

# NEWS RELEASE

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## NC State's Schenck Forest to be Closed to Dogs

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Effective June 1, 2005, North Carolina State University's Schenck Forest will no longer allow dogs on the premises.

Schenck Forest, a teaching and research forest belonging to NC State, had been open to dog owners provided the animals were properly restrained. In recent months, however, unleashed dogs had caused faculty and students to fear for their safety, and had elevated the university's concerns about environmental damage to the forest.

Following education and outreach efforts that culminated in April's monthlong usage survey, the College Forest Advisory Committee determined that the continuing presence of unleashed dogs proved a hazard to both the forest's environment and the safety of NC State students, faculty and other visitors to the forest.

Data collected by Schenck Forest monitors revealed that only 23 percent of dog owners who visited the Schenck on weekdays complied with local leash laws, and that the number dropped to only 16 percent on weekends. This data, coupled with evidence of damage to the forest environment – including the root system of the Schenck Memorial Oak, a 150-year-old oak tree – led to the dog ban.

“We truly regret that it has come to this, and we sincerely appreciate the efforts of everyone involved in the local People for Unleashed Parks group who tried to work with us to increase leash-law compliance,” said College of Natural Resources Acting Dean J.B. Jett. “But Schenck Forest is first and foremost an outdoor teaching and research facility, and we had to act in the best interests of our students and faculty and to preserve our facilities.”

Signage notifying the public of the new policy will be posted at Schenck Forest, and NC State's Campus Police Department will continue to conduct patrols of the property. First-time offenders will be ticketed for trespassing; subsequent offenders will be subject to arrest.

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