Notice of Exemption

To: Office of Planning and Research P.O. Box 3044, 1400 Tenth Street, Rm. 113 Sacramento, CA 95812-3044

☐ Signed by Lead Agency

From: California Department of Fish and Wildlife Habitat Conservation Planning Branch Native Plant Program P.O. Box 944209 Sacramento, CA 94244-2090

Project Title: Managing Non-native Plant Species in Joshua Tree Woodlands Project (Project)

Project Location: The Project will take place at multiple properties owned by Mojave Desert Land Trust (MDLT) and Transition Habitat Conservancy (THC). The Project will occur on the Portal Ridge Wildlife Preserve (34.752598. -118.492748) in Los Angeles County, the Puma Canyon Ecological Reserve (34.405665, -117.619944) and Gateway Preserve (34.128186, -116.360795) in San Bernardino County, and the Antelope Valley Conservation Bank (34.858931, -118.501315) and Desert Springs area (near Inyokern; 35.551519, -118.057455) in Kern County.

Project Description: The California Department of Fish and Wildlife is issuing a permit to MDLT [Permit No. 2081(a)-21-024-RPI pursuant to Fish and Game Code section 2081(a) for a project involving the manual removal of non-native, invasive plants (plant removal) on MDLT and THC properties that contain western Joshua tree (Yucca brevifolia) woodlands vulnerable to wildfire. The goal of the Project is to use manual removal treatments (i.e., hand tools) to reduce and control non-native, invasive plant species by whole-plant removal or cutting. Plant removal should decrease the amount of fuel available to burn during a wildfire and help control non-native, invasive plant population sizes that compete with native plants for resources. The Project will take place over five years with plant removal occurring repeatedly, but not more than once per year. Plant removal will occur on multiple properties with each property containing large multi-acre treatment areas. Surveys will be conducted prior to plant removal, as well as annually for the duration of the Project, to document the effects of plant removal on western Joshua tree. Data will be collected annually on species composition; percent cover and condition of targeted non-native, invasive plant species; and density and condition of western Joshua tree in the treatment area. Data will be analyzed to identify and track changes in non-native, invasive plant species; condition of western Joshua trees (dead versus alive); and overall species composition in the treatment areas.

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

Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: Amy Langston, Natural Resources Program Director, Mojaye Desert

Land Trust	gstori, Natural Nesources i Togram Director, Mojave Desert
Exempt Status:	
☐ Ministerial;	
Declared Emergency;	
☐ Emergency Project;	
	number: Sections 15306 and 15307, Classes 6 and 7
resource evaluation activities, and is expected to ben properties by decreasing the amount of fuel available sizes of non-native, invasive plants competing with na	des data collection, research, experimental management, and nefit western Joshua tree woodlands on MDLT and THC to burn during a wildfire and helping to control the population ative plants for resources. The permit issued by the California es best management practices to minimize disturbance to
Lead Agency Contact Person: Kristi Lazar Docusigned by:	Area Code/Telephone/ Extension: (916) 594-5425
B	2/9/2022
Signature:	Date:
Isabel Baer, Native Plant Program N	Manager and the state of the st

Date Received for filing at OPR: