

# 5 Year Review

## Questions & Answers

### **Q1: What is a five-year review?**

A1: A five-year review is an Endangered Species Act (ESA) mandated process conducted to ensure the listing classification is accurate. The five-year review is not a rulemaking in and of itself. It provides analyses and a "recommendation;" it is not a decision document and makes no "determination."

### **Q2: Who conducted the red wolf five-year-review?**

A2: The review and document was conducted and written by the Red Wolf Recovery Program Office of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) while talking with scientists, partners and others.

### **Q3: What are the common and scientific names for the species in this review? Where does it occur?**

A3: The common name is red wolf, a species native to the southern and eastern U.S. The scientific name is *Canis rufus*. There is currently one wild red wolf population restored to northeastern North Carolina on the Albemarle Peninsula. Red wolves also occur in captivity and in island propagation sites at 42 locations across the nation.

### **Q4: What are the results of this review?**

A4: After reviewing all of the best scientific and commercially available information and data, the Service recommended that the current listing classification for the red wolf remain unchanged. This means the world's only wild red wolf population, restored in North Carolina, continues to have non-essential, experimental status. Red wolves located at island propagation sites and in captive breeding facilities continue to have full endangered status.

### **Q5: What other recommendations or needs are identified in the red wolf five-year-review document?**

A5: See the document itself for a complete list of recommendations. However, highlights include reaffirming the need to restore additional red wolf populations to the wild within the species' historic range in order to achieve recovery. Another recommendation is to establish a disease management plan. A third recommendation is to partner with State wildlife officials and USDA officials to manage canid species issues in North Carolina. Expansion of the captive breeding program and retaining the island propagation program are also identified as important.

### **Q6: Aren't red wolves in the U.S. the same as Algonquin wolves in eastern Canada?**

A6: Scientists are currently studying relationships between red wolves in the U.S. and Algonquin wolves in Canada. Some scientists believe both wolves should be combined into one species and called the eastern wolf, possibly allowing for the wolves to be managed together. Other scientists believe the two

wolves are genetically distinct enough that they should be managed separately. Additional data and scientific consensus over time are needed before the Service considers changes in the taxonomic and management status of red wolves. The Service currently recognizes the red wolf as its own species, *Canis rufus*.

**Q7: What will happen as a result of this five-year review?**

A7: As a result of the red wolf five-year-review, the Service recommended retaining current status. The Service also outlined in the review recommendations in Section 4 entitled, Recommendations for Future Actions. These recommendations identify the next steps needed to further achieve gains in red wolf recovery.

**Q8: What opportunities did the public have to participate in this review?**

A8: Public comments on the five-year review for the red wolf were sought with a *Federal Register* announcement on September 20, 2005, along with distribution of this announcement by mail to interested parties, and a press release sent to interested media inviting pertinent information.

**Q9: How does the Service determine whether a species is endangered or threatened?**

A9: The ESA defines “endangered” as “...in danger of extinction throughout all or a significant portion of its range...” whereas “threatened” is defined as “...is likely to become an endangered species within the foreseeable future throughout all or a significant portion of its range.”

Section 4(a)(1) of the ESA establishes that we determine whether a species is endangered or threatened based on one or more of the five following factors:

1. The present or threatened destruction, modification, or curtailment of its habitat or range;
2. Over-utilization for commercial, recreational, scientific, or educational purposes;
3. Disease or predation;
4. The inadequacy of existing regulatory mechanisms; or
5. Other natural or man-made factors affecting its continued existence.

Section 4(a)(1) of the ESA also requires that our determination be made on the basis of the best scientific and commercial data available.

**Q10: What does non-essential experimental status mean for the wild red wolf population restored in North Carolina?**

A10: Under the ESA, the Secretary of Interior may designate restored populations established outside the species’ current range, but within its historical range, as “experimental.” Based on the best scientific and commercial data available, we must determine whether experimental populations are “essential” or “non-essential” to the continued existence of the species. Regulatory restrictions are considerably reduced under a non-essential, experimental population (NEP) designation.

For the purposes of section 7 of the Act, the Service treats an NEP as a threatened species when the NEP

is located within a National Wildlife Refuge or National Park, and section 7(a)(1) and the consultation requirements of section 7(a)(2) of the Act apply. When NEPs are located outside a National Wildlife Refuge or National Park, the Service treats the population as proposed for listing and only two provisions of section 7 apply: section 7(a)(1) and section 7(a)(4). In these instances, NEPs provide additional flexibility because Federal agencies are not required to consult with us under section 7(a)(2). Section 7(a)(4) requires Federal agencies to confer (rather than consult) with the Service on actions that are likely to jeopardize the continued existence of a species proposed to be listed. The results of a conference are advisory in nature and do not restrict agencies from authorizing, funding, or carrying out activities. Section 7 of the Act does not affect activities undertaken on private land unless they are authorized, funded, or carried out by a Federal agency.

A population designated as experimental is treated for the purposes of section 9 of the Act as threatened, regardless of the species' designation elsewhere in its range. Section 4(d) of the Act allows the Service to adopt whatever regulations are necessary to provide for the conservation of a threatened species. Regulations issued under section 4(d) for NEPs are usually more compatible with routine human activities in the NEP area. For example, the Federal rules (51 FR 41797 and 50 CFR 17.84) that contain necessary prohibitions and exceptions allow for take of red wolves which constitute a demonstrable threat to human safety or livestock, provided it has not been possible to eliminate such threat by live capture and relocation of the wolf.

**Q11: How was information reviewed and analyzed?**

A11: The best scientific and commercially available data and information was reviewed within the context of the ESA's five listing factors and the most recent recovery/species survival plan. Service biologists and managers looked at the status and trend of the red wolf populations, the ESA listing factors that categorize threats, and recovery/species survival plan actions or tasks. Numerous scientific studies, reports, published papers, and other information were evaluated and listed in the Reference section of the review.

**Q12: Has the restoration of red wolves to North Carolina proven successful to date?**

A12: Considering the grave challenges red wolves faced when first listed as endangered in 1967, efforts to restore, recover and conserve them have been remarkably successful. Red wolves have been transformed from nearly extinct at a count of only 14 individuals in the 1970's to a captive population of 208 and a restored wild NEP population with counts up to nearly 130. The red wolf was pulled back from the brink of extinction and given a fighting chance for survival. We conclude that NEP status is effective in red wolf conservation and in allowing flexibility for red wolves and people. Future success in addressing threats to the red wolf NEP and general red wolf recovery will depend heavily upon the assistance and actions of partners that include local communities and state wildlife agencies like the NCWRC.

**Q13: How can I stay current or find out more information about red wolf conservation efforts?**

A13: A good start is to read the red wolf five-year-review, its appendices, and the references cited within. To read information less technical, visit the three primary web sites for red wolves.

Red Wolf Recovery Program

<http://www.fws.gov/redwolf.html>

Field Trip Earth

[http://www.fieldtripearth.org/div\\_index.xml?id=2](http://www.fieldtripearth.org/div_index.xml?id=2)

Red Wolf Coalition

[http://www.redwolves.com/index\\_02.html](http://www.redwolves.com/index_02.html)