

Study Guide for *Leap, Frog* by Jane Cutler

Below is a newspaper story written about California red-legged frogs - (the same kind Edward and Charley used to win the jumping-frog contest with!). The news story is taken from The San Francisco Chronicle, July 25, 2002. After you read it, answer the following questions:*

1. What is the problem faced by the red-legged frogs? (hint: see paragraph one)
2. What are the reasons this problem came about? (hint: there are four reasons - see paragraph three)
3. Does this news story bring good news or bad news for the red-legged frog? Explain your answer.

Related Topics:

Who is Mark Twain?

Where is Calaveras County?

What is the US Fish and Wildlife Service? the Sierra Club? the Jumping Frog Institute? the Environmental Protection Agency? the Endangered Species Act? "The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County?"

*By the way, there are some pretty hard words in the news story about the red-legged frog. Look at the list below. Do you know the meaning of all these words? If you don't, you might want to look them up before you read the story:

amphibian/celebrated/consumption/contamination/decreed/depleted/encroachment/endangered/environmentalists/pesticide/predator

Judge Reverses Decision, Returns Habitat to Frog

(Jane Kay, Chronicle Environmental Writer,
San Francisco Chronicle, Thursday, July 25, 2002)

A federal judge has reversed an earlier decision and temporarily redesignated nearly 4 million acres as important habitat for the California red-legged frog, the celebrated amphibian suffering from a depleted population.

U.S. District Judge Richard Leon of Washington, D.C., agreed with environmentalists that they should have been heard before the judge signed a consent decree that effectively removed all but 200,000 acres of special habitat protections in California until 2005.

Experts say the frog's population has dropped from the millions to the hundreds - the result of their consumption by humans in the late 1800s and early 1900s, the introduction of predator bullfrogs, the loss of habitat, and pesticide contamination.

The dispute stemmed from a lawsuit filed by the Homebuilders Association of Northern California against the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for designating 4.1 million acres in 28 counties as habitat for the threatened frog's resurgence.

More information about the fate of the red-legged frog,

(The San Francisco Chronicle, September 13, 2002):

The croaking California amphibian that Mark Twain made a celebrity edged back from oblivion. . .when a federal agency adopted a plan to stave off extinction of the red-legged frog.

Under the Endangered Species Act, the plan requires monitoring the existing frogs, conducting research and re-establishing colonies.

Advocates say it's unclear if the plan is enough to accomplish the goal of ensuring the frog's survival.