

## Group Files Suit over Pacific Walrus Pacific Walrus on 'Candidate List' for Protection

By Abby Hancock

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ANCHORAGE, Alaska -

An environmental group filed intent to sue the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for better protection of the Pacific Walrus. The Center for Biological Diversity is asking the agency to give the Pacific Walrus federal protection under the Endangered Species Act.

In February, the agency announced that the walrus is facing threats from climate warming, but the species was not listed as threatened or endangered. Instead, it was placed on the candidate list for protection because the agency said other species were higher priority.

The Center for Biological Diversity calls that list a black hole, and points to more than 200 species on the list that have waited years for federal protection.

“We don’t want to see walrus on that list. Walrus are in trouble, they’re losing their sea ice habitat rapidly

because of climate change, and we would like to see the Fish and Wildlife service go ahead and protect the walrus,” said Rebecca Noblin, spokeswoman for the Center for Biological Diversity.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service would not comment on the environmental group’s formal letter of intent to sue. Spokesman Bruce Woods said it is the agency’s policy to withhold comment on pending litigation.

The agency has 60 days to act before a formal lawsuit is filed.