

R2 Sensitive Species List Recommendation

Columbia Spotted Frog (*Rana luteiventris*)

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Recommendation: R2 Sensitive Species (ADD)

Rationale: The Columbia spotted frog ranges from Alaska, through western Canada, and throughout the northwestern United States, reaching into R2 in the Shoshone National Forest. An isolated relict population remains in the Bighorn Mountains of Wyoming. Because of declines, habitat loss, degradation, and fragmentation, the species is ranked as vulnerable to imperiled over large portions of its range, including Wyoming, where it is ranked imperiled.

While at present the species remains common across the Shoshone, its narrow habitat requirements (quality glacial and old oxbow ponds) remain vulnerable to degradation and fragmentation. Most remaining populations are found on NFS lands, making those lands particularly important. Threats to the species include a variety of factors within FS management control, including: recreation, logging, grazing, road construction, trout stocking, and others. Because of predation effects, the species does not exist in waters occupied by trout. Stocking of trout in waters that did not historically have trout have, therefore, reduced spotted frog populations.

The species is known to breed in only 3 locations on the Bighorn, constituting a minimally viable metapopulation, entirely isolated from the all other populations of the species. Two populations are heavily impacted by grazing and the third by recreation (Harold Golden, BHNF). Consequently, this metapopulation is particularly vulnerable to extirpation.

The Bighorn metapopulation clearly warrants and needs special management protection. Because of the declines in various portions of the species range, its narrow habitat requirements, the array of threats to and vulnerability of its habitat, and the clear importance of NFS lands to the continued viability of the species in R2, we strongly recommend that the species be added to the R2 sensitive species list.

Note: In addition to the evaluator's references, also referred to: biodiversity documentation at Natureserve.com; Wyoming Biodiversity Node, Univ. Wyoming.