



# United States Department of the Interior

## FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

1875 Century Boulevard  
Atlanta, Georgia 30345

AUG 22 2016

In Reply Refer To:  
FWS/R4/ES

Ms. Jennifer L. Loda  
Amphibian and Reptile Staff Attorney  
Center for Biological Diversity  
1212 Broadway, Suite 800  
Oakland, California 94612

Dear Ms. Loda,

This letter is in response to your request on behalf of the Center for Biological Diversity (CBD) to provide you with a schedule of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's (Service) intended timelines to complete the Draft Recovery Plans for the frosted flatwoods salamander (*Ambystoma cingulatum*) and reticulated flatwoods salamander (*A. bishopi*).

The Service proposes to draft separate recovery plans for each species, to more clearly describe the similarities and particularly the differences in recovery needs and challenges for each. The recovery plans will include findings from field work performed throughout this current breeding season. Our projected schedule for plan completion is as follows:

### Projected Schedule of Plan Completion

- On July 18-19, 2016, we will have the second formal recovery team meeting to finalize our recovery criteria and the strategies, cost estimates, and actions to achieve these criteria. This meeting was originally suggested for late May, but was rescheduled to allow the team time to gather and incorporate this past breeding season's data from all of our partners prior to the submission of the final drafts.
- Following the meeting, the Service and recovery team will draft the Species Status Assessment and recovery strategies, criteria, and actions sections of the Recovery Plan and use this information in the Recovery Implementation Strategy.
- We intend to submit to the Federal Register the notice announcing the availability of the Draft Recovery Plan for *A. bishopi* in May 2017, and the notice announcing the availability of the Draft Recovery Plan for *A. cingulatum* in late 2017.
- Following review of comments on the draft recovery plans and revisions, we plan to publish the final recovery plans within 12 to 18 months of the release of the draft plans.

Please note that our ability to meet these deadlines may vary depending on workload, staffing, budget, the volume of comments, and other factors. We will continue to provide you quarterly

updates, via email from the Panama City Field Office project leader, on our progress toward producing draft recovery plans and on our continued conservation of the species.

Thank you again for your concern for the recovery of these two species. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Catherine Phillips, Panama City Project Leader, at (850) 769-0552 ext. 246 or [catherine\\_phillips@fws.gov](mailto:catherine_phillips@fws.gov), or Lisa Ellis, Deputy Chief, Division of Restoration and Recovery, at (404) 679-7089 or [lisa\\_ellis@fws.gov](mailto:lisa_ellis@fws.gov).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Leopoldo Miranda". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "L" and "M".

Leopoldo Miranda  
Assistant Regional Director