



## Consultation and engagement on the potential addition of Brassy Minnow (Western Arctic population) to the List of Wildlife Species at Risk under the *Species at Risk Act*

The Government of Canada is engaging with Canadians on whether the Western Arctic population of Brassy Minnow should be added to the List of Wildlife Species at Risk as Special Concern.

Please fill out the online [survey](#) by May 14, 2024.

### Your opinion counts!

The *Species at Risk Act* (SARA) supports Canada's international commitments to conserve biological diversity by providing legal protection for wildlife species at risk of extinction or extirpation. SARA acknowledges that all Canadians have a role to play in the conservation of wildlife species.

Before deciding whether the Brassy Minnow (*Hybognathus hankinsoni*), Western Arctic population, will be added to Canada's List of Wildlife Species at Risk, we would like to receive your comments regarding the possible ecological, cultural, and economic impacts of listing or not listing this species under SARA.

### Adding a species to the List of Species at Risk

The process of listing a species under SARA consists of several steps: it begins with a status assessment by the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC) and ends with a Government of Canada decision on whether or not to add a species to the List of Wildlife Species at Risk. Public engagement is conducted to gather the opinions of Canadians, and is an important step in this process.



Figure 1: Brassy Minnow

### Facts about Brassy Minnow

Brassy Minnow is a minnow species that is moderately deep-bodied and compressed, with olive-green colouring dorsally and brassy-yellow to dull silver colouring laterally. The head is broad, and the snout overhangs a small mouth that does not extend back as far as the front margin of the eye. It has large circular scales, no barbels, a complete lateral line, and a long, complexly coiled gut.

Brassy Minnow inhabits small headwater lakes, quiet pools, small slow-moving streams, beaver ponds, and drainage ditches with submerged aquatic vegetation. Brassy Minnow appears tolerant of a range of water quality conditions, but occupancy and abundance are highest in large, deep, backwater habitats that likely improve survival during droughts and over





winter, and where there are few or no predatory fishes. Because it typically occurs in waterbodies with low fish species diversity, it is likely an ecologically significant fish in these systems. As a low-level consumer of phytoplankton and other algae, its transfer of energy and nutrients up the food chain is important.

### Status designation of Brassy Minnow

The Western Arctic population of Brassy Minnow was most recently assessed as special concern by COSEWIC in May 2022. Under SARA, a special concern species is defined as one that may become a threatened or an endangered species because of a combination of biological characteristics and identified threats.



Figure 2: Distribution of Brassy Minnow, Western Arctic population (west portion)

Long description: Figure 2 is a partial map of northwestern Alberta and northeastern British Columbia. The cities of Grande Prairie and Prince George are indicated by black dots on the map. The east portion of the distribution of Brassy Minnow, Western Arctic population, is indicated by red dots, located north of Prince George, south of Grande Prairie, and along the provincial border of British Columbia and Alberta. A north arrow indicating the direction of north is located in the top left of the image. A map scale of 80 km is located at the bottom right of the image.

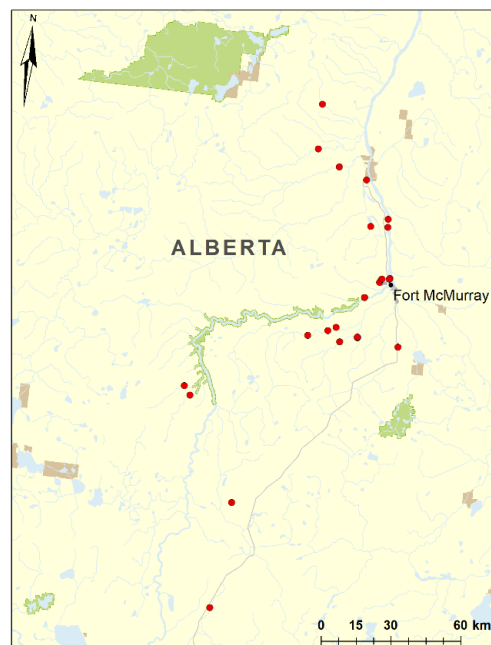


Figure 3: Distribution of Brassy Minnow, Western Arctic population (east portion)

Long Description: Figure 3 is a partial map of northeast Alberta, with the urban service area of Fort McMurray shown. The west portion of the limited and fragmented distribution of Brassy Minnow, Western Arctic population, is indicated by red dots, located north, south, and southwest of Fort McMurray. A north arrow indicating the direction of north is located in the top left of the image. A map scale of 60 km is located at the bottom right of the image.

### Why is Brassy Minnow assessed as special concern?

Within the Western Arctic population, the introduction of predatory fishes is the threat that is most likely to influence Brassy Minnow abundance and distribution. Brassy Minnow is also affected by the degradation of habitat or habitat quality over the medium-long term and other multifaceted threats that are likely cumulative. These threats are further affected by natural fragmentation in the species' distribution. Brassy Minnow likely have a limited ability to move downstream and colonize other headwater tributaries. The species' short generation time make it susceptible to events or habitat changes that affect its population and abundance.





**What happens if Brassy Minnow is listed as a special concern species under the SARA?**

If Brassy Minnow is listed as special concern, the species will not be subject to prohibitions under SARA (including killing, harming, harassing, capturing, possessing, buying, selling, or trading). However, the Government of Canada will be required to produce a management plan which outlines measures that will contribute to the conservation of Brassy Minnow. The management plan will be prepared in cooperation with Indigenous organizations and stakeholders. There may also be increased access to funding for scientific research and stewardship activities.

**We would like to receive your comments on the potential impacts of adding or not adding the Brassy Minnow (Western Arctic population) to the List of Wildlife Species at Risk under SARA designated as Special Concern.**

**Your comments are important.**

**Please fill out the [survey](#): we want to hear from you.**

A copy of the 2022 COSEWIC Status Report on the Brassy Minnow and other information can be found on the [SARA Registry](#).

**References**

COSEWIC. 2022. COSEWIC assessment and status report on the Brassy Minnow *Hybognathus hankinsoni*, Pacific population, Western Arctic population and Missouri population, in Canada. Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada. Ottawa. xx + 60 pp.

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