



July 18, 2024

The Honourable Steven Guilbeault, P.C. M.P.
Minister of Environment and
Climate Change Canada
House of Commons
Ottawa, Ontario,
Canada
K1A 0A6

The Honourable Diane Lebouthillier
Minister of Fisheries, Oceans, and the
Canadian Coast Guard
15th Floor, Centennial Towers
200 Kent Street
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0E6

Dear Minister Guilbeault and Minister Lebouthillier,

Re: NWMB Decision on Environment and Climate Change Canada and Fisheries and Oceans Canada’s Proposal to List Thorny Skate as Special Concern under the Federal Species at Risk Act

NWMB Decision

At the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board’s (NWMB or Board) Regular Meeting (RM002-2024) on June 26, 2024, Fisheries and Oceans Canada presented a proposal requesting that the Board approve the listing of thorny skate (*Amblyraja radiata*) as Special Concern under the federal *Species at Risk Act*.

At the Board’s In-Camera Meeting (IC002-2024) on June 26, 2024, the Board considered Environment and Climate Change Canada and Fisheries and Oceans Canada’s submission and presentation and made the following decision:

RESOLVED that pursuant to Sections 5.2.34(f) of the Nunavut Agreement, the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board approve the designation of thorny skate as a species of Special Concern under the Federal Species at Risk Act.

Reasons for NWMB Decision

In reaching its decision, the Board considered information from Environment and Climate Change Canada and Fisheries and Oceans Canada, which suggested that the thorny skate population had declined and experienced range contractions in the southern extent of its range. The Board also considered the threats to this population



Daniel Shewchuk
Chairperson
Nunavut Wildlife Management Board
P.O. Box 1379
Iqaluit, Nunavut
X0A 0H0

Dear Mr. Shewchuk,

Thank you for your letter of July 18, 2024, in which you present the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board's decision, dated June 26, 2024, on the proposed listing of Thorny Skate as special concern under the *Species at Risk Act* (SARA). The Board indicated support for listing Thorny Skate under Schedule 1 of SARA, and I wish to express my appreciation for the Board's response.

For this decision, the Minister must respect his obligations under both the Nunavut Agreement and the Nunavik Inuit Land Claims Agreement. The Nunavik Marine Region Wildlife Board (NMRWB) has informed us that they will require several months to provide their decision on Thorny Skate.

As per Article 5.3. 18 of the Nunavut Agreement, can you please advise us whether the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board grants our request to vary the deadline to 120 days from when we receive the final board decision, in this case, that of the NMRWB?

I would like to extend my thanks to you and the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Paula Brand,

Acting Director General,
Canadian Wildlife Service,
Environment and Climate Change Canada

c.c. Sarah Wren, Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC)
Erin Groulx, Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO)
Cal Wenghofer, Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO)



FEB 06 2026

Mr. Daniel Shewchuk
Chairperson
Nunavut Wildlife Management Board
c/o Taqialuq Sataa
tsataa@nwmb.com

Dear Mr. Shewchuk:

Thank you for your correspondence of November 24, 2025, regarding the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board's decision on the Horned Grebe's listing change under the *Species at Risk Act* (SARA). I regret the delay in responding.

In accordance with Article 5.3.18 of the Nunavut Agreement, I am pleased to accept the Board's decision to combine the Magdalen Islands and the Western populations into a single designatable unit for the Horned Grebe. The Eeyou Marine Region Wildlife Board has also accepted this change, while the Nunavik Marine Region Wildlife Board has indicated that it will not be providing a decision on this assessment.

I would like to express my gratitude to the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board for ensuring that the interests of rights-holders were carefully considered in arriving at this decision.

Following my recommendation, should the Governor in Council approve the proposed change to the Horned Grebe, Western population, further refinements to the existing management plan may be required. Environment and Climate Change Canada officials will work collaboratively with relevant Nunavut partners, as needed, in accordance with the Nunavut Agreement and SARA.

Please accept my best regards.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Julie Dabrusin'.

The Honourable Julie Dabrusin, P.C., M.P.