



ALASKA WOOD FROG MONITORING PROGRAM

PROJECT OVERVIEW



What is The Alaska Wood Frog Monitoring Program? It is a volunteer-based effort designed to assess the current status of wood frogs in Southcentral and Interior Alaska. We know that wood frogs are found from the Brooks Range to the Alaska and Kenai Peninsulas but we know very little about their actual distribution in Alaska and even less about their population status. Since there is so little known about wood frogs from the northern part of their range, our goals are to learn where they live, to assess their baseline populations, and to document their habitat types. We need your help! We are looking for anyone who wants to learn more about the Alaska wood frog and is interested in adding to the knowledge baseline of this animal. We are encouraging individuals, families, clubs, schools and other groups to get involved in this fun-filled educational activity.



Why are wood frogs important? Alaska has six native amphibian species: three species of salamander, one toad, and two species of frogs. The wood frog (*Rana sylvatica*) is the most widely distributed amphibian in Alaska and is the only amphibian in the world found north of the Arctic Circle. These unique frogs have evolved an amazing adaptation for surviving the extreme cold of Arctic winter: They can freeze solid! Click on the Wood Frog Biology link on our website at www.akfrogs.com to find out more about freezing frogs. Wood frogs as well as other amphibians are excellent indicators of environmental health because they are very sensitive to environmental contamination, pollution, habitat loss, and climate change. Problems with amphibians are often our first warning of problems in our shared environment, and reports of malformed wood frogs are increasing in Alaska.



Why are amphibians in trouble? Amphibian species are declining drastically worldwide. Reports of malformed wood frogs are on the rise in Alaska and across the rest of the country. Scientists in Alaska and throughout the world are working hard to determine the causes and impacts of these global phenomena.



I am interested in becoming a volunteer, how do I begin? First-log on to our website at www.akfrogs.com and decide what type of survey interests you. Start planning early, since wood frogs begin to call around the last week in April and stop around the middle of May. Roadside surveys involve volunteers to select a route with at least three sites (up to ten) of potential frog habitat in their survey area. Ponds, bogs, marshes, temporary pools, and even roadside ditches are potential wood frog breeding habitat. The sites need to be at least ½ mile apart to ensure that you don't hear overlapping frogs. Click on the Survey Instructions link to read more about roadside surveys. Backyard surveys involve volunteers to select a site that they know frogs inhabit-preferably in or near your own back yard. Decide on the exact spot at the site you will be listening from-we ask that you listen from the same post each day you do the survey. Click on the Survey instructions link to read more about backyard surveys.

Incidental observations are used to supplement the Roadside and Backyard Surveys, since you probably won't have data sheets or instructions along; we ask that you fill out the data sheets when you are able to. You may leave items blank if you don't remember or are unsure of. While choosing your survey sites, remember to avoid sites that require trespass on private lands or are difficult or time consuming to access.



What kind of training do I need? The only training is to learn the frog calling intensity index. Click on the Wood Frog Calling Examples link and listen to the different examples. The first three are half minute long recordings of the different indices and the final is a Calling Index Training Recording. This three minute long recording ties together the three previous recordings and is a fun way to properly prepare for your survey.



What do I need for my survey? Not much, just bring a pencil, data sheets, and instructions. The data sheets can be printed from the Project Data Form link and the Instructions can be printed from the Survey Instruction link found on the website. Optional items are a GPS (for documenting frog locations) and a thermometer.



What else can I do to help? You can also become a wood frog ambassador. After familiarizing yourself with the Wood Frog Monitoring program by logging into our website, you are ready to become a wood frog ambassador. We provide the necessary materials and training so that you can help us to spread the word about wood frogs and citizen science. Some of the activities of a wood frog ambassador are to distribute posters, brochures, press releases, and flyers around schools, clubs, neighborhoods and events. As an ambassador you may give PowerPoint presentations about the program to interested groups.



I have completed my survey, now what? Please return all of your completed forms to the Project Coordinator by July 15th of this year. You may submit the forms electronically by email or fax, or through the mail. We will send you a self addressed, stamped envelope for this purpose upon request. Send the data as well as any questions or comments to:

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Thank you for your participation in our project!!

