



Red Wolves: History, Recovery Challenges, and Next Steps

Overview:

The red wolf (*Canis rufus*) is a critically endangered wolf species found only in North America. Native to the southeastern United States, red wolves were rescued from the brink of extinction and now reside in the wild in North Carolina. A captive population of red wolves, managed by the Red Wolf Species Survival Plan (SSP), exists with the ultimate goal of release to the wild. As of March 2021, only 10 red wolves are known to remain in the wild.

Recovery Challenges:

In 2014, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) announced that it would be conducting a review of the red wolf recovery program in eastern North Carolina, per request of the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission (NCWRC). The following year, USFWS suspended reintroductions of red wolves into the wild. In November 2020, the Southern Environmental Law Center (SELC) sued USFWS for violations of the ESA connected with the agency's new policies that prohibit proven management strategies to recover the world's only remaining population of critically endangered red wolves. In January 2021, U.S. District Court Judge Terrence Boyle ruled that USFWS must develop a plan to resume the successful practice of releasing captive red wolves into the Red Wolf Recovery Area in North Carolina.

Next Steps:

USFWS' departure from its own accepted and proven management practices has resulted in the corresponding decline in the population. What USFWS, the very agency charged with protecting endangered species, needs to do is restore the field program to the same level of intensity prior to 2014 that achieved success in bringing about a functioning wolf population that once numbered over 130 animals.

The future of red wolves is currently in the hands of the courts. Stay tuned.

What can the public do to support red wolf recovery?

- ✓ **Be Vocal** - The best red wolf supporter is a loud red wolf supporter! Participate in online awareness campaigns, join pro-wolf rallies - if you're actively showing your support, others will follow.
- ✓ **Oppose Measures that Would Weaken the ESA** - Red wolves exist today because of the ESA and rely on its protections for their recovery. Urge your representatives to oppose any efforts that seek to strip the ESA of its powers.
- ✓ **Teach Friends and Family** - Educate others about red wolves. Spreading factual information helps improve the public's perception of red wolves and leads to increased social tolerance.
- ✓ **Expand Your Knowledge** - Stay informed about red wolves! Visit **nywolf.org** for breaking news, red wolf research, free scientific webinars, and more.



Wolf Conservation Center

Mission:

Founded in 1999, the Wolf Conservation Center (WCC) is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit environmental education organization working to protect and preserve wolves in North America through science-based education, advocacy, and participation in the federal recovery and release programs for two endangered wolf species - the Mexican gray wolf and red wolf. The WCC's three 'ambassador wolves' reside on exhibit where they help teach the public about wolves and their vital role in the environment. Through wolves, the WCC teaches the broader message of conservation, ecological balance, and personal responsibility for improved human stewardship of our world.

Wolf Recovery Highlights:

43 CRITICALLY ENDANGERED PUPS

Every new arrival represents a priceless contribution to the recovery of their rare and at-risk species.



3 WOLVES RELEASED TO THE WILD

Since 2013, we've given three critically endangered wolves the opportunity to claim their rightful places in the wild.



3 WOLVES RESCUED

Offering refuge to three wolves rescued from federal lethal control, the WCC remains the preeminent facility for wild wolf rescue. While we are privileged to have the important task of caring for wild-born wolves, we grieve for the wild lives they lost.



Contact the WCC:

Website - nywolf.org

Facebook/Instagram - Wolf Conservation Center

Twitter - @nywolforg

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