

Battle to save Sierra frogs involves fungus



Scientists are trying to save the mountain yellow-tree frog. Photo/USFWS/Rick Kuyper

By Lauren Sommer, KNPR

A deadly fungus that's been devastating frog populations is spreading across the globe – it's helped drive the extinction of 200 species so far. In California, the chytrid fungus has moved inexorably across the Sierra Nevada, leaving thousands of frogs dead.

But scientists are trying to turn the tide against the fungus with an experimental treatment, one that could matter to frogs worldwide.

They're making a last-ditch effort to save the endangered mountain yellow-legged frog by immunizing it against the fungus.

Mountain yellow-legged frogs, found only in California's alpine lakes, have been in steep decline due to the fungus while also falling prey to non-native trout. More than 90

percent of the population has disappeared.