

The National Academies of
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**Assessing the Taxonomic Status of the Red Wolf and the Mexican Gray Wolf
FAQs**

What is the scope of the study?

The National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine will appoint an ad hoc committee of experts to conduct an independent analysis of scientific literature to answer the two questions:

1. Is the red wolf a taxonomically valid species?
2. Is the Mexican gray wolf a taxonomically valid subspecies?

The committee will publish its findings and conclusion in a brief report. Read the complete Statement of Task [here](#).

Who is sponsoring this study and why?

This study is being sponsored by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS).

Currently, the FWS considers the red wolf a valid taxonomic species and the Mexican gray wolf a valid taxonomic subspecies. The red wolf and the Mexican gray wolf are listed as endangered and protected by FWS under the U.S. Endangered Species Act (ESA; United States Public Law No. 93-205; United States Code Title 16 Section 1531 et seq.). However, there is ongoing debate about their taxonomic status. As part of the March 23, 2018 appropriations bill, Congress directed the FWS to obtain an independent assessment on the taxonomic status of the red wolf and the Mexican gray wolf.

How are committee members chosen?

The National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine issue calls for nominations for committee members, seeking recognized experts from diverse disciplines and backgrounds. Each committee must include the full range of expertise and experience needed to address the study's statement of task. All committee members serve as individual experts, not as representatives of organizations or interest groups. The overall composition of the committee is evaluated to make sure that points of view are reasonably balanced so that the committee can carry out its charge objectively and credibly. A provisional committee slate is posted for a 20-day comment period. At the end of the comment period, and after any conflicts of interest or issues of committee balance and expertise are addressed, the committee is formally approved by the President of the National Academy of Sciences.

How will the committee gather information before it assembles the report?

Study committees typically gather information through: 1) meetings that are open to the public and that are announced in advance through the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine website; 2) the submission of information by outside parties; 3) reviews of the scientific literature; and 4) the investigations of the committee members and staff. In all cases, efforts are made to solicit input from individuals who have been directly involved in, or who have special knowledge of, the problem under consideration.

All committees deliberate in meetings closed to the public in order to develop draft findings and recommendations free from outside influences. The public is provided with brief summaries of these

The National Academies of
SCIENCES • ENGINEERING • MEDICINE

meetings that include the list of committee members present. All analyses and drafts of the report remain confidential.

When will the committee meet?

The committee will meet throughout the study process. To be notified of upcoming meetings and events, click [here](#).

Will recordings of those meetings be available?

All meetings in which the committee gathers information are open to the public and recorded. The recordings will be posted on this website about 1 week after each meeting.

How can I contribute to the study?

The committee will accept input from the public throughout the course of the study. The input is intended to help ensure that the study committee hears about important issues from interested parties. All submissions, including attachments and comments, may be reviewed by members of the study committee. By submitting input, you agree that all information shared with the study committee, including your name, will be recorded in the Public Access File and may be quoted in whole or in part in the study committee's report with attribution.

1. Submit nominations to serve on the committee (or nominate yourself).
2. Attend public meetings – During one or more meetings there will be opportunity for members of the public to share their data and views.
3. Submit ideas and data in writing. All submitted ideas and materials may be reviewed by members of the study committee, will be listed in the project's public access record, and have the potential to be quoted in the study committee's final report.
4. Suggest speakers and reviewers – send these suggestions to the study director Keegan Sawyer at ksawyer@nas.edu.

To be notified about upcoming meetings and events, please sign-up for the study listserv [here](#).

Can I see the comments and information submitted to the committee?

Written materials submitted to a study committee by external sources are listed in the project's public access file and can be made available to the public upon request. Contact the Public Access Records Office (PARO) for a copy of the list and to obtain copies of the materials. Copies of materials are free to the press and government employees. Please send an email or call PARO to make a request or an inquiry.

Public Access Records Office
The National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine
Telephone: 202.334.3543
Email: paro@nas.edu

Normal business hours for PARO are 9:00 am to 5:00 pm, Monday through Friday.

The National Academies of
SCIENCES • ENGINEERING • MEDICINE

Who will review the report before it is published?

As a final check on the quality and objectivity of the study, all National Academies reports whether products of studies, summaries of workshop proceedings, or other documents must undergo a rigorous, independent external review by experts whose comments are provided anonymously to the committee members. The National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine recruit independent experts with a range of views and perspectives to review and comment on the draft report prepared by the committee.

The review process is structured to ensure that each report addresses its approved study charge and does not go beyond it, that the findings are supported by the scientific evidence and arguments presented, that the exposition and organization are effective, and that the report is impartial and objective.

Each committee must respond to, but need not agree with, reviewer comments in a detailed "response to review" that is examined by one or two independent report review "monitors" responsible for ensuring that the report review criteria have been satisfied. After all committee members and appropriate officials from the National Academies have signed off on the final report, it is transmitted to the sponsor of the study and is released to the public.

When will the study be completed?

The study will be completed in March 2019.

Will the results of the study be available to the public?

Yes. An electronic version of the final report will be available to download for free [here](#).

Where can I get more information?

Inquiries can be send to the Study Director, Keegan Sawyer at ksawyer@nas.edu.