

memorandum

FILE

DATE: September 11, 1992

REPLY TO
ATTN OF: Red Wolf Coordinator, FWS, Asheville, NC

SUBJECT: Monthly activity report - August 1992

TO: Regional Director, FWS, Atlanta, GA (FWE/SE)
Attention: Mr. Dave Flemming

Following are my accomplishments for the month of August:

Alligator River Reintroduction - I spent most of the month, along with Mike Phillips, in meetings with the County Board of Commissioners and the public. Results of the first 5-years was shared and a proposal was presented and input received to expand the project westward to include the Pocosin Lake NWR in 1993. The Board of Commissioners meetings involved Dare, Hyde, Washington, Tyrrell, and Beaufort Counties. In general, the Commissioners in Washington, Tyrrell, and Beaufort Counties had no problems with the project. In Dare County, problems with a local landfill soured the Commissioners on anything involving the Service. A memo regarding this issue was sent to the Regional Office. I attended a second Commission meeting to discuss the content of a letter from our Raleigh Field Office, at which a recommendation was made in an attempt to resolve the issue. A meeting with the Board of Commissioners, the consultant, the Raleigh Field Office, the Alligator River NWR, and the Red Wolf Project personnel was recommended as one alternative. A second alternative was for the Board to respond to Raleigh with their interpretations of requirements; i.e., all input was adversary and not mandatory. Hyde County Commissioners passed a resolution objecting to the wolf project based on a lack of trust in the Service. Eight public meetings were held with at least one in each of the five counties. Dare County had three meetings, and Hyde County had two meetings. A large turnout of approximately 80 people at Swanquarter, Hyde County, was about two-thirds negative and one-third positive. The other meetings were rather small, from 3-12 people. Although there were negative comments, with the exception of Swanquarter and East Lake (three people attending), the majority of the people were positive or neutral. More importantly, the negative comments were rarely directed at the wolf project but at the Service in general. The only negative comment specific to red wolf problems arising in the last 5 years was an instance of cat killings. A report is in preparation summarizing the 5-year results and recommendations for the future. A memo was sent to the Regional Director explaining the procedure we plan to follow in meeting the requirements specified in the final rule, obtaining input on future proposals, and finalizing future plans. Attached to the memo was a draft letter for congressional representatives detailing our plans. While at Alligator River, I participated in health checks and administering shots to the captive wolves.

Southern Appalachians Reintroduction - I received, reviewed, and provided comments on a proposal from a graduate student at the University of Tennessee on "The ontology of red wolf social behavior implication for

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sociality and taxonomic status." I am considering funding this study instead of continuing to fund coyote work through the University. Plans have been made to bring in Glen Riley, with the U.S. Department of Agriculture Wildlife Damage Control, stationed in Texas, to trap and radio collar coyotes in the Park.

General - The Second North American Wolf Symposium was attended in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada. I was coauthor on two papers presented at the Symposium. Dr. Ron Nowak presented one of the papers summarizing data on taxonomy, which generated considerable discussion in light of recent genetics work (including another paper at this Symposium presented by Dr. Bob Wayne). Mike Phillips presented the other paper on the results of the recovery program. I chaired a discussion session on reintroduction that generated a helpful interchange of ideas between wolf personnel involved in, or contemplating, reintroductions. I also participated as a member in the IUCN Wolf Specialist Group meeting, where the taxonomic question was again debated with presentations by Dr. Bob Wayne and Dr. Ron Nowak. I reported on the present status of the recovery program. The Wolf Specialist Group passed a resolution supporting the current red wolf recovery program but reserving the right to reevaluate the resolution if additional data becomes available in the future. I initiated an amendment to our Cooperative Agreement with the Tacoma Zoo to fund nuclear DNA work on the red wolf by Dr. Bob Wayne. I attended a field trip through gray wolf habitat in Banff and Jasper National Parks, Canada, in which observations of wolf tracks, wolf kill, and wolf dens added to my knowledge on wolves and provided additional insight on finding and evaluating evidence of red wolf and other canid presence in given localities.

Following are revisions in the locations and numbers of red wolves that occurred this month.

A. Wild Populations.

1. Alligator River NWR - An adult pair and four pups were released. Therefore, known totals are 30 to 32 wolves including 23 to 25 adults (8 males, 14 to 15 females, 1 to 2 unknown), and 7 pups.
2. Great Smoky Mountains National Park (GSMNP) - The adult female was recaptured and returned to captivity in preparation for the release of new family groups this fall. This leaves two yearling females.

C. Captive Propagation.

1. Sandy Ridge, Alligator River NWR - The family group released in the wild leaves 9 adults (5 males, 4 females).
2. GSMNP - The adult female recaptured brings the captive total to 13, with 5 adults (2 males, 3 females) and 8 pups (6 males, 2 females).

D. Total - Same as July.

V. Gary Henry

cc:

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