

PRELIMINARY RESULTS OF AMPHIBIAN MONITORING ON THE LEWIS AND CLARK NATIONAL FOREST^{TWS}

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Preliminary amphibian and reptile surveys were conducted by the Montana Natural Heritage Program in 1994 on the Lewis and Clark National Forest in central Montana. These surveys provided initial distribution information for six species of amphibians, three of which have been identified as species experiencing declines across their historic ranges: northern leopard frog (*Rana pipiens*), Columbia spotted frog (*Rana luteiventris*) and boreal toad (*Bufo boreas boreas*). A fourth species, the tailed frog (*Ascaphus truei*), has been considered sensitive to habitat disturbance and an indicator of high-integrity native aquatic communities. Subsequent annual surveys through 1998 have expanded the known distribution areas, located breeding sites and revealed interesting habitat use characteristics of these amphibians, including overlap with fish habitats and potential for both positive and negative human effects. Insights on population dynamics and extinction risks can be drawn from limited, nonstatistical surveys such as these.