

Work Task D12: Lowland Leopard Frog and Colorado River Toad Surveys

| FY11 Estimate | FY11 Actual Obligations | Cumulative Expenditures Through FY11 | FY12 Approved Estimate | FY13 Proposed Estimate | FY14 Proposed Estimate | FY15 Proposed Estimate |
|---------------|-------------------------|--------------------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| \$120,000 | \$117,017.13 | \$52,885.88 | \$150,000 | \$125,000 | \$0 | \$0 |

Contact: Allen Calvert, (702) 293-8311, acalvert@usbr.gov

Start Date: FY10

Expected Duration: FY13

Long-term Goal: Determine the extant populations of the lowland leopard frog and Colorado River toad along the LCR, and understand their habitat requirements.

Conservation Measures: LLFR1, CRT01.

Location: Within reaches 3-7 of the LCR MSCP boundary and the Bill Williams River.

Purpose: Better define distribution, habitat requirements, and factors limiting the distribution of the lowland leopard frog and Colorado River toad using a system-wide monitoring approach.

Connections with Other Work Tasks (past and future): N/A

Project Description: A system-wide survey for these two species will be conducted along the LCR and the Bill Williams River. It is unknown if any extant populations exist for either species along the LCR. The lowland leopard frog has been observed on the Bill Williams River and surveys will help determine the stability of this population. If it is decided to attempt to establish this species by reintroduction along the mainstem LCR, the Bill Williams River population would be the most likely source. Habitat characteristics will also be gathered in conjunction with surveys where presence of either species is confirmed.

Previous Activities: A study plan was designed, survey areas were chosen, and planning for this study was completed. Equipment was purchased for the first full year of study to be completed in FY11.

FY11 Accomplishments: The first year of the project was implemented and an annual report was completed. Both species were surveyed using multiple methods (e.g., visual encounter surveys, call surveys, larval funnel traps). Surveys began in January and were repeated once each month through August. Over 1,740 locations were identified through GIS analysis. With many overlapping areas identified as potential sites, 139 individual locations were visited. Locations reviewed were considered promising areas and in many cases were a centralized point for a cluster of backwater sites. Of those 139 sites, 69 localities were given a ranking of three or

better, with no localities receiving a ranking of five which indicates ideal habitat. Only localities with a ranking of three or better were visited on subsequent surveys and trapping efforts. No lowland leopard frogs were found in 2011. Three Colorado River toads were found and marked with toe clips at Planet Ranch on June 29. Three additional toads were found and marked on a return visit to Planet Ranch on August 14. This location on Planet Ranch was highly impacted by human activities and atypical of much of the habitat found within the study area. The vegetation at the site consisted of grass with patches of bare soil.

FY12 Activities: The second year of the surveys will be implemented and an annual report will be completed based on data collected during the two years. An additional field crew will be added this year to increase the chance of finding either species. Due to the apparent low abundance of both species within the study area, there may be insufficient data to determine populations and presence/absence of the species. If this is the case, then the project may be extended.

Proposed FY13 Activities: Surveys will focus on areas with the highest likelihood of occupancy for either species. A final report will then be submitted including recommendations for completing additional conservation measures for these species.

Pertinent Reports: An annual report for FY11 will be posted on the website.