

Cost-Benefit Analysis Thorny Skate (*Amblyraja radiata*)

The purpose of this analysis is to examine the incremental costs and benefits to Canadians that result from listing Thorny Skate as special concern under the federal *Species at Risk Act*.

If Thorny Skate is added to the List of Wildlife Species at Risk as a species of special concern, it would not be subject to the general prohibitions under the *Species at Risk Act* (SARA). However, Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) would be required to develop and implement a future management plan for the species in an effort to ensure that it does not become threatened or endangered due to human activity. The management plan would be developed in cooperation with affected governments, wildlife management boards, Indigenous organizations, and any other organizations or persons affected by the management plan. As the general prohibitions under SARA do not apply to species of special concern, the benefits and costs of adding Thorny Skate to List of Wildlife Species at Risk are likely negligible and result primarily from the use, development, and implementation of a management plan.

A benefit following a potential listing of Thorny Skate under Schedule I of SARA would be the demonstration of DFO's continuing commitment to conserving Canada's species at risk, and upholding the department's SARA mandate as well as international commitments. Non-use benefits derived by Canadians would include knowledge that the species exists (existence value) and that the species will be available for future generations to enjoy (bequest value). Self-sustaining and healthy ecosystems with their various elements in place, including species at risk, would also contribute positively to the livelihoods and the quality of life for all Canadians. Additionally, if the species was listed, a management plan by the Department that could include research, education, outreach, monitoring, and reporting activities would be developed.

The potential costs and benefits following a potential listing of Thorny Skate remain uncertain at this time. However, as there would be no SARA prohibitions associated with listing as special concern, it is anticipated that costs would be minimal.