application process in detail.

A new call for applications is issued annually in the fall.

### Species at Risk Incentives Program

Many of Ontario's species at risk live on private land. The Species at Risk Incentives Program is designed specifically for private landowners to support the use of best management practices that protect species at risk.

Incentives for landowners will include cost-sharing with the ministry on projects that benefit species at risk. For example, the ministry would help to support a project where a farmer restores a field with plantings to provide habitat for a species at risk.

The Species at Risk Farm Incentive Program is a pilot program for registered farms that shares the cost of projects that use beneficial management practices. A brochure is available that explains the eligibility criteria and application process. This program is a cooperative effort with the Canada-Ontario Environmental Farm Plan, the Ontario Federation of Agriculture and the Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association.

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### Conservation Land Tax Incentive Program

The Conservation Land Tax Incentive Program (Program) is designed to recognize, encourage and support long-term private stewardship of Ontario's provincially-significant conservation lands, including the habitat of endangered species.

The Program provides property tax relief to landowners who agree to protect the natural heritage values of their property. The current tax relief offered is 100% tax exemption on the eligible part of the property.

The Program is not a land acquisition program. Participating landowners retain full ownership and property rights.

For the purposes of the Program, endangered species are those listed in regulation under Ontario's Endangered Species Act.



Karen Stokes, Ontario Stewardship

### For additional information:

Visit the *species at risk* website at [www.ontario.ca/speciesatrisk](http://www.ontario.ca/speciesatrisk)

Contact your District MNR office

Contact the Natural Resources Information Centre  
1-800-667-1940

TTY 1-866-686-6072

[www.mnr.gov.on.ca](http://www.mnr.gov.on.ca)

E-mail inquiries: [mnr.nric.mnr@ontario.ca](mailto:mnr.nric.mnr@ontario.ca)