

Front Range American Bullfrog Control and Northern Leopard Frog Working Group  
Meeting Minutes  
3/22/2019

Date	March 22, 2019	
Location	City of Boulder OSMP office; 2520 55th St. Boulder 80301	
Attendance	Harry Crockett	Colorado Parks and Wildlife
	Boyd Wright	Colorado Parks and Wildlife
	Chelsea Beebe	Jefferson County Open Space
	Andrew DuBois	Jefferson County Open Space
	Aran Meyer	City of Fort Collins
	Will Keeley	City of Boulder, Open Space and Mountain Parks
	Ryan Pioreschi	City of Boulder, Open Space and Mountain Parks
	Mac Kobza	Boulder County, Parks and Open Space
	Kelly Triece	Adaptation Environmental Services
	Joseph Ehrenberger	Adaptation Environmental Services
Attendance Regrets	Tina Jackson	Colorado Parks and Wildlife
	Jeff Thompson	Colorado Parks and Wildlife
	Elizabeth Brown	Colorado Parks and Wildlife
	Matt Schultz	Colorado Parks and Wildlife
	Mike Sherman	Colorado Parks and Wildlife
	Joy Master	City of Boulder, Parks and Recreation
	Jonathon Decoste	City of Boulder, Parks and Recreation
	John Wold	City of Boulder, Open Space and Mountain Parks
	Drew Rayburn	Jefferson County Open Space

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

## **ACTION ITEMS**

- 1. Set next/ 2019 Working Group Dates (aim for quarterly meetings)**
  - a. Spring – phone/ webinar (GoToMeeting/ Google Hangouts) meeting (1 hour)?**
    - i. May 15<sup>th</sup> 3pm; May 20<sup>th</sup> 9am; June 3<sup>rd</sup> 3pm
    - ii. Prep for CPW Wetlands Grant
  - b. Summer – phone/ webinar (GoToMeeting/ Google Hangouts) meeting (1 hour)?**
    - i. July 17<sup>th</sup> 9am; July 22<sup>nd</sup> 3pm; August 14<sup>th</sup> 9am
    - ii. Discuss eDNA strategies (i.e timing of effort, Small Grants?, etc)
  - c. Fall – site visit (2 hours)?**
    - i. October 28<sup>th</sup> 1pm; November 4<sup>th</sup> 10am; November 13<sup>th</sup> 1pm
  - d. Winter (2020) – in-person 3-4 hours/ pre-COPARC meeting (Friday before)?**
    - i. February 7 or 14 (more than likely)
- 2. Establish goals of a Northern Leopard Frog Working Group**
- 3. Strategic mapping**
  - a. Priority areas for NLF conservation**
  - b. Priority areas for Bullfrog removal**

## **GENERAL NOTES**

- Needs for effective American Bullfrog control
  - a collaborative effort across the Front Range (create a Northern Leopard Frog Working Group)
  - exchange of techniques across agencies
  - strategic mapping
  - Some benefit to outreach; Joe and Andrew presented to Boulder County Nature Association on bullfrog mgmt did not garner s negative comment (a bit of a surprise given the audience); Similarly, beneficial results from interagency presentations on NLF habitat restoration and BF mgmt at COSA and CCTWS
- A longer, half or full day meeting is needed to establish a Working Group
- CPW and partners would like to see a comprehensive approach to NLF
  - Could be multi-faceted approach that includes habitat restoration, vegetation removal and bullfrog control
  - Suggestion: draft a plan that identifies our priorities
- The CPW [Wetlands Grant](#) opportunity exists for wetlands improvement/restoration funding
- Harry Crockett (CPW) can provide data on occurrences
  - Submit a data request to CPW
- CPW can lend equipment to agencies
- eDNA
  - Possible small grant opportunity?
  - Can we get a subject matter expert on eDNA to speak with us about methods and opportunities?
  - Limitations

- Collection window is narrowed to the breeding season, in order to collect DNA when amphibians are at pools
- American Bullfrogs can be controlled as a game species (through fishing license and research permit (pending techniques))

### **Notes from each agency**

#### City of Fort Collins Natural Areas Program

- The City is working on their relationship with the owners of Meadow Springs Ranch, which the last known Northern Leopard Frog (NLF) breeding population location on City of Fort Collins Natural Areas
- Aran M is now in charge of Frog Watch on FCNA property
- No NLF detected on Soapstone
- No Chytrid fungus detected
- The City is currently monitoring amphibian through auditory surveys
- The City would like to control American Bullfrogs if they colonize new areas

#### Boulder County Parks and Open Space (BCPOS)

- BCPOS is allocating time dedicated to NLF monitoring and conservation and American Bullfrog control this year.
- Using Visual Survey method to re-study high priority locations for NLF presence.
- Looking to fine-tune monitoring protocol and methods
- BCPOS has an electro frogger, which has given positive results so far. BCPOS is confident in the best settings and conditions for using the electro frogger.
  - Electro frogger is not effective in the following:
    - Cattails, thick vegetation, mudflats

#### Jefferson County Open Space (JCOS)

- JCOS uses FrogWatch USA and volunteers to collect amphibian call data
  - Volunteers have been useful for distribution data
  - Volunteers, while useful, can also be a lot of time in management
  - A volunteer did assist in locating a new NLF breeding site
- JCOS uses song meters to monitor all known and historic NLF sites (3-4 known sites)
  - Records 3 minutes out of every 10 minutes for 24 hrs; manual review necessary
- JCOS would like to use distribution data to build a NLF management plan
  - This may include predictive models to find possible unknown NLF breeding sites (or bullfrog sites)

#### City of Longmont

- The only control we have undertaken is the limited trapping methods you conducted for us last year.
- For resources, we could try to incorporate any control into our staff work plans to do in-house. Otherwise, could try and find the money in our operating budget to contract control

but has potential to not be approved. We would be interested in partnering on any grants with matching funds or in-kind resources.

- Water bodies chosen based on how isolated they are from other potential source populations of bullfrogs. In the future, if neighboring agencies want to coordinate we could pick waterbodies that are near other agency priority water bodies. Control of bullfrogs in waterbodies with known populations of northern leopard frog would be prioritized? a consideration as well.
- Not currently providing public education but would consider it if started a larger control effort. Would have to weight pros and cons of doing so.
- We are not conducting further research but would be willing to coordinate with others that are interested.
- We would look to others for consensus on the most humane method of euthanasia.

#### City of Boulder Open Space and Mtn Parks (OSMP)

- OSMP began systemwide amphibian monitoring using visual encounter surveys in 2006; annual monitoring identifies NLF hotspots, which has driven habitat restoration priorities
- The number of NLF breeding sites on OSMP is increasing annually, probably due to habitat restoration activities; up to 13 in 2018
- OSMP has employed the *Ready to Work* program for volunteer opportunities related to vegetation removal; good success with this program
- OSMP has been improving habitat conditions for NLF through:
  - 1.) Non-native vegetation removal
  - 2.) Planting native plants, especially low emergent vegetation
  - 3.) Removing predaceous fish
  - 4.) Fencing out cattle from NLF sites to improve veg conditions
    - a. Include gates on all fences to allow prescriptive grazing as needed
  - 5.) Controlling Bullfrogs: considerable effort to control BF so priority sites are those that are currently occupied or were previously occupied by NLF – Approx. 6-7 sites on OSMP
    - a. Methods used
      - Seining or dip netting at night
      - Draining ponds to control BF tadpoles
      - Pellet gun has shown to be very successful in removing BF from small ponds after other methods are exhausted
        - Requires special annual permit from CPW Area Wildlife Manager;