Citizen Suit Action/Endangered Species Act: Center for Biological Diversity Notice of Intent to Sue U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Regarding Pearl River Map Turtle

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The Center for Biological Diversity ("CBD") transmitted a December 4th document to the United States Fish and Wildlife Service ("Service") styled:

Sixty-day Notice of Intent to Sue for Violations of the Endangered Species Act for Failure to Timely Designate Critical Habitat for the Pearl River Map Turtle ("NOI").

The NOI alleges that the Service has failed to designate critical habitat for the Pearl River map turtle within the statutory deadlines set by the Endangered Species Act ("ESA").

The Pearl River map turtle is described as endemic to the Pearl River system in Mississippi and Louisiana. The species is stated to be threatened with extinction due to habitat degradation and loss from:

- Dam construction
- River channelization.
- Degraded water quality from agricultural runoff, mining, and development.

The effects of climate change and target shooting and collection for the pet trade are additionally listed as factors.

The Service is stated to have proposed listing the Pearl River map turtle following a positive 90-day finding. It was then designated as threatened on November 23, 2021. The Service listed the Pearl River map turtle as threatened on July 12, 2024.

The Service is stated to have not proposed a rule designated critical habitat for the Pearl River map turtle. The NOI alleges that the July 12, 2024 finding meant the Service had a deadline for designating critical habitat by July 12, 2025. The Service is stated to have failed to propose any critical habitat designation, violating the ESA.

A copy of the NOI can be found here.