

***Journey and destination:* wolf policy in the Northeastern US**

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Different status for related canids

Canada

- Gray wolf “not at risk,” can be hunted & trapped.
- Eastern/Algonquin wolf is a threatened and protected species.
- No wolf or coyote hunting in areas where Eastern/Algonquin wolf may be.

United States

- Gray wolf is a federally endangered species (with exceptions in several states).
- Eastern wolf is a sub-species of gray wolf.
- Year-round, unlimited coyote hunting & trapping (NY has a season).



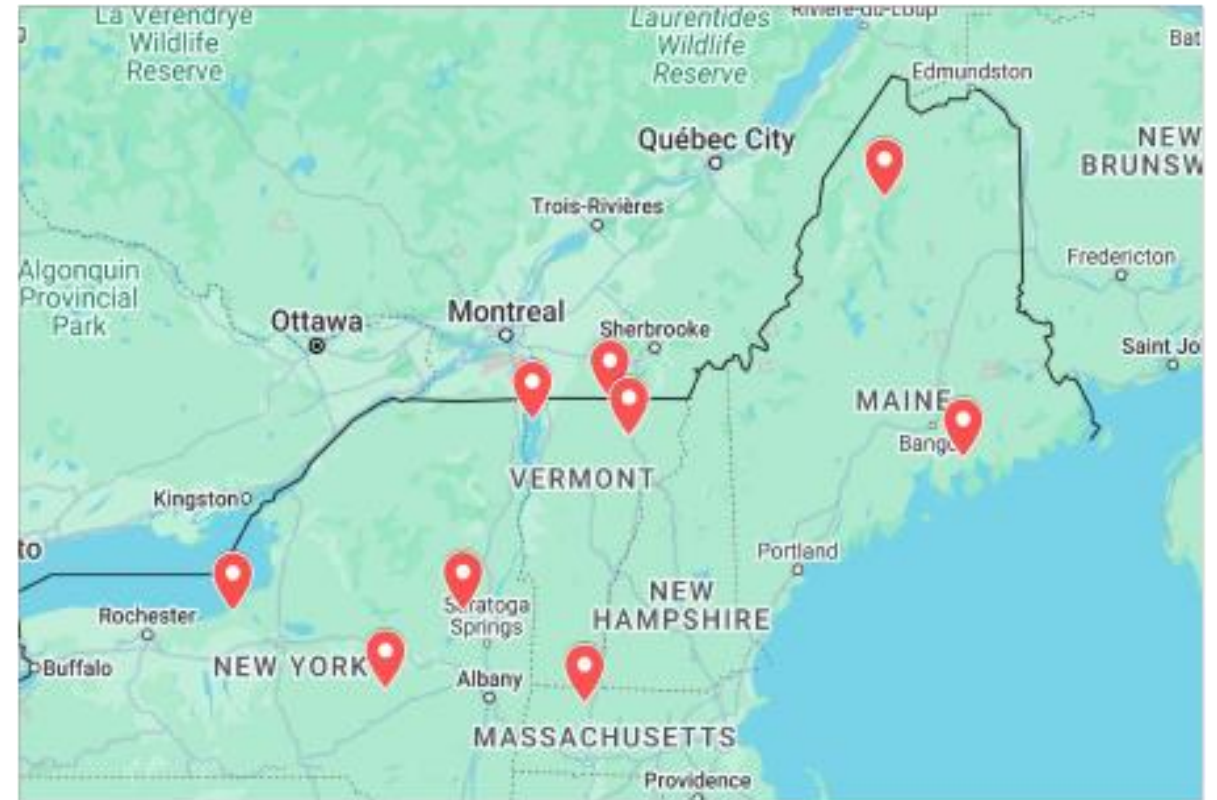
Reality on the one hand...

- Officially, wolves are extirpated from the Northeast.
- U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service eliminated separate Northeast wolf recovery area in 2003 (combined it with Midwest).
- State wildlife agencies minimize possible presence of wolves (“just coyotes”).
- Agencies don’t conduct field surveys—but some DNA sampling has begun.



...and reality on the other hand

- Wolves can make it to the Northeast; are periodically killed & documented.
- Differentiation can be difficult; genetic research highlights admixture across species.
- Limited hunter information to prevent misidentification of “coyotes.”



Northeastern canids today



Photo montage courtesy of Maine Wolf Coalition

Policy Opportunities

- **Prevent federal wolf delisting!** Bill to remove Endangered Species Act protections in Congress.
- **National wolf recovery plan.** Ensure Northeast is included for evaluation and management actions. FWS deadline December 2025.
- **State Wildlife Action Plans.**
 - 10-year revision in 2025.
 - Keep wolf on list of “Species of Greatest Conservation Need” in VT & NH, reinstate in NY & ME.
 - Strengthen state plans to reflect the latest science (including genetics), monitor for wolves.
- **Legislative initiatives.**
 - Bills to establish regulated coyote hunting seasons; prohibit Wildlife Killing Contests.
 - NY bill: hunters & trappers would report killed coyotes, DEC would conduct DNA analysis on animals <50 lbs.
- **Cross-boundary collaboration** to protect potential wolf habitat and migration corridors.

State of action and discussion

- State agencies need to survey for wolves, plan for their presence, reduce pressure on coyotes.
- Can mixed wild canids in the Northeast play a wolf-like ecological role?
- Are mixed canids the new reality, or should recovery efforts include reintroduction (and of which species)?

