## **Notice of Exemption**

**To:** Office of Planning and Research PO Box 3044, 1400 Tenth Street, Rm 113 Sacramento, CA 95812-3044

From: California Department of Fish and Wildlife Habitat Conservation Planning Branch

Native Plant Program P.O. Box 944209

Sacramento, CA 94244-2090

**Project Title:** San Fernando Valley Spineflower (*Chorizanthe parry*i var. *fernandina*) Experimental Habitat Manipulation and Seeding Study, Phase 3 (Project)

**Project Location:** The Project will take place on land owned by Newhall Land and Farming, Inc. (Newhall) located in northwestern Los Angeles County and Ventura County. Specifically, the Project will be conducted at three sites: Castaic Mesa, Ventura County Facing Simi, and San Martinez Grande Expansion-Ventura County. Laboratory analyses will take place at the office of the Permittee at 262 Patricia Lane, Watsonville, Santa Cruz County.

**Project Description:** The California Department of Fish and Wildlife is issuing a permit to Dr. Jodi McGraw (Permit No. 2081(a)-20-016-RP) pursuant to Fish and Game Code section 2081(a) for a project to examine whether San Fernando Valley spineflower established from seed collected from different subpopulations differ in their demographic and population performance when seeded into potential introduction sites that feature a range of habitat conditions including elevation, soil texture, and soil organic matter. The project will utilize seed that was collected in 2003 and has been stored at California Botanic Garden in Claremont, California. In fall 2020, the seed will be sown into experimental plots in potentially suitable but unoccupied San Fernando Valley spineflower habitat. At the end of the each growing season, a maximum of 710 San Fernando Valley spineflower plants will be collected from the study plots (5 plants in each of the 108 seeding study plots plus 34 reference plots in the naturally occurring population) to measure aspects of plant biomass and flower production. Plants harvested from the seeded plots during the first year will be disposed of, and all remaining San Fernando Valley spineflower plants in the seeded plots will be removed and disposed of offsite to prevent seed production in the plots. Plants harvested from the seeded plots during the second year will be returned to the plots they were collected from. During both years, all plant samples from the reference plots in the naturally occurring population will be returned to the plots they were collected from prior to the onset of the winter rains to avoid reducing the population of seed in those sites.

California Public Agency Approving Project: California Department of Fish and Wildlife

Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: Dr. Jodi McGraw, Jodi McGraw Consulting				
Exempt Status:				
☐ Ministerial;				
☐ Declared Emergency;				
☐ Emergency Project;				
☐ Categorical Exemption. Type and section number:	Section 15306, Class 6			

**Reasons why project is exempt:** The Project consists of basic data collection, research, experimental management, and resource evaluation activities that will not result in a major disturbance to an environmental resource. The permit issued by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife for the Project includes measures to ensure that existing populations of the endangered San Fernando Valley spineflower are not impacted.

Lead Agency Contact Person: Cherilyn Burton

Area Code/Telephone/ Extension: (916) 206-0411

Signature:	Docusigned by:		Date:	10/26/2020
- · <b>J</b> · · · · · · · · ·	Isabel Baer, Native Plant			
□s	igned by Lead Agency	Date Received for filing at O	PR: _	