

Memorandum

Date: 8/27/2021

To: Sarah Mussulman
Senior Environmental Scientist, Supervisor
Department of Fish and Wildlife

From: Ben Ewing
District Fishery Biologist (Alpine, Amador, Calaveras, and Lake Counties)

Subject: **2021 Scotts Lake Amphibian Survey**

On July 14, 2021, California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) completed an amphibian survey at Scotts Lake. The purpose of the survey was to determine if there were any Sierra Nevada Yellow-Legged Frog (*Rana sierrae*) inhabiting the lake and to assess if the lake could continue to be on the CDFW stocking list.

Scotts Lake is a small 36-acre lake in Alpine County located at 38° 45' 48.61 N 119 57' 58.21 W situated at 8, 032 feet above mean sea level. The shoreline is a mix of rocks, sand, and conifer forest (**Figure 1**). The lake bottom appears mostly mud with a lot of exposed tree stumps (**Figures 2 and 3**). Maximum depth of the lake is 31 ft (Fraser and Hall, unpublished). Scotts Lake serves as the headwaters of Scotts Creek and receives water from rain and snowmelt runoff from the Waterhouse Peak area. The lake historically has received fingerling-sized stockings of Brook Trout (*Salvelinus fontinalis*), Rainbow Trout (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*), and Lahontan Cutthroat Trout (*Oncorhynchus clarkii henshawi*) with the last recorded stocking of Lahontan Cutthroat Trout in 2019.



Figure 1. Scotts Lake, Alpine County (7/14/21). Photo credit (CDFW staff).



Figure 2. Scotts Lake, Alpine County (7/14/21). Photo credit (CDFW staff).



Figure 3. Scotts Lake, Alpine County (7/14/21). Photo credit (CDFW staff).

CDFW personnel conducted the Fellers and Freel (1995) Visual Encounter Survey (VES) Protocol as modified by CDFW to conduct amphibian surveys at Scotts Lake. No amphibians were observed during the survey. In 2003 during a High Mountain Lakes (HML) survey at the lake, no amphibians were observed, however two Mountain Garter Snakes (*Thamnno elegans elegans*) were seen during the survey (HML Database). In 2012, CDFW performed a VES in which no amphibians were observed (Ewing 2012). Based on the results of the pre-stocking survey a pre-stocking evaluation will be written to keep Scotts Lake on the CDFW fish allotment list.

Literature Cited:

Ewing, B. 2012. Scotts Lake Pre-Stocking Survey. California Department of Fish and Game. Region 2 Fish Files.

Fellers, G. M. and K. L. Freel. 1995. A standardized protocol for surveying aquatic amphibians. National Biological Service Cooperative Park Studies Unit, University of California Division of Environmental Studies, Davis, CA. Technical Report No. NPS/WRUC/NRTR95-01 (UC CPSU TR # 58).

Fraser, J. C. and J. D. Hall. 1951. Lake survey and stocking record. California Department of Fish and Game. Region 2 Fish Files.

California Department of Fish and Wildlife, High Mountain Lakes Database, August 26, 2021
Accessed by B. Ewing, CDFW.