

WOOD FROG

(Rana sylvatica)

THE WOOD FROG, ALTHOUGH fairly widespread in northern North America, is found in Colorado only as a disjunct population in the north-central part of the state at elevations between 8,000 and 10,000 feet. It's a relatively small frog, with adults usually not growing to much more than 3 inches long, and can be recognized by dark, mask-like markings across the eyes and a light stripe down the back.

In the late 1970s, concern arose about the status of the wood frog in Colorado because several breeding populations appeared to be declining or had disappeared and there were possible threats to habitats. As a result of these concerns, the Colorado Wildlife Commission listed the wood frog as a threatened species in 1979.

Due to limited funding and personnel,

not much was done in regard to management of the wood frog in Colorado for several years. However, in the early 1990s, a recovery plan was written, and an intensive survey effort was initiated by aquatic wildlife biologists in 1994. Surveys over a three-year period revealed that wood frogs were still present in all of the known historic range in northern Colorado, and cooperative work with the U.S. Forest Service provided assurances that important breeding habitats would remain secure in the foreseeable future. As a result, the delisting criteria in the recovery plan were met, and the Colorado Wildlife Commission was able to remove the wood frog from the state's list of threatened species in 1998. Close monitoring of wood frog populations and their habitat in Colorado continued through 2003 to ensure that this species was, indeed, no longer at risk.

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Wood frogs, which are found between 8,000-10,000 feet elevation in Colorado, are no longer at risk.

