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## 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:** Population Enhancement of San Diego Thornmint (*Acanthomintha ilicifolia*) (Project)

**Project Location:** The Population Enhancement of San Diego Thornmint (*Acanthomintha ilicifolia*) Project (Project) will take place in San Diego County at: (1) the Palomar Airport Road occurrence located in the Carlsbad Oaks North Preserve (33.13292, −117.263992), (2) the Carlsbad Raceway Preserve (33.134410, −117.234546), (3) the Emerald Pointe Preserve (33.121153, −117.299439), and (4) the San Diego Habitat Conservancy office at 2900 Fourth Avenue Suite 200, San Diego (32.73574, −117.16140).

**Project Description:** The California Department of Fish and Wildlife is issuing a permit to the San Diego Habitat Conservancy [Permit No. 2081(a)-23-004-RP] pursuant to Fish and Game Code section 2081(a) for a project to (1) collect San Diego thornmint seed from the Palomar Airport Road occurrence, (2) sow the collected seed into the Carlsbad Raceway Preserve and Emerald Pointe Preserve, and (3) use hand clipping to control non-native plants growing in the immediate vicinity of San Diego thornmint populations at the Carlsbad Raceway Preserve and Emerald Pointe Preserve. Project activities covered under the term of this permit include seed collection, outplanting, and non-native plant removal through hand clipping. San Diego thornmint seed will be collected from the Palomar Airport Road occurrence in spring/summer of 2023. No more than five percent of San Diego thornmint seed will be collected at the Palomar Airport Road occurrence. Collected seed will be outplanted in fall of 2023 at one location within the Carlsbad Raceway Preserve and one location at the Emerald Pointe Preserve that currently support small populations of San Diego thornmint. Seed will also be sown in three additional areas at the Carlsbad Raceway Preserve that are within 500 feet of the existing San Diego thornmint population. Hand clipping of non-native plants will occur within a three-foot radius of historic San Diego thornmint populations and new seeding areas at the Carlsbad Raceway Preserve and Emerald Pointe Preserve. Monitoring of San Diego thornmint populations at all three sites will occur annually (at least through 2026) as part of the long-term monitoring program implemented by the San Diego Management and Monitoring Program.

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

**Person or Agency Carrying Out Project:** Kathleen Pollett, Senior Conservation Habitat Manager, San Diego Habitat Conservancy

**Exempt Status:**

- ☐ Ministerial;
- ☐ Declared Emergency;
- ☐ Emergency Project;
- ☒ Categorical Exemption. Type and section number: Section 15306 and 15307, Class 6 and 7

**Reasons why project is exempt:** The Project consists of basic data collection, research, experimental management, and resource evaluation activities to ensure the maintenance, restoration, and enhancement of existing populations of the California endangered San Diego thornmint. The permit issued by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife for the Project includes measures to ensure the existing populations of San Diego thornmint are not impacted, and that the enhanced and existing populations are adequately protected.

**Lead Agency Contact Person:** Kristi Lazar Area Code/Telephone/ Extension: (916) 594-5425

**Signature:** DocuSigned by: 36A908313DB6442... **Date:** 6/5/2023

*Isabel Baer, Native Plant Program Manager*

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