



ENDANGERED SPECIES:

Settlement forces FWS to study pesticides' impact on red-legged frog

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A federal judge approved a settlement yesterday to require the Fish and Wildlife Service to consider the effects of seven pesticides on the threatened California red-legged frog.

FWS will have to consult with EPA and decide whether the use of those chemicals is likely to harm the frog, which was listed as threatened by the federal government due to habitat loss in 1996.

The pesticides are glyphosate, malathion, simazine, pendimethalin, permethrin, methomyl and myclobutanil.

FWS will have to produce a draft biological opinion for two of the pesticides within one year, with the rest to be completed within two years, according to the settlement approved yesterday by Judge Jeffrey White of the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California.

The suit was brought in 2011 by the Center for Biological Diversity, which had originally tried to require consideration of 64 pesticides. The settlement allows the group to sue again over the remaining 57 pesticides after two years have passed.

"We're hopeful the analysis required by this agreement will stop the use of harmful pesticide in the red-legged frog's most vulnerable habitats and open the door to its recovery," said CBD attorney Justin Augustine. "It's long overdue."

The agreement follows an earlier settlement that also required EPA and FWS to consult on the pesticides' effects on the frog, as well as establish buffer zones around frog habitat (E&ENews PM, Oct. 19, 2006).