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## ONTARIO SOIL AND CROP IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION

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### Benefit more with the 2016 Species At Risk Farm Incentive Program

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 16, 2016

Guelph ON – The Species at Risk Farm Incentive Program is back for 2016. The Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association (OSCIA), with support from Environment Canada and the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry, is pleased to support producers who are enhancing farm habitat for species at risk across the province. With streamlined funding levels and new bundled application forms—and up to \$20,000 available per farm business—it's easy to benefit more with SARFIP.

“SARFIP is great for producers who are looking to make improvements on their farms while also supporting farm habitat for species at risk,” said Gord Green, President of OSCIA. “Through offering cost-share funding for these types of projects, both farmers and species at risk benefit from the same on-farm activities.”

Farm businesses in Ontario can access cost-share dollars for on-farm projects that implement a variety of Best Management Practices. With a diversity of project opportunities, eligible BMPs encompass activities around croplands, grasslands, shorelines, stream banks, wetlands and woodlands. Many opportunities are available to support critical habitat through SARFIP, including cross fencing for rotational grazing, watering systems for livestock, native tree planting, improved stream crossings, native grassland plantings, invasive species removal and erosion control structures, among others.

SARFIP 2016 is open to all agricultural landowners in the province. Projects that provide indirect benefits to species at risk are eligible for 50% cost-share, and projects that directly benefit species at risk are eligible for 65%. An additional bonus of 10% cost-share is available for direct benefit projects if the producer is interested in enrolling in SAR-Watch, a monitoring program that measures the impact of SARFIP projects on the ground for species at risk.

“Farmers have a unique opportunity to support species at risk alongside their farming practices,” expressed Christine Schmalz, Environmental Programs Manager at OSCIA. “Farmers are on the ground working hard to implement projects that improve on-farm habitat for species at risk; we’re working hard to improve access to the program.”

To find out if SARFIP is a good fit with your farm, consult the program brochure for complete and detailed program information. All program materials, including the brochure and application forms can be found on the OSCIA website. To be eligible to participate in SARFIP, Ontario farm businesses must have a completed 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> Edition Environmental Farm Plan (EFP) workbook and Action Plan that has been verified and completed within the last five years.

Applications are now being accepted, and funding will be allocated to projects in the order in which they are received until fully allocated. Funding for this program is limited; if you have a project idea that fits, get your application submitted as soon as possible. Projects initiated on or after April 1, 2016 may be eligible.

For more information on eligibility criteria, the application process, and program deadlines, or to sign up to an upcoming EFP workshop in your area, visit the SARFIP page on the OSCIA website at

[www.ontariosoilcrop.org/oscia-programs/sarfip/](http://www.ontariosoilcrop.org/oscia-programs/sarfip/) or contact OSCIA directly at 519-826-3035 or [SARFIP@ontariosoilcrop.org](mailto:SARFIP@ontariosoilcrop.org).

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