



## MEDIA RELEASE

### **New program provides funds for on-farm protection of species at risk**

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*Prepared for Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association*

Guelph, Ontario – Farmers can access funding for on-farm projects to protect species at risk under a new government program that has just been launched for the 2010 cropping year.

The Species at Risk Farm Incentive Program (SARFIP) will provide cost-share funding for farmers to implement best management practices that help protect species at risk and essential habitats located on-farm. The Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources has provided \$800,000 to the program this year through the Species at Risk Stewardship Fund and the Government of Canada has committed \$400,000 through its Habitat Stewardship Program for Species at Risk. SARFIP will be delivered by Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association (OSCIA) under an agreement with the Ontario Federation of Agriculture (OFA) who represents the Ontario Farm Environmental Coalition.

“We are pleased to have a new program available that can help farmers with costs associated with protecting species at risk”, says Barry Hill, a farmer and President of OSCIA. “About 180 of Ontario’s wildlife species are considered to be at risk and farmers can play an important role in protecting our province’s biodiversity.”

In order to qualify for funding of up to 50 percent of approved project costs, eligible Ontario farm businesses must have a peer-reviewed Third Edition Environmental Farm Plan and have selected at least one of the best management practices (BMP) from the SARFIP list. Portions of five specific BMP categories are eligible for cost-share funding under this new initiative: Upland and Riparian Area Habitat Management, Erosion Control Structures (Riparian), Improved Pest Management, Shelterbelt and Native Vegetation Establishment and Resource Planning.

SARFIP is a new program that cannot be combined with existing cost-share opportunities associated with the Canada-Ontario Farm Stewardship Program. For more specific details, farmers are encouraged to contact their local OSCIA Program Representative or visit [www.ontariosoilcrop.org](http://www.ontariosoilcrop.org).

“We have been asking for additional funding to support on-farm environmental activities so we welcome the launch of this program,” says Bette Jean Crews, President of OFA. “Ontario’s farmers are committed leaders in environmental stewardship and our on-farm conservation efforts provide benefit to all Ontarians.”

The Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association is a not-for-profit farm organization dedicated to working with farmers to facilitate responsible economic management of soil, water, air and crops through development and communication of innovative farming practices.

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