Wildlife Without Borders - Amphibians In Decline Program

In 2012, the USFWS awarded five new grants from the Amphibians In Decline Fund totaling \$121,093.00, which was matched by \$263,840.00 in leveraged funds. Field projects in five countries (in alphabetical order below) will be supported.

BRAZIL

The role of the North American bullfrog in spreading chytridiomycosis across endangered frog populations in the Atlantic Forest of Brazil.

AD-0137		University of Michigan	
Grant# F12AP00997			
FWS:	\$25,985	Leveraged funds:	\$8,435
Location:		Atlantic Forest of Brazil, Brazil	

This project will support efforts to conserve multiple amphibian species in the Atlantic Forest of Brazil, by determining the prevalence of chytrid fungus infection among six endangered frog species in relation to the abundance of the non-native American bullfrog *(Lithobates catesbeianus)*. Specific activities include: (1) field surveys at five Atlantic Forest sites to determine the abundance of American bullfrogs; (2) field surveys of chytrid fungus prevalence among focal endangered species; (3) DNA sequence analysis of the chytrid fungus detected at the survey sites to determine the relative distribution and frequency of different chytrid genotypes; and (4) outreach to government personnel and other key stakeholders to inform them of the presence of chytrid fungus in the Atlantic forest, the association between chytrid, bullfrog farms, and escaped bullfrogs, and to discuss mitigation measures.

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO

Identifying disease risk in threatened amphibians in the Itombwe and Misotshi-Kabogo massifs, Democratic Republic of the Congo.

AD-0135		Wildlife Conservation Soc	iety (WCS)
Grant# F12AP01162			
FWS:	\$26,000	Leveraged funds:	\$70,508
Location:		Itombwe and Misotshi-Kabogo massifs, Democratic Republic of	
		Congo	

This project will support efforts to conserve multiple amphibian species in the Itombwe and Misotshi-Kabogo sites, both highly threatened at the moment, of eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), by determining the prevalence of amphibian diseases in the field and in specimens collected in the past. Specific activities include: field surveys of chytrid fungus and ranavirus at twelve sites in Itombwe and Misotshi-Kabogo, including

an anticipated 250 individual frogs; managing laboratory tests of skin and tissue samples at the WCS molecular lab in New York, or the WCS Mobile Molecular Laboratory in DRC; managing laboratory tests of archived amphibian specimens for chytrid fungus through histological (tissue) analysis to establish a baseline for disease monitoring; and create a map and model of disease distribution in relation to habitat and ecology in the broader Albertine Rift region.

GHANA

Conservation of the Critically Endangered Togo slippery frog (Conraua derooi) in Ghana.				
AD-0121		Herp Conservation-Gha	ina	
Grant# F12AP01179				
FWS:	\$24,392	Leveraged funds:	\$19,627	
Location:		Ghana		

This project will support efforts to conserve the Togo slippery frog (*Conraua derooi*) in the Atewa Hills and other sites in eastern Ghana, by raising conservation awareness among key stakeholders and restoring degraded forest habitats. Specific activities include: outreach to religious leaders and audiences to build support for species conservation; building support for the formal protection of the Atewa Hills as a national park with outreach to traditional authorities and statesmen, followed by an outreach to schools to reduce hunting pressure by children; continued restoration of 49 acres of degraded forest along the Ghana-Togo border; establishing community-based volunteer groups to raise awareness of the species' status and to report sightings and illegal activities; and training government wildlife and forestry personnel on amphibian identification and conservation.

LAOS

Conservation of the enigmatic and highly threatened Lao newt (Laotriton laoensis).				
AD-0136	Wildlife Conservation Society		ociety	
Grant# F12AP00951				
FWS:	\$23,896	Leveraged Funds:	\$22,575	
Location:		Northern Laos		

This project will support efforts to conserve Lao newt (*Laotriton laoensis*) in northern Laos, by conducting field surveys in areas outside the species' known distribution and by working with local communities and key stakeholders to reduce unsustainable harvest. Specific activities include: increasing training of field assistants from the National University of Laos's Faculty and Science Department on survey technique; performing field surveys in the southern part of the Nam Et Phou Louey National Protected Area and the Kham District along the Vietnam border to determine if the species occurs within a protected area and outside its known distribution; and a public outreach campaign to local communities to inform villagers of the species' status and legal protection and to reduce harvesting for the illegal international pet trade.

NICARAGUA

Population assessment and survey of chytrid infection in a newly-discovered population of endangered robber frog (Craugastor laevissimus) and sympatric amphibians of southwestern Nicaragua.

AD-0132 Grant# F12AP01176		Paso Pacífico	
FWS:	\$20,820	Leveraged funds:	\$142,695
Location:		Southwestern Nicaragua	

This project will support efforts to conserve a robber frog (*Craugastor laevissimus*) in southwestern Nicaragua, by identifying key watersheds for amphibian conservation, increasing protection of key habitat, and reducing transmission of chytrid fungus between watersheds. Specific activities include: conducting doing field surveys of amphibians, water quality, and the presence of the chytrid fungus in the southeastern part of the Paso del Istmo Biological Corridor; managing fundraising to purchase 121 acres of species habitat in the Sierra Serena; patrols along key watersheds to discourage foot traffic between Costa Rica and Nicaragua and to reduce disturbance associated with shrimp harvests; and establishing an outreach program to schools to raise awareness of amphibian conservation and to encourage reporting of amphibian deaths.