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AMPHIBIAN SURVEYS IN THE BACKCOUNTRY OF THE GREATER YELLOWSTONE ECOSYSTEM. CHARLOTTE C. CORKRAN, *Northwest Ecological Research Institute, 130 NW 114th Avenue, Portland, OR 97229.*

Because the habitats remain largely undisturbed by local anthropogenic factors, wetlands within the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem (GYE) are being studied as a baseline for examining the implications of global threats to amphibian populations. Efforts by Debra Patla and Dr. Charles Peterson from the Idaho Herpetology Laboratory at Idaho State University to construct an amphibian and reptile breeding atlas of the GYE have evolved into a part of the U. S. Department of Interior's Amphibian Research and Monitoring Initiative (ARMI). Since 1997 I have spent three weeks each July as a volunteer conducting surveys in 7th level watersheds in backcountry regions of Yellowstone National Park and adjacent areas. Within each watershed, an attempt was made to complete a basic survey, using visual encounter and dipnetting methods, at every mapped wetland. Three of the five native species of amphibians have been found in abundance in many appropriate habitats, but western toads (*Bufo boreas*) have been rare, and no northern leopard frogs (*Rana pipiens*) have been seen. A local die-off of Columbia spotted frogs (*Rana luteiventris*) was found in 2001. The ARMI project is continuing and any conclusions are preliminary, but my surveys indicate that populations of several amphibian species may be declining even in pristine habitats with no evidence of previous human visits.