Notice of Exemption

To: Office of Planning and Research P.O. 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: Nipomo Mesa Lupine Seed Predation Study and Population Enhancement Project (Project)

Project Location: The Project will take place within the Guadalupe-Nipomo Dunes Complex in San Luis Obispo County, at Black Lake Ecological Area (35.05599, -120.60373), and on a parcel owned by Phillips 66 that is part of the Oceano Dunes State Vehicular Recreation Area (35.04278, -120.59102).

Project Description: The California Department of Fish and Wildlife is issuing a permit to Cheadle Center for Biodiversity and Ecological Restoration (CCBER) [Permit No. 2081(a)-21-025-RP] pursuant to Fish and Game Code section 2081(a) for a seed predation study and population enhancement project for the endangered Nipomo Mesa lupine. For the seed predation study, eight camera traps will be set up over petri dishes or shallow plastic containers that are buried approximately three inches deep in Nipomo Mesa lupine habitat at Black Lake Ecological Area. Each container will contain 30 seeds that will be buried within the top half centimeter of soil; six of the containers will be uncaged and two will be caged. The camera traps will be installed in December 2021 and will be left in place for four to eight weeks depending on rainfall and germination. All germinated plants and materials will be removed from the field when the seed predation study is complete. For the population enhancement project, CCBER will be using seed they currently possess that were bulked as part of a 2018 Traditional Section 6 Grant project. In December 2021, five fenced (2.5 feet tall) 10 x 10-foot paired plots (ten plots total) will be established in areas where Nipomo Mesa lupine previously occurred but has not been observed since 2010 or earlier. For each pair of plots, one will receive 500 scarified seeds, and the other will receive 500 unscarified seeds. All plots will be monitored monthly, December 2021 through May 2022. If the seeding is successful, additional plots may be established and seeded in fall 2022 with prior written approval from CDFW.

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

Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: Lisa Stratton, Ph.D., Director of Ecosystem Management

Exempt Status:

Ministerial;

Declared Emergency;

Emergency Project;

Categorical Exemption. Type and section number: Sections 15306 and 15307, Classes 6 and 7

Reasons why project is exempt: The Project consists of basic data collection, research, experimental management, and resource evaluation activities and will facilitate the recovery of the California endangered Nipomo Mesa lupine by attempting to establish additional self-sustaining populations of the species within its historic range. The permit issued by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife for the Project includes measures to ensure that existing populations of Nipomo Mesa lupine are not impacted, and that re-introduced populations are adequately protected.

Lead Agency Contact Person: Cherilyn Burton

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

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Signature:	

Date: _____

Isabel Baer, Native Plant Program Manager

Signed by Lead Agency

Date Received for filing at OPR: _____