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FWS agrees to protect habitat for Hine's emerald dragonfly

The Fish and Wildlife Service has agreed to designate critical habitat for the Hine's emerald dragonfly, a wetland-dependent endangered species found in areas of Illinois, Michigan, Missouri and Wisconsin.

The agency reached a settlement with five environmental groups that accused FWS of refusing to comply with the Endangered Species Act's critical habitat provisions and allowing hundreds of projects to go forward without federal review or mitigation requirements.

The settlement "will force the Bush administration to put the developers' interests aside and rely on science, protecting our region's precious natural heritage," said Brent Plater, an attorney for one of the groups, the Center for Biological Diversity.

The Door County Environmental Council, Northwoods Wilderness Recovery, Habitat Education Center and Michigan Nature Association also joined in the lawsuit.