

## **Review of the protocol for the detection and relocation of freshwater mussel species at risk in Ontario Great Lakes Area (OGLA)**

Regional Peer Review Meeting  
Canada Centre for Inland Waters  
Burlington, ON  
May 11<sup>th</sup>, 2007

### **Terms of Reference**

#### **Context**

The following freshwater mussel species found in Ontario are listed as Endangered under the *Species at Risk Act* (SARA): Round Hickorynut (*Obovaria subrotunda*), Kidneyshell (*Ptychobranhus fasciolaris*), Northern Riffleshell (*Epioblasma torulosa rangiana*), Snuffbox (*Epioblasma triquetra*), Round Pigtoe (*Pleurobema sintoxia*), Rayed Bean (*Villosa fabalis*), Mudpuppy Mussel (*Simpsonaias ambigua*) and the Wavyrayed Lampmussel (*Lampsilis fasciola*). Two additional species, Rainbow (*Villosa iris*, Endangered) and Mapleleaf (*Quadrula quadrula*, Threatened) have been assessed by the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC) and are currently being considered for listing under SARA.

The Minister of Fisheries and Oceans is responsible for aquatic species, including freshwater fishes and mussels. Once a species is listed under the SARA, it becomes illegal to kill, harass, capture or harm it in any way.

#### **Meeting Objectives**

The objective of this meeting is to peer review the manuscript report entitled, "Protocol for the detection and relocation of freshwater mussel species at risk in Ontario Great Lakes Area (OGLA)". The purpose of the protocol is to outline and standardize methods to be incorporated into field surveys carried out to detect, relocate and monitor mussel species at risk in Ontario. In addition, the document provides guidance on when a SARA permit is needed and the process for obtaining the permit is also provided. It is designed for use by persons planning projects in and around water that might affect mussel species at risk in Ontario. The peer review of the document is to ensure that the technical content of the report is accurate and the methods are scientifically based and sound.

This protocol does not provide direction on when the relocation of mussels would be an acceptable mitigation strategy for development activities under review by Fisheries and Oceans Canada. The decision to allow a mussel relocation will be made by DFO during the review of the development activity once a proposal has been submitted to DFO. As such, relocation as a mitigation strategy for mussel species at risk is not under review at this meeting although it has proven to be a useful tool under certain circumstances.

The manuscript report will be available to all participants by April 23.

**Output of the meeting**

The output of the meeting will be a proceedings document which will outline the discussion of the protocol manuscript.

**Participation**

The participants invited to this meeting include DFO Science, DFO Habitat and Oceans Management, and researchers from Environment Canada, Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, University of Guelph, University of Toronto, Lakehead University, Trent University and North Carolina State University.