



to reproduce. Habitat fragmentation has been implicated in the declines of many songbird populations across North America, and has contributed to an estimated 50% decline in black-throated green warbler numbers in studies in northern Alberta.

Timber harvesting has increased significantly in recent years in our province, and regenerating forests will not reach a sufficient age to support black-throated green warblers before being harvested again. Oil and gas development further increases habitat loss and fragmentation in forested regions of the province. Loss of wintering habitat in Central America may also be affecting black-throated green warbler populations.

## Management

Under Alberta's *Wildlife Act*, the black-throated green warbler is currently designated as a "non-game animal". The Endangered Species Conservation Committee has recommended that it be recognized as a "Species of Special Concern". Conservation of black-throated green warbler habitat has been recommended, and long-term forest management must focus on maintaining populations that are well distributed over the species historic range. In response to this need, Alberta Sustainable Resource Development (ASRD) is enhancing programs that collect information on the distribution, population size and trend of the black-throated green warbler in Alberta.

In 2001, a five-year joint initiative by the Alberta Bird Atlas Project and the University of Alberta Remote Areas Program, supported in part by ASRD, began. This study addresses the need for population information throughout the remote northern portion of the black-throated green warbler range in Alberta. Other research initiatives related to forest management are underway, or have been recently completed.

Conservation efforts for Alberta's black-throated green warbler population are best directed towards slowing the rate of direct habitat loss. Modifications to forest practices and management policy should be pursued in order to guarantee continued availability of black-throated green warbler habitat in our province. Such strategies could include maintenance of mixedwood forests through innovative harvesting and silvicultural practices, allocation of larger patches of older forest (> 40 ha) to wildlife reserves in harvested areas, and increasing the intervals between subsequent harvests (extended rotations).

## What You Can Do To Help

**As a member of the public, a land manager, or an industrial developer:**

- Report any observations of the black-throated green warbler to the nearest office of the Fish and Wildlife Division, Alberta Sustainable Resource Development.
- Volunteer for the annual Breeding Bird Survey in northern Alberta [<http://www.mp2-pwrc.usgs.gov/bbs/participate>].
- Contact wildlife management staff at the nearest Fish and Wildlife Division office for information on ways that you can minimize the impacts of human activities on black-throated green warbler populations.

