



United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

1875 Century Boulevard
Atlanta, Georgia 30345

In Reply Refer To:
FWS/R4/ES

JAN 19 2017

Collette Adkins
Senior Attorney
Center for Biological Diversity
8640 Coral Sea Street, NE
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55449

Dear Ms. Adkins:

Thank you for your petition dated December 8, 2016, submitted on behalf of the Animal Welfare Institute, Center for Biological Diversity, Defenders of Wildlife, Endangered Species Coalition, South Florida Wildlands Association, WildEarth Guardians, and Wolf Conservation Center. Your petition requested that the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) revise and update our 1990 recovery plan for the red wolf. The Red Wolf Recovery Plan (Recovery Plan), finalized on October 26, 1990, delineates reasonable actions which are believed to be required to restore the red wolf as a component of certain ecosystems within the southeastern United States. These actions include captive-breeding objectives as well as reintroduction and propagation-in-the-wild strategies.

Prior to receiving your petition, the Service had already decided to revise the Recovery Plan. The revisions will incorporate new information about the status of the red wolf found in recent studies and findings, including the Red Wolf Recovery Team Recommendations and Red Wolf Population Viability Analysis, all of which are currently informing our management decisions. On September 12, 2016, we released a memorandum outlining a proposed path forward for the red wolf recovery program (see enclosed). In that memo, we committed to developing a Species Status Assessment (SSA) by October 2017, which will be used as the basis for a revised Recovery Plan. We will develop the SSA using the best available scientific and commercial information, and we will also consider the information you submitted with your petition. To ensure the Recovery Plan provides the best course of action for conservation of this species, it will also be developed using the best available science, including the SSA, along with the information you submitted with your petition and other materials received during the public comment period on the draft revised Recovery Plan. Developing a revised Recovery Plan for this species is a high priority and will commence shortly after the completion of the SSA with a goal of completing the revised Recovery Plan in 2018.

We greatly appreciate your interest in the conservation of the red wolf. For further information or if you have any questions, please contact Emily Weller, Regional Red Wolf Recovery Lead, at (337) 291-3090 or at emily_weller@fws.gov.

Sincerely yours,

Cynthia K. Dohner
Regional Director

Enclosure