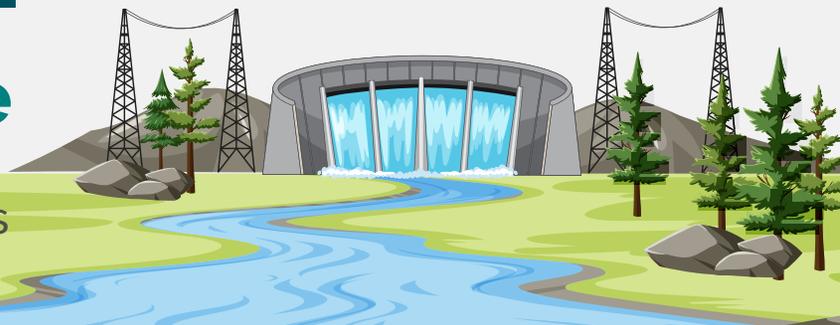
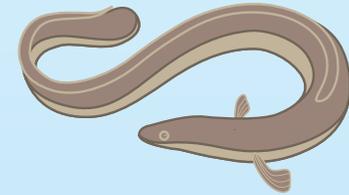


# The Fox Guarding the Henhouse

## How Industry-led Endangered Species Management is **FAILING** the American Eel in Ontario



Ontario's *Endangered Species Act* came into effect in 2008. In 2013, an amendment allowed certain industries, such as hydropower, to manage their own impacts on species at risk. These industries became responsible for figuring out if they harmed these species, and how to fix possible issues if they did. They only had to register and submit their plans as well as their observation reports to the provincial government if they were asked.



### How Well Does That Work?



To evaluate how well this works, the Canadian Wildlife Federation collaborated with researchers and students at Carleton University in Ottawa to review results, using the American Eel as an example. We obtained plans and reports from willing industry partners and through freedom of information. We identified facilities that are likely having negative effects on American Eels and confirmed whether each facility was participating. We then had a look at the process they were using and if they followed best management practices.

### What We Discovered

- We identified **17 hydropower facilities** that harm the American Eel by blocking their upstream migration, killing them as they migrate to spawn, or both.
- **Only eight** of the 17 facilities were registered as required by the Act.
- Actions to reduce the negative effects of these facilities on American Eel were only implemented at **four of the eight facilities**.
- The other four facilities had plans and took action, but **only one demonstrated how they reduced mortality**.
- We learned that many mitigation actions **did not** follow best management practices.
- **Monitoring methods were poor** — the number or proportion of eels blocked or killed was not estimated for any facility.
- **Only two eels** were identified as having been saved from downstream mortality, at one facility.



### What Does This Mean and Where Do We Go From Here?

Clearly, the industry has not been proactive in taking action to conserve the American Eel, and the provincial government has not provided adequate support for and enforcement of this regulatory framework. Even the most basic minimum legal requirements (to register facilities, fix possible issues and observe the eel population) were not met at most facilities. In light of these results, the industry needs guidance, auditing, and enforcement by the provincial government to ensure eel conservation.

### What Can You Do?

Write to your MPP and David Piccini, Ontario's Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks to ask that species at risk be better protected. Visit [CanadianWildlifeFederation.ca/eels](http://CanadianWildlifeFederation.ca/eels)