

Species at Risk

Western Screech-Owl (macfarlanei subspecies)

Megascops kennicottii macfarlanei



STATUS

The Western Screech-Owl macfarlanei subspecies is protected under the federal *Species at Risk Act*.

HABITAT DESCRIPTION

The macfarlanei subspecies of the Western Screech-Owl is found at low elevations in the southern interior of British Columbia. It can be found in dry coniferous forests dominated by Ponderosa pine (*Pinus ponderosa*) or Douglas-fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*). It is strongly associated with mature riparian woodlands dominated by black cottonwood (*Populus spp.*), water birch (*Betula occidentalis*), or trembling aspen (*Populus tremuloides*). Nesting occurs in natural tree cavities or holes excavated by larger woodpeckers. They will also use appropriate nest boxes if available. Current estimates suggest that half of the habitat for the macfarlanei subspecies has been lost over the past century.

HABITAT FEATURES (BIOPHYSICAL ATTRIBUTES)

The macfarlanei subspecies of the Western Screech-Owl require habitat with the following biophysical attributes:

- Dry coniferous forest dominated by Ponderosa pine and Douglas-fir;
- Mature riparian woodland stands of black cottonwood, water birch, or trembling aspen; and
- Natural tree cavities or larger hollows excavated by woodpeckers.

CRITICAL HABITAT RANGE

In British Columbia the Western Screech-Owl macfarlanei subspecies is found in coastal regions (except Haida Gwaii) and in the interior southern valleys from Lillooet, Kamloops, Lumby, Slokan, Creston and Cranbrook south to the US border. 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 Management 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
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dry coniferous forest dominated by Ponderosa pine and Douglas-fir 	<p>Removal or alteration of forest stands and associated understory vegetation for timber harvesting, or urban and agricultural development.</p> <p><i>How activity would destroy critical habitat:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vegetation removal (tree/canopy removal, understory alteration) leads to elimination of cover needed for nesting and dispersal Loss of foraging areas for breeding owls 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protect, enhance, or restore existing dry coniferous forest stands adjacent to riparian areas <p>BMPs</p> <p>2006-1002 2006-1004 2006-2101 2006-2601 2018/2019-1002 2018/2019-1004 2018/2019-2601 2018/2019-3501</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mature riparian woodland stands of black cottonwood, water birch, or trembling aspen 	<p>Removal or significant alteration of riparian forest stands.</p> <p><i>How activity would destroy critical habitat:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Removal of riparian forest stands leads to loss of nesting, foraging, and cover structures. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protect or replant riparian woodlands in dry coniferous forests <p>BMPs</p> <p>2006-0601 2006-0602 2006-1002 2006-1003 2006-2001 2006-2101 2006-2104 2006-2107 2006-2203 2018/2019-0601 2018/2019-0704 2018/2019-1002 2018/2019-1003 2018/2019-1004 2018/2019-1005 2018/2019-1101 2018/2019-2201 2018/2019-2202 2018/2019-2204 2018/2019-2205 2018/2019-3001 2018/2019-3401 2018/2019-3501</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Natural tree cavities or larger hollows excavated by woodpeckers 	<p>Removal of mature riparian trees or wildlife trees for public safety or forestry operations.</p> <p><i>How activity would destroy critical habitat:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Loss of nesting sites which are often located in large mature riparian trees 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protect or replant riparian woodlands in dry coniferous forests Retain large riparian deciduous trees and wildlife trees in park lands Installation of nest boxes in areas where riparian vegetation has been altered or removed <p>BMPs</p> <p>2006-2204 2018/2019-2204 2018/2019-2801 2018/2019-3501</p>



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