

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: Baker’s Meadowfoam Habitat Rehabilitation and Invasive Species Control Project (Project)

Project Location: The Project will take place on Willits bypass mitigation lands north of Willits in Mendocino County. Seed will be temporarily stored at the Mendocino County Resource Conservation District (MCRCD) field office at 998 Hearst Road in Willits, Mendocino County.

Project Description: The California Department of Fish and Wildlife is issuing a permit to MCRCD [Permit No. 2081(a)-20-008-RP] pursuant to Fish and Game Code section 2081(a) for a project to develop new techniques utilizing ground tarping coupled with habitat rehabilitation to manage invasive species growing in and encroaching on Baker’s meadowfoam (*Limnanthes bakeri*) habitats. In March to April of 2021 (year one), the Permittee will identify and map reed canary grass (*Phalaris arundinacea*) and creeping-Jenny (*Lysimachia nummularia*) infestations, including areas within Baker’s meadowfoam habitat. In May to June 2021, all seed will be collected from Baker’s meadowfoam plants within the identified treatment areas where tarps will be placed, and seed will be cleaned and stored at the MCRCD field office in Willits. After seed collection, the treatment areas will be mowed and weed-whipped close to the ground, and any seed-bearing non-native or invasive plant material will be bagged and removed from the site for disposal. Following mowing, heavy woven ground cloth fabric will be laid over and staked down within the treatment areas. In November 2021, following the onset of fall rains, the Permittee will distribute all collected meadowfoam seed around the treatment areas and within habitats where it was collected from. Treated areas will be monitored throughout winter and spring to ensure tarps remain in place. In spring 2022 (year two), up to five percent of Baker’s meadowfoam seed will be collected from areas immediately adjacent to the treatment areas. All collected seed will be cleaned and stored at the MCRCD office in Willits. In November 2022, the tarps will be removed and the Baker’s meadowfoam seed will be distributed back into the areas it was collected from. This two-year treatment cycle will be repeated in 2023 to 2024 in other areas that are infested with creeping-Jenny and reed canary grass. Treatment areas will be monitored in January to May annually beginning in 2023. Any regrowth of reed canary grass or creeping-Jenny may be managed by hand pulling.

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

Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: Chris Bartow, Land Manager, MCRCD

Exempt Status:

- Ministerial;
- Declared Emergency;
- Emergency Project;
- Categorical Exemption. Type and section number: Sections 6 & 7, Classes 15306 & 15307

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 rare Baker’s meadowfoam by controlling invasive species and rehabilitating populations. The permit issued by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife for the Project includes measures to ensure that existing populations of Baker’s meadowfoam are not negatively impacted.

Lead Agency Contact Person: Cherilyn Burton

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

Signature: 
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Isabel Baer, Native Plant Program Manager

Date: 5/18/2021

- Signed by Lead Agency
- Date Received for filing at OPR: _____