

# PROPOSED NEW MANAGEMENT RULE FOR THE RED WOLF NEP IN NORTH CAROLINA

*What's in it and what's different*

For more information about the Red Wolf Recovery program and recent decisions including the release of a new Species Status Assessment and a five-year status review released in April, please visit <https://www.fws.gov/redwolf/>.



*photo: Ryan Nordsvan/USFWS*

Based on a comprehensive four-year evaluation of the red wolf recovery program, a peer-reviewed Species Status Assessment published in April 2018, and the most recent five-year species status review, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is proposing new management rules for the non-essential, experimental population of red wolves in eastern North Carolina (NC NEP).

On June 28th, we published a proposed rule in the Federal Register and announced the availability of a draft Environmental Assessment for public review and comment. The proposed rule and how it would be different from the existing rule are noted below. The draft Environmental Assessment assesses the likely impacts

of this change and discusses several alternatives. For a copy of the draft Environmental Assessment please visit <https://goo.gl/JGvH87>.

### Why are we proposing a new rule:

- While the northeast North Carolina reintroduction area was chosen due to the reduced potential for interaction with coyotes, their recent colonization of the area necessitates different management strategies.
- The current conditions in the NEP area are not favorable for red wolf self-sustainability and survival. Basic conditions conducive to wolf population self-sufficiency in North Carolina simply have not been achieved.

- The red wolf remains a species that cannot be recovered without active management and private landowner support. In a landscape dominated by private land ownership, it is imperative that the rules governing an introduced non-essential experimental population put no additional regulatory burden on private landowners.

### What would change under the proposed new rule:

- The NC NEP management area would be reduced from five eastern North Carolina counties to Alligator River National Wildlife Refuge and Dare County Bombing Range in Dare and Hyde Counties.
- All red wolves found on private land would still be part of the NC NEP but there would be no take prohibitions or permits required to remove red wolves from on private lands just like wolves outside the current boundary.
- The annual release of up to five red wolves from the captive breeding population into the NC NEP would be authorized.
- The primary objective of the NC NEP would shift to serving as a propagation population rather than a recovery population, for potential future reintroductions.
- The Service would manage red wolves in accordance with the Red Wolf Adaptive Management Work Plan. The plan will continue to be updated based on the best available science.