Consultation Summary
Snowy Owl and Short-billed Dowitcher

Prepared for the NMRWB-EMRWB

Snowy Owl

Summary of Comments Received

Four responses were received during consultations regarding the proposed listing of the Snowy Owl under Schedule 1 of the Species at Risk Act.

- Three respondents supported the proposed listing.
- One respondent opposed the proposed listing due to concerns regarding insufficient data to support the change in status.

Key reasons provided in support of listing included population declines, the cultural importance of the species to Inuit communities, the precautionary approach to conservation, the need for continued research and monitoring, and the value of incorporating Indigenous Knowledge into conservation decisions. One respondent supported the listing but did not provide detailed rationale.

Key Themes

- Conservation of a culturally important Arctic species
- Population declines and ongoing threats
- Need for additional monitoring and research
- Importance of Indigenous Knowledge
- Limitations and uncertainty in available data

Short-billed Dowitcher

Summary of Comments Received

Two responses were received regarding the proposed listing of the Short-billed Dowitcher. Both respondents supported the proposed listing.

Comments highlighted the importance of protecting wetlands used by the species, potential impacts from climate change, the precautionary approach to conservation, and habitat pressures associated with development activities, including mineral exploration.

Key Themes

- Wetland conservation
- Climate change impacts
- Precautionary conservation approach
- Habitat protection from development pressures
- Continued monitoring and conservation efforts

Additional Consultation Context

Consultation Process Considerations

In some cases, consultation activities extended beyond meeting submission deadlines, despite repeated outreach efforts, engagement opportunities could not be arranged with all organizations contacted during the consultation period, and some follow-up communications did not result in meetings or additional feedback.

Additional Snowy Owl Feedback

The Government of Nunavut indicated that it does not support listing the Snowy Owl as Threatened and recommended further consideration of the assessment before a final listing decision is made. Concerns focused on uncertainty related to population estimates and trends, limitations in available breeding population data, the interpretation and application of Indigenous Knowledge, and the evidence supporting identified threats. Additional review of available information was recommended. Participants in consultation activities also raised questions regarding population trends, climate-related impacts on Arctic ecosystems, the use of Indigenous Knowledge in species assessments, and the availability of monitoring information. Some participants noted that Snowy Owls continue to be harvested and used in Arctic regions, indicating ongoing interactions between communities and the species.

Additional Short-billed Dowitcher Feedback

Very limited feedback was received regarding the proposed listing of the Short-billed Dowitcher. This was generally consistent with observations that the species occurs infrequently within much of Nunavut and falls outside the primary area of interest for some consultation participants. No substantive concerns regarding the proposed listing were raised during the consultation period.