

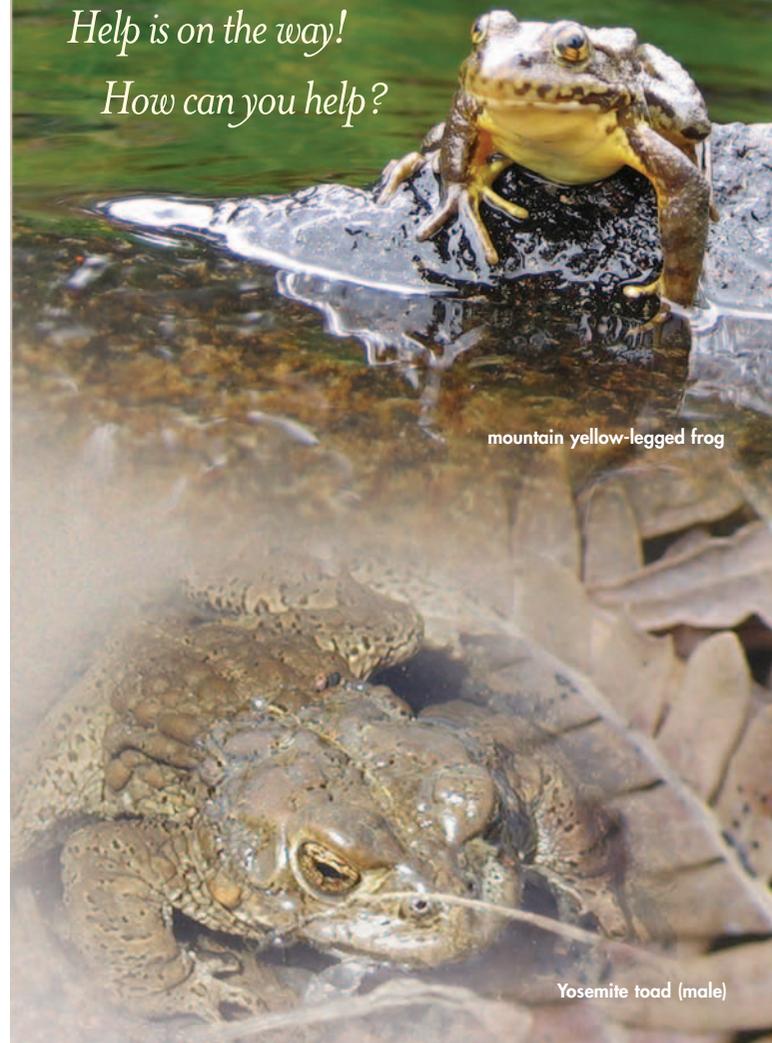
MOUNTAIN YELLOW-LEGGED FROG AND YOSEMITE TOAD

Is there a problem?

Why are they important?

Help is on the way!

How can you help?



mountain yellow-legged frog

Yosemite toad (male)

IS THERE A PROBLEM?

The Sierra Nevada Mountains are the native home of both the mountain yellow-legged frog and Yosemite toad, who have lived here for over one million years! These species historically inhabited wet meadows, lakes and streams from 4,500 to over 12,000 feet elevation. Today, the mountain yellow-legged frog has declined dramatically and is now found in fewer than 10 percent of its historic range. Similarly, the Yosemite toad also has declined substantially and has disappeared from over 50 percent of its historic range. These two species are declining primarily due to competition with non-native fishes. Other contributing factors to their decline include livestock grazing, recreation, land development, roads, fire, timber harvest, dams, diversions, pesticide drift from agriculture and disease.

WHY ARE THESE AMPHIBIANS IMPORTANT?

The mountain yellow-legged frog and the Yosemite toad play an integral part in the Sierra Nevada ecosystem by maintaining a relationship with plants and animals. If one or both of these species becomes extinct, the surrounding ecosystem will become unbalanced with unknown consequences. Preventing these frogs and toads from becoming endangered or extinct depends on proper management and restoring their habitat.

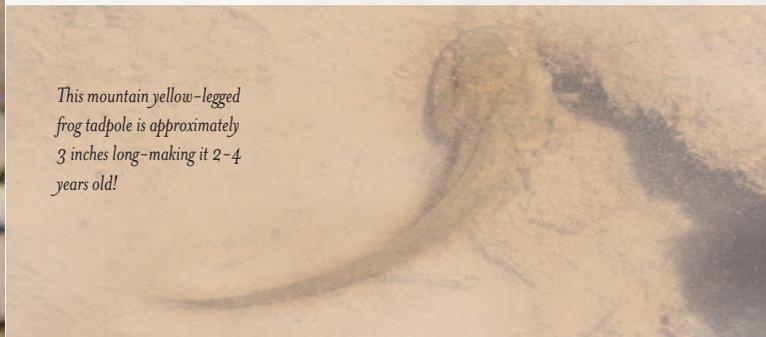
HELP IS ON THE WAY!

Recovery of these amphibians will occur by restoring their native habitat to its historic natural condition. The *Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest* and the *California Department of Fish and Game* are working together to conserve and restore mountain yellow-legged frog and Yosemite toad populations. The following are a few examples of how this is being done:

- Restoring a few selected lakes to their natural fishless condition
- Better management of livestock grazing in certain areas
- Educating recreationists about LEAVE NO TRACE
- Educating the public on how to prevent the spread of harmful diseases

The goal is to restore these million-year-old species to some of the remote Sierra Nevada lake areas, while continuing to provide recreational fishing and camping opportunities at the more popular lake destinations. With proper management, these amphibians will be able to exist in habitats shared with anglers, campers and even livestock grazing while conservation and restoration are occurring.

This mountain yellow-legged frog tadpole is approximately 3 inches long—making it 2-4 years old!



“Our goal is to maintain a reasonable balance between species conservation and land use.” — Jason E. Kling, USFS Biologist

MOUNTAIN YELLOW-LEGGED FROG

Rana muscosa

Markings: Olive, yellowish or brown above, with some dark black spots. Pale orange to yellow below and underneath the legs.

Diet: Eats a variety of aquatic invertebrates and tadpoles.

Reproduction: Tadpoles need 2-4 years to develop into young adults. Most tadpoles from other species only need a few months to develop into young adults.

Fun Fact: mountain yellow-legged frogs reach sexual maturity at 6 years of age. Their lifespan is 12-16 years.

YOSEMITE TOAD

Bufo canorus

Markings: Males are olive green with black spotting. Females are gray, tan or brown with black spots that are edged with a white or cream color.

Diet: Consists of a wide variety of invertebrates.

Reproduction: Mating occurs between April and July. Unlike the mountain yellow-legged frog, these tadpoles only need a few months to develop into young adults. These toads can be seen hopping across the snow in early spring as they are returning to water in hopes of mating. Due to their short growing season, the sooner they lay their eggs in the water, the sooner their eggs can develop into young adults before it snows again.

Fun Fact: The Yosemite toad makes bird-like trilling sounds in the spring to attract mates.

During cold winter months the mountain yellow-legged frog hibernates under water or in crevices underneath rocks, logs or vegetation. The Yosemite toad hibernates in rodent burrows and also in crevices underneath rocks, logs or vegetation.



mountain yellow-legged frog



Yosemite toad (female)



mountain yellow-legged frog tadpole



mountain yellow-legged frog developing tadpoles

“All species have a place here in the environment and we as humans have the ability to influence the continued existence of these amphibians.”

— John Hanson, CDFG Biologist

HOW CAN YOU HELP THESE RARE SPECIES?

You can help the mountain yellow-legged frog and Yosemite toad by supporting conservation and restoration efforts and preserving the uniqueness of all wild landscapes by practicing the seven LEAVE NO TRACE principles:

- Plan ahead and prepare.
- Travel and camp on durable surfaces.
- Dispose of waste properly.
- Leave what you find.
- Minimize campfire impacts.
- Respect wildlife.
- Be considerate of other visitors.

The mountain yellow-legged frog and Yosemite toad are susceptible to various infectious diseases. Chytrid fungus is just one of the diseases contributing to the decline of these species. You can help prevent the spread of these diseases by disinfecting all fishing gear prior to relocating to a different lake or stream. By cleaning your boots, waders, float tubes and other fishing gear, you can help prevent diseases from spreading.

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mountain yellow-legged frog

For more information on Amphibians of the Sierra:
www.fs.fed.us/r4/hnrf/resources/

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