



July 29, 2015

The Honourable Leona Aglukkaq
Minister of the Environment
10 Wellington Street, 28th Floor
Gatineau, QC K1A 0H3

Re: Listing of Swallows under the *Species at Risk Act*

Dear Minister Aglukkaq,

I am writing to urge you to act immediately to secure the listing of Barn Swallows and Bank Swallows as threatened species under the *Species at Risk Act* (SARA) and accelerate assessments of other Swallow species with declining populations.

According to *The State of Canada's Birds 2012 (Supplementary Materials)*, Swallow populations have been falling almost precipitously over the 40 years leading up to 2012, at the following annual rates:

- Bank Swallow 8.9%
- Purple Martin 4.1%
- Northern Rough-winged Swallow 4.1%
- Barn Swallow 3.4%
- Cliff Swallow 3.3%

Four years ago, the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC) officially recommended that the Government of Canada list the Barn Swallow as threatened under SARA, so that concerted action to recover this species could begin. Two years ago, COSEWIC similarly urged that the Bank Swallow be listed as threatened. Neither species has yet been listed under SARA. These delays are extremely concerning given the continuing declines in populations of these Swallow species.

We urge you to act as soon as possible to obtain the legal listing of Barn Swallows and Bank Swallows as threatened either by issuing an order under s.27.(3) of SARA or recommending that the Governor in Council list these species under s.27.(1) of SARA. We also ask you to commission with dedicated funding an assessment by COSEWIC of the population status of Purple Martin, Northern Rough-winged Swallow and Cliff Swallow.

Nature Canada looks forward to continuing to work with you to ensure the protection of these important birds.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Eleanor Fast".

Eleanor Fast
Executive Director