

CONSERVATION STANDARDS PROGRAM TERMS AND CONDITIONS: SPECIES DETECTION SURVEYS

INTRODUCTION

Species Detection surveys are typically conducted by environmental consulting companies on behalf of industry proponents to detect and mitigate impacts to rare and sensitive species and their habitats. A permit is required under Section 21 of *The Wildlife Act, 1998* to conduct surveys, research, or other activity to detect or observe wild species or wild species at risk. These permits fall under the Conservation Standards Program and are administered by the Saskatchewan Ministry of Environment. These terms and conditions apply to all Species Detection survey permits.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

In consideration of the terms and conditions set out below, the Ministry of Environment (the "Ministry") and the permittee ("Proponent") agree as follows:

A. SCOPE

1. The Proponent and Primary/Secondary Contacts (PTC/STC) are responsible for ensuring all conditions on the permit are met. Failure to comply with these permit terms and conditions may result in immediate revocation of the permit, rejection of further applications, and/or possible prosecution.

B. LEGAL AUTHORITY

1. This permit is issued pursuant to Section 21 of *The Wildlife Act, 1998*.
2. Possession of a permit does not exempt the Proponent from obtaining additional permissions, approvals, licences, permits and authorizations required by law.
3. The Proponent and PTC/STC must comply with *The Wildlife Act, 1998* and all regulations pursuant to that Act, and any associated federal, provincial and municipal regulations that may apply.

C. INDEMNIFICATION

1. The Proponent and PTC/STC agree to indemnify and hold harmless the Government of Saskatchewan and its employees and representatives against any claims, injuries or damages arising from activities conducted under this permit.

D. ADMINISTRATION

1. The permit must be signed by the Proponent to be valid.
2. The Proponent and PTC/STC shall ensure that all persons employed in connection with the work are competent to perform the work, meet Ministry Personnel Requirements as stated in the "Species Detection Personnel Instructions and Roster," and are fully instructed and supervised.
3. The permit authorizes work to be conducted by the Proponent, PTC, STC, and personnel listed in the associated company Species Detection Survey Protocol Staff Matrix(es), provided they meet or

exceed the minimum experience requirements listed in the “Species Detection Personnel Instructions and Roster.”

4. Trainees must be accompanied by an experienced observer that meets the personnel requirements listed in the “Species Detection Personnel Instructions and Roster.”
5. The signed permit and Species Detection Survey Protocol(s) must be carried at all times during surveys and made available upon request by the Ministry. Electronic versions are acceptable.

E. SURVEY REQUIREMENTS

1. Surveys must be conducted in areas with Saskatchewan Conservation Data Centre observations as well as all suitable habitats for the guild or Species of Conservation Concern (SOCC) within the proposed project area and setback distances, as defined by the Saskatchewan Activity Restriction Guidelines (ARGs).
2. Proponents and PTCs/STCs must use appropriate Ministry Species Detection Survey Protocols (SDSPs), or alternate approved SDSPs on record with the Ministry.
3. Survey equipment left unattended must be clearly marked with the permit number and removed at the end of the field season.
4. Observations of SOCC must be disclosed to the Ministry, in any proposal, report, terms of reference, or other document submitted to the Ministry regarding the project informed by the species detection survey(s) (e.g. construction proposals, Environmental Impact Statements).

F. REMOTE PILOTED AIRCRAFT SYSTEMS

1. Remote Piloted Aircraft Systems (RPAS) surveys must have written approval from the Ministry and must follow Transport Canada regulations.

G. DEAD OR INJURED WILDLIFE

1. Unless authorized in the permit, immediate notification must be provided to the nearest Ministry of Corrections, Policing and Public Safety (CPPS) Field Office if any species protected under *The Wildlife Act, 1998* is injured or dies as a result of the survey, found injured or dead within the project footprint or survey area, requires euthanasia, or requires transportation to the Canadian Wildlife Health Cooperative, a veterinarian or rehabilitation facility.

H. DATA SUBMISSION

1. Data must be submitted for all Species Detection surveys and notification activities (e.g., Trail Camera Monitoring) using ministry approved Loadforms.
2. All wild species data must be submitted, including detections of both target and incidental species:
 - a. All detections (observations/vocalizations) of SKCDC tracked species must be recorded in the Species Detection Loadform with the exception of guild-type surveys (i.e. grassland birds, forest birds, amphibians, vascular plants), where all taxa within the guild that are detected must be recorded, not just listed species or species tracked by the SKCDC (i.e. all birds detected during a grassland bird survey must be recorded, not just Sprague’s Pipit). The date and location must be recorded for all species.

- b. Any incidental detection (observation or vocalization) of a tracked species must be recorded, along with the date and location.
- 3. Unless otherwise specified in the permit, Species Detection Loadforms must be submitted on or before the permit expiry date.
- 4. Earlier data submissions are required when an environmental assessment (EA) determination for the project is imminent or pending. Proponents or the PTC/STC must submit the Species Detection Loadform at least three weeks in advance of the corresponding regulatory approval document to allow adequate time for review.
- 5. Species Detection Loadforms must be submitted separately on a per-permit basis. Submit updated HABISask Project Screening Report(s) and corresponding Project Footprint(s) with the Species Detection Loadform, if the project footprint changed after submitting the Species Detection Application Form package.
- 6. GPS track file(s) (.gpx) must be recorded and submitted for all Breeding Bird Scans conducted under this permit. A separate track file is required for each scan visit and observer. The file name must include the permit number and date of the visit (e.g., 25SD123_BreedingBirdScan_YYMMDD.gpx).
- 7. Permit requirements are not met until the Ministry receives an acceptable Species Detection Loadform. Resubmissions are due within one week of the Ministry's resubmission request.

I. PERMIT EXTENSIONS AND CLOSURE

- 1. The Ministry will consider the permit closed once an acceptable Species Detection Loadform has been received.
- 2. If the project has been cancelled or postponed and no surveys were initiated, the PTC/STC must advise the Ministry via the Species Detection Application Form (amendment) as quickly as possible so the permit can be closed.
- 3. Permit expiry extensions may be granted where surveys or passive monitoring (e.g., Autonomous Recording Unit or trail camera monitoring) are scheduled to continue beyond the original permit expiry date. Requests for permit extension must be submitted at least one week prior to the permit expiry date.
- 4. Extensions for Species Detection Loadform submission may be granted for surveys that require additional time for analysis (e.g. automated recording unit surveys, trail camera monitoring). Extension requests must be submitted before the permit expiry date.
- 5. Proponents or PTCs/STCs that fail to close or extend permits by the deadline may be disqualified from obtaining Species Detection permits in the following field season.

DEFINITIONS

Term	Definition
Species of Conservation Concern (SOCC)	Species that meet one or more of the following criteria: - Identified in Schedules 1, 2 and 3 of the <i>Species at Risk Act, 2002</i> (SARA). - Recognized as being at risk by the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC). - Listed in the provincial <i>Wild Species at Risk Regulations, 1999</i>. - Listed by the Saskatchewan Conservation Data Centre (SKCDC) as S1, S2, SH and SX. - Contained in the Activity Restriction Guidelines (ARGs).
Suitable habitat	All habitat types described in the “Ecology and Life History” section of NatureServe Explorer for the target species or guild unless otherwise indicated.

TABLE OF AMENDMENTS

Date	Section	Comments
March 2025		Initial version – amendments to updated versions will be tracked in this table
April 2025	H. DATA SUBMISSION	Added point H.6. to reflect Breeding Bird Scan requirements
March 2026	D. ADMINISTRATION	Clarified personnel requirements
	E. SURVEY REQUIREMENTS	Clarified subject
	H. DATA SUBMISSION	Clarified data expiry date language
	I. PERMIT EXTENSIONS AND CLOSURE	Clarified permit closure and extension requirements

For inquiries, contact SD.researchpermit@gov.sk.ca (Species Detection Mailbox). Include the Permit number in the subject line if applicable.