

Sunset Advisory Commission
Board and Commission Review of Endangered Species Committee

The Commission reviews every State board and commission and takes testimony regarding whether each board or commission should continue to operate or be eliminated and whether the powers and duties of any board or commission should be revised. Each board and commission have the burden of justifying its continued operation.

The Commission also reviews whether members of a board or commission should be entitled to a per diem and, if so, the amount of that per diem.

In testifying before the Commission, you should be able to provide the following information:

- 1. In general, how often does the board and commission meet? Provide specific information on how often the board or commission has met in the past two fiscal years. Provide information on where agendas and minutes of meetings can be found.**

The Endangered Species Committee meets three times per year. Minutes are posted to the ANR website.

- 2. Provide the names of members of the board or commission, their term length and expiration, their appointing authority, and the amount of any per diem they receive.**

The ESC consists of nine members. Members include the Secretary of Agriculture, Food and Markets, the Commissioner of Fish and Wildlife, the Commissioner of Forests, Parks and Recreation, and six members of the public. The Public Members include:

BOARD MEMBER NAME	TERM EXPIRES	SEAT DESCRIPTION
Bryan Pfeiffer	2/28/2022	Flora
Alan Calfee	2/29/2023	Agricultural Activities
James Shallow	2/28/2022	Fauna
Allan Strong	2/29/2023	Fauna
Elizabeth Thompson	2/28/2021	Flora
Paul Wiczoreck	2/28/2021	Agricultural Activities

3. Provide an overview of the board or commission's purpose.

The Endangered Species Committee advises the Secretary of the Agency of Natural Resources on matters relating to endangered and threatened species, including making recommendations on whether to list or de-list threatened and endangered species, how to protect those species, permit conditions, and whether and where to designate critical habitat. The Committee is advisory only.

4. Is that purpose still needed? What would happen if the board or commission no longer fulfilled that purpose?

Yes. The Endangered Species Committee brings needed expertise and effort that augments that of the Agency of Natural Resources staff. They are sometimes thought of as a peer review committee and work in partnership with Agency staff. Without the Committee we would likely do less as our staff capacity is already limited. Some work would likely not get done or not done as well.

5. How well is the board or commission performing in executing that purpose? What evidence can you provide to substantiate that performance?

The Committee is working well. They helped develop a process for designation of critical habitat and provided advice to the Secretary on six listing/delisting recommendation and three critical habitat designations.

6. If the purpose is still needed, can State government be more effective and efficient if the purpose was executed in a different manner?

The Committee continues to serve a worthwhile purpose.

7. If the purpose is still needed, do any of your board or commission's functions overlap or duplicate those of another State board or commission or federal or State agency? If so, is your board or commission still the best entity to fulfill the purpose?

The Committee's functions do not overlap with those of another board or commission.

8. Does the board or commission's enabling law continue to correctly reflect the purpose and activities of the board or commission?

Yes, the Endangered Species Law correctly reflects the activities of the Committee. The Committee maintains Operations Guidelines that reflect this.

9. Provide a list of the board and commission's last fiscal year expenditures including staffing costs. How are these funded?

Fiscal year 2020 expenditures = \$2,554.45 Funded by the Nongame Wildlife Fund (\$1,513.92), license sale revenues (\$815.51), and General Revenues (\$225.02).

There were no expenditures by the Committee although they are eligible for reimbursement for meals and miles traveled. They are currently meeting online.

10. Is the board or commission required by law to prepare any reports or studies for the Legislature, the Governor, or any State agency or officer? If so, have those reports or studies been produced? Does the board or commission have ongoing reporting obligations?

The Committee is advisory only and there have been no required reports or other documents. On their own initiative the Committee developed Operations Guidelines, prepares formal response on permit questions, and develops documents for listing species and designating critical habitats it recommends to the Secretary.

11. How would you measure the performance of the board or commission?

The Committee performs its function of advising the Secretary of Natural Resources well and expands the capacity of the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department to conserve endangered and threatened species in Vermont.