



Conservation Efforts for At-risk Species in Oklahoma

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Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation Overview

- ❑ Established in 1909
- ❑ Primary Function: regulation of hunting and fishing
- ❑ Broader Mission: management of self-sustaining fish and wildlife populations for current and future generations of Oklahomans
- ❑ Manages fisheries on public lakes
- ❑ Manages wildlife on 63 wildlife management areas
 - ❑ 24 owned by agency / 39 leased or managed cooperatively
- ❑ Operates four fish hatcheries
- ❑ Enforces fish and game laws (Oklahoma Titles 29) and regulations (Oklahoma Title 800)



ODWC Overview Continued

- ODWC is a Constitutional agency and funded under a user-pay model
- Agency receives no legislative appropriation or general state tax revenue
- Two primary funding sources:
 - Hunting/Fishing License Sales ~ 40%
 - Federal Cost-Share Grants ~ 45%

Federal funding received on a 75:25 cost-share ratio from:

- 1) the 1937 Wildlife Restoration Program (excise tax on hunting equip. & ammunition)
- 2) the 1950 Sport Fish Restoration Program (excise tax on fishing equipment)

ODWC's Trust Resource Role

- Fish and wildlife, but not plants, are public-trust resources managed by the states.
- Three exceptions:
 - Diadromous Fish (e.g., American Eel)
 - Federally Threatened & Endangered Species
 - Native Birds except for three families
 - Odontophoridae – quail
 - Meleagrididae – turkey
 - Tetraonidae – prairie chicken



ESA and State Wildlife Agencies

- The Endangered Species Act conveys management authority for federally-listed threatened and endangered species to the federal government working through the USFWS & NMFS
- The ESA contains no delegation language to lower government entities, but Congress created the Cooperative Endangered Species Fund in recognition of the states' ability to assist in the recovery of threatened and endangered species. Oklahoma's share of this fund averages ~ \$110,000/year.
- The State of Oklahoma has the authority to list wildlife at the state level as threatened or endangered, but rarely done in Oklahoma – only three state-listed species. Oklahoma's preference is to protect through closed seasons rather than T & E listing.

ESA and State Wildlife Agencies

- State wildlife agencies are in a unique role – we are both a conservation partner with the Services & an affected/regulated entity.
- Use of all federal cost-share funds (45% of agency budget) subject to approval of USFWS and compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act.
- Creates an incentive for states to work toward recovery and delisting of T&E species, and to work proactively (surveys, research & habitat enhancements) to preclude the need for additional federal listings.



Federally-listed Species in Oklahoma

Currently, 20 Federally-listed Species:

Whooping Crane (E)

Piping Plover (T)

Red-cockaded Woodpecker (E)

Indiana Bat (E)

Northern Long-eared Bat (T)

Leopard Darter (T)

Neosho Madtom (T)

Ouachita Rock Pocketbook (E)

Rabbitsfoot Mussel (T)

Neosho Mucket (E)

Eastern Black Rail (T)

Atlantic Red Knot (T)

Ozark Big-eared Bat (E)

Gray Bat (E)

Arkansas River Shiner (T)

Ozark Cave Fish (E)

American Burying Beetle (E)

Scaleshell Mussel (E)

Winged Mapleleaf (E)

Harperella (T) (plant)

And Two Proposed for Listing:

Lesser Prairie Chicken (T)

Pyramid Pigtoe (T)

ODWC's Role After a Species is Listed

ODWC cooperates with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to implement recovery practices using Cooperative Endangered Species Fund cost-share grants. Species are prioritized based upon recovery and subsequent delisting potential.

- Habitat improvements, translocation to improve genetic diversity, and nest-site protection for Red-cockaded Woodpeckers
- Cave gating to protect Gray Bat & Ozark Big-eared Bat



ODWC's Role After a Species is Listed

- Habitat improvements and cowbird control for Black-capped Vireo (delisted)
- Surveys and population monitoring for American Burying Beetle
- Captive propagation and population augmentation for Ouachita Rock Pocketbook
- Population monitoring for the Arkansas River Shiner



ESA-Petitioned Species

- Between 2008 and 2011, nearly 1,200 species nationwide were petitioned for listing under the Endangered Species Act
- Roughly half were dismissed during their 90-day Finding due to insufficient information
- 29 of remaining species occur in Oklahoma, plus an additional 8 species have been petitioned since 2014
- Coined “Mega” Petitions, including:
 - Southeast Petition (404 species) filed by Center for Biological Diversity ; Southwest Petition (475 species) filed by WildEarth Guardians in 2007; Multi-species Reptile/Amphibian Petition (53 species) filed by Center for Biological Diversity in 2012

Multi-district Litigation (MDL)

- The USFWS has a finite annual listing/delisting budget (\$11M - \$12M). The backlog created by the mega-petitions lead to litigation and a 2011 court settlement between USFWS and petitioners WildEarth Guardians & Center for Biological Diversity.
- USFWS agreed to near-term listing actions and critical habitat designations for over 250 species including nearly every federal Candidate species (those species whose listing decisions had been precluded by more urgent priorities).
- The parties also agreed to develop a multi-year National Listing Work Plan to schedule the listing decisions for over 500 species.



2012-2016 MDL Settlement Actions

- Oklahoma species first addressed in the MDL settlement:
 - Rabbitsfoot and Neosho Mucket mussels, final listing rule and critical habitat designation (Species listed October 2013; critical habitat April 2015)
 - Sprague's Pipit (Candidate since 2010) – USFWS to take further action by Fall 2015 – Not Listed
 - Arkansas Darter (Candidate since 1991) – USFWS to take further action by Fall 2016 – Not Listed

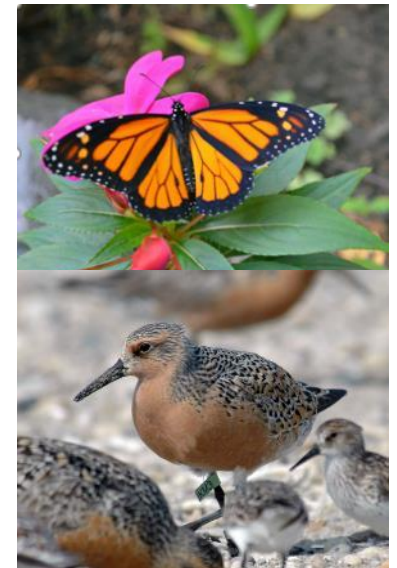


Oklahoma Petitioned Species

- Since 2008, 39 species (35 animals and 4 plants) in Oklahoma have been petitioned for federal listing
- Sparse biological and distributional information exists for several of these species; some may no longer occur in the state:
- Current status of the listing actions for these species:
 - 2 recent petitions await 90-Day Findings
 - 22 species await 12-Month Findings (in listing work plan)
 - 3 listing petitions have been withdrawn
 - 6 species received “not-warranted” listing decisions
 - 3 species were proposed for listing as Threatened Species
 - 2 species have been listed as a Threatened Species
 - 1 species listed as Endangered Species with Critical Habitat

Oklahoma Petitioned Species

Atlantic Red Knot →	Listed as Threatened (2014)
Eastern Black Rail →	Listed as Threatened (2019)
Monarch →	Proposed Threatened (Candidate)
Peppered Chub →	Listed as Endangered with CH (2021)
Lesser Prairie Chicken →	Proposed Threatened (2021)
Pyramid (Pink) Pigtoe →	Proposed Threatened (2021)
Oklahoma Grass Pink →	Not Warranted (2017)
American Eel →	Not Warranted (2018)
Seaside Alder →	Not Warranted (2019)
Rattlesnake Master Borer →	Not Warranted (2020)
Purple Lilliput →	Not Warranted (2020)
Hall's Bulrush →	Not Warranted (2021)



Oklahoma Petitioned Species

Bluehead Shiner →

Petition Withdrawn (2018)

Ozark Emerald →

Petition Withdrawn (2019)

Oklahoma Salamander →

Petition Withdrawn (2020)

Western Fanshell →

Listing Decision 2021

Texas Kangaroo Rat →

Listing Decision 2021

Longnose Darter →

Listing Decision 2022

Regal Fritillary →

Listing Decision 2022

Tricolored Bat →

Listing Decision 2022

Little Brown Bat →

Listing Decision 2022

Alligator Snapping Turtle →

Listing Decision 2022



Oklahoma Petitioned Species

Kiamichi Crayfish →	Listing Decision 2023
Plains Spotted Skunk →	Listing Decision 2023
Colorless Shiner →	Listing Decision 2024
Western Chicken Turtle →	Listing Decision 2024
Frosted Elfin →	Listing Decision 2024
Oklahoma Cave Crayfish →	Listing Decision 2024
Delaware Co. Cave Crayfish →	Listing Decision 2024
Prairie Chub →	Listing Decision 2025
Rocky Shiner →	Listing Decision 2025
Linda's Roadside Skipper →	Listing Decision 2025
Three-toothed Caddisfly →	Listing Decision 2025
Small-headed Pipewort →	Listing Decision 2025



Oklahoma Petitioned Species

Louisiana Pigtoe →

Listing Decision after 2025

Cumberland Sandreed →

Listing Decision after 2025

American Bumble Bee →

Listing Decision after 2025

Variable Cuckoo Bumble Bee → New Petition (2021)

Southern Plains Bumble Bee → New Petition (2021)



ODWC and Listing Decisions

- ODWC believes that federal listing decisions should be based on the most complete status and biological information feasible.
- Federal listings should be used only as a last resort and critical habitat should be designated only when there is identifiable need.
- ODWC working to avoid/preclude federal listing through a better understanding of petitioned species, habitat improvement, and population monitoring.
- When a federal listing cannot be avoided, a threatened designation can provide greater flexibility for conservation efforts and cooperation with economic development through a 4(d) rule, and recovery and delisting are generally more readily achievable.

ODWC and Listing Decisions

- ODWC's resources for addressing information and habitat needs for uncommon nongame wildlife species comes from the cost-share funding provided by the State Wildlife Grants program and the Cooperative Endangered Species Fund.
- Prior to making a listing determination, the USFWS prepares a Species Status Assessment report. ODWC provides data and comments pertinent to the status of each species during the SSA process.
- In 2018, the Service modified its petition process. Petitions can only be submitted for individual species, and each state wildlife agency within the species' range must be notified 30 days in advance.

ODWC's Petitioned Species Conservation

ODWC has on-going or recently completed ecological studies and status assessments for 24 of the 35 petitioned animal species.

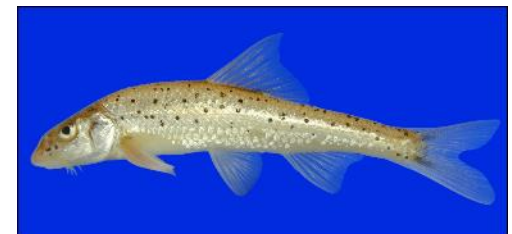
These include:

- survey and status assessment for Texas Kangaroo Rat
- surveys, monitoring and life history studies for Longnose Darter
- surveys, ecological requirements and reintroductions for Alligator Snapping Turtle
- surveys to help justify withdrawal of the Ozark Emerald and Oklahoma Salamander petitions

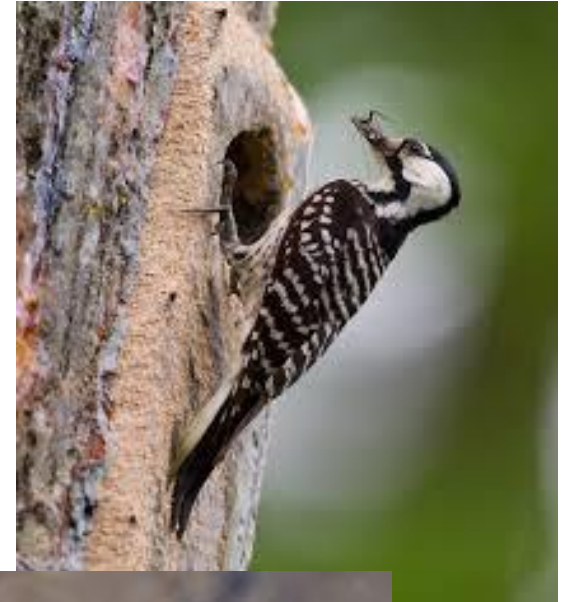


ODWC's Petitioned Species Conservation

- surveys, monitoring and ecological requirements of the Prairie Chub
- surveys and life history studies of the Western Chicken Turtle
- population and habitat assessment for the Regal Fritillary
- surveys for the Colorless Shiner and Rocky Shiner
- surveys and population monitoring for the Tricolored Bat and Oklahoma Cave Crayfish
- surveys and status assessments for the Frosted Elfin and Linda's Roadside Skipper



Questions?



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