

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

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Red Wolf Recovery Program

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Update on the North Carolina Nonessential Experimental Population (NEP)

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- The management of the wild red wolf population in the NC NEP is being conducted under the 10(j) rule updated in 1995 along with the permanent injunction put in place by a Federal court in November 2018 regarding take.
- The current known population of red wolves (e.g. radio-collared individuals) in the NC NEP is 10 red wolves with the estimated total population approximately 18 - 20 red wolves.
 - o We lost the radio collar signal from a really old collar on one male red wolf in January. However, we also found tracks on the bombing range of a female whose old radio collar died over a year ago.
- There has been 1 mortality in 2020 resulting from gunshot on private property. The law enforcement case is open so no other details can be shared.
- Trapping/Translocation
 - o During this past winter's trapping and translocation efforts, 7 red wolves were captured between the NC NEP and St. Vincent NWR.
 - o After their captures, one of the Milltail males was translocated to Pocosin Lakes NWR and placed in an acclimation pen with the female red wolf from the Pungo area until February 5th.
 - o After her capture, the previous Milltail breeding female was placed in the acclimation pen in the Milltail area of Alligator River NWR with the male red wolf translocated from St. Vincent NWR. They were released together February 18th. The daughter of the Milltail breeding female had also been captured and she was released at the same time and place as the pair from the acclimation pen.
 - o All red wolves captured were released wearing bright orange VHF radio collars to help the public distinguish them.

- Tracking
 - Tracking has been very limited because of the COVID-19 measures and we have not been able to conduct any aerial telemetry for several weeks.
 - Some ground telemetry is occurring on the refuges and we have increased it this week to try and determine if any denning is occurring. No sign of denning yet.
 - Based on limited tracking, there are no red wolf pairs currently together.
 - The male translocated to Alligator River NWR from St. Vincent NWR remained with the Milltail female and/or her daughter for several weeks after release from the acclimation pen, but we have not located him in about three weeks. Both of those Milltail females remain on the refuge within the areas they are typically found.
 - The female red wolf in the Pungo area of Pocosin Lakes NWR remains in her traditional territory and the male translocated there from Alligator River NWR is usually within or immediately adjacent to that territory, but not with her.
 - We are hopeful that perhaps one or both of the pairs in acclimation pens mated before they separated, but there's no sign of that to this point.

Update on the St. Vincent National Wildlife Refuge

- The male translocated from NC Zoo to St. Vincent NWR was released onto the island on February 14th and was soon with the other red wolves.
- All 5 radio-collared red wolves (two adults, one juvenile and 2 yearlings) are remaining together at this point, but there has been no sign of denning yet.

Outreach

- Prey of the Pack
 - The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, through its Partners in Fish and Wildlife program (PFW) in partnership with the North Carolina Wildlife Federation (NCWF) and the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission (WRC) will be initiating a program to help incentivize interested and willing private landowners to create/improve habitat for red wolf prey species on their lands (e.g. early successional forest). In general, the FWS PFW would pay for a portion of the cost for landowner's to do habitat work on their lands in exchange for agreeing to be tolerant of red wolves on their property and potentially allowing for some level of monitoring by FWS personnel.

- We have old used radio collars that are no longer in use that we could provide to folks if they are interested in using them for educational purposes. Contact Morgan Lewis at (252) 475-8350 for more information.
- There is a map of the historic range of red wolves on the Red Wolf Recovery Program website. If anyone is wanting to print of that map at a larger size for educational purposes, we have a higher resolution version we can send to you electronically. Contact Morgan Lewis at (252) 475-8350 for more information.