**Hine’s Emerald Dragonfly Critical Habitat**
**Responding to Bush Administration Claims about Critical Habitat**

**Myth:** The Bush Administration claims that Critical Habitat provides no additional protection for imperiled species.

**Fact:** Critical habitat designation is particularly important for species like the Hine's emerald dragonfly for which habitat loss is the primary threat to the species. Critical Habitat designation provides protection against 'adverse modification' of habitat, and map-based guidelines for landowners and managers to allow the dragonfly to survive and recover. Furthermore, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service records show that species with critical habitat are less likely to decline and twice as likely to be recovering as those without.

**Myth:** The Bush Administration claims that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service does not have the budget to designate Critical Habitat. In fact, Interior Secretary Gail Norton has attempted to use this as an excuse to avoid court-orders to provide endangered species listings and critical habitat designations.

**Fact:** The Bush Administration has deliberately under-funded these programs in a political attempt to neglect ESA protections. USFWS stated in 2003 that they need a multi-year budget of $153 million to address the backlog of endangered species listings and critical habitat designations. However, the Bush Administration instead requested only $12.3 million, despite the fact that Congress appropriated the entire $12.3 million and invited the administration to increase the budget request. The Bush Administration refused the invitation. Nonetheless, the Administration has continued to claim that USFWS is unable to comply with the ESA and court orders due to budget constraints.

**Myth:** The Bush Administration claims that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is unable to designate Critical Habitat because its resources are tied up with court-ordered actions from citizen lawsuits.

**Fact:** USFWS is indeed being forced by the courts to address a number of threatened and endangered species. However, this is because the Bush Administration has failed to implement protections of the ESA. The Bush Administration has the lowest endangered species listing rate in history—listing an average of 8 species annually, compared to 65 per year under Clinton, and 58 per year under George H.W. Bush. Also, the Bush administration is the only presidency in the history of the ESA to have not listed a single species except in response to petitions and/or lawsuits by scientists and environmental groups. Furthermore, the Bush administration has reduced the size of 92% of critical habitat designations proposed by USFWS (by an average of 76%), has withdrawn two dozen previously designated critical habitats totaling 16.4 million acres, and has not designated a single new critical habitat except under court order.

In Region 3, where the Hine’s emerald dragonfly lives, critical habitat has been designated for only 4 of the 68 listed species, and the Region is currently involved in very few other listing or critical habitat designations. Furthermore, USFWS has identified the Hine's emerald dragonfly as critically endangered --the only dragonfly so listed in the United States—indicating that the agency considers the dragonfly to have the highest priority for implementing protections such as critical habitat.
**Myth:** Private landowners and communities oppose critical habitat designation on their properties.

**Fact:** In the case of the Hine’s emerald dragonfly, landowners are expressing their support our lawsuit to have their lands designated as critical habitat. A private landowner on the board of directors of one co-plaintiff is doing a declaration explicitly stating that he wants his land designated as critical habitat, and that such designation will increase his use and enjoyment of his land. Another co-plaintiff in Michigan wants their lands designated as unoccupied critical habitat for the species.

**Myth:** Critical habitat designation is an economic burden for landowners and communities.

**Fact:** The dragonfly's habitat is likely to have enormous economic benefits for the region, and the destruction of these habitats are drastically affecting our quality of life. The dragonfly is a wetland dependant species, and wetlands of course provide enormous economic benefits in terms of waterfowl habitat, water quality for drinking water and the Great Lakes themselves, and recreational opportunities. The destruction of these habitats through urban sprawl eliminates valuable open space and the rural and wild character of these areas.

**Private landowners support critical habitat**

“Our family is committed to protecting habitat for endangered species on our northern Michigan property as well as adjoining shoreline areas and public land,” said Bob Preston, a private landowner near Misery Bay, Alpena County, Michigan. “We want the Fish and Wildlife Service to designate critical habitat so we can help ensure that the Hine’s emerald dragonfly and other sensitive species can recover.”

“We are interested in having our wetlands designated critical habitat for the Hine’s emerald dragonfly,” said Carol and Paul Sills of Bailey’s Harbor, Wisconsin. “We’ve admired the swarming activity of the dragonfly near our land in Liberty Grove.”

“As a landowner, the Michigan Nature Association wants its land to be designated as critical habitat,” said Jeremy Emmi, Executive Director in Williamston, Michigan. “MNA has worked for years to acquire such habitat, and FWS should obey its mandate to protect this habitat.”

“My brother and I each own property near Mud Lake, Wisconsin, just a short distance from occupied Hine’s emerald dragonfly habitat. We look forward to the day that the FWS designates critical habitat for the Hine’s, and we welcome designation of our lands to help the dragonfly to prosper,” said Nick Wilson, private landowner in Door County. “We know Hine’s emerald dragonflies and the landscapes they call home are of great benefit to the people of Door County and America, and we will do everything in our power as private property owners to insure that endangered species survive on our lands.”

“In the summer, we see Hine’s emerald dragonflies on our Door County property and do everything we can to help them thrive,” said John and Janice Stiefel of Bailey’s Harbor, Wisconsin. “Wetland habitat is important to our ecosystem as a whole, as well as the many creatures that inhabit these areas.”