

Memorandum

Date: 11/17/2014

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

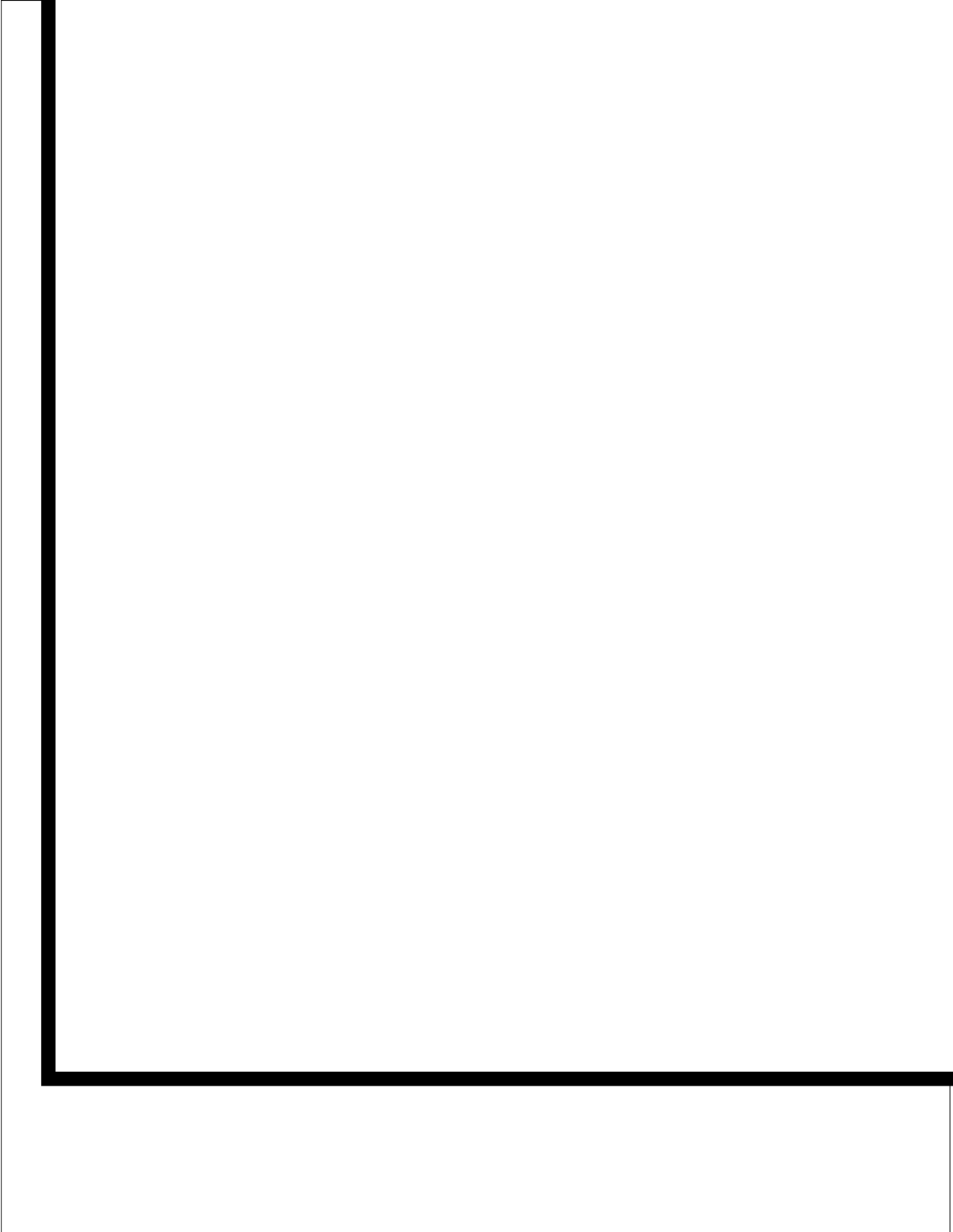
From: Ben Ewing
District Fishery Biologist (Alpine, Amador, Calaveras, and Lake Counties)

Subject: **Winnemucca Lake Amphibian Survey**

On September 17, 2014, California Department of Fish and Wildlife (Department) completed an amphibian evaluation at Winnemucca 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.

Winnemucca Lake is a 54 acre lake in Alpine County located at 38° 40' 11.56 N 119° 59' 36.46 W situated at 8,995 feet above mean sea level (Figure 1). The majority of shoreline is made up of boulders, with some sand and approximately 30% of the lake surrounded by a combination of manzanita (*Arctostaphylos* genus) and willows (*Salix* genus) which is steep with no walking access (Figure 2). No aquatic vegetation was seen during the survey. The lake bottom appears mostly sand and various sized rock substrate. Depth of the lake has been estimated at over 100 feet (Region 2 Fish Files). At the time of the survey the lake was at full capacity. When Winnemucca Lake spills, water drains into nearby Woods Lake. The lake receives water from rain and snowmelt runoff from the immediate watershed. The lake historically has received fingerling stockings of brook trout (*Salvelinus fontinalis*) and rainbow trout (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*) with the last recorded plant being rainbow trout in 2000.

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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 Winnemucca Lake. The VES began at 11:30 and ended at 12:45 on September 17 where approximately 70% of the lake shoreline was surveyed. Due to the steep shoreline and large boulders, the entire shoreline could not be safely surveyed. Surface water temperature of the lake was 13°

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C (55°F). 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 57 brook trout and two rainbow trout were recovered in the gillnet (CDFW HML Database 2014). In 2012 during a High Mountain Lakes survey at the lake, 54 brook trout was recovered in the gillnet (CDFW HML Database 2014) with no VES performed. Winnemucca Lake appears to be a self-sustaining brook trout fishery with no amphibians found during any Department surveys. Based on the results of the evaluations completed, Winnemucca Lake will not be added to the Department fish stocking list at this time due to a self-sustaining brook trout fishery.



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