

State of California
Department of Fish and Wildlife

Memorandum

Date: November 9, 2020

To: Sarah Mussulman
Senior Environmental Scientist; Supervisor
Department of Fish and Wildlife
North Central Region
1701 Nimbus Road, Suite A
Rancho Cordova, CA 95670

Cc: CDFW North Central Region Fish Files

From: Mitch Lockhart; Environmental Scientist
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Department of Fish and Wildlife
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Rancho Cordova, CA 95670

Subject: Pre-Stocking Evaluation at South Fork American River, Camp Sacramento, El Dorado County

Camp Sacramento is a well-known fishing spot in El Dorado County along the South Fork American River (**Figure 1**). The river segment is accessible by parking at the Ralston Trailhead along US-50, just east of Twin Bridges. The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) has been planting Rainbow Trout (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*; RT) and Brown Trout (*Salmo trutta*; BN) since at least 1988. CDFW most recently planted 1,350 catchable-size RT on September 3, 2020 (**Table 1**).



Figure 1. Overview map of Camp Sacramento (pink), El Dorado Co., in relation to Lake Tahoe (CDFW BIOS Viewer, retrieved 9.15.2020).

Table 1. CDFW Stocking History for South Fork American River, Camp Sacramento, 2009-2020.

Year	Species	Number of Fish Planted	Size
2009	RT	1,400	Catchable
2010	RT	750	Catchable
2011	RT	1,000	Catchable
2012	RT	1,050	Catchable
2013	RT	950	Catchable
2014	RT	1,000	Catchable
2015	RT	1,100	Catchable
2016	RT	20	Super-Catchable
2016	RT	2,380	Catchable
2017	RT	91	Super-Catchable
2017	RT	880	Catchable
2018	RT	1,850	Catchable
2019	RT	2,150	Catchable
2020	RT	25	Super-Catchable
2020	RT	3,250	Catchable

To assess the current status of the sports fishery at Camp Sacramento and determine if further fish plants are warranted, two CDFW Scientific Aides surveyed 500 meters east and west of the main Camp Sacramento access point (**Figure 2**) on August 20, 2020. The Scientific Aides sampled the sports fishery at Camp Sacramento by hook-and-line

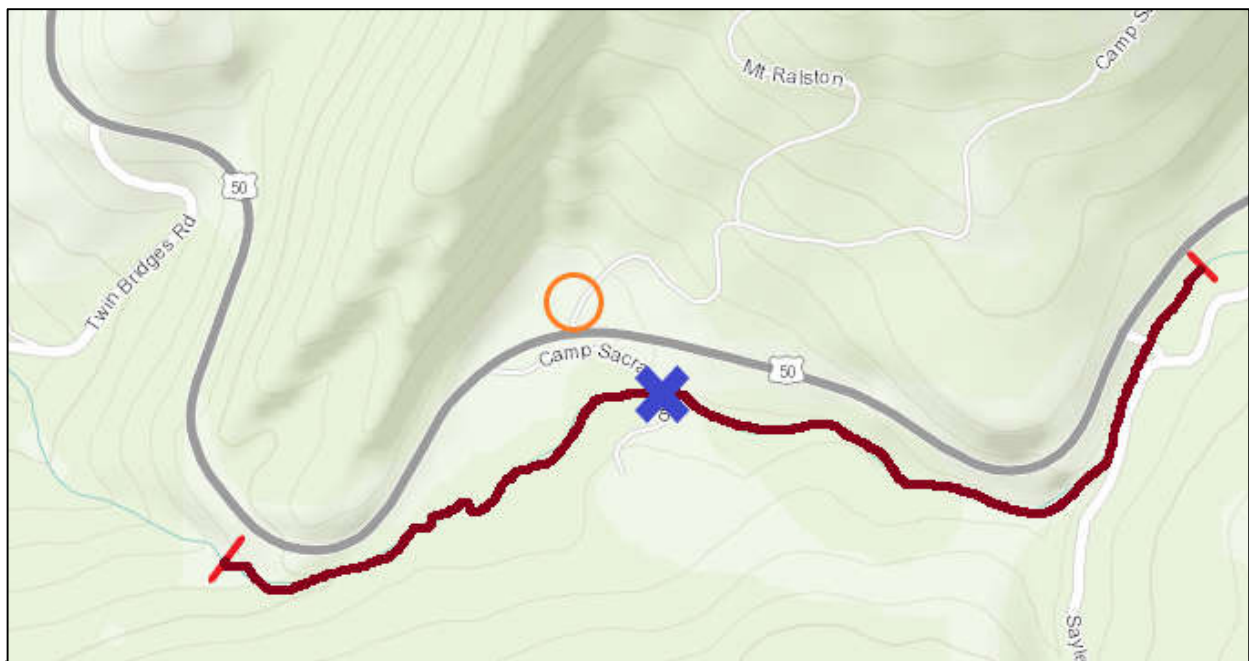
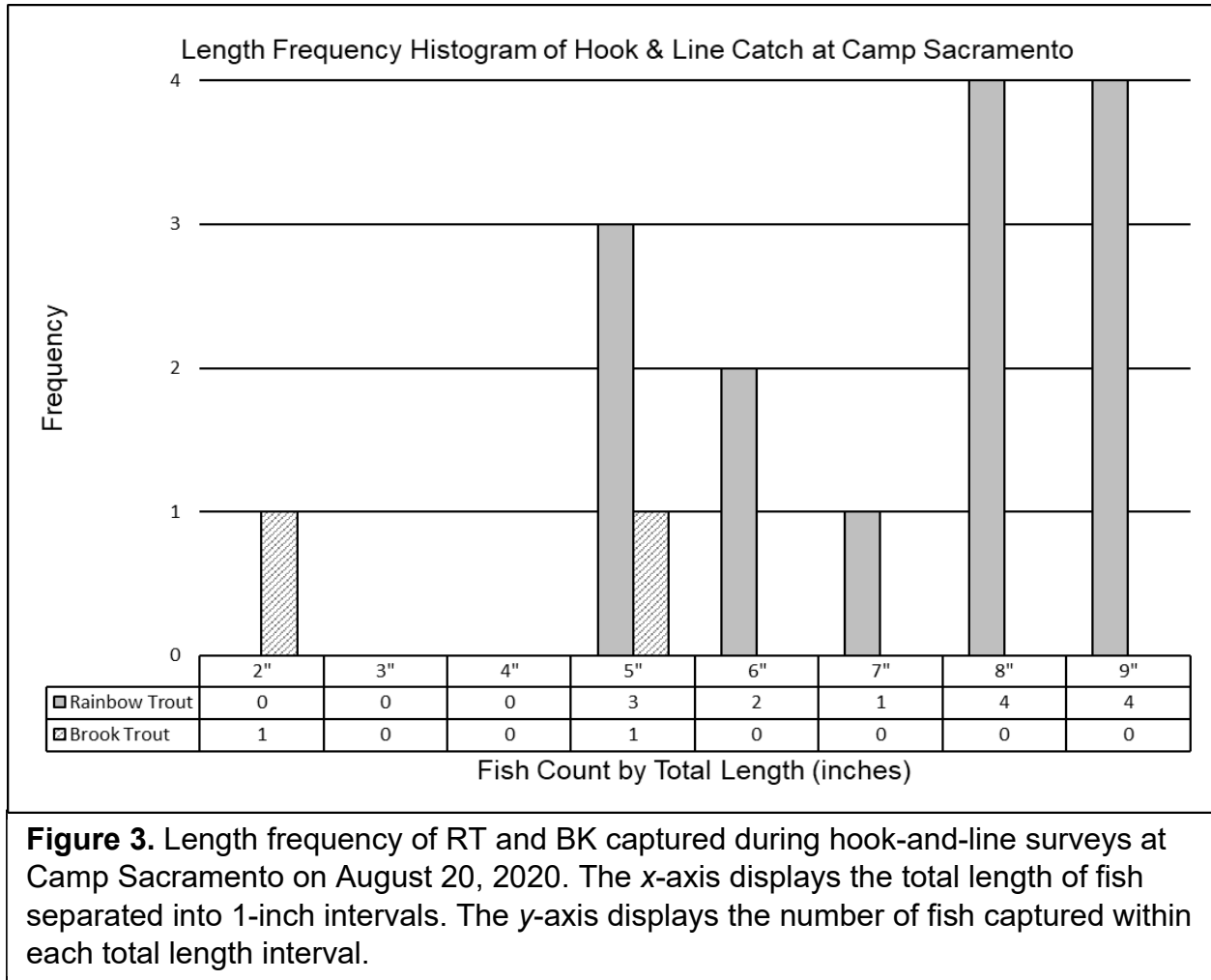


Figure 2. Close-up map of Camp Sacramento and US-50. The red track highlights the stream reach surveyed on August 20, 2020. The blue “X” marks the CDFW stocking location. The orange circle highlights the public parking access (CDFW BIOS Viewer, retrieved 09.15.2020).

and conducted a Visual Encounter Survey (VES) of the same reach.

Two sessions of hook-and-line sampling occurred; the first of which began at 8:15 AM and ended at 9:55 AM for a combined survey effort of 3.5 hours. Three RT and one Brook Trout (*Salvelinus fontinalis*; BK) were landed. The second hook-and-line session began at 10:45 AM and ended at 1:00 PM for a combined survey effort of 5.5 hours. Eleven RT and one BK were captured. In total, 16 trout were landed (**Figure 3**) over 9 hours of survey effort, for a Catch Per Unit of Effort (CPUE) of 1.78 fish per hour.



The Scientific Aides conducted a VES of Camp Sacramento on August 20, 2020, searching for diurnal herpetofauna, specifically the Federally endangered Sierra Nevada Yellow-Legged Frog (*Rana sierrae*; SNYLF). The VES began at 10:30 AM under smokey skies, light wind, and an air temperature of 16 degrees Celsius. The survey continued until 1:00 PM for a total survey effort of 55 minutes. No herpetofauna species were encountered during the VES.

Hook-and-line data collected in 2020 show that Camp Sacramento continues to supply

recreational angling opportunities to front-country anglers for small, wild RT and BK. Individual fish were up to 9-inches in length, smaller than the average length of catchable-sized hatchery trout, suggesting all of the fish encountered were wild origin fish. The surveyors landed the most fish west, or downstream, of Camp Sacramento, which is also nearer the CDFW stocking location. Individual RT were healthy and in good body condition. One small RT exhibited a deformity; a large bulge between the dorsal fin and operculum (**Figure 4**). The wild RT population is abundant, provides a fishery for small trout, and is thriving alongside regular plants of hatchery RT. Similarly, VES results collected in 2020, show that special status herpetofauna are not found in the area and will not be impacted by continued plants.



Figure 4. Photograph of a deformed, wild RT landed at Camp Sacramento during a hook-and-line survey conducted August 20, 2020. (Luc Mitchell, August 20, 2020).

CDFW should continue to plant catchable-size RT in the South Fork American River at Camp Sacramento. The location is a popular day-use destination and is frequented by Scouts of America, school groups, and other young anglers. However, catchable-sized hatchery fish do not persist at this location after planting. The hook-and-line sample was conducted roughly two months after the most recent CDFW plant and no hatchery fish were captured or encountered. To enhance the fishery at Camp Sacramento, CDFW should increase the number of planting events to broaden the length of opportunity to catch a 12-inch, or larger, RT. The allotment should be increased relative to the number of events.

More monitoring is necessary to help inform an increased planting schedule. Hook-and-line surveys and/or direct observation snorkel surveys should be conducted multiple times to understand how long catchable-sized RT persist and contribute to the fishery after a planting event. The conclusions drawn from additional monitoring surveys will be used to develop a more rigorous planting schedule for Camp Sacramento.

South Fork
American River -
Water: Camp Sacramento Date: 8/20/2020
Start: 0815 ^{am} Stop: 0955 ^{pm}
No. Anglers: 2 (LTM, JTS) Species Targeted: RT, BK

Fish No.	Species Caught	Total Length	Fin Clipped	Kept
1	RT	8 in	Y (N)	Y (N)
2	RT	9 in	Y (N)	Y (N)
3	RT	8 in	Y (N)	Y (N)
4	Bk	5 in	Y (N)	Y (N)
5			Y N	Y N
6			Y N	Y N
7			Y N	Y N
8			Y N	Y N
9			Y N	Y N
10			Y N	Y N
11			Y N	Y N
12			Y N	Y N
13			Y N	Y N
14			Y N	Y N
15			Y N	Y N
16			Y N	Y N
17			Y N	Y N
18			Y N	Y N
19			Y N	Y N
20			Y N	Y N

Species Codes:
Kokanee = KOK, Chinook Salmon = CHIN, Lake Trout = LT, Rainbow Trout = RT,
Brown Trout = BN, Brook Trout = BK, Lahontan Cutthroat Trout = LCT, Golden Trout = GT,
Mountain Whitefish = MWF

South Fork
American River -
Water: Camp Sacramento Date: 8/20/2020
Start: 1045 ^{am} Stop: 1300 ^{pm}
No. Anglers: 2 (LTM, JTS) Species Targeted: RT, BK

Fish No.	Species Caught	Total Length	Fin Clipped	Kept
1	RT	8 in	Y (N)	Y (N)
2	RT	8 in	Y (N)	Y (N)
3	RT	5 in	Y (N)	Y (N)
4	RT	9 in	Y (N)	Y (N)
5	BK	2 in	Y (N)	Y (N)
6	RT	9 in	Y (N)	Y (N)
7	RT	9 in	Y (N)	Y (N)
8	RT	5 in	Y (N)	Y (N)
9	RT	6 in	Y (N)	Y (N)
10	RT	7 in	Y (N)	Y (N)
11	RT	6 in	Y (N)	Y (N)
12	RT	5 in	Y (N)	Y (N)
13			Y N	Y N
14			Y N	Y N
15			Y N	Y N
16			Y N	Y N
17			Y N	Y N
18			Y N	Y N
19			Y N	Y N
20			Y N	Y N

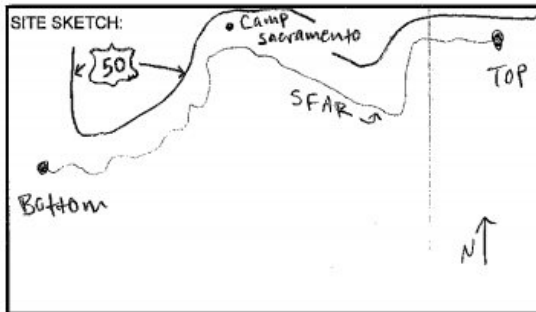
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Figure 5. Data Sheet containing hook and line data from Camp Sacramento, El Dorado Co., collected on August 20, 2020.

CDFW High Mountain Lakes - Amphibian and Reptile Visual Encounter Survey Data Sheet

Site ID: 6576011	Date: 8/20/2020	SKY: Clear Partly Cloudy Mostly Over-Cloudy Rain Snow <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Smoke	WIND: Calm <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Light Moderate Strong				
Topo Name: SFAR (1:24,000) Camp Sacramento	County: El Dorado	Elevation: - m ft	If not surveyed, provide reason: <input type="checkbox"/> Private Property <input type="checkbox"/> Frozen <input type="checkbox"/> Not Found <input type="checkbox"/> No Access				
Surveyors: LTM, JTS	Water Type: <input type="checkbox"/> Lake <input type="checkbox"/> Unmapped pond <input type="checkbox"/> Marsh/ meadow <input type="checkbox"/> Spring seep <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Stream <input type="checkbox"/> Skip to STREAMS on pg. 2						
Lake Name: SFAR (from map) Camp Sacramento	East UTM: 0750437	North UTM: 4298841	UTM Zone: 16S				
Color: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Clear <input type="checkbox"/> Stained <input type="checkbox"/> Turbidity: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Clean <input type="checkbox"/> Cloudy	Water (5 m from shore, Temp 10cm deep): 12 @ 1028 <input type="checkbox"/> or <input type="checkbox"/> F	Air (1 m above water): 16 @ 1024 <input type="checkbox"/> or <input type="checkbox"/> F	Seasonality: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Perennial <input type="checkbox"/> Ephemeral				
Survey START time: 1030	Survey END time: 1300	Total survey duration (min): 55	HERPS SEEN? YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FISH SEEN? YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				
*FOR LAKES/PONDS/MEADOWS: ALSO SURVEY FIRST 200 m OF INLETS AND OUTLETS. RECORD DATA SEPARATELY IN THE "STREAMS" SECTION ON PG. 2							
HERP SPECIES	# adults	# subadults	# metamorphs	# larvae	# egg m.	# swabs	Survey Method
Calling? Y N							<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Visual Trapped <input type="checkbox"/> Aural Hand Collected <input type="checkbox"/> Amp Net Incidental
Calling? Y N							<input type="checkbox"/> Visual Trapped <input type="checkbox"/> Aural Hand Collected <input type="checkbox"/> Amp Net Incidental
Calling? Y N							<input type="checkbox"/> Visual Trapped <input type="checkbox"/> Aural Hand Collected <input type="checkbox"/> Amp Net Incidental
Calling? Y N							<input type="checkbox"/> Visual Trapped <input type="checkbox"/> Aural Hand Collected <input type="checkbox"/> Amp Net Incidental
Calling? Y N							<input type="checkbox"/> Visual Trapped <input type="checkbox"/> Aural Hand Collected <input type="checkbox"/> Amp Net Incidental
Calling? Y N							<input type="checkbox"/> Visual Trapped <input type="checkbox"/> Aural Hand Collected <input type="checkbox"/> Amp Net Incidental
FISH SPECIES (circle species seen, if known): BK (brook trout), BN (brown trout), CT (cutthroat trout), GT (golden trout), RT (rainbow trout) HYBRID (e.g., GT x RT), OTHER (e.g., minnows)							
Amphibians: S. Long-toed Salamander (AMMA); Yosemite Toad (ANCA, fmlly BUCA); Sierran Treefrog (HYSI, fmlly PSRE or HYRE); Sierra Nevada Yellow-legged Frog (RASI) Amph. less common in HML: CA Toad (ANBO, fmlly BUBO); Bullfrog (RACT); Cascades Frog (RACA); CA Red-legged Frog (RADR); Sierra Newt (TASI, fmlly TATO) Reptiles: Sierra Gartersnake (THCO); Mountain Gartersnake (THEL); Valley Gartersnake (THSI); Western Pond Turtle (EMMA, fmlly CLMA)							

PHOTOS	Photo Number	Camera	Time	Date (yyyy-mm-dd)	UTM E	UTM N	Comments
Overview	1002	LTM	1002	2020-Aug-20	0750865	4298852	Top of reach (upstream) PICS
	1300	LTM	1300		0750072	4298685	Bottom of reach (downstream) PICS
Herps							
Other							



NOTES:
 ~ 500 m upstream and downstream from Camp Sacramento.
 NO HERPS SEEN.
 MANY RT, BK PRESENT

PLEASE Return to: Isaac Chelman, California Department of Fish and Wildlife, (916) 358-4038; 1701 Nimbus Rd., Rancho Cordova, CA 95670

Field review Copied Entered Proofed

Herp Data Sheet, pg. 1 of 2

Figure 6. Data Sheet with Visual Encounter Survey data from a survey conducted on August 20, 2020, at Camp Sacramento, El Dorado County. No herpetofauna were seen during the VES.