**Reading Purpose: What method is being used to control the Bullfrog population?**

**Invasive Species**

Source: Save the frogs

Humans ship hundreds of millions of animals around the world each year, for pets, food, bait, lab research, and for use in zoos. Unfortunately, animals are often either purposely set free in their new environment, or they escape. Many of these invasive species adapt to their new environments, where they reproduce and become established. These species can predate upon native species, outcompete native species for food resources, and spread [infectious diseases](http://www.savethefrogs.com/threats/chytrid/index.html) to native populations. **Invasive species** are one of the most serious threats to native wildlife worldwide, as they are incredibly difficult to eradicate from the wild once they become established. On top of driving native species to dangerously low numbers or to complete extinction, invasive species cost humans billions of dollars each year in environmental damage.

There is an urgent need to drastically reduce the intercontinental trade and transport of wildlife species involved in the pet trade, bait trade, and food trade, as these trades provide little benefit to humans, but cause immense damage to Earth's ecosystems, and are therefore unsustainable.

**Bullfrogs**

**Bullfrogs** are native to eastern North America. Unfortunately, they have been transported around the world for use as food, and have now become established in at least 15 countries, as well as throughout western North America. Being a large amphibian, they not only compete with native amphibians for food resources, but they are actually voracious (*devouring great quantities of food*) consumers of any frog that can fit in their mouth!

After the early settlers of California ate unsustainable numbers of native California Red Legged Frog populations, the 1890's Californian entrepreneurs decided that bullfrogs would be needed to appease the appetites of these frog-loving gold miners, so they imported large numbers of bullfrogs from the Eastern USA, starting bullfrog farms and setting them loose in the wild where they have wreaked havoc on native frog populations ever since. To this day, bullfrogs eat native frogs, outcompete them for food, and spread infectious diseases like [chytridiomycosis](http://www.savethefrogs.com/threats/chytrid/index.html), which has driven 100 frog species to complete extinction.

How bad is the problem? Over 5 million bullfrogs get imported into San Francisco, Los Angeles and New York City each year, and a recent study demonstrated that 62% of these frogs are infected with the deadly [chytrid fungus](http://www.savethefrogs.com/threats/chytrid/index.html)! Bullfrogs have become established in California, Oregon, Washington, British Columbia, Colorado, China, Colombia, Cuba, Dominican Republic, France, Haiti, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Mexico, the Netherlands, Puerto Rico, South Korea, Taiwan, Venezuela and Uruguay. (Note: In March 2010 the California Fish & Game Commission discontinued the issuing of permits for the importation of non-native frogs for food. Thanks to the 1,196 SAVE THE FROGS! supporters who sent letters to the Commission urging them to take action on this issue!)

[](http://www.savethefrogs.com/donate/index.html)Did you know that pet shops throughout the western United States still legally sell bullfrog tadpoles? We're working on getting laws in place to ban the sales of these known invasive species outside their native range. You can [see this proposal we have submitted](http://www.savethefrogs.com/amphibians/rana-catesbeiana/images/Bullfrog-Legal-Summary-Kriger.pdf" \t "_blank) to California State Senator Joe Simitian. Can you [help us out by donating $20](http://www.savethefrogs.com/donate/index.html) so that we can institute these new laws as soon as possible? The choice is native frogs and healthy ecosystems, or a lot of big fat bullfrogs.

Directions: Respond to the following questions in **complete sentences.**

1) What method is being used to stop the spread of bull frogs?

2) Would you donate to this foundation’s cause? Why or why not?

3) Which method do you think is the best for controlling invasive species? Why?

\*\*\*\*Homework\*\*\*\*: Research an example of when biological control was used for an invasive species and it failed. List the species that was used.

Cite your source!!!