

A-State continuing work on the Red Wolf repopulation center project

RACHEL RUDD

NEWS EDITOR

A-State is working on becoming one of the few institutions in the world that breeds red wolves for the purposes of repopulation. The project first began in 2017, following a trip to the Endangered Wolf Center in St. Louis. Dr. Thomas Risch, an animal ecology professor and Chris Thigpen, a temporary biology professor, learned about the state of the red wolf population and became inspired. Risch is the academic lead for the project, while Thigpen is a co-faculty advisor for the Red Wolves for Red Wolves club. The club works to provide education and outreach surrounding red wolves, and volunteers with the Endangered Wolf Center. The decline in the red wolf population began when settlers started moving west. Additionally, the government placed federally mandated bounties on large predators, including both red and gray wolves. The extermination efforts of the gray wolves led to coyotes moving into gray wolf habitats, placing further selection pressures on the red wolf population. An abundance of coyotes meant that the surviving red wolves could not easily find mates, so by the time repopulation efforts began in the 1970s and 1980s, conservationists had only 14 wolves to work with. The population has since brought up to 241 captive specimens. A-State's red wolf repopulation center would work

to increase the number of captive red wolves, as well as provide awareness and education. “The idea is to house 12 red wolves, hopefully breeding pairs,” Thigpen said. The facility could hold up to 30 wolves maximum when the breeding pairs have pups. From there on out, the wolves would be moved to various breeding facilities across the country to combat issues such as inbreeding. “It’s very carefully laid out to maximize the genetic diversity and also so that the facilities that have the room and the capacity are the ones that are involved in the breeding,” Risch said. The plan is to break ground this year and for the facility to open in 2023. It will include a gift shop, a veterinary examination area, a specific kitchen for wolf food preparation, as well as a large central room that acts as a viewing patio. It will have six half-acre enclosures with at least one acting as a place where guests can view one of the breeding pairs. The facility also plans to display red wolf themed art. A sculpture depicting a red wolf mother and her pup has already been donated. “We’re hopeful that our students and faculty will be a big source of artwork moving forward,” Risch said. The project has a five million dollar goal, with \$575,000 currently raised. There is currently a grant pending that would cover a large amount of the cost. The total amount raised so far has been a result of scholarships and donations from organizations like the Game and Fish Commission,

but also from donors with no relation to A-State, such as Weiler Woods for Wildlife. “They learned about us through our shared interest in red wolf conservation,” Risch said. “So we hope there’s more folks out there that will recognize what we’re doing and want to help us and be part of it.” The conservation center will additionally act as a place for students from all majors to get involved. Art majors can contribute artwork and use the animals as drawing references. Students interested in working at a zoo or conservation center in the future can intern or volunteer. “We’re not just looking for biology majors. Any major could benefit from this: art, social media, communications, marketing. It’s really an untapped potential that we can offer to the students,” Thigpen said. In addition to providing opportunities for students, the facility can act as ecotourism for Jonesboro. Alongside common tourist attractions such as Memphis, Graceland, the Johnny Cash Boyhood Home, the conservation center would provide an opportunity to attract out-of-town visitors. Combined with the fact that the facility will be located near the Crowley’s Ridge Nature Center, it will act as an experience unique to Jonesboro. Risch and Thigpen want people to come away with three things after a tour of the facility: that the red wolf is the all-American wolf, it is the most endangered canid in the world and that by working together the American red wolf can be saved.

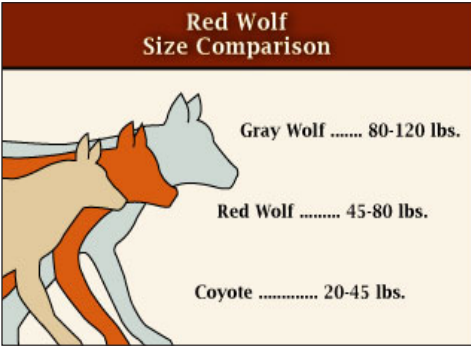
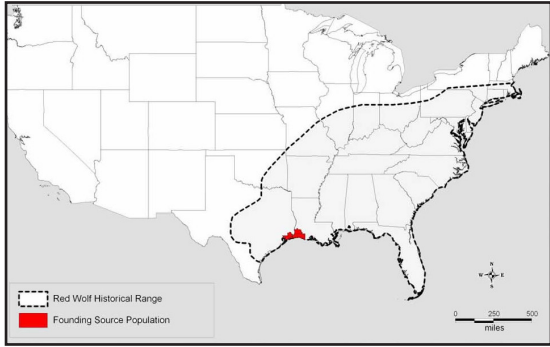
Red Wolf Recovery Program Review

Red Wolf Recovery Program Timeline

1967	Red wolf listed as endangered under the Endangered Species Preservation Act
1969	Red wolf captive breeding initiated at Point Defiance Zoo & Aquarium in Tacoma, Washington
1973	Endangered Species Act becomes Federal law
1977	First litter of red wolf pups born in breeding program at Point Defiance Zoo & Aquarium
1978	First successful experimental release, tracking, and recapture of red wolves on Bulls Island, South Carolina, solidifies reintroduction techniques
1980	Last red wolves removed from the wild; declared biologically extinct in the wild
1986	Publication of a final rule in the Federal Register to introduce mated pairs of red wolves into the Alligator River National Wildlife Refuge in eastern North Carolina
1987	Restoration effort begins with the experimental release of red wolves at Alligator River National Wildlife Refuge
1988	First litter of red wolf pups born in the wild at Alligator River National Wildlife Refuge
1991	Publication of a final rule in the Federal Register to introduce mated pairs of red wolves into the Great Smoky Mountains National Park
1992	Experimental release begins at Great Smoky Mountains National Park
1993	First red wolves born in the wild at Great Smoky Mountains National Park
1995	Publication of an amendment to the special rule in the Federal Register addressing private landowner concerns about reintroduced red wolves
1998	Red wolf project ended at Great Smoky Mountains National Park due to lack of adequate food sources
2000	Adaptive management plan implemented to address red wolf/coyote hybridization within the recovery area
2006	The size of the wild population in North Carolina peaked at an estimated 120-130 wolves
2013	Memorandum of Understanding on collaborative conservation of red wolves and other canids including coyotes on the Albemarle Peninsula signed by the Service and the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission
2014	Release of the peer-reviewed evaluation of the non-essential, experimental population in North Carolina conducted by the Wildlife Management Institute NCWRC established rules to ban nighttime hunting and require permits for daytime hunting of coyotes in the five-county red wolf recovery area in eastern North Carolina
2015	Reintroductions of red wolf into the wild suspended while additional science and research into the feasibility of species' recovery is gathered; existing red wolves located in North Carolina are managed in accordance with the 1995 rule Recovery team reconvened to address current and future needs to restore red wolves in the wild; the team's first face-to-face meeting was held on December 2 and 3, 2015, in Raleigh, North Carolina
2016	Department of the Interior's Office of Inspector General released an investigation report on the red wolf recovery efforts in North Carolina; the investigation found no evidence to support allegations that the Service misreported red wolf mortality data or falsely reported the cause of death of a specific wolf; the report affirmed the Service's own findings that more wolves were released than originally proposed in a Federal Register notice, and the agency did not always follow its rules about releasing wolves onto private land The recovery team continued to meet with the intent to produce a set of recommendations for consideration by the Service; the team met five times this year via conference call and one face-to-face meeting The Service announced recovery of the red wolf in the wild is possible with significant changes that must be implemented to secure the captive and wild populations; the Service is committed to recovering the red wolf



GRAPHIC AND PHOTOS COURTESY OF ARKANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY
The graphic above is a timeline depicting the red wolf recovery efforts. The lower left graphic is a map that depicts the historical red wolf population, as well as where the initial breeding population was found. The lower right graphic compares the red wolf's size to other canids.



SGA first weekly meeting discusses on-campus events

JACK BOND

STAFF WRITER

The student government association, which holds a meeting every Tuesday, gathered yesterday to discuss various topics about campus. It was announced that Career Services would be hosting their first career leadership conference, where students will be able to join sessions about career preparedness, leadership and diversity. It will be held in the Student Union on Feb. 18. Following the reports and announcements, Joy Byrd, president of the Black Student Association, discussed the events the organization will be holding for Black History Month. One event will be the Sankofa Film Screening on Feb. 10. More details about it can be found on the BSA's Instagram. After Byrd's announcements, two new senators were sworn into office. The first was Tony Munashe, a cheerleader and nursing student from Toronto, Canada. He expressed his want to increase support for students whose main support groups are back in their native country.

“I’d like to provide more advocacy for international students such as myself,” Munashe said. “A lot of international students have a really hard time fitting in here.” Will Silas, a junior marketing and global supply chain management major, was the second student to be sworn in. “For the past three years I’ve

experience for the position. “I look forward to serving those here at Arkansas State University and being open to anything they may want or need on campus,” Silas said. After swearing in the new senators, the association briefly went over grammatical errors for the resolution documents. Content of the documents is yet to be discussed. One final event was brought to attention: the SGA’s “App and App” event. App and App will be an opportunity for students to come and learn about the SGA and answer any questions they may have about the organization. Food and drink will be provided. Details on applying for a position in the SGA will also be explained. The event will be held in the Student Union on Feb. 15 from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Students of any background may attend. The meeting was closed with a few more announcements for future changes and events. Improvements to the campus bike paths and to student advising were briefly mentioned to be in discussion with faculty.



GRAPHIC COURTESY OF ARKANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY

continued to make relationships with those in the community as well as on campus and I’ve continued to strengthen those relationships,” Silas said. Silas participated in the student council in high school, giving him

CAMPUS CRIME



RACHEL RUDD

NEWS EDITOR

Jan. 30 | 1:00 a.m.

Officer Daniel Bradway was patrolling the area of Aggie Road and University Loop, when he noticed suspect one walking south on the sidewalk carrying what appeared to be a beer can in his hand. Bradway turned around and got out with the subject. After doing so, he confirmed that it was a beer can. Suspect one told Bradway that he was not a student and did not have any identification on him. When Bradway got into his patrol vehicle to look him up, suspect one fled the scene on foot. Suspect one ran west bound behind the Delta Zeta house and between the Chi Omega house toward the Red WOLF Center. Bradway lost sight of him after that. Bradway

began searching the area with no luck. While searching, Bradway noticed a vehicle driving on the sidewalk in front of the Red WOLF center. He then caught up to the vehicle and initiated a traffic stop on it. When Bradway introduced himself to suspect two and told him why he was stopped, he stated that he was lost. Suspect two said he was looking for his friend and did not know where he was. Bradway then asked who the friend was, and was told it was suspect one. After a short conversation, suspect two was allowed to leave. Bradway followed him to 2214 E. Johnson, where he got fuel. Suspect two then drove down Marion Berry Parkway and at the intersection of Marion Berry and Aggie, Bradway witnessed suspect one run up to the vehicle and get in. Bradway

activated his emergency lights and stopped the vehicle again. Bradway got suspect one out of the rear seat and took him into custody. Suspect one was placed in restraints with his hands behind his back. He was then searched prior to being placed in the rear of Bradway’s caged patrol unit. Suspect one was seat belted in for safety and transported to the Craighead County Jail. Once at the jail, he was escorted into the booking facility where custody was transferred to the booking officer. Jan. 25 | 10:13 p.m. Officer Keith Gilliam pulled up on an accident that had just occurred at the Alumni Blvd., University Loop, University Loop West intersection. Information was obtained and a state accident report was completed.