

**Stakeholder involvement in species at risk recovery planning:
A multiple case study in southern Ontario.**

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The successful implementation of many species at risk recovery plans will often require the voluntary involvement of landowners. In southern Ontario, where fragmentation of habitat and a high degree of public land ownership exists, the appropriate involvement of landowners in the recovery process is imperative to successful implementation of recovery actions. During 2001, representative key informants from various national, provincial, and regional agencies were surveyed on their perspectives on the appropriate stage for landowner involvement in the recovery planning process. Representatives from four species at risk recovery teams in southern Ontario were then interviewed on their perspectives of the landowner involvement process in their respective recovery plan. The four recovery plans studied included the ecosystem-based Sydenham River and single species-based black rat snake, blue racer, and eastern loggerhead shrike. Best practices from the experiences of those involved in these four case studies indicate a desire from most participants to involve landowners as early as possible in the recovery planning process but time and financial constraints and a lack of expertise often prevented this from occurring. Other best practices from cases examined offer recommendations to improve the national recovery planning process.