

Dr. Ron Sutherland

Dr. Ron Sutherland leads the development of new habitat connectivity models for the southeastern U.S., and coordinates efforts to map the entire Eastern Wildway. He also directs an extensive camera-trapping project in the red wolf recovery area in North Carolina, and is an enthusiastic public advocate for red wolf conservation.

Ron received his Ph.D. in Environmental Science and Policy in 2009 from the Nicholas School of the Environment at Duke University, where he studied the response of wildlife to urbanization and vehicle traffic in the Sandhills region of North Carolina. Growing up in the rapidly expanding suburb of Cary, North Carolina, he developed an intense passion for nature conservation—especially after watching his childhood forest playground literally get bulldozed into a parking lot. Ron earned a B.S. in Biology from North Carolina State University and an M.S. in Conservation Biology and Sustainable Development from the University of Wisconsin, Madison. His Master’s research (conducted in collaboration with the Wildlife Conservation Society) focused on the conflicting goals of population growth and wildlife conservation within small colonist villages near Kaa-Iyaa National Park in the Gran Chaco of Bolivia. Between 2013–2015, Ron ran a successful campaign for Wildlands Network to save the 79,000-acre Hofmann Forest in eastern North Carolina from being sold to and destroyed by private buyers.

Ron lives in Durham, North Carolina with his wife and three children, plus a hound-shepherd mix named Henry. He enjoys playing water polo, swimming rivers and lakes, woodworking, and conducting experiments using native aquatic plants to remove nutrient pollution from neighborhood ponds. Ron also loves to backpack in wilderness and canoe in coastal swamps.