

January 15, 2025

## **PUBLIC NOTICE**

The Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks (KDWP) administers the Kansas Nongame and Endangered Species Conservation Act, K.S.A. 32-957 *et seq.* Pursuant to the Act, KDWP must review every five years which species are Endangered, Threatened, or Species in Need of Conservation in the state. Revisions to the list were last completed in 2019, and since then, new information is available regarding the abundance, distribution, and imperilment status of rare species in Kansas.

According to K.S.A. 32-960(b), determinations regarding Endangered and Threatened species shall be: (1) made “on the basis of best scientific, commercial and other data available to the secretary and after consultation, as appropriate, with federal agencies, other interested state agencies and interested persons and organizations”; and (2) KDWP shall “take in to consideration actions, if any, being carried out or about to be carried out by the federal government, by other states, by other agencies of the state or by nongovernmental persons or organizations which may affect the species under consideration.”

The Secretary of KDWP makes changes to the list of species pursuant to the following process:

1. KDWP accepts petitions from interested persons to list or delist species over a designated period.
2. The Secretary appoints a Kansas Threatened and Endangered Species Task Committee.
3. The Committee reviews each petition to determine whether the petitioner has provided substantial evidence that a species should be listed, up-listed, down or delisted and recommends to the Secretary which petitions should be reviewed further.
4. If the Secretary agrees that the petitions should be further reviewed, the Committee identifies species experts to serve on the Advisory Panel to the Committee.
5. KDWP staff identify and obtain the latest scientific data available on the species and provide it to the Advisory Panel and Committee.
6. The Advisory Panel reviews the data and provides recommendations to the Committee.
7. KDWP staff hold public meetings at multiple locations across Kansas where the petitioned species are known to occur, accepting comments and questions from members of the public.
8. The Committee reviews the information gathered at the public meetings and the findings from the Advisory Panel and submits recommendations to the Secretary.
9. If the Secretary agrees with the Committee’s recommendations and determines that the petitioner has presented substantial evidence that a species should be listed or delisted, KDWP (1) publishes a public notice notifying members of the public of the proposed listing actions; (2) mails notification of the proposed listing actions to federal and state agencies and local and tribal governments that are or may be affected by the results of this review as well as to all individuals and organizations that have requested notification of department action regarding the administration of the Act; (3) notifies the governor of each state that shares a common border with Kansas and in which the subject species is known to occur that such listing action is being proposed; and (4) issues a public notice to publicize the proposed listing action.
10. The Secretary submits the proposed rules and regulations to the Kansas Wildlife and Parks Commission for adoption at a future public hearing.

In July 2023, KDWP initiated this review process with a request for petitions to change a listing with supporting evidence. Upon the deadline of the petition process, the Committee reviewed the proposed petitions and determined that three petitions warranted full review. Following approval by the Secretary, the Committee then evaluated the scientific literature and consulted the Advisory Panel for its input to assist with a proper listing category determination. In February 2024, KDWP conducted public meetings in Great Bend, Topeka, and Fort Scott and held two virtual meetings to gather public testimony on the proposed delisting of state endangered and threatened species.

Consistent with the Committee's recommendations, the Secretary is proposing to move three species from Threatened status to Species in Need of Conservation status: Broad-headed Skink (*Plestiodon laticeps*); Northern Map Turtle (*Graptemys geographica*); and Shoal Chub (*Macrhybopsis hyostoma*). Increased effort and improved sampling methods have detected higher numbers of these species and demonstrated larger known distributions in Kansas.

KDWP invites your written comments on these proposals. Please address all comments to Jordan Hofmeier at [jordan.hofmeier@ks.gov](mailto:jordan.hofmeier@ks.gov) or 512 SE 25th Ave., Pratt, KS 67124-8174. Comments will be accepted until the Commission votes on the proposed changes at a time to be determined in the future.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Christopher Kennedy". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "C".

Christopher Kennedy, Secretary  
Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks