



Red Knot Proposed Critical Habitat Update

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What Are We Proposing To Do?

- The USFWS is proposing to designate Critical Habitat for the rufa subspecies of the red knot.
- The Endangered Species Act defines Critical Habitat as the specific geographic areas that contain physical and biological features essential to the conservation of an endangered or threatened species and that may require special management and protection. Critical habitat may also include areas that are not currently occupied by the species but will be needed for its recovery.



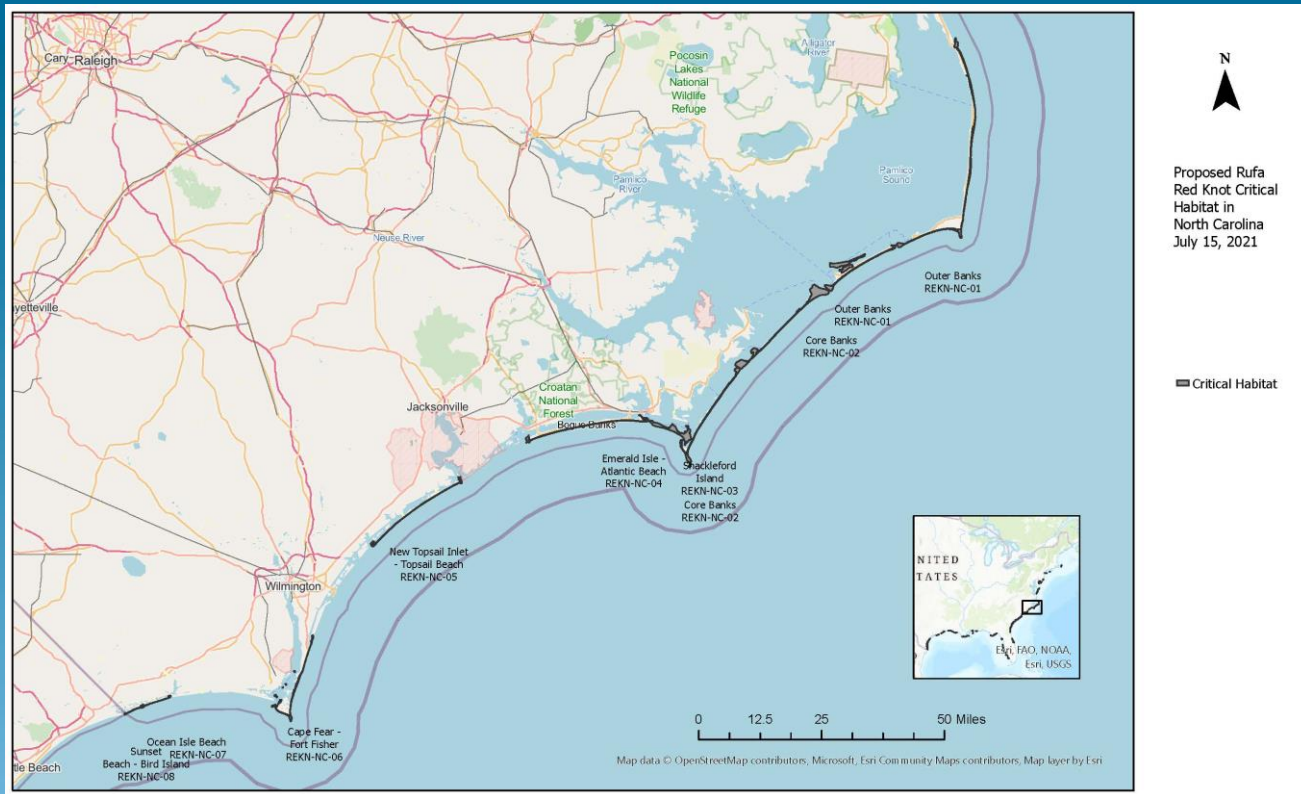
Where Are We Proposing To Do This?

This past summer the USFWS published a proposed rule to designate 649,066 acres in 120 units as Critical Habitat for the rufa sub-species of the Red Knot.





Where Are We Proposing To Do This in North Carolina?



- 10 Units totaling 33,930 acres.
- Units include the beach area from MLLW to the toe of the dune vegetation, inlet shoals and emergent flats.



Why are we doing this?

Section 4(a)(3)(A) of the Endangered Species Act says “The Secretary, by regulation promulgated in accordance with subsection (b) and to the maximum extent prudent and determinable (i) shall, concurrently with making a determination under paragraph (1) that a species is an endangered species or a threatened species, designate any habitat of such species which is then considered to be critical habitat.”





How Are We Proposing Red Knot Critical Habitat?



- USFWS Published the Proposed Rule on July 15, 2021.
- The Comment Period Closed on September 13.
- We received approximately 183 substantive comments, including 35 from or referencing North Carolina.
- We also received requests to extend the comment period.



How Are We Proposing Red Knot Critical Habitat? (Update)



- We are currently reviewing the comments received.
- We intend to reopen the comment period and publish a revised proposed rule this winter.
- Previously submitted comments need not be resubmitted.
- Additional comments will be welcomed.



Questions?



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