Species at Risk

Barn Swallow

Hirundo rustica

STATUS

The Barn Swallow is protected under the federal *Species at Risk Act*.

HABITAT DESCRIPTION

In natural environments, Barn Swallows preferred nesting in caves, crevices and ledges in cliff faces. In areas of human settlement, their nesting habits change to use human made structures such as barns, buildings, bridges, and culverts almost exclusively. They forage in a diverse range of open or semi-open habitats such as grassy fields, freshwater shorelines, islands, wetlands, and subarctic tundra. The Barn Swallow can be found throughout British Columbia, but their numbers are thought to be declining in recent decades.

HABITAT FEATURES (BIOPHYSICAL ATTRIBUTES)

Barn Swallows require habitat with the following biophysical attributes:

- Open or semi-open foraging areas (grassy fields, freshwater shorelines, islands, wetlands, and tundra)
- Natural features (caves, crevices, or ledges) or man-made structures (barns, bridges, buildings, garages, culverts) for nesting; and
- Large populations of insects for feeding.

CRITICAL HABITAT RANGE

The Barn Swallow is known to breed throughout British Columbia. It is a long-distance migrant and winters though Central and South America. A map of habitat range is currently unavailable.

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CRITICAL HABITAT FEATURE LINK TO BC AGRICULTURAL BMPs

This table identifies which Environmental Farm Plan (EFP) Beneficial Managment Practices (BMPs) may be applicable; other stewardship actions may also be possible.

Habitat biophysical attributes	Activity that would destroy critical habitat	Agricultural BMP for protection or enhancement of habitat
• Open or semi-open foraging areas (grassy fields, freshwater shorelines, islands, wetlands, and tundra)	Changes in agricultural practices (e.g., loss of habitat as grassland-associated agriculture is transformed to vegetable, berry, and greenhouse production). *How activity would destroy critical habitat:* • Direct loss of grassland habitats and foraging areas	• Maintain uncultivated grassland areas **BMPs** 2006-1004 2006-2601 2018/2019-1004 2018/2019-2601 2018/2019-2801 2018/2019-3501
	Land conversion for human development (e.g. housing and urban areas, logging, agriculture) in core or connectivity critical habitat. *How activity would destroy critical habitat:* • Direct loss of grassland foraging habitats as land is converted to housing, commercial, or industrial buildings	
• Natural features (caves, crevices, or ledges) or man-made structures (barns, bridges, buildings, garages, culverts) for nesting	Land conversion for human development (e.g. housing and urban areas, logging, agriculture) in core or connectivity critical habitat. *How activity would destroy critical habitat:* • Direct loss of nesting structures such as old buildings and old trees as land is converted to housing, commercial, or industrial buildings • Increased road mortality as urbanization increases in historically rural areas	• Retain nesting features in existing buildings • Replace lost nesting locations with nest boxes **BMPs** 2006-2204 2018/2019-2801 2018/2019-2204 2018/2019-3501
• Large populations of insects for feeding	Use of pesticides to control or reduce insect populations. *How activity would destroy critical habitat:* • Direct loss of food source • Secondary poisoning through bio-accumulation in insect prey	• Reduce or eliminate the use of pesticides that may affect insect populations **BMPs** 2006-2501 2018/2019-2501 2018/2019-3501

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