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## **Landmark Report Highlights Importance of Biodiversity Conservation**

*State of Ontario's Biodiversity 2010 report released*

Toronto — May 17, 2010 —A council established by the Ontario government to measure the state of the province's biodiversity has delivered a landmark report. The Ontario Biodiversity Council (OBC) has released its State of Ontario's Biodiversity 2010 report today, comprised of 29 indicators that provide the most comprehensive overview to date of the province's natural environment and the pressures that must be addressed.

"The report shows efforts to conserve Ontario's biodiversity have increased. However, many aspects of the province's biodiversity are still under threat," says Terry Rees, member of the Ontario Biodiversity Council.

This report is the first of its kind for Ontario. The indicators in the report touch on a wide variety of subjects, including species diversity, protection of rare ecosystems and freshwater quality.

In 2005, Ontario's Biodiversity Strategy made a series of recommendations on improving the protection of the province's natural wealth. The creation of the Ontario Biodiversity Council fulfilled a recommendation of the Strategy.

"The work of the Ontario Biodiversity Council shows that the government has taken significant steps to address the goals of the biodiversity strategy," said Linda Jeffrey, Minister of Natural Resources. "Measuring and documenting our biodiversity will enable Ontarians to make informed conservation and planning decisions."

More than one-third of the indicators in the Council's report establish baselines of information for the first time, providing a reliable way to measure progress in the future.

"We've learned that overall the majority of birds that regularly breed in Ontario have either increasing or stable long-term population trends," says Caroline Schultz, of the Ontario Biodiversity Council. "But we've also found that aerial insectivores have suffered sharp declines and that habitat loss faced by grassland and forest-interior birds is a threat that warrants urgent attention."

"This report shows where the threats to Ontario's biodiversity are," says Jon Grant, Chair of the Ontario Biodiversity Council. "We now have a clear picture of where we need to concentrate more efforts and where more research is required. We may not like all of the findings of the report, but we can certainly use the knowledge we've gained to strengthen Ontario's conservation agenda."

The full State of Ontario's Biodiversity 2010 report can be found on the Ontario Biodiversity Council website at [www.ontariobiodiversitycouncil.ca](http://www.ontariobiodiversitycouncil.ca)

## About the Ontario Biodiversity Council

The Ontario Biodiversity Council (OBC) is a group of 22 volunteers who represent environmental and conservation groups, government agencies, academia, Aboriginal communities, and industry associations.

The purpose of the OBC is to guide the implementation of Ontario's Biodiversity Strategy (OBS).

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