

From: SCAReg (MECP) <scareg@ontario.ca>

Sent: Tuesday, March 31, 2026 11:59 AM

To: SCAReg (MECP) <scareg@ontario.ca>

Subject: Decision regarding new regulations and policies to enable the Species Conservation Act, 2025

**Ministry of the Environment,
Conservation and Parks**

**Ministère de l'Environnement, de
la Protection de la nature et des
Parcs**



Good morning,

I am writing to inform you of the implementation of the new *Species Conservation Act, 2025* (SCA), including new regulations and the repeal of the *Endangered Species Act, 2007* (ESA) and revocation of its regulations.

The SCA modernizes species protection and implements a registration-first approach while maintaining strong environmental safeguards. The registration-first approach – a process already in use in other ministry statutes – allows most projects to begin as soon as they register, while requiring that persons undertaking those projects follow clear, enforceable rules aimed at protecting species and their habitats. Under the new regulations, some activities will not be registerable and instead will require a permit. Other activities, such as growing a plant for commercial purposes or protecting yourself from imminent harm from an animal, are excepted and can proceed without a registration or permit.

To support implementation of the new SCA, the ministry has posted two decision notices on the Environmental Registry of Ontario (ERO):

1. Decision notice on the new regulations and amendments (ERO 025-0909)
2. Decision notice related to proposed guidance materials (ERO 025-0908)

The SCA and the following regulations are now in effect:

- Protected Species in Ontario (PSO) List Regulation: sets out the species that receive protections under the SCA
- Registrable Activities Regulation: sets out registration requirements and rules for conducting registerable activities
- Permit Activities Regulation: prescribes which activities must obtain a permit before proceeding and cannot proceed under a registration.
- Excepted Activities Regulation: prescribes activities that can proceed without a registration or permit
- Transitional Matters Regulation: sets out rules to transition activities authorized under the ESA under a permit or agreement, or registered to a conditional exemption under the ESA to the SCA

In addition, consequential amendments to other statutes and regulations have also taken effect. These amendments update references to the ESA to refer to the SCA.

Finally, two amending regulations made under the *Environmental Bill of Rights, 1993* (EBR) have taken effect. One makes regulations made under the SCA subject to the public consultation requirements of the EBR and the other exempts instruments issued under the SCA from those requirements.

Under the SCA, as most activities adversely impacting protected species or their habitat will be required to register, if you had applied for a permit for an activity that was not issued before March 30, 2026, your activity likely now requires registration. Existing permits, other authorizations and registrations to conditional exemptions under the ESA will transition to the SCA through rules set out in the Transitional Matters Regulation. You are advised to review the SCA and new regulations to determine how to proceed with your activity.

The ministry is also developing new guidance materials to support the implementation of the SCA. This guidance is intended to assist in assessing whether an activity is likely to have an impact on a protected species or species' habitat such that a registration or permit would be required. Drafts of this proposed guidance will be posted for comment under a new ERO number.

The ERO decision notices provide further details of the above-noted changes and can be viewed online:

- Decision notice on the new regulations and amendments ([ERO 025-0909](#))
- Decision notice related to proposed guidance materials ([ERO 025-0908](#))

You can also review the ERO proposal notices and public comments on the [Environmental Registry](#). These postings were open for public consultation for 45 days and closed on November 10, 2025.

MECP would also like to invite you to **attend a virtual webinar for stakeholders**, during which we will present information on the new regulations under the SCA.

The virtual sessions will take place on **April 1 from 10 to 11am** and **April 8 from 10 to 11am**. If attending a session, you will be able to join via weblink. If you wish to participate, please register through one of the following links:

- April 1, 10 – 11am: [Eventbrite](#)
- April 8, 10 – 11am: [Eventbrite](#)

All sessions will be identical in content delivered, giving you the ability to choose the session(s) that works best with your schedule. An email invitation will be sent to you closer to the session date with a link to access the meeting.

If you have any questions on these postings, please reach out to SCAReg@ontario.ca. If you have any questions about the registration process, please reach out to SCRegistry@ontario.ca.

Thank you for your interest in protecting and conserving Ontario's species.

Sincerely,

Travis Coulter
Director, Species at Risk Branch
Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks