

## Memorandum

Date: 11/17/2014

To: Kevin Thomas  
Senior Environmental Scientist, Supervisor  
Department of Fish and Wildlife

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

Subject: **Round Top Lake Amphibian Survey**

On September 17, 2014, California Department of Fish and Wildlife (Department) completed an amphibian evaluation at Round Top Lake. The purpose of the survey was to determine if any Sierra Nevada yellow-legged frog (*Rana sierra*) were present, and to assess if the lake could be added to the Department fish stocking list.

Round Top Lake is a small six acre lake in Alpine County located at 38° 40' 01.84 N 120° 00' 44.46 W situated at 9,358 feet above mean sea level (Figure 1). The shoreline is a mix of rocks, sand, willow (*Salix* genus) and conifer (*Pinopsida* class) forest (Figure 2). The lake bottom appears mostly sand and various sized rock substrate. Maximum depth of the lake is approximately 40 to 50 feet (Region 2 Fish Files). At the time of the survey the lake looked approximately one foot below the high water mark. When Round Top Lake spills, water drains into nearby Woods Lake. The lake receives water from rain and snowmelt runoff from the immediate area. The lake historically has received fingerling stockings of golden trout and rainbow trout (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*), as well as Lahontan cutthroat trout (*Oncorhynchus clarki henshawi*) with the last recorded plant being Lahontan cutthroat trout in 2006.

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Department personnel utilized the Fellers Freel 1995 Visual Encounter Survey (VES) Protocol as modified by the Department to conduct the amphibian survey at Round Top Lake. The VES began at 10:00 and ended at 10:33 on September 17 where the entire lake shoreline was surveyed. Surface temperature of the lake was 13° C. No amphibians of any kind were seen during the survey. In 2001 during a High Mountain Lakes survey at the lake, no amphibians were observed while 53 Lahontan cutthroat trout were recovered in the gillnet

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(CDFW HML Database 2014). In 2012 during a High Mountain Lakes survey at the lake, only one Lahontan cutthroat trout was recovered in the gillnet (CDFW HML Database 2014). The lack of trout recovered as well as the lack of suitable spawning habitat suggests this fishery is not self-sustaining. Based on the results of the evaluations completed, a pre-stocking evaluation will be completed to add Round Top Lake to the Department fish stocking list.



Figure 2. Round Top Lake, Alpine Co. (B.Ewing, 9/17/2014).