

Number of Species at Risk in Alberta

Description

This map describes the number of animal and plant species that are at risk in Alberta. "Species at risk" is a term used by the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC) that includes the following categories of plants and animals:

- Extirpated species – no longer in the wild in Canada.
- Endangered species – species facing imminent extirpation or extinction.
- Threatened species – likely to become an endangered species if nothing is done to reverse factors leading to its extirpation or extinction.
- Species of special concern – species that may become threatened or endangered due to biological characteristics or identified threats.

The number of species at risk are displayed on the map using the following classes: 0, 1 to 3, 4 to 6, 7 to 9, and 10 to 16. The species at risk in Alberta in 2002 were:

- American badger (*jeffersonii* subspecies)
- Anatum peregrine falcon
- Burrowing owl
- Deepwater sculpin (Great Lakes populations)
- Eastern short-horned lizard
- Ferruginous hawk
- Great plains toad
- Grizzly bear
- Hare-footed locoweed
- Long-billed curlew
- Monarch butterfly
- Mountain plover
- Northern leopard frog (Prairie population)
- Ords kangaroo rat
- Piping plover (*circumcinctus* subspecies)
- Prairie loggerhead shrike
- Sage grouse (Prairie population)
- Sage thrasher
- Short-eared owl
- Slender mouse-ear-crec
- Small-flowered sand-verbena
- Smooth goosefoot
- Soapweed
- Spragues pipit
- Swift fox
- Tiny cryptanthe
- Weidemeyer's admiral
- Western blue-flag
- Western silvery minnow
- Western spiderwort
- Wolverine (Western population)
- Wood bison
- Woodland caribou (Boreal population)
- Yellow rail

Data sources

COSEWIC is a committee of experts that assesses and designates which wild species are in some danger of disappearing from Canada. Individual COSEWIC 2002 Species Range Maps were downloaded from the COSEWIC website. These maps show the natural habitat area of each of the species at risk. The number of these areas that overlapped at any given location in the landscape was used to designate the number of species at risk at that location.

Potential uses

This map is useful for increasing awareness of biological diversity (biodiversity) concerns in the province. Maintaining biodiversity is essential for ensuring a healthy environment. The more diverse the ecosystem, the better it is able to respond to environmental changes or stresses, such as floods, drought, pests and disease.

Knowing where more species are at risk creates awareness of how human activities may be affecting biodiversity. Greater biodiversity in agricultural landscapes provides more land management choices and increases the stability of an ecosystem.

Limitations

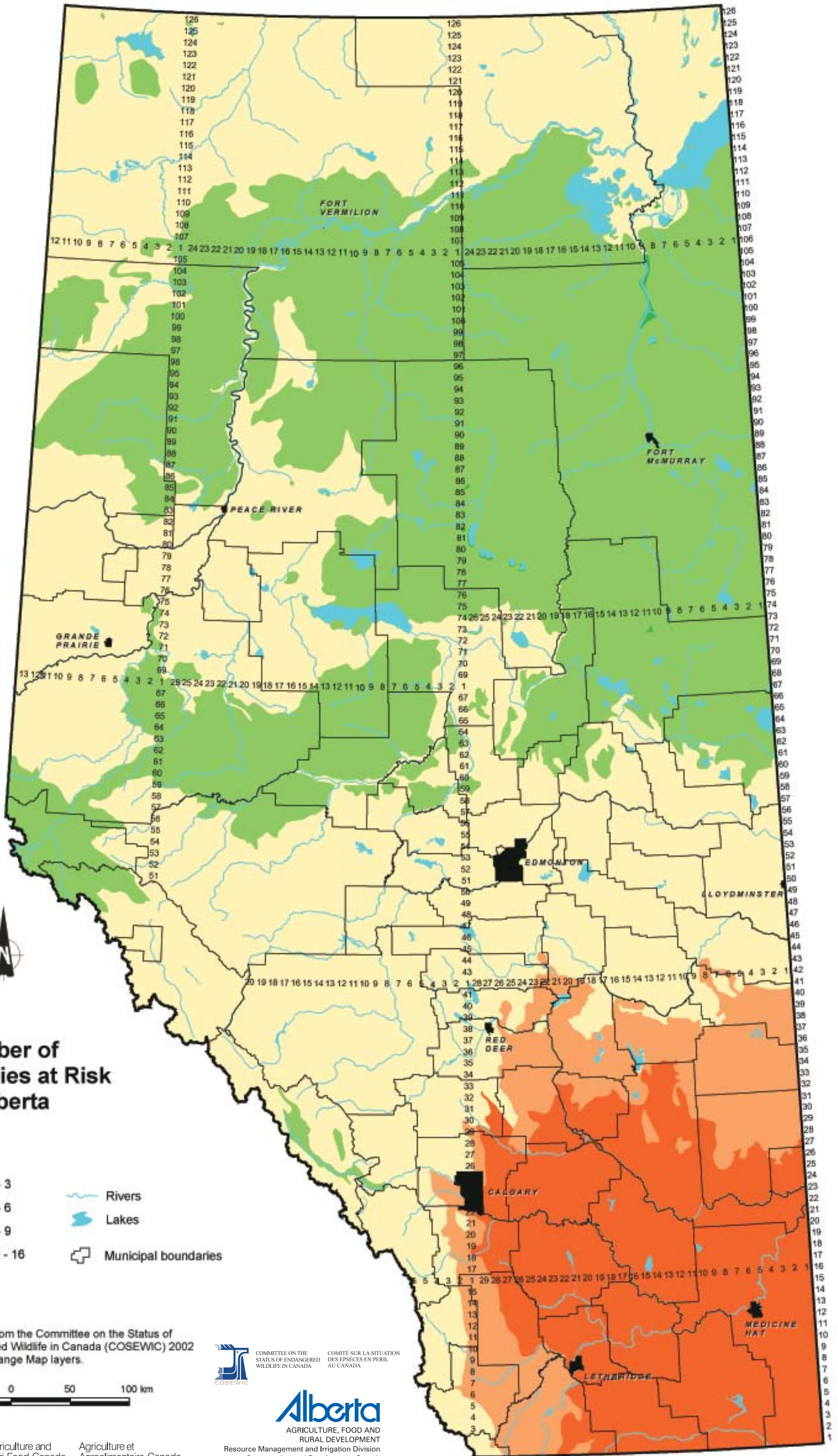
This map should be used as a broad indication of the number of species at risk and distribution of those numbers in the province. By using the number of natural habitat areas of the species at risk that overlap as a surrogate for actual density of species at risk, the map is showing the range of the species that overlap and should be used at a regional level only.

Further information

COSEWIC www.cosewic.gc.ca

Alberta Environmentally Sustainable Agriculture program provides information about agricultural biodiversity. From the Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development website, use the topic bar on the left and follow: *Soil/Water/Air, Environmental Stewardship* and *Biodiversity*. www.agric.gov.ab.ca

Scroll down to view map



Number of Species at Risk in Alberta

- 0
 - 1 - 3
 - 4 - 6
 - 7 - 9
 - 10 - 16
- Rivers
 - Lakes
 - Municipal boundaries

Adapted from the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC) 2002 Species Range Map layers.

