State of California Department of Fish and Wildlife

Memorandum

Date: 7/27/2018

- To: Sarah Mussulman Senior Environmental Scientist Department of Fish and Wildlife North Central Region
- From: Mitch Lockhart Environmental Scientist Department of Fish and Wildlife North Central Region

Subject: Gillnet Survey and Visual Encounter Survey at Dardanelles Lake, El Dorado County

Dardanelles Lake, El Dorado County, is within the Lake Tahoe basin and is part of the Upper Truckee Lahontan Cutthroat Trout Restoration Expansion Area. In 2012, the USDA Forest Service, Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit began non-native brook trout removal at Dardanelles Lake using gill nets and backpack electrofishers. A total of 453 brook trout were removed and no fish have been caught in Dardanelles Lake since the 2013/2014 winter gill net set. With brook trout eradicated from the lake, Lahontan cutthroat trout can be introduced.

To introduce Lahontan cutthroat trout to Dardanelles Lake, CDFW will aerially plant the lake with fingerling-sized trout annually until such time a self-sustaining population is established. CDFW is required to evaluate potential impacts or conflicts to existing management prior to stocking fish. The Pre-Stocking Evaluation must rely upon data that is no older than five years old. As a result, CDFW conducted a gill net survey and visual encounter survey to collect information on the current fish, amphibian, and reptile populations at Dardanelles Lake to be used in a CDFW Pre-Stocking Evaluation.

On June 11, 2018 at 18:15, Mitch Lockhart, CDFW Environmental Scientist, and two CDFW scientific aides set a five panel, monofilament gill net at Dardanelles Lake. The net was pulled the following morning on June 12, 2018 at 8:50. No fish were captured during the gill net survey, confirming the LTBMU conclusion that Dardanelles Lake is currently fishless.

On June 28, 2018, Mitch Lockhart and one seasonal aid conducted a visual encounter survey at Dardanelles Lake from 12:00 to 13:45 looking for diurnal amphibians and reptiles. The survey included the perimeter of the lake, 200 meters of the inlet stream, and 200 meters of the outlet stream. During the survey, approximately 330 Pacific tree frog (*Pseudacris regilla*) larvae and three adult mountain garter snakes (*Thamnophis elegans*) were observed near the outlet. The inlet stream was dry and the outlet stream was intermittent and drying. No fish were seen during the duration of the survey.

Because of the fishless condition at Dardanelles Lake and the absence of special status species, Dardanelles Lake may be included in the aerial stocking program to receive Lahontan cutthroat trout fingerlings without unduly influencing other species or ecosystem functions.



Upper shoreline view of Dardanelles Lake (6/12/2018).



Google Earth image of Dardanelles Lake (retrieved 8/6/2018).

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