

Northern Leopard Frog and American Bullfrog Working Group
Meeting Minutes

June 3, 2020

Phone (Hosted by Adaptation Environmental Services)

| Attendees | |
|--------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Boyd Wright | Colorado Parks and Wildlife |
| Andrew DuBois | Jefferson County Open Space |
| Mac Kobza | Boulder County, Parks and Open Space |
| Joseph Ehrenberger | Adaptation Environmental Services |
| Steve Roels | City of Louisville |

Goal: To bring together experts along the Front Range to discuss efforts to improve habitat for native wildlife, including northern leopard frogs, manage bullfrogs and to create a framework for future discussions.

Website: <https://www.adaptationenvironmental.com/401/login.php?redirect=/northern-leopard-frog-and-bullfrog-control-working-group.html>

Password: Frogs2019

Agency NOTES

OSMP (*email* - Thanks to Ryan for putting the stats together in short order.)

- Two of our **temporary (year-long) technicians** were furloughed mid-April which has caused us to prioritize our amphibian monitoring site visits. So far, Ryan has visited around 40 priority wetland sites (out of about 110 that we usually visit by now). We have confirmed NLF breeding at 6 sites and located 22 egg masses. To Andrew (if on the call): we have not seen anything at the Lippincott pond during two site visits, the most recent on 5/28.
 - o Our furloughed technicians will be returning to OSMP on 6/28 and we plan on getting a better idea of breeding during early July.
- We will soon email CPW to request a renewal of our permit to **control bullfrogs with a pellet gun** (and will cc Boyd). We have seen success with this method as staff effort to keep 7 select sites bullfrog free have substantially decreased in the 5 years we have had the permit. Approved sites are closed to public use, etc., and have been or are NLF occupied sites.
- We are also interested in continuing to learn more about the efficacy of the **electrofrogger** from BCPOS. Currently, any new wildlife projects not on the director-approved list needs to

go through our director for approval, so us assisting with the electro-frogger will need to be approved by the OSMP director if BCPOS would like assistance or BCPOS would like to test the method on OSMP. Approval should not be a problem, it just might take a week or two.

- Last month, Boyd stocked a few of the NLF sites on OSMP with **northern red belly dace**. He can talk more about the habitat preferences of that native minnow if he would like, but we are hopeful that the NLF and NRDs can coexist.
- **COVID-19** Because of furloughed staff and the 6' spacing, we are not anticipating that we will be able to accomplish the amount of restoration work that we were able to complete in 2019. However, we are confident that we will be able to perform a couple of small restoration projects with a few staff with correct social distancing to improve habitat for NLF on OSMP. Trails crew members have been approved to come on in late June and their supervisors have traditionally been willing to allow them to work with us for a day or two on cattail removal. The trick is vehicles as only two people are currently allowed per vehicle.
 - o We are interested to hear other agencies' current policies on how many to a truck and how many can work together / share equipment so that I can relay any differences to our management. It seems the City of Boulder may be the most stringent.
- We are also interested to hear the status of Boyd's proposal to funnel some of the **\$\$ from the boreal toad work to NLF** (with a keen OSMP interest in eDNA and more Bd testing).
- Don't hesitate to reach out with any questions.

CPW

- No issues expected with pellet-gun control permit
- COVID-19 update: Restricted to 1-person/ vehicle; techs started 6/1 and Boyd is operating at 50% capacity for now
- N Red-belly Dace: Really appreciative of site visits with OSMP; gives a lot of hope to future possibilities of release sites
- Species Conservation Trust – Boreal Toad funds re-purposed for NLF research, investigate novel sampling methods for NLFs and Bd on CO's Front Range (e.g. eDNA, VES, and automated call surveys); field work during FY 22 and data analyzed in FY 23. Awaiting approval from other CPW regions for this research to commence. (BW to forward proposal)
- Data request update: still pooling data, seasonal tech hired to put together data; A Treble sent data to BW to refine data to be shareable
- **REQUEST**: tissue samples from NLFs – ask if you need tubes, ethanol, and/ or other equipment (for eDNA assay developed by Pisces Molecular)
 - o AD interested in helping with that as needed; **AD to send email/ address to BW;**
 - o AD to BW: Are Bd tests available for JCOS to swab (i.e. looking to update 10 year data)? BW – Limited kits available and funding limited for analyzing Bd; Can JCOS contribute funding to run samples? **(BW will work on figuring this out, but may be easier for agencies to set up their own contract with Pisces Molecular to run Bd samples)**
- Nothing to update from State Parks (per JE)

JCOS

- COVID-19 affecting agency through limited work, but JCOS policy asks for social-distancing at all times. Limit 2 people to a vehicle, masks in vehicle. AD – been driving personal vehicle; Volunteer programs supported by JCOS but social-distancing rules apply
- Frog inventory – 56 wetland site visits;
 - o 1 NLF breeding wetland (stock pond off of irrigation ditch) at Ranson Edwards – more survey needed to determine extent of usage by NLFs; permit for translocation submitted since NLF pond has considerable leak;
 - o Pine Valley Ranch has NLF calling;
 - o No bullfrogs at NLF calling sites
- Expand wetland inventory – 20 new sites not previously surveyed, no NLF at these sites yet
- Lippincott pond site has no NLFs

BCPOS

- COVID-19 hampering work plan; no seasonal on yet, but to begin soon. MK has had limited time to visit sites
- No NLFs detected yet; Bullfrogs at nearly all ponds/ wetlands; Woodhouse’s Toads and Chorus Frog tadpoles observed at some areas
- Electro-frogging – no current plan under COVID-19 social-distancing protocols; Restoration projects difficult to plan with current staff availability and COVID-19 protocols
- Boulder Co has 4-stage process for re-opening; currently at stage 2; MK’s job level is stage 4 and he anticipates working from home/ personal vehicle the remainder of the year; (Monitoring project prioritized but not restoration work)

City of Louisville

- COVID-19: Short-staffed; 1-person/ vehicle; volunteers just starting back in Louisville; SR first field season (started in fall); no detection of NLFs yet; significant bodies of water have Bullfrogs and lots of chorus frogs heard
- Wants to connect with other agencies to figure out steps forward.
- **Are there known NLF sites near Louisville?**
 - o MK: Maybe sites near Broomfield and Rockford Farms which have had historical observations
 - o AD: Recommends COPARC network for reliable volunteer observers; possibly a 1-day survey could be coordinated to assist Louisville
- Auditory surveys so far, but limited time to do this
 - o AD: From 8 years of monitoring existing NLF sites, only 2 years detected through auditory surveys
 - o Recommends VES along drainage banks for jumping/ “spooked” frogs

City of Longmont (email via Scott Severs)

- Here at Longmont we’ve been conducting infrequent **calling surveys** and have been identifying places for bullfrog eradication. With **covid interruption** and general staff departures we have had to put some of our amphibian work on the backburner as other ongoing tasks such as weed control and prairie dog management take priority. But with my

colleague Cass Holman's excellent work on a **calling protocol** we have made some inroads into finding a baseline of NLF occurrence within City of Longmont. No frogs have been detected in the city limits, but we have **detected one occurrence on the periphery, a single calling individual just west of Longmont** and immediately north of St. Vrain Creek.

- All our herp items are being cataloged on Herp Mapper.

SWPARC update via JE

- October meeting in Fort Collins will be canceled due to COVID-19 concerns and participant travel
- A webinar-series plan to hear from biologists across the west is currently under development; JE and Audrey Owens (AZGFD) are coordinating – stay tuned!
- Please be aware of the California/ Nevada Amphibian Populations Task Force (www.canvamphibs.com) as some of their work and research may inform CO efforts
- WY is actively working on bullfrog control efforts, as well as acoustic monitoring technique refinement (i.e. Wildlife Acoustics Kaleidoscope software encountering detection issues; Arbimon II seems to be a bit better so far)

General Questions

- AD: Are funds available for wetland restoration to address 2013 flood damage on JCOS lands?
 - o BW: CPW Wetlands grant is likely the only one available, but check with NFWF for some possible grants
 - Consider water rights when planning restoration
 - o JE: Perhaps check with GOCO to see if any of their grant opportunities may support restoration needed in JCOS